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Israel, Iran in mortal combat



PTI/AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel delivered its long-expected response to Iranian missile attacks early Saturday by carrying out a series of airstrikes against the Islamic Republic. Under the cover of darkness early Saturday, Israel struck multiple sites in different parts of Iran. Explosions were heard in the capital, Tehran.

The Israeli military said its "precise and targeted strikes" hit missile air defence systems and "aerial capabilities" as well as missile manufacturing facilities used to produce weapons that have been used against Israel. Iran insisted the strikes caused only "limited damage."

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said Iran would respond to the airstrikes, calling them a clear violation of international law as it asserted Tehran's right to self-defence. Israel characterised Saturday's attack as a response to previous aerial assaults by Iran using missiles and exploding drones in April and another missile attack this month.

Many of those projectiles were shot down before reaching their targets. It was not immediately clear how hard of a blow Israel dealt, with neither country providing detailed assessments of the destruction. Iran said the strikes targeted military bases in the provinces of Ilam, Khuzestan and Tehran.

Israel appeared confident in its battering of Iran's air defences, with military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari saying that "Israel now has broader aerial freedom of operation in Iran."

The strikes did not appear to target facilities that would all but ensure a harsh Iranian response. Those most notably include Iran's oil infrastructure, the backbone of the OPEC member's economy, and its nuclear facilities.

President Biden earlier this month said he would not support an Israeli strike on Iranian nuclear sites. US officials felt they had secured agreement from Israel not to hit nuclear or oil sites after dispatching another air-defence missile battery and associated troops, though those

assurances were not set in stone. Israel signalled that the pre-dawn bombardment was the end of this attack. "The retaliatory strike has been completed, and its objectives have been achieved," Hagari said early Saturday, still the Sabbath in Israel.

Not long after, Iran's Civil Aviation Organisation said commercial flights would resume after being halted because of the airstrikes. The Israeli attacks aimed to deter future aggression and "show we won't be silent," but to do so in a way that would minimise the embarrassment for Iran, said Yoel Guzansky, a researcher at the Tel Aviv-based Institute for National Security Studies.

The White House indicated that it wants the strikes to end the direct exchanges of fire between Israel and Iran, and warned Iran against responding. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said there was a "need to avoid further regional escalation" and called on all sides to show restraint.

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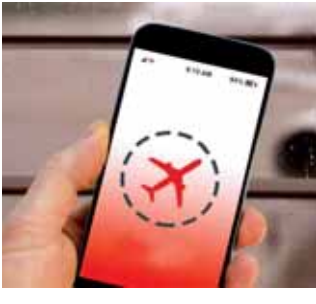
Take down threat posts: MeitY

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of hoax calls to airlines in the last few days, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has issued an advisory to all social media platforms to make "reasonable efforts" to "promptly" take down bomb threat posts or else "be held liable." Issuing this advisory, the ministry also asked all social media platforms to adhere to provisions of the Information Technology (IT) Rules and Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS).

The ministry has cautioned online platforms that failure to comply with the IT Rules could result in the loss of their safe harbour protection under the IT Act. The provision currently shields platforms from legal liability for third-party content posted on their social media platforms.

"Airline travellers and security agencies are being affected due to such hoax bomb threats that disrupt the normal course of operations of the Airlines. The instances of malicious acts in the form of hoax bomb threats to such airlines lead to potential threat to the public order & security of the state [sic]," the IT Ministry said in an official statement.



"Such hoax bomb threats while affecting a large number of citizens also destabilises the economic security of the country. Further, the scale of spread of such hoax bomb threats has been observed to be dangerously unrestrained due to the availability of the option of 'forwarding/re-sharing/re-posting/re-tweeting' on the social media platforms," it added.

Over 250 flights were affected by over 250 hoax bomb threats, mostly through social media, in the last 10 days, bringing turbulence to India's domestic aviation industry. Even hotels, schools, hotels and other establishments have also received similar warnings. In its advisory, the IT Ministry also stated that all social media platforms will have to provide information on the matter to law enforcement agencies within 72 hours.

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West Delhi man arrested for hoax bomb call

STAFF REPORTER: A 25-year-old West Delhi resident was arrested for issuing a hoax bomb threat to the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport via a social media account, in an attempt to draw attention to himself. According to police, they received two bomb threat messages from a

social media account. Following standard security protocols, an investigation was launched, which ultimately revealed the threat to be a hoax. A case was registered at the IGI police station, and authorities traced the suspect through his account.

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US sends illegal visitors back home

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States hired a chartered flight to deport Indian nationals who were staying in the country illegally, the Department of Homeland Security has said, noting that this has been done in cooperation with the Indian government. The charter flight was sent to India on October 22, the department said on Friday.

"Indian nationals without a legal basis to remain in the United States are subject to swift removal, and intending migrants should not fall for the lies of smugglers who proclaim otherwise," said Kristie A. Canegallo, a senior official performing the duties of Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security.

The statement said the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continues to enforce US immigration laws and deliver tough consequences for those who enter unlawfully and encourages the use of lawful pathways.

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Indian cricketers break a record... of the worst kind



RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

In a disappointing turn for Indian Cricket, Team India's record 12-year long test streak of winning the test series ended by New Zealand. New Zealand emerged victorious by winning the

second test in Pune by 113 runs, taking 2-0 lead in the three-match Test series and claiming the first test series win in India and away series in World Test Championship (WTC) cycle.

Indian Captain Rohit Sharma's side became the first in 12 years to lose the test series after MS Dhoni's unit back in 2012-2013 suffered the heavy defeat from England. From 2013, India won all 18 series at home, and recorded an unbeaten streak in the history of Test cricket. New Zealand had ended a 26-year-old drought of winning a test series in India. New Zealand has now become the third team to beat India in their own backyard after Australia and England.

This was not the first time India failed a spin test, in Pune last time Australia's Steve O'Keefe left arm orthodox spinner claimed six wickets in both the innings and helped Australia to win the test match.

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Substandard helmets must be trashed



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to enhance road safety and protect consumers from substandard helmets, the Department of Consumer Affairs has directed District Collectors (DCs) and District Magistrates (DMs) to launch a nationwide campaign targeting manufacturers and retailers who sell non-compliant helmets for two-wheeler riders. This comes as a response to the growing concerns over the quality of helmets available in the market and their critical role in safeguarding lives on the road. The Department has written to DCs and DMs in this regard. It is said that more than 85% of helmets used

by two-wheeler riders in India do not meet ISI standards. The ministry's data shows there are 162 licences of manufacturers of helmets that have been cancelled/expired. Besides, till date total 27 search and seizure have been conducted on misuse of BIS Standard Mark/Violation of QCOs in regards to 4151:2015 and cases are filed in various courts. In 2023, road crashes in India claimed nearly 1.73 lakh lives and left 4.63 lakh injured, marking a record high. Two-wheeler riders, particularly those without helmets, accounted for 44 per cent of the fatalities.

According to the department, it has come to light that substandard helmets, which lack the requisite BIS certification, are being sold on the roadside. This poses a severe risk to public safety and has been linked to numerous fatalities in road accidents. Therefore, there is an urgent need to tackle this issue head-on. The Government has called for strict enforcement against manufacturers operating without BIS licences or using counterfeit ISI Mark, as well as retailers peddling these non-compliant products to unsuspecting consumers. Consumers can verify whether a helmet manufacturer is licensed by BIS through the BIS Care App or by visiting the BIS website.

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NC feeling the heat of 'dual control'

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The top brass of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference has started feeling the heat of 'dual control' in the corridors of power. After Omar Abdullah's swearing-in ceremony, the party leaders gave measured reactions to the Chief Minister's role in the presence of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at the helm of affairs.

However, the recent incidents of terrorist violence in which 12 innocent lives were lost in three separate incidents last week have once again provoked the leaders of the ruling party to flex their muscles in support of their demand for restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest.

On Saturday, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, who is also the Provincial President of the party (Kashmir division) told reporters on the sidelines of a function that Jammu & Kashmir cannot function effectively under its current 'dual control' structure, where security remains under the Lieutenant Governor (LG) while other administrative functions are managed by the Chief Minister.

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ED detects irregularities in concert ticket sales

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Saturday said it has detected irregularities after it conducted raids in a money laundering case to probe "black marketing" of tickets of popular music concerts by British rock band Coldplay and actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh. The agency filed case for money laundering after conducting searches on Friday at 13 locations in five states -- Delhi, Maharashtra (Mumbai), Rajasthan (Jaipur), Karnataka (Bengaluru) and Punjab (Chandigarh) - after the federal investigation agency filed a criminal case under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

While the 'Dil-Luminati' concert by Dosanjh is scheduled to be held over the weekend on October 26-27 at the Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) stadium in the national capital, the Coldplay event 'Music of the Spheres World Tour' is slated for January 2025 at Navi Mumbai. The ED said in a statement that it initiated an investigation after numerous reports emerged that



FILE PHOTO

individuals and fans were being "deceived/cheated" through "fraudulent" ticket sales after the rapid sellout of entry passes. The agency took cognisance of multiple police FIRs filed in the case across the country, including one filed by online ticket booking portal BookMyShow, against several suspects "believed to be exploiting concert-goers." The FIR alleges that these individuals engaged in selling counterfeit tickets and drastically inflated prices, taking advantage of the high demand for these coveted concerts, the ED said. It said these concerts were "electrifying" and "highly

anticipated" announcement for music enthusiasts across India. Both events, it said, generated immense excitement and official ticketing partners like BookMyShow and Zomato Live reported that tickets were sold out in just minutes on their platforms, which "ultimately led to black-marketing of tickets at exorbitant prices."

Many fans have discovered that they were sold fake tickets or charged exorbitant prices for legitimate ones, the agency said. According to reports, the tickets were sold for Rs.32,000 to Rs.60,000. "Searches and investigation conducted by ED

has revealed information regarding multiple individuals known for providing such tickets, including fake tickets through social media using Instagram, WhatsApp and Telegram," the agency said.

The ED said several "incriminating" materials in the form of mobile phones, laptops, SIM cards, etc. Used in the ticket sales "scam" were seized during the raids. The searches were aimed at investigating the illegal sales of tickets, financial networks supporting these scams, and tracing the proceeds of crime generated from such illegal activities, it said.

In a related development, the Delhi High Court on Thursday sought the response of the Centre on a plea seeking a regulatory framework to regulate the resale of these concert tickets through authorised platforms. A bench of Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela issued notice to Union Ministries of Information and Broadcasting and Electronics, and Information Technology, private entities Stubhub Inc, Viago Entertainment Inc and Bigtree Entertainment Pvt Ltd.



To market... to market... bumper-to-bumper

Hyper local markets are bursting at the seams as Diwali shopping peaks

BY ABHI SINGHAL

Ahead of the last Diwali weekend, the hyper local colony markets are bursting at the seams adding to the congestion in major areas connecting to such markets. This affects both pedestrian traffic as well motorists. All the major markets in the city like the Sadar Bazaar, Kamla Nagar Market, Lajpat Nagar market, Chandni Chowk market are the most congested areas.

The metro station Lal Quila which is the nearest to the Chandni Chowk market has lines of people waiting to exit the metro gates due to the rush. The Kamla Nagar market in North Delhi has been facing the same situation all along. But the hyper local markets have worse conditions on such days.

For instance, the influx of vendors selling Diwali items in the Rani Bagh market has led to severe congestion, making it difficult for pedestrians to navigate the market giving them a tough time.

The Rani Bagh market in the North West Delhi has become a difficult place to pass by with such heaps of people across the market which connects both Mahindra Park and Shakurpur Basti Railway Station. The season of lights is here, however, the headlights at the traffic jams are blinding and congestion fumes choke the lungs.

The problem is exacerbated by the lack of proper traffic management. Also, the vendors taking over the roadside selling either clothes or Diwali decoration items like the diyas, Lakshmi and Ganesh idols, Saraswati Charan Padukas, Rangoli colours, stencils, flower garlands, candles, clay lamps are majorly responsible for the over rush even at early hours of the day like 11 am, when the markets just starts to open.

To get a control over the situation the Delhi Police has barricaded at the entry side of the market to restrict vehicle entry but the situation remains chaotic at the other end. The absence of barricades at the exit point near the Shakurpur Basti



Photo: Abhi Singhal

Railway Station has resulted in a surge of vehicles on the connecting main road, contributing to the congestion from the morning 11 am.

The situation gets worse when the end of Rani Bagh market, which opens in front of the Shakurpur Basti Railway Station does not have the barricading, leading to excessive rush on the connecting main road. The e-rickshaws entering the market from the exit side make it even more difficult crowding the market by hindering the pedestrians' way. The absence of monitoring on entry and exits of the market are being advantaged by the e-rickshaws and the people locally living there. The grabbing of parking space of the two wheelers in front of the shops, on entry and exit sides, inside the market roads blocks the market from all sides.

Moreover, continuous in and out of 'Chota Hathi's' (a small tempo-like vehicle) carrying stocks for the shops makes the condition worse. Talking to a person shopping in the market on the

rush said, "does it feel like 12.00pm in the afternoon".

A shopkeeper said, "diwali tak esa hi rahega haal. Ye to kuch nahi hai aap shaam ko aaiye" (The condition of the market will remain the same till Diwali and at the evening time the condition is worse)". The other shopkeepers also emphasised the difficulty of movement in the market but said that it had been the same all these years due to Diwali.

Shockingly a roadside vendor revealed that they pay the big showrooms a generous rent for allowing them to sit outside the shops. A vendor named Sitaram and his wife, selling diyas on the Rani Bagh market road said, "hum kiraya dete hain shop ke malik ko aage saman bechne ka, to koi bhi kaha hum yahan se nahi hilenge' (I pay rent to the shop, so I will not move on anybody's saying)".

The situation in the market gets worsened in the evening hours when the traffic of pedestrians inside the market and vehicles on the connecting road goes out of hand.

BJP leader's 'sexist slur' against Congress's Thorat's daughter sparks row, arson in Maharashtra

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The scurrilous, distasteful and sexist remarks made by a BJP leader against senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat's daughter and his election manager Dr Jayshree Thorat at an election rally sparked violent protests and an all-night siege of a local police at Sangamner in Ahmednagar district of western Maharashtra on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday.

Shocked by the "extremely derogatory, shameless, and disrespectful" language used by Vasant Deshmukh, an associate of former BJP MP Sujay Vikhe-Patil against Dr Jayshree, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) came down heavily on the saffron party for degrading the level of political discourse during the elections.

At the BJP's "Sankalp" rally held at Dhandarphal village in the Vikhe Patils' home constituency of Sangamner on Friday evening, Vasant Deshmukh said: "She (Dr Jayashree) calls her father as father of all of us here. Sujaydada affectionately calls her Jayashree tai (sister). That's our culture. But everyone knows about her in Sangamner taluka....If we decide to hit the streets during election time, she cannot come out of her home".

Incidentally, Sujay Vikhe-Patil - son of a veteran political leader from western Maharashtra Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil - was present when his associate Vasant Deshmukh made the statement.

"This perversive Vasant Deshmukh should be immediately arrested. The Election Commission of India (ECI) should take this matter seriously and take

action against both Vasant Deshmukh and Sujay Vikhe," Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole said.

Seventy-one-year Vijay Bhausaheb Thorat - popularly known as Balasaheb Thorat - is contesting as the Congress candidate for the ninth consecutive time from Sangamner. His daughter Dr Jayshree, a cancer specialist, is managing her father's elections as the latter is busy in the Opposition MBA's seat-sharing talks and the campaign.

However, after the objectionable remarks made by Sanjay Deshmukh, scores of Congress activists laid siege to the Sangamner Taluka Police station from 10 pm on Friday till 6 am on Saturday demanding stringent action against Deshmukh and Sujay Vikhe-Patil. Some party workers also set on fire some private



vehicles parked in the vicinity of the rally. Condemning the "derogatory, shameless, and disrespectful" language by Sanjay Deshmukh against Dr Jayashree, Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole said: "Deshmukh has not only handed a threat to Dr Jayshree when he said 'once we step into the battlefield, your daughter

will not be able to step out of her house, but he has cast aspersions on her character. Sujay Vikhe was present on the dais at that time. "Only BJP people can use such language about women; this is their culture, as demonstrated by leaders ranging from Brij Bhushan to lower-level party workers. This is not only an insult to Dr Jayashree Thorat but an

insult to all women in the state. The mothers and sisters of the state will seek revenge for this insult in the upcoming elections," Patole said.

On his part, Sujay Vikhe-Patil - who is likely to be a BJP candidate from Sangamner Assembly constituency - distanced himself and the ruling BJP-led MahaYuti from Sanjay Deshmukh's statement. "At yesterday's rally Sanjay Deshmukh made an objectionable statement about Jayashree tai. During his speech, I tried to stop him from continuing his address. But he did not stop his address. Deshmukh's remarks have nothing to do with me or the MahaYuti," Sujay said.

Sujay however took serious exception to the Congress workers setting ablaze some private vehicles in the vicinity of his party rally on Friday night. "I was advised

that there could be an attempt to attack me or torch my vehicle, so I went by an alternative route. The entire state has witnessed what happened last night. It's a gross violation of the ECI rules," the former BJP MP said.

Meanwhile, Balasaheb Thorat's sister Durga Tambe hit out at the ruling BJP for its "double standards." "On one hand the BJP and its allies talk of 'Ladki Bahin' (favourite sister) and on the other they abuse a daughter in such demeaning terms. Politics has stooped to a new low and the incident must be probed," she said.

Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar said that never before in the history had a woman been subjected to such abuses in the birthplace of the legendary social reformer Savitribai Phule. "On one hand they go around asking for votes from

women in the name of 'Ladki Bahin' scheme, while on the other they denigrate the women publicly. If someone uses such derogatory language about our mothers or sisters, can the family members remain silent? The time has come to rid the state of people with such disgusting thinking," Wadettiwar said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut accused the BJP of bringing down the level of political debate to such new depths. "This is an insult to the women in the entire Maharashtra. The BJP wants to create riots in the state before the November 20 State Assembly elections," Raut said.

Maharashtra Congress' Chief Spokesperson Atul Londhe demanded to know from the BJP as to how a person (Sanjay Deshmukh) with a deranged mentality was allowed to speak on the stage"

Congress nominates wife Anuja in place of scam-convicted Sunil Kedar in Vidarbha

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After its five-time legislator and former minister Sunil Chhatrapal Kedar was disqualified as an MLA following his conviction in a co-operative scam, the Congress has nominated his wife Anuja Kedar in his place from the Saoner seat of Nagpur district in Vidarbha region. Her name figured in the second list of candidates released by the Congress for the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections, on Saturday. Having known beforehand that she would be nominated for the Saoner seat in place of her husband, she filed her nomination for the November 20 Assembly polls from Kedar's home constituency.

The ruling BJP has not named its candidate from Saoner.

Sixty-three-year-old Sunil Kedar, a popular politician in his home constituency, has been an MLA for five terms (1995, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019). He is considered close to the Gandhi family.

In December, 2023, Sunil Kedar was disqualified as an MLA following his



conviction and five-year jail term by a Nagpur court in connection with an alleged Rs 150 crore cooperative bank scam, a scam that had surfaced 21 years ago. Anuja Kedar too comes from an influential political family. She is the granddaughter of Barrister Sheshrao Krushnarao Wankhede, a former Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and a former President of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai has been named after him.

Meanwhile, the Congress released its second list of 23

candidates on Saturday. Earlier, the party had released its first list of 48 candidates. Apart from Anuja, prominent names that figured in the second list included Krushnarao Pandav (Nagpur South) Shekhar Pramodbabu Shende (Wardha), Prof Vasant Chinduji Purke (Ralegaon) and Kailas Kishanrao Gorantyal (Janla). In Mumbai, the Congress has nominated Kalu Badheliya as its candidate from Kandivli East, while it has fielded Yashwant Jayprakash Singh from Charkop seat.

Favourable winds bring slight improvement to Delhi's AQI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Favourable winds have brought a slight improvement to Delhi's air quality over the last two days, moving it to the "poor" category, compared to the "very poor" levels recorded a few days ago. The 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded at 4 pm on Saturday was 255 against 270 a day earlier, data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) showed.

Data from 36 of the city's 40 weather-monitoring stations has been shared by the department, revealing that six stations -- Anand Vihar, Jahangirpuri, Mundka, Wazirpur, Vivek Vihar and Sonia Vihar -- fall in the "very poor" or red-zone category, while the rest are in the "poor" category. In neighbouring areas like Greater Noida, Gurugram and Faridabad, the air quality was better, with the AQI recorded in the "moderate" category.

Meanwhile, Noida and Ghazibad recorded "poor" air quality, similar to the national capital.

Weather experts had said earlier that a shift in the wind direction and an increased wind speed had contributed to an improvement in the air



quality. Similar wind conditions are expected over the next couple of days. With no major weather activity predicted for the upcoming week, the conditions are likely to remain stable. The prominent pollutants in Delhi on Friday were PM10 and O3, according to the CPCB's data. PM10 is a particulate matter that is 10 micrometre or less in diameter. These tiny solid or liquid particles suspended in the air can be inhaled into the lungs. The sources of PM10 include dust, pollen, mold, vehicle exhaust and industrial emissions, which can cause respiratory problems because they can

penetrate deep into the lungs, potentially leading to issues such as asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory diseases. Long-term exposure can also increase the risk of heart and lung diseases.

Meanwhile, Delhi's transport sector was the biggest contributor to its pollution, with emissions from transportation accounting for 14.8 per cent of the city's air pollution on Saturday, according to the Centre's Decision Support System for Air Quality Management. It also predicted that the transport sector will remain the top contributor to Delhi's pollution over the next two days. The PM2.5

level was recorded at 110.6 micrograms per cubic metre at 5 pm, according to the CPCB.

PM2.5 refers to fine inhalable particles with a diameter generally measuring 2.5 micrometre and smaller, posing the greatest risk to health.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai emphasised the urgent need to tackle air pollution across northern India, calling the next 15 days "crucial".

Following a key meeting with the Central government on Friday, Rai held a press conference on Saturday. The meeting was attended by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, and Agriculture Ministers from Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh. The Chairperson of the Central Commission on Air Quality Management (CAQM), along with other key central government officials, were also present, aimed to assess and address the worsening air quality in the region.

This came on the backdrop of poor air quality index in Delhi, prompting the authorities to impose restrictions under the stage II of the GRAP. The air quality index was stood at

255 in Delhi. Rai mentioned that for the past month and a half, he has been reaching out to the central environment minister, advocating for artificial rainfall in Delhi. During the meeting, he called for proactive measures, including stubble-burning control and firecracker restrictions.

Rai expressed concern over the delay in this year's meeting and said, "Last year, a similar meeting was held in August, allowing us more time to strategise."

"This year's meeting took place in the last week of October. Had it been conducted three months earlier, we could have tackled the pollution problem more effectively," Rai said.

During the meeting, Punjab's Agriculture Minister presented a report detailing stubble-burning incidents within the state. The report indicated that by October of the previous year, around 5,500 instances of stubble burning had already taken place in Punjab. He said, "Stubble burning is also happening in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. There has been an increase in these incidents in certain districts compared to 2022, and efforts need to be actively made in these areas."

Substandard helmets must be...

From page 1

While emphasising the need to spread awareness among citizens on the matter, Nidhi Khare, Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs said, "Helmets save lives, but only if they are of good quality. This initiative is crucial in removing unsafe helmets from the market and educating consumers about the importance of BIS-certified products. We urge all stakeholders to actively participate in this campaign for the safety of our citizens." Notably, the government has already made wearing a helmet mandatory under the

Motor Vehicles Act 1988. The helmet is a crucial safety measure for two-wheeler riders to prevent fatalities in road accidents. Helmet is a critical product and manufacturing of substandard/non-ISI helmets adversely impacts the safety of the user. However, the effectiveness of a helmet is highly dependent on its quality. Sub-standard helmets do not adhere to the prescribed standards and fail to provide the necessary protection, undermining the very purpose of wearing them. This initiative underscores the government's

commitment to consumer protection and road safety. By removing sub-standard helmets from the market, the Department aims to prevent avoidable road accident fatalities and promote high-quality safety gear. The Department's branch offices have been instructed to engage continuously with district administrations and police departments to support this campaign. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has enforced the Quality Control Order (QCO) as of June 1, 2021, mandating that all helmets comply with the BIS standard

IS 4151: 2015. Any helmet manufactured or sold without this certification violates the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016. It has been observed that many helmets sold on roadsides lack the mandatory BIS certification, posing significant risks to consumers. India accounts for the highest number of road accident deaths in the world, although mishaps in the US are almost six times more than in India. According to the report, 33 per cent of all road accidents and 35 per cent of fatal accidents took place on national highways and expressways.

NC feeling the heat of...

From page 1

Speaking at an art exhibition for amateur artists in Srinagar, Wani highlighted that a unified governance model, achieved through the restoration of statehood, is essential for addressing J&K's unique challenges. "J&K is not like other states. We have made commitments to the people, and we will fulfill them," he said, adding that the government should restore statehood. Reiterating that the National Conference is committed to fulfilling all the promises made with the people, Wani said the people of

J&K just need to show some patience as little time has passed since government formation. Regarding the Chief Minister's meetings with the Home Minister, Defence Minister, and Prime Minister, he said these discussions aimed to resolve common people's issues, and they assured support for J&K's progress. He also stated that the people mandated the National Conference, and the party is committed to resolving common issues, as J&K has been without elected representation for the last ten years.

West Delhi man arrested for...

From page 1

As many as 33 flights received bomb threats including two at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) on Saturday. More than 300 domestic and international flights have received bomb threats via social media in the past 13 days. The accused was arrested from the Rajapuri area located in Delhi's Uttam Nagar and confessed to the act saying that he did it after seeing similar incidents on television, hoping to gain attention. Deputy Commissioner of Police (IGI Airport), Usha Rangnani identified the accused as Shubham Upadhyay (25), who is an unemployed person and is only 12th pass. Deputy Commissioner of Police Rangnani said, "During the intervening night of October 25th and 26th, two suspicious and

potential bomb threat messages were received at IGI Airport via a social media account. Immediate action was taken, and standard security protocols were followed. A case was promptly registered under various sections of BNS, and an investigation was initiated. During the investigation, the threat was found to be a hoax," the DCP stated. According to aviation sector sources, 11 flights each of IndiGo, Air India and Vistara received the threats on Saturday. In a statement, an Air India spokesperson said a number of its flights were subject to security threats received on social media on Saturday. "Following the laid down protocols, relevant authorities were immediately alerted, and all security procedures strictly adhered to, as per guidance from the regulatory authorities," the spokesperson said.

US sends illegal visitors...

From p-age 1

Since June 2024, when the Securing the Border Presidential Proclamation and accompanying Interim Final Rule went into effect, encounters between ports of entry along the southwest border of the US have decreased by 55 per cent. In fiscal year 2024, the DHS removed or returned over 160,000 individuals and operated more than 495 international repatriation flights to more than 145 countries, including India, the statement said. It said the department regularly engaged with foreign governments throughout the hemisphere and around the world to accept repatriations of their nationals without a legal basis to remain in the US. This was one tool among many that the US used to reduce irregular migration, promote the use of safe, lawful and orderly pathways, and hold transnational criminal networks accountable for smuggling and exploitation of vulnerable people, it said.

Over the last year, DHS has removed individuals from a range of countries worldwide, including Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Egypt, Mauritania, Senegal, Uzbekistan, China, and India. Meanwhile, a day after the US homeland

authorities announced the deportation of Indian nationals who were staying in that country illegally, sources on Saturday said it was a result of the cooperation on migration and mobility between the two nations. As part of this cooperation, both sides are engaged in a process to "deter illegal migration," they said. This week's flight demonstrates the Department's continued commitment to pursuing "sustained cooperation" with the Indian government and other international partners to reduce and deter irregular migration and jointly work to counter human smuggling, it added. Sources said the move was a result of the India-US cooperation on migration and mobility. This is being done to "create more avenues" for legal migration from India to the US. The latest deportation of Indian nationals by a chartered flight is the result of this cooperation, the sources added. Such deportations "have been happening" for several years, they said. In the fiscal year 2024, the DHS removed or returned over 1,60,000 individuals and operated more than 495 international repatriation flights to more than 145 countries, including India, the DHS statement said.

Israel, Iran in mortal combat

From page 1

Iran could attempt another direct bombardment, though doing so risks provoking yet another direct Israeli attack on its territory at a moment when its defences are weakened. It could also encourage allied militant groups such as Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon to intensify their attacks, though both have suffered serious blows in their ongoing wars with Israel. "Iran will play down the impact of the strikes, which are in fact quite serious," predicted Sanam Vakil, the director of the Middle East and North Africa programme at the London-based think tank Chatham House. She said Iran is "boxed in by their own military limitations, economic constraints from sanctions and by the US election outcome," which could affect the course of further escalation or diplomatic outreach.

Indian cricketers break...

From page 1

For the Kiwis, Santner became Player of the Match (7/53 and 6/104) 13 wickets in the game and 33 runs with the bat on first innings heralded a remarkable triumph for New Zealand, who mastered the conditions and played better cricket than India to beat Rohit Sharma's team in their own game. After a historic low 46 all-out in the Bengaluru test, Pune test defeat has raised so many questions about the batting ability to perform in upcoming (BGT) Border Gavaskar Trophy. Although Rohit Sharma stated post match "I don't doubt anyone's ability, but batters must trust their lungs," Jaiswal fought a lone battle of sorts with nine fours and three sixes with a score of 77 runs on 65 balls and gave a needy partnership of 62 runs with Shubman Gill, but none of the famed Indian batters, including mainstays Rohit

Sharma and Virat Kohli, could pose any challenge to the Kiwis. From a steady 81/1 at lunch, the home team lost six wickets for 97 runs, struggling to negotiate Santner who yet again spinned his magic around the Indian batters. Indian all-rounder Washington Sundar marked his presence in the comeback match England test match at Ahmedabad in 2021. He registered his career best figures of (7/59 and 4/56) 11 wickets in the game and handy 39 runs with the bat. This defeat means that India stay on top in the WTC table with 98 points but their percentage points (62.82) got hit badly as Australia are now marginally behind at 62.50. The series loss is a major setback for India, who were aiming to consolidate their position at the WTC standings. The team will need to regroup and learn from the mistakes to prepare for their next assignment.

Take down threat posts...

From page 1

"In addition to the above, the IT Rules, 2021 obligates the intermediaries to provide information under its control or possession, or assistance to the Government agency which is lawfully authorised for investigative or protective or cyber security activities, for the purposes of verification of identity, or for the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution, of offences under any law for the time being in force, or for cyber security incidents, well within the stipulated timeframes (as soon as

possible but not later than 72 hours)," it stated. Earlier this week, the authorities of Kolkata, Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda airports received threats about the presence of bombs on different flights but those later turned out to be a hoax. Security was strengthened at the airport after the incident. As per standard protocol, the airport premises were checked. Some planes which were mentioned in the threat were also taken to the isolation bay and thoroughly checked, an official said, adding it turned out to be a hoax.

Traffic crawls near central Delhi as Diljit fans throng JLN stadium

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Traffic moved at a snail's pace near Jawaharlal Nehru (JLN) Stadium in central Delhi on Saturday as thousands of fans turned up to attend Punjabi singer Diljit Dosanjh's concert. More than 3,000 security personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order, police officials said. Traffic crawled in areas around the stadium, including Lodhi Road. In a post on X, a commuter said that due to heavy traffic, it took him two hours to cover the stretch from the Lodhi Road flyover to Chirag Delhi. A fan outside JLN Stadium said she has attended many music concerts but is very excited about Dosanjh's first concert in India. Dosanjh kicked off his "Dil-Luminati India Tour 2024" with his concerts in Delhi. The

scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, became one of the most awaited musical events of the year, marking the singer's return to India after the grand success of his shows in North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. With gates scheduled to open at 5:30 PM, there was a huge gathering of fans, eager to witness the unparalleled energy and star power of one of India's most beloved artists, outside the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which has a capacity of over 60,000 seats. The fans' excitement was palpable even before the show began. "It's an amazing vibe, and people have been waiting for the last half hour, so the craze is full on. And as he said, 'Punjabi aa gaye oye,' it really feels like he's come back home. We're enjoying it," said one fan. "There used to be fights back in the day, and the same is happening

today because we weren't getting tickets. We had to request some of our friends to help us get them." Another fan shared his anticipation for the event and said, "Really excited. We've been waiting for this event for the past month, and finally, the day has come, so it feels good." For some fans, the wait has been even longer. "I've been waiting for two months. I got the tickets on the first try, so now I'm just waiting for the gates to open and to enjoy myself. My excitement level, on a scale from 1 to 100, is 110," said an enthusiastic concert-goer. Others felt fortunate to secure tickets amid the heavy demand. "It was pure luck that I got the tickets. My favourite Diljit song is with Gurdas Maan, 'Ki Banu Duniya Da', and my current favourite song is 'Born to Shine,'" said a fan.



There were also those who were willing to go through the struggle just to witness their favourite singer. "I struggled for nine hours on Zomato Live to get some tickets, and I finally got one. My girlfriend has the other ticket, but she's sitting on the other side. We're in two different rows," said a concert-goer. Delhi's concert-goers are especially in for a treat, as the city will witness not just one but two shows. The second date was added after the first show sold out within minutes. It is almost sold out as well, with only lounge tickets available priced between Rs 32,000 and Rs 60,000. Organised by Ripple Effect Studios and Saregama India, with Zomato Live handling ticketing, the tour has already smashed records, becoming the fastest-selling and highest-grossing concert event in Indian

history. Dosanjh, who has enthralled music aficionados globally with hit tracks such as "Jatt Da Pyaar", "Raat Di Gedi", "Patiala Peg", "Do You Know", "5 Taara Theka" and "Laembadgini", announced his arrival in Delhi in a post on Instagram on Friday. "Delhi Ka Mausam Kya Keh Raha Hai. DIL-LUMINATI TOUR Year 24," he posted alongside photos from the plane and at the airport. In another post on Saturday, the 40-year-old musician shared a video from the stadium and is seen inspecting the arrangements ahead of the concert. "All set for tonight," he captioned the video. Ahead of the shows, the Delhi Traffic Police issued an advisory for the general public. "We are expecting around 35,000 people to come for the event. Elaborate security arrangements have been

made in and around the stadium," a senior police officer said. More than 3,000 security personnel have been deployed in and around the stadium. Paramilitary forces, including a company of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), have also been deployed, the officials said. Policemen in plain clothes have been deployed to keep an eye on activities inside the stadium and a large number of CCTV cameras have been installed in and around the venue, they said. On Friday, police had issued a traffic advisory informing commuters about road closures and traffic diversions. According to the advisory, the movement of heavy motor vehicles from JLN Stadium Red Light to Whole BP Marg would be restricted on Saturday and Sunday from 4 pm to 11 pm.

17-year-old girl jumps to death in Jamia Nagar after failing to clear IIT-JEE

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a shocking incident, a 17-year-old girl, preparing for the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), allegedly died by suicide after jumping from a residential building in Delhi's Jamia Nagar as she could not clear the national entrance exam for entry into top engineering colleges. The Class 12 student reportedly left a suicide note that asked her parents to forgive her for not being able to crack the JEE. The note read, "Sorry, I could not do it." The incident reportedly took place on Friday. "Yesterday, at 11:25 hrs, a PCR call regarding a girl aged 17, jumping off the roof of the 7th floor of a building in Okhla main market was received at Police Station Jamia Nagar. She was preparing for JEE after clearing the 12th class. She has left a suicide note citing study pressure and not meeting expectations as a

reason. Proceedings under 194 BNS are underway," the Delhi Police said. A purported video of the incident has surfaced on social media, showing the heart-wrenching moment the girl fell to the ground while a man nearby was talking on his phone. As soon as she hit the ground, onlookers rushed to assist her. Local residents, visibly disturbed by the tragedy, reported that the girl had been struggling emotionally due to her unsuccessful attempt at clearing the highly competitive Joint Entrance Examination (JEE). The incident took place four days after a second year Master's student from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, allegedly died by suicide late Tuesday night. According to police, the student had visited the IIT hospital earlier that day and had been undergoing psychiatric treatment.

JNUSU: Procedural violations in probe into sexual harassment plicant by 17 female students

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) has alleged procedural violations in the inquiry into a sexual harassment complaint filed by 47 female students with varsity's Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) after a freshers' party. In a letter to Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) has accused the committee of diluting the case by treating it as an "individual complaint" rather than a collective grievance. The union said 47 female students from the Centre for the Study of Social Systems (CSSS) on Wednesday filed a collective complaint with the ICC over alleged sexual harassment and violence during the CSSS freshers' party at the Convention Centre on Tuesday (October 22). However, the complainants were informed that the

Presiding Officer Vandana Mishra would not meet all the survivors together and asked them to nominate five representatives to present the case, the union said. During the ICC meeting on Thursday, four student representatives arrived late, taking advantage of which the ICC members tried to intimidate the lone complainant, pressuring her into a private deposition, the JNUSU claimed in its letter on Friday. The union said this was an effort to break the collective nature of the complaint. "The survivors disagree with this because the complaint was filed as a collective, but they were trying to dilute this into five individual cases of harassment," the letter read. According to JNUSU, during the deposition, the complainant was reportedly asked "irrelevant and intimidating questions", such as, "Why didn't you go to your centre's chairperson first?" and "Who told you about the ICC process?"

The letter further stated, "These questions do not concern the jurisdiction of the ICC, and were meant to threaten the survivors and get information from her about the case, to weaken our cause." The union also raised concerns that a staff member recorded a video of the complainant during the confidential session, compromising her anonymity. JNUSU representatives and CSSS students intervened, demanding that a JNUSU representative be allowed to sit in on the survivors' depositions, a restraining order be issued without naming the survivors, and that the complaint be treated as a collective grievance. They also insisted that any videos taken during the confidential meeting be deleted immediately. However, Mishra reportedly rejected these requests and brought in external staff from the Campus Security Office (CSO), which the JNUSU claimed was an attempt to "shield" the accused.



A trust of Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati, the Shankaracharya of the Jyotirmath Peeth in Uttarakhand, organized an event at Shah Auditorium as part of his "Gau Mata Rashtaramata Abhiyan". Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati Maharaj said that Cows should be removed from the animal category and given a special status. Former Congress MLA Jai Kishan was also present at the event.

BJP chief hospitalised after taking dip in 'toxic' Yamuna to highlight AAP's failure

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva was admitted to the RML Nursing Home on Saturday with complaints of itching and breathing difficulties, two days after he took a dip in the heavily-polluted Yamuna to highlight the alleged failure of the AAP government to clean the river. On Thursday, Sachdeva took a dip in the Yamuna at the Chhath Ghat and slammed former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for his "failure" to fulfil his promise to clean the river by 2025. After taking the dip, Sachdeva faced skin rashes and slight discomfort in breathing for which he was examined at the RML Hospital where the doctors prescribed him medicines for three days. However, on Saturday morning, the BJP leader was admitted to the RML Nursing Home after he complained of itching and breathlessness. He doesn't have any past history of similar problems, Delhi BJP media cell said in a



statement. New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj, addressing a press conference said the Kejriwal's government has done nothing except politicize the issue for the past decade. Once BJP comes to power, a Yamuna Cleanliness Tribunal will be set up to ensure continuous cleaning efforts. Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor added that AAP seems so rattled by Sachdeva's Yamuna dip that they have resorted to labeling public protests as attacks. He warned AAP leaders who are

dismissing the dip as mere drama that this act has become the key to political change in Delhi, as the issue of the Yamuna cleanliness scam is now at the forefront of public discussion. Wishing Sachdeva a speedy recovery, senior AAP leader and Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said that BJP leaders should now realise that their "theatrics" will not clean the river. On Thursday, Sachdeva "apologised" to Yamuna for the AAP government's "failure" in cleaning its water, promising to form a

separate authority for its rejuvenation if the BJP wins the Assembly elections scheduled in Delhi next year. The politics over Yamuna intensified in Delhi after a layer of toxic froth appeared on the river surface due to heavy contents of pollutants, leading to a squabble between the ruling AAP and the opposition BJP. The war of words has become even more intense in view of the upcoming Chhath festival that is widely celebrated in Delhi-NCR by the Purvanchali people. Before the imposition of a ban, a large number of women used to gather along the banks of Yamuna during Chhath to worship the Sun god in knee-deep waters of the river. The AAP leaders have been claiming that the toxic froth in Yamuna at Kalindikunj has been caused by the release of millions of gallons of untreated industrial waste-water into the river from drains in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, both BJP-ruled states.

Public disenchanted with AAP Government due to its incompetence, corruption, mismanagement: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday here claimed public was disenchanted with the AAP government in Delhi due to its incompetence, corruption and mismanagement. It was evident from slogans and protests during public rallies of the ruling party leaders including Arvind Kejriwal on Friday, New Delhi BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj said. Addressing a news conference, she said the backlash AAP leaders are facing is a result of the significant anti-incumbency against Kejriwal and his 58 MLAs. The press conference was moderated by Delhi BJP Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor who said "AAP's" government is on way out. Bansuri Swaraj criticized Kejriwal's decade-long governance, saying it has been marred by incompetence, corruption, and mismanagement. She added that although



people elected AAP MLAs in the last two elections, these representatives disappeared from public view soon after winning. Now, as elections draw near again, they have reappeared, engaging in theatrics, but the public has seen through these tactics. Bansuri Swaraj pointed out that despite it being October, Delhi's water crisis persists. Half the city's population, especially in unauthorized colonies, slums, and resettlement areas, is still forced to buy water from black markets. She emphasized that the protest against Kejriwal on

Friday was triggered by public frustration over water black-marketing under Vikas Puri MLA Mahendra Yadav. Swaraj also highlighted the poor condition of Delhi's roads and noted that, for the first time under Kejriwal's rule, the city's budget has slipped into deficit. She criticized AAP's health department for halting new projects due to inadequate budget provisions made by then-Finance Minister Atishi Marlena. Bansuri Swaraj stressed that AAP leaders are facing public anger during their

outreach efforts. She urged AAP to stop making false accusations against the BJP to cover their failures, as BJP believes in positive politics. She remarked that the entire AAP government appears shaken after BJP Delhi President Virendra Sachdeva took a dip in the Yamuna. AAP's deception on Yamuna cleanliness became evident when Sachdeva invited Kejriwal and Atishi to visit the Yamuna banks, but neither of them showed up. Swaraj noted that AAP's strategy of playing the victim card every election has become outdated, and people are now laughing at the statements made by AAP leaders since yesterday. Regarding the Yamuna's polluted state, she said Kejriwal's government has done nothing except politicize the issue for the past decade. Once BJP comes to power, a Yamuna Cleanliness Tribunal will be set up to ensure continuous cleaning efforts.

HC withholds DUSU polls' results as Chief Election Officer claims properties have been cleared

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As Delhi High Court pulled up Delhi University (DU) on the issue of defacing property during recent Delhi University Students Union (DUSU) polls and withheld results, Chief Election Officer of the varsity Professor Satyapal Singh has said properties have been cleaned. Stating this, he said DU Vice Chancellor Professor Yogesh Singh inspected many colleges regarding the matter. He said during the DUSU elections, some committees were formed to remove posters and flexes from the properties. As per

the report received, more than 90% of the colleges/departments/institutes/centres have made their campus free from any kind of defacement. The Chief Election Officer said with the cooperation of the students and the university, the defaced property was cleaned. The Vice Chancellor is constantly monitoring the arrangements. He himself is visiting colleges and departments and inspecting the arrangements. Professor Satyapal Singh informed that as per the direction of the Delhi High Court on October 23, all the colleges/departments/institu

tes/centres were requested to take immediate necessary steps for cleanliness and send status report. He informed that the Vice Chancellor in a meeting on October 23 had noted that the University Committee on Prevention of Defacement of Property (UCPDP) was constituted in August, 2018. The Vice Chancellor has constituted the UCPDP Committee in compliance with the guidelines of the Delhi High Court. A notification to this effect was issued on October 24. The same day the Vice Chancellor also called a meeting with DUSU



candidates and directed the students to take all possible measures to remove the defacements. The Vice Chancellor has also directed the senior officials of the University to visit the colleges/departments/institutes/centres and University campuses to inspect the arrangements for removing defacement from public/private property. The Chief Election Officer said the Vice Chancellor himself, along with senior officials of the University, had inspected Hindu College, Kirori Mal College, Ramjas College and Hansraj College on 24 October. On October 25, he visited

Satyawati College (morning and evening) and SGT Khalsa College. On Saturday, the Vice Chancellor visited Motilal Nehru College (morning and evening), Ram Lal Anand College and Aryabhata College and took stock of the cleanliness arrangements. Professor Satyapal Singh said many DUSU candidates have also cleaned the walls along with their teams and have also submitted before and after cleaning photographs to the election office. Two candidates have also submitted videos of the cleaning. The Chief Election Officer

of DUSU election had deployed teams of 20 observers on 10 different routes in all the colleges/departments/institutes/centres to inspect the garbage in and around the colleges on Saturday. Those teams have submitted their status report on the cleaning of garbage in the colleges/departments/institutes/centres in the afternoon. He himself visited Hansraj College and Laxmi Bai College to inspect the cleanliness in these colleges. All the observers reported that they found that the garbage in and around the colleges has been removed.

Amit Shah to inaugurate passenger terminal at Petrapole

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will inaugurate the newly-constructed passenger terminal and a cargo gate named as 'Maitri Dwar' at the India-Bangladesh land border crossing in West Bengal on Sunday. The crossing at Petrapole is the largest land port in South Asia and is a vital gateway for trade and commerce between India and Bangladesh. The union home minister will inaugurate the passenger terminal building and 'Maitri Dwar' at land port Petrapole in West Bengal on Sunday, an official statement said. Petrapole (India)-Benapole (Bangladesh) is one of the most important land border crossings for India-Bangladesh both in terms of trade and passengers movement. Nearly 70 per cent of land-based trade (by value) between India and Bangladesh takes place through this land port



which is under the administrative control of the Land Ports Authority of India, a wing of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It is also the eighth largest international immigration port of India and facilitates movement of over 23.5 lakh passengers annually between India and Bangladesh.

The new passenger terminal at Petrapole is a significant addition to the region's infrastructure and it set to enhance the travel experience between India and Bangladesh, the statement said. With its robust construction and advanced technological systems, the terminal promises safety, efficiency, and comfort for all users.

Designed to reflect the grandeur of international transport hubs, the terminal at Petrapole is equipped with all modern facilities such as VIP lounges, duty free shop, basic medical facility, Infant/baby feeding room, food and beverages outlets etc. The terminal has a passenger handling capacity of 20,000 per day, and will house immigration, customs, and security services under one roof. Its built-up area is of 59,800 sq m. The government has also implemented an automated entry and exit systems through flap barrier integration. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has provided the Land Ports Authority of India a new momentum, direction and dimension to take forward our cultural and trade relations with all South Asian countries," the statement said. This ambitious project is set to redefine infrastructure and service standards, enhancing the travel experience between India and Bangladesh and position-

ing itself as a pivotal hub in Asia. Maitri Dwar is a joint cargo gate at zero line agreed by both the countries. Shah had laid its foundation stone on May 9, 2023. In response to the daily cross-border traffic movement at Petrapole, which sees approximately 600-700 trucks per day, the Land Ports Authority of India established the new common second cargo gate and named it as Maitri Dwar. This dedicated gate for cargo movement is aimed at easing and streamlining the flow of goods between the two nations. The introduction of Maitri Dwar is anticipated to significantly accelerate the release and clearance of goods at the border, thereby enhancing trade efficiency, the statement said. The gate is equipped with modern day facilities such as automatic number plate recognition, boom barriers, facial recognition cameras and access-controlled entry and exit points for trucks from India and Bangladesh.

PM Modi, Spain PM to inaugurate C-295 aircraft facility in Gujarat



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart, Pedro Sanchez, will inaugurate the Tata aircraft complex in Gujarat's Vadodra on Monday for manufacturing C-295 aircraft by Tata Advanced Systems. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO), in a statement on Saturday, said this will be the first private sector final assembly line for military aircraft in India. During the visit to his home state, Modi will also launch

development projects worth more than Rs 4,900 crore in Amreli. The PMO said 40 aircraft will be built in the Vadodra facility as part of the agreement, while aviation behemoth Airbus will deliver 16 aircraft directly. Tata Advanced Systems is responsible for making these 40 aircraft in India and this facility will be the first private sector final assembly line (FAL) for military planes in India. It will involve the full development of a complete ecosystem, from manufacture to assembly, test and qualification, to deliv-

ery and maintenance of the complete life cycle of the aircraft, the statement said. Apart from the Tatas, leading defence public sector units, such as Bharat Electronics and Bharat Dynamics, as well as private micro, small and medium enterprises will contribute to this programme. Modi had laid the foundation stone for the Vadodra final assembly line in October 2022. In Amreli, the prime minister will inaugurate the "Bharat Mata" Sarovar in Dudhala. This project was developed through a collaboration between the state government and the Dholakia Foundation under the public-private partnership (PPP) model. Various rail, road, water and tourism projects, among others, to be inaugurated by Modi will benefit the citizens of Amreli, Jamnagar, Morbi, Devbhoomi Dwarka, Junagadh, Porbandar, Kachchh and Botad districts of the state, the statement said.

Priyanka Gandhi promises to fight for Wayanad's interests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday said her first journey as a public representative of Wayanad is not her first as a "public fighter" as she asserted that fighting for democracy, justice and values enshrined in the Constitution is central to her life. In an open letter to the people of Wayanad, after she filed her nomination papers from the constituency, she told them that she would work with them closely and help address their challenges. Urging people to elect her as an MP in the November 13 bypoll, she promised that her work would serve to deepen



the bond with them and that she would do all she could to fight for them and represent them in the way that they wish to be represented in Parliament. She said the people of Wayanad will be "my guides and teachers" in this journey, which is her first as a public

representative. "Fighting for democracy, for justice and for the values enshrined in our constitution is central to my life. I look forward to carrying this battle for all our futures forward with your support and will be deeply grateful to you if you choose to make me your MP," she said in her letter. "My Dear Sisters and Brothers of Wayanad, A few months back, I travelled to Chooramala and Mundakkai with my brother. I saw the devastation brought by the landslide and the depth of the loss you suffered. I met children who had lost everyone they loved, mothers who were grieving for their children and families whose entire lives had been washed

away by the rage of nature. "Yet, through the darkness of the tragedy that befell you, what shone through to me was your immense courage and fortitude as a community. You rallied together with a strength I have not seen before. Doctors, public representatives, volunteers, social workers, teachers, nurses, housewives, everyone was doing whatever they possibly could to help one another," she said. She said as she was returning home, she felt that it would be an honour to represent the people of Wayanad in parliament. She said Rahul Gandhi explained to her the struggles of the people of Wayanad and briefed her about the issues that need attention and resolution.

Gandhi family is not above law: BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday accused Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra of "non-disclosure of essential information" regarding her and her husband Robert Vadra's assets in her affidavit to contest the Lok Sabha bypoll from Kerala's Wayanad. BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed that Priyanka Gandhi is in violation of the Supreme Court's directive to poll candidates to make a full disclosure of their, their spouse's and dependents' assets. "The Supreme Court order is binding on all citizens. The Gandhi family is not above law. There can be only one out-



come. If somebody furnishes wrong information in the affidavit, they have no right to contest elections," Bhatia told reporters here. The date for a scrutiny of the nominations by poll officials is October 28 and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been targeting the Congress general secretary over her affidavit in the run-up.

Referring to the alleged grab of National Herald assets by the Gandhi family, Bhatia said Priyanka Gandhi's affidavit made no mention of her ownership of shares in Associated Journals through a couple of trusts. This amounts to non-disclosure of essential information, he said. The affidavit, he added, mentioned Vadra's three firms

while omitting his stakes in two other companies. The BJP leader said his charge is based on "irrefutable" documents. He asked Priyanka Gandhi to respond to the allegations to inform the public about her stand on the issue. The Congress will have to comply with the law or there will be serious consequences, Bhatia said, adding that the BJP will take all necessary and effective steps as it follows the Constitution. The Gandhi family, he alleged, thinks that it can ignore the law and befool people. No one should harbour such an illusion, he added. The bypoll to the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency is scheduled to be held on November 13.



Panchayati Raj ministry approves new infrastructure projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking to address infrastructure gaps, the Panchayati Raj Ministry has approved a series of proposals for building new panchayat buildings and resource centres and upgrading existing ones across the country. These include a proposal for building around 400 Gram Panchayat buildings in border areas of Arunachal Pradesh, ministry sources said. According to a source, a number of proposals were put forth in the meeting of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) on the revamped Gram Swaraj Abhiyan earlier this month and were recently approved by the ministry. In the CEC meeting chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Vivek Bharadwaj, issues of infrastructure and training for panchayats were in focus. "In a bid to boost Panchayat Infrastructure in the 'Vibrant Villages' in the border areas, the construction of 400 Panchayat Bhawans - c - u - m - C - o - m - m - o - n Service Centres in Arunachal Pradesh has been approved by the Ministry," the source said. Under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, the Ministry has supported the construction of Panchayat Bhawans as well as the setting up of Common Service Centres, especially in border states. In Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry has supported the construction of 970 Gram Panchayat Bhawan and the co-location of 1,606 Common Service Centres during 2024-25, according to information provided by the Panchayati Raj Ministry. Similarly, panchayat infra-

structure has been supported for the other states of the Northeast including Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Assam and Manipur. Overall 1,633 Gram Panchayat Bhawans and 514 CSCs have been approved for the States of North East. The source said that the establishment of these facilities will empower local governance, enabling better access to public services and fostering community participation in decision-making processes. The Ministry has also approved the construction of 3,301 Gram Panchayat Bhawans with Common Service Centre (CSC) co-locations and sanctioned 22,164 computers for Gram Panchayats across various States, including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, and Telangana. A decision has also been taken to modernise the Panchayat Resource Centres at state and district levels across the country. Computer labs in State Panchayat Resource Centres (SPRC) in 25 States as well as in District Panchayat Resource Centres in 395 Districts will be upgraded with more computers of the latest specification. Apart from this, the Central Empowered Committee also approved the standardisation of honorarium rates for Master Trainers, Guest Faculties, and Eminent Resource Persons across states/UTs. The source said it will bring uniformity and quality in training delivery across the country from larger states like Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra to smaller ones like Sikkim and Goa, and will be particularly important for states like Bihar, Gujarat, Punjab and West Bengal, which are scaling up their training initiatives.

Centre appoints 29 new joint secretaries across departments

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a major bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre, 29 joint secretaries have been appointed in different government departments. Officers from various central services, including the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS), Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE), Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS) and Indian Revenue Service (IRS) among others have been appointed to these key joint secretary (JS)-level posts, as per an order issued by the Personnel

Ministry. IDAS officers Praveen Kumar Rai and Rakesh Kumar Pandey, and IRSEE officer Rajesh Gupta have been appointed as joint secretaries in the Home Ministry, said the order dated October 25. Raj Kumar, a 1999-batch IA&AS officer, has been named as Director (Finance) in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) under the Ministry of Home Affairs for a tenure of five years, it said. Deepak Agarwal, a 2000-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as Managing Director (JS level),



National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), the order said. IAS officers Chauhan Sarita Chand and P Bala Kiran have been appointed as Joint

Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances and Department of Personnel & Training, respectively. Bhavna Saxena, a 1996-batch Indian Police Service (IPS)

officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as CEO, Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) under the Ministry of Women & Child Development, the order said. Anjan Kumar Mishra, a 1998-batch Indian Ordnance Factories Service (IOFS) officer, has been named as Secretary, Petroleum & Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Niraj Kumar, a Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officer, has been appointed as Joint Secretary, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, the order said. Kesang

Yangzom Sherpa, a 1995-batch IRS (Income Tax cadre) officer, will be Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce. Premjit Lal has been appointed as Executive Director, India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), Balamurugan D will be Joint Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Rama Shankar Sinha has been named as Joint Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying. Senior bureaucrats Rajat Agarwal and Ved Prakash Mishra have been appointed as joint secretaries in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

AI curriculum launched for ITI students nationwide



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As the nature of jobs has been evolving, students at Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) will now have the opportunity to explore careers using Artificial Intelligence (AI). In addition to this students will also understand how AI is impacting jobs and industries and examine the advantages and disadvantages of AI at work. This is part of the new 7.5-hour foundational module on Artificial Intelligence (AI), titled 'Introduction to Artificial Intelligence', has been added to the existing 120-hour Employability Skills curriculum. One of the chapters titled "Exploring careers with AI", helps learners find career options that match their interests and qualifications using AI. The AI tools can suggest careers that match people's interests and qualifications and can also help find new career options one might not have thought about. These tools save time by showing careers that fit one's interests. The module was launched on Saturday by Jayant Chaudhary, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development and

Entrepreneurship and will be implemented in 14,681 ITIs across India starting this November. According to Chaudhary, the new 'Introduction to AI' module opens up the fundamentals of artificial intelligence, sparking curiosity and creating awareness among ITI students about AI's real-world possibilities. "This program is designed to show how AI can enhance everyday tasks and inspire students to explore AI technologies in greater depth," the Minister added. Elaborating further, Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship said, "It is fundamental for everyone to understand the real-world applications of AI since it is the future. This curriculum will lay a strong foundation in AI for a smooth school-to-work transition and help them understand the power and responsibility that comes while using it." Ved Mani Tiwari, CEO, NSDC, Dr. Vinita Aggarwal, Executive member, NCVET, Preethi Pal, Paralympics champion, Trishaljit Sethi, Director General of Training, Dr. Neena Pahuja, Executive member, NCVET amongst others is were present on the occasion.

Former NIOS chairperson repatriated amid controversy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Former National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) chairperson Saroj Sharma has not been removed from the post but repatriated to her parent cadre in accordance with her request, the institute said on Saturday. "Prof. Sharma has not been removed by Centre. She had requested for premature repatriation from her role to join IITE, Gandhinagar and it was according to the set procedure of repatriation to the parent organisation from central government," the NIOS said in a statement. Sharma was at the centre of a controversy after she was booked by the Delhi Police in connection with the suicide of her driver, who had written to the education ministry accusing her of harassment and



caste discrimination. Earlier this month, the Gujarat government cancelled Sharma's appointment as the vice-chancellor of the Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE). She was appointed to the post on September 5 but was yet to take charge. "I had requested for premature repatriation from my role a month ago to join the IITE-Gandhinagar as the vice-chancellor and it was according to the set procedure of repatriation to the parent organisation from the central government. In such cases, an approval from the DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training) as well as the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) is needed," Sharma said. "I had requested the Gujarat government to give some more time to me to join but due to a procedural delay in my premature repatriation, it appointed some other person as the vice-chancellor there," she added. Sharma has been repatriated to her parent department in the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi. She refused to comment on the suicide controversy, saying "a probe is underway".

tion from my role a month ago to join the IITE-Gandhinagar as the vice-chancellor and it was according to the set procedure of repatriation to the parent organisation from the central government. In such cases, an approval from the DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training) as well as the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) is needed," Sharma said. "I had requested the Gujarat government to give some more time to me to join but due to a procedural delay in my premature repatriation, it appointed some other person as the vice-chancellor there," she added. Sharma has been repatriated to her parent department in the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi. She refused to comment on the suicide controversy, saying "a probe is underway".

ED attaches assets worth ₹163 crore in West Bengal recruitment scam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday said it has attached assets worth more than Rs 163 crore of the alleged "main middleman" and his linked entities in fresh action in a "scam" in the recruitment of group C and D category staff by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC). The anti-money laundering earlier attached properties worth Rs 230.6 crore in connection with the alleged irregularities in the hiring of assistant teachers and Rs 151 crore worth of assets in the primary teachers recruitment "scam" in West Bengal. Both recruitments were done by the WBSSC. The ED said in a statement that five hotels and resorts, 230 land parcels and 17 flats and shops



of Prasanna Kumar Roy, the "main middleman" in these cases, his wife Kajal Soni Roy and a company, controlled and operated by Roy, named Shree Durga Dealcom Pvt. Ltd. Have been provisionally attached under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The value of the attached properties is Rs 163.20 crore, it said.



The attached assets include Chalankita Resort situated at Shyampur in Howrah, Royal Bengal Resort at Sunderbans, Hotel Mili (Rubina) in Digha, Hotel Murti at Jalpaiguri and Bamboo Village Resort in Alipurduar. The money laundering probe stems from a CBI FIR and charge sheets registered for the alleged "illegal appointment of Group 'C' and

'D' employees by offering appointment to the undeserving, non-listed and below-ranked candidates and consequently depriving the deserving and genuine candidates." It is alleged that the appointments were made without maintaining fairness, in a criminal conspiracy with various persons and by flouting the relevant rules, according to the ED. The CBI charge sheets stated that a total of 3,432 (1,125 for group 'C' and 2,307 for group 'D') employees were appointed or recommended "illegally" by the officials of WBSSC in criminal conspiracy with others, it said. Roy and former WBSSC advisor Santi Prasad Sinha were arrested by the ED in the assistant teachers recruitment "scam" linked money laundering case and they are in judicial custody at present.

FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2024

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during Deepawali and Chhath Puja Festival, Northern Railway, in association with other zonal railway, has planned to run the following Festival Special Trains as per schedule given below:-

LIST OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS ORIGINATING/TERMINATING IN NORTHERN RAILWAY

Spl. Train No.	Station From	Dept. Time	Station to	Arr. Time	Frequency / Day	Period
02252	New Delhi	08:25	Patna Jn	20:00	Tri-weekly	Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 30.10.24 to 06.11.24
02251	Patna Jn	07:30	New Delhi	19:00	Tri-weekly	Thursday, Saturday, Monday 31.10.24 to 07.11.24
02270	Lucknow	14:15	Chhapra	21:30	6 Days a week	Except Tuesday Upto 08.11.24
02269	Chhapra	23:00	Lucknow	06:30	6 Days a week	Except Tuesday Upto 08.11.24
02248	New Delhi	08:25	Patna Jn	20:30	Tri-weekly	Tues, Thurs & Saturday 29.10.24 to 05.11.24
02247	Patna Jn	07:30	New Delhi	19:35	Tri-weekly	Wed, Fri & Sunday 30.10.24 to 06.11.24
04052	New Delhi	14:20	Jaynagar	15:40	Date Wise	Sat, Tue, Fri, Mon 29.10.24, 01 & 04.11.24
04051	Jaynagar	18:00	New Delhi	18:50	Date Wise	Sun, Wed, Sat, Tue 27, 30.10.24, 02 & 05.11.24
04054	New Delhi	14:20	Barauni Jn	11:00	Date Wise	Sun, Wed, Sat, Tue 27, 30.10.24, 02 & 05.11.24
04053	Barauni Jn	12:30	New Delhi	09:10	Date Wise	Mon, Thu, Sun, Wed 28, 31.10.24, 03 & 06.11.24
02250	New Delhi	23:55	Patna Jn	16:40	Weekly	Thursday on 31.10.24
02249	Patna Jn	17:50	New Delhi	11:00	Weekly	Friday on 01.11.24
04075	New Delhi	23:45	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	11:40	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Sunday Upto 17.11.24
04076	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	21:20	New Delhi	09:30	Bi-weekly	Thursday, Monday Upto 18.11.24
04498	Anand Vihar Terminal	19:30	Ballia	13:30	Weekly	Sunday Upto 24.11.24
04497	Ballia	18:40	Anand Vihar Terminal	14:25	Weekly	Monday Upto 25.11.24
04022	Anand Vihar Terminal	11:40	Sitamarhi	15:45	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Friday Upto 29.11.24
04021	Sitamarhi	18:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	18:05	Bi-weekly	Thursday, Saturday Upto 30.11.24
04032	Anand Vihar Terminal	05:15	Saharsa Jn	10:30	5 days a week	Mon, Tue, Thu, Sat, Sun Upto 30.11.24
04031	Saharsa Jn	13:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	16:10	5 days a week	Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri, Sun Upto 01.12.24
04624	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	23:45	Varanasi Jn	23:55	Weekly	Sunday Upto 17.11.24
04623	Varanasi Jn	05:30	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	11:25	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 19.11.24
04080	Delhi Jn	19:30	Varanasi Jn	09:45	Tri-Weekly	Monday, Tuesday, Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04079	Varanasi Jn	18:25	Delhi Jn	08:50	Tri-Weekly	Tuesday, Friday, Sunday Upto 17.11.24
04530	Bhatinda Jn	20:50	Varanasi Jn	17:30	Bi-weekly	Monday, Friday Upto 15.11.24
04529	Varanasi Jn	20:40	Bhatinda Jn	17:00	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04096	Anand Vihar Terminal	09:00	Ayodhya Cantt	22:00	Tri-Weekly	Monday, Wednesday, Friday Upto 18.11.24
04095	Ayodhya Cantt	09:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	22:30	Tri-Weekly	Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday Upto 19.11.24
04518	Chandigarh	23:15	Gorakhpur	18:20	Weekly	Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04517	Gorakhpur	22:05	Chandigarh	14:10	Weekly	Friday Upto 15.11.24
04060	Anand Vihar Terminal	10:30	Jaynagar	15:15	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Friday Upto 15.11.24
04059	Jaynagar	17:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	19:55	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04068	Delhi Jn	19:30	Darbhanga Jn	16:30	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Friday Upto 15.11.24
04067	Darbhanga Jn	18:00	Delhi Jn	16:35	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04044	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:15	Gorakhpur	14:00	Bi-weekly	Saturday, Tuesday Upto 26.11.24
04043	Gorakhpur	17:25	Anand Vihar Terminal	10:40	Bi-weekly	Sunday, Wednesday 27.10.24 to 27.11.24
04217	Varanasi Jn	06:25	Lucknow Jn	11:45	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 22.11.24
04218	Lucknow Jn	16:30	Varanasi Jn	21:50	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 22.11.24
04010	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:45	Jogbani	05:20	Weekly	Tuesday 29.10.24 to 12.11.24
04009	Jogbani	09:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	16:05	Weekly	Thursday 31.10.24 to 14.11.24
04678	Firozpur Cantt Jn	13:25	Patna Jn	17:00	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 13.11.24
04677	Patna Jn	18:45	Firozpur Cantt Jn	22:40	Weekly	Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04211	Varanasi Jn	14:50	Chandigarh	07:45	Weekly	Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04212	Chandigarh	09:30	Varanasi Jn	01:20	Weekly	Sunday 27.10.24 to 17.11.24
04553	Saharanpur	04:40	Ambala Cant Jn	06:45	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 30.11.24
04554	Ambala Cant Jn	20:20	Saharanpur	22:30	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 30.11.24
04682	Jammu Tawi	23:20	Kolkata	13:00	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 14.11.24
04681	Kolkata	23:45	Jammu Tawi	12:30	Weekly	Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04078	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:55	Patna Jn	16:25	Weekly	Monday Upto 18.11.24
04077	Patna Jn	17:50	Anand Vihar Terminal	11:00	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 19.11.24
04646	Jammu Tawi	05:45	Barauni Jn	12:10	Weekly	Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04645	Barauni Jn	15:15	Jammu Tawi	22:30	Weekly	Friday Upto 15.11.24
04038	Delhi Jn	19:10	Azamgarh	11:30	Weekly	Sunday Upto 17.11.24
04037	Azamgarh	13:30	Delhi Jn	06:10	Weekly	Monday 28.10.24 to 18.11.24
04312	Haridwar Jn	12:30	Howrah Jn	17:10	Weekly	Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04311	Howrah Jn	19:00	Haridwar Jn	23:30	Weekly	Friday Upto 15.11.24
04314	Haridwar Jn	12:30	Muzaffarpur Jn	07:30	Weekly	Friday Upto 15.11.24
04313	Muzaffarpur Jn	09:00	Haridwar Jn	05:30	Weekly	Saturday Upto 16.11.24
04058	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:15	Muzaffarpur Jn	21:15	Bi-weekly	Monday, Thursday Upto 14.11.24
04057	Muzaffarpur Jn	23:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:30	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Friday Upto 15.11.24
04062	Anand Vihar Terminal	09:00	Barauni Jn	06:30	Weekly	Sunday Upto 17.11.24
04061	Barauni Jn	08:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	10:10	Weekly	Monday Upto 18.11.24
02246	Hazrat Nizamuddin	23:55	Patna Jn	16:40	Bi-weekly	Monday, Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
02245	Patna Jn	17:50	Hazrat Nizamuddin	10:50	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Thursday Upto 28.11.24
04526	Sirhind Jn	11:25	Saharsa Jn	17:00	Weekly	Monday Upto 18.11.24
04525	Saharsa Jn	19:15	Ambala Cantt Jn	22:20	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 19.11.24
04006	Delhi Jn	23:05	Jaynagar	23:45	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Friday Upto 26.11.24
04005	Jaynagar	01:30	Delhi Jn	01:30	Bi-weekly	Thursday, Sunday Upto 28.11.24
04048	Anand Vihar Terminal	15:20	Katihar Jn	15:00	Bi-weekly	Tuesday, Friday Upto 26.11.24
04047	Katihar Jn	18:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	17:50	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Saturday Upto 27.11.24
04070	New Delhi	00:20	Rajgir	21:00	Bi-weekly	Saturday, Tuesday Upto 30.11.24
04069	Rajgir	22:50	New Delhi	23:10	Bi-weekly	Sunday, Wednesday Upto 30.11.24
02262	New Delhi	00:20	Darbhanga Jn	21:15	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Sunday Upto 27.11.24
02261	Darbhanga Jn	23:20	New Delhi	20:15	Bi-weekly	Wednesday, Sunday Upto 27.11.24
04608	Jammu Tawi	20:20	Howrah Jn	13:20	Date Wise	Wednesday & Monday 30.10.24 & 04.11.24
04607	Howrah Jn	23:45	Jammu Tawi	15:20	Date Wise	Friday & Wednesday 01.11.24 & 06.11.24
04680	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	18:40	Kamakhya	21:00	Date Wise	Monday & Saturday 28.10.24 & 02.11.24
04679	Kamakhya	06:00	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	06:20	Date Wise	Thursday & Tuesday 31.10.24 & 05.11.24
04662	Amritsar Jn.	20:10	Saharsa	05:00	Date Wise	Tuesday & Sunday 29.10.24 & 03.11.24
04661	Saharsa	10:00	Amritsar Jn.	18:20	Date Wise	Thursday & Tuesday 31.10.24 & 05.11.24
05001	Gorakhpur Jn.	19:30	Delhi Jn.	13:15	Weekly	Sunday 27.10.24 to 10.11.24
05002	Delhi Jn.	15:15	Gorakhpur Jn.	09:55	Weekly	Monday 28.10.24 to 11.11.24
05111	Chhapra Jn.	14:00	New Delhi	11:50	Weekly	Monday 28.10.24 to 11.11.24
05112	New Delhi	12:50	Chhapra Jn.	11:30	Weekly	Tuesday 29.10.24 to 12.11.24

LIST OF FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS PASSING THROUGH NORTHERN RAILWAY NETWORK

03575	Asansol Jn	10:15	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:05	Weekly	Friday Upto 29.11.24
03576	Anand Vihar Terminal	10:15	Asansol Jn	10:20	Weekly	Saturday Upto 30.11.24
03435	Malda Town	09:30	Anand Vihar Terminal	14:10	Weekly	Monday Upto 25.11.24
03436	Anand Vihar Terminal	15:45	Malda Town	23:30	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 26.11.24
03255	Patna Jn	22:20	Anand Vihar Terminal	15:00	Bi-weekly	Sunday, Thursday Upto 14.11.24
03256	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:20	Patna Jn	17:20	Bi-weekly	Monday, Friday Upto 15.11.24
02391	Patna Jn	22:20	Anand Vihar Terminal	15:00	Weekly	Saturday Upto 15.11.24
02392	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:20	Patna Jn	17:20	Weekly	Sunday Upto 10.11.24
03257	Danapur	07:30	Anand Vihar Terminal	00:30	Weekly	Sunday Upto 10.11.24
03258	Anand Vihar Terminal	05:00	Danapur	20:45	Weekly	Monday Upto 11.11.24
05219	Muzaffarpur Jn	13:30	Anand Vihar Terminal	06:00	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 31.12.24
05220	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:00	Muzaffarpur Jn	00:45	Daily	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun Upto 01.01.25
05109	Chhapra	17:45	Anand Vihar Terminal	11:50	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
05110	Anand Vihar Terminal	12:55	Chhapra	06:45	Weekly	Thursday Upto 28.11.24
05023	Gorakhpur	21:15	Anand Vihar Terminal	13:15	Weekly	Sunday Upto 24.11.24
05024	Anand Vihar Terminal	15:15	Gorakhpur	04:45	Weekly	Monday Upto 25.11.24
05301	Mau Jn	04:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	20:30	Weekly	Thursday Upto 28.11.24
05302	Anand Vihar Terminal	00:25	Mau Jn	17:45	Weekly	Friday Upto 29.11.24
05005	Gorakhpur	14:40	Amritsar Jn	09:30	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
05006	Amritsar Jn	12:45	Gorakhpur	08:50	Weekly	Thursday Upto 28.11.24
05049	Chhapra	09:55	Amritsar Jn	09:30	Weekly	Friday Upto 29.11.24
05050	Amritsar Jn	12:45	Chhapra	14:00	Weekly	Saturday Upto 30.11.24
02525	Kamakhya	22:45	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:50	Weekly	Friday Upto 29.11.24
02526	Anand Vihar Terminal	17:20	Kamakhya	03:40	Weekly	Sunday Upto 01.12.24
05671	Guwahati	15:00	Anand Vihar Terminal	08:50	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
05672	Anand Vihar Terminal	23:45	Guwahati	14:15	Weekly	Friday Upto 29.11.24
05734	Katihar Jn	11:40	Amritsar Jn	00:10	Weekly	Thursday Upto 28.11.24
05733	Amritsar Jn	04:25	Katihar Jn	15:00	Weekly	Saturday Upto 30.11.24
03413	Malda Town	07:10	New Delhi	07:30	Bi-weekly	Thursday, Sunday Upto 28.11.24
03414	New Delhi	10:30	Malda Town	07:55	Bi-weekly	Friday, Monday Upto 29.11.24
03483	Bhagalpur	11:00	New Delhi	07:10	Bi-weekly	Saturday, Tuesday Upto 30.11.24
03484	New Delhi	10:30	Bhagalpur	04:10	Bi-weekly	Sunday, Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
05565	Saharsa Jn	19:30	Sirhind Jn	00:05	Weekly	Thursday 14.11.24 to 26.12.24
05566	Sirhind Jn	02:00	Saharsa Jn	09:45	Weekly	Saturday 16.11.24 to 28.12.24

03107	Sealdah	00:10	Lucknow Jn	00:10	Weekly	Saturday Upto 30.11.24
03108	Lucknow Jn	01:40	Sealdah	23:50	Weekly	Sunday Upto 01.12.24
09075	Mumbai Central (Via Bareilly)	11:00	Kathgodam	14:30	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 25.12.24
09076	Kathgodam (Via Bareilly)	17:30	Mumbai Central	20:55	Weekly	Thursday Upto 26.12.24
07363	Hubballi Jn	20:30	Yog Nagari Rishikesh	23:30	Weekly	Monday Upto 04.11.24
07364	Yog Nagari Rishikesh	06:15	Hubballi Jn	06:30	Weekly	Thursday Upto 07.12.24
09657	Daurai (via Barabanki Jn)	15:00	Barhni	13:25	Weekly	Saturday Upto 16.11.24
09658	Barhni (via Barabanki Jn)	19:15	Daurai	19:20	Weekly	Sunday Upto 17.11.24
03423	Bhagalpur	13:55	Haridwar Jn	17:55	Weekly	Monday Upto 25.11.24
03424	Haridwar Jn	19:55	Bhagalpur	21:20	Weekly	Tuesday Upto 26.11.24
05736	Katihar Jn	21:00	Amritsar Jn	09:45	Weekly	Wednesday Upto 27.11.24
05735	Amritsar Jn	13:25	Katihar Jn	23:45	Weekly	

INDIA LOOK FOR CONSISTENCY FROM BATTERS TO SEAL SERIES

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

India will seek a better performance from batters in their quest to seal the series when they face New Zealand in the second women's ODI here on Sunday.

Even though India won the first match comfortably by 59 runs, batters squandered starts as their innings were littered with multiple 30s and 40s.

The hosts would want a change of script in this match, and skipper Smriti Mandhana will have to lead the charge, which in the last match was done by debutant Tejal Hasabnis.

The elegant left-hander got out for eight in the opening match, continuing her lean run over the last month or so. She can fall back upon the memories of a fine run against South Africa earlier this July when she cracked runs for fun, including two big hundreds.

Along with Mandhana's form, the Indian camp will also keep an eye on the fitness of regular skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who missed the previous match with an unspecified niggle.

On the bowling front, India will be delighted with debutant pacer Saima Thakor's impressive performance the other night, along with left-arm spinner Radha Yadav's return to wicket-taking



form in this format.

On the other hand, New Zealand's ambition to square the series received a

severe blow as talismanic all-rounder Amelia Kerr was ruled out of the series with a left quadriceps muscle tear that

she sustained in the first match. Kerr, who will return home on Sunday, will require approximately three weeks to recover from her Grade One injury. "We're really gutted for Melie," said White Ferns head coach Ben Sawyer. "We know how disappointed she is to not be able to play these games. Everyone knows how much of an integral part of this team Melie is so we'll certainly miss her but we're wishing her a speedy recovery," said Sawyer. Kerr was the standout performer for New Zealand in the first ODI with a four-wicket haul. She will not be replaced in the squad with the final game of the series to be played in three days' time.

TEAMS (FROM):

INDIA: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, D. Hemalatha, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Yastika Bhatia, Uma Chetry, Sayali Satgare, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh, Tejal Hasabnis, Saima Thakor, Priya Mishra, Radha Yadav, Shreyanka Patil.
NEW ZEALAND: Sophie Devine (c), Suzie Bates, Eden Carson, Lauren Down, Izzy Gaze, Maddy Green, Brooke Halliday, Polly Inglis, Fran Jonas, Jess Kerr, Amelia Kerr, Molly Penfold, Georgia Plimmer, Hannah Rowe, Lea Tahuu.



Ali and Khan lead Pakistan to Nine wicket win, clinching series against England

AP ■ RAWALPINDI

Spinners Noman Ali and Sajid Khan suppressed England's batting attack inside three days and earned Pakistan a long-awaited and series-clinching nine-wicket win in the third and final Test on Saturday.

The 38-year-old left-arm spinner Ali and off-spinner Khan, 31, had grabbed all 20 wickets on a recycled second Test pitch to level the series last week and yet again clipped the batters on an engineered dry surface by sharing 19 wickets as England was dismissed for 112 on Day 3.

It was England's lowest innings total in Pakistan, eclipsing its previous score of 130 all out in Lahore in 1987.

Pakistan, which got a meaningful 77-run first innings lead, reached 37-1 at the stroke of lunch to notch its first home series win since 2021 when it beat South Africa 2-0.

Skipper Shan Masood (23 not out), who lost six successive test matches as captain before England got beaten in the second test, sealed the win with a six over long-off against Shoaib Bashir after smashing four successive boundaries to Jack Leach.

"It's special," Masood said. "The first win came after a long time and it was backed up by a series win ... it's about character. To be here and

standing as the winning team, it's the most special thing for us." Leach grabbed the only wicket to fall when he successfully went for an lbw television referral against Saim Ayub, who made eight.

The win was a sweet revenge for the home team, which was knocked over by England 3-0 when it last toured Pakistan two years ago under the captaincy of Ben Stokes.

England's batting folded meekly against the spin duo for the second time around as Ali followed his three wickets in the first innings with 6-42 on a wicket which was dried out by industrial-sized giant fans and outdoor heaters.

Khan grabbed 4-69 to add to his first innings six-wicket haul as England batters couldn't negotiate the variable bounce and the turn Khan and Ali extracted of the pitch.

England won the first test by an innings and 47 runs before Pakistan succeeded in its ploy to reuse the same surface in Multan to counter England's aggressive batting and recalled both Ali and Khan for the remaining two test matches.

"Disappointing," said Stokes, who missed out on England's memorable win in the first test recovering from torn hamstring, but returned to lead the side in tougher conditions for his batters. "We got thrown some challenges over these last two games and weren't able to stand up to them, credit to

Pakistan." Resuming on a precarious 24-3, Joe Root (33) and Harry Brook (26) cut down the deficit to 11 runs before England lost wickets in cluster.

Brook got a thick edge when he tried to cut Ali and the left-arm spinner had Stokes lbw off an armed ball which the England captain awfully tried to leave. England was still trailing by two runs when Jamie Smith (3) charged down the wicket to Khan and had his off stump knocked over and England slipped to 6-75.

Khan then ended Root's grim resistance by finding the outside edge before England's tail folded quickly against the spin duo.

"The lads trained hard but when you get out in the middle it can be completely different," Stokes conceded. The 2-1 series win was Masood's first series win since he was appointed test captain last year, but lost six test matches in a row. Australia routed Pakistan 3-0 under Masood's leadership and Bangladesh recorded a stunning 2-0 win in Pakistan before England racked up record-breaking 823-7 decl. To hand Masood another defeat.

"We'd like to dedicate this (series win) to the people of Pakistan, who've been through a lot," Masood said. "Hopefully this will put a smile on people's face, and hopefully we can have full houses.



India one win away from U17 Asian Cup qualification

PTI ■ CHONBURI (THAILAND)

India are one step away from qualifying for the AFC U17 Asian Cup in Saudi Arabia, needing a crucial victory over hosts Thailand in their final Group D match here on Sunday.

With two wins from two games, the Ishaq Ahmed-coached India Colts sit level on points with Thailand but trail on goal difference, making this clash a must-win to secure the top spot and an automatic berth in the tournament. Friday's hard-fought 1-0 victory over Turkmenistan kept India's hopes alive and showcased their resilience, with a well-timed strike from Ningthoukhongiam Rishi Singh clinching the game.

However, Thailand's massive 19-0 rout of Brunei Darussalam later that day sent a clear signal, pushing them to the top of the group with an astounding goal difference. India had earlier defeated Brunei 13-0, while Thailand opened their campaign with a solid 2-0 win over Turkmenistan.

The group stakes are high: a draw will see Thailand qualify as group leaders, while only a win will guarantee India's direct entry to the final tournament.

However, there is a rider. India could still make it through as one of the five best second-placed teams, depending on results from other groups. Head coach Ishaq Ahmed, however, is keeping the team focused on a single goal -- victory.

"For us, that's the way. We just

play for three points. We will give our best as we do in every match. Whatever we have left in us, we will put that on the line," said the Indian coach.

Rishi, who scored his second goal for India, adding to his header against Nepal in the SAFF U17 Championship semi-final, said, "I am very happy to score the winning goal and help the team. I'd like to thank my teammates and coaches. We are ready for the last game against Thailand." Backed by an ardent home crowd, Thailand pose a considerable challenge.

The hosts boast an unbeaten 2024 record, scoring 21 goals in the qualifiers and reaching the ASEAN Championship final, where they narrowly lost to Australia on penalties. They also defeated the UAE 4-2 in a pre-qualifier friendly, making them a formidable team to face.

"We are both very good sides. And when you beat these are the kind of teams playing a good brand of football, only then you deserve to qualify for the final tournament," Ahmed said.

"Our biggest challenge is to recover since there's just a day's gap between matches and we've played twice in the heat and humidity of 4 pm here.

"But yeah, we even saw Thailand, who have only played at 8 pm, had a couple of players getting cramps in the first game.

"So, I'm extremely proud of my boys with the strength they've shown and I have no complaints. Hopefully, we get three points and qualify tomorrow," concluded Ahmed.

Manika Batra upsets Szocs to enter quarterfinals of WTT Champions



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star Indian paddler Manika Batra shocked World No.14 Bernadette Szocs of Romania to enter the women singles quarterfinals of the WTT Champions event in Montpellier, France. The world No. 30 Indian won 3-1 (11-9 6-11 13-11 11-9) in 29 minutes against the eighth-seeded Szocs in a round of 16 match on Friday night. Batra, a multiple Commonwealth Games

medallist, saved two game points in the third game to keep her nose ahead and then sealed the tie in the next game, converting her second match point.

Batra now enjoys a 6-5 lead in the head-to-head record against Szocs. She had also defeated Szocs in India's 3-2 win over Romania in the pre-quarterfinals of the Paris Olympics.

Batra will next face China's Qian Tianyi on Saturday. World No. 21 Qian stunned top seed and compatriot Wang Yidi 3-0 (11-7 11-9 13-11) in another round of 16 match. Batra had defeated USA's Lily Zhang 3-0 (11-4 11-8 12-10) in the first round.

The other Indian in fray in women's singles, Sreeja Akula had lost 2-3 (11-6, 7-11, 1-11, 8-11) against world No. 13 Adriana Diaz of Puerto Rico in the first round.

McLaren loses appeal over Norris penalty as F1 title fight with Verstappen moves to Mexico City

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

Amid an unexpectedly tight championship battle between Max Verstappen and Lando Norris, their teams brought the fight to the Mexico City Grand Prix over an officiating dispute in last week's race.

McLaren lodged a complaint into the penalty Norris received last week at the United States Grand Prix - a step in trying to get it overturned and put three-time reigning world champion Verstappen back within his reach. The appeal was denied late Friday night.

Norris received a five-second penalty for passing Verstappen off the track late in the race in Austin, Texas. The two were racing for third at the time, and the penalty gave the final podium finish to Verstappen.

The change in position widened Verstappen's lead to 57 points headed into Sunday's race at Mexico City, and there are only five races remaining to decide the title. Norris has maintained he did nothing wrong and, along with

many other drivers, argued that Verstappen should have been penalized for his defensive driving.

"He did what he thought was right, and I did what I thought was right. I still disagree, and as a team, we disagree," Norris said.

"It is something I am sure we will discuss as it has been a big talking point since last weekend. A lot of other drivers didn't agree with it, teams didn't agree with it."

The same stewards who levied the penalty at the USGP heard the appeal via video conference late Friday afternoon.

Verstappen argued in Mexico that F1 has become over-policed - he was ordered to serve community service for swearing in a news conference in Singapore last month - and joked he needs to keep a copy of the rulebook inside his car to keep up with all the regulations.

"I think we are getting to a stage where I always need the book in the car. If you look of course over the years, the book has grown quite a lot," Verstappen said. "It is definitely over-regulated."



But seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton seemed to side with Norris, claiming Verstappen has routinely received favorable treatment from the stewards.

"I mean, it's always been a gray area. That's why he's got away with it for so long," Hamilton said.

"They probably need to make some adjustments for sure. We do have inconsistencies weekend in, weekend out,

F1, that George Russell said a driver-only meeting was planned for Friday evening. Among the topics is the idea of hiring permanent stewards who regulate every grand prix on the F1 schedule, the new crackdown on cursing, and transparency over where monetary fines go when collected by the FIA.

Russell also received a five-second penalty in Texas for forcing Valtteri Bottas wide, which he isn't fighting. "I thought my penalty was harsh, but probably correct," Russell said. "Looking at Lando's, I think that was probably correct as well, but Max should probably have got a penalty for running off the track."

Russell is a director of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association and said the drivers had agreed to meet privately following their regularly scheduled briefing. "Between us, we'll talk with the FIA and understand their viewpoint first," Russell said.

"And then we can judge. At the end of the day, the stewards are doing the best job they can. They're trying their hardest,

and they do have a set of guidelines which they follow. We've spoken about consistency in the past, the only way you can have consistency is if you have the same stewards at every single race weekend.

"And at the moment, they are very experienced, but they are here as almost volunteers," he continued.

"It is not a professionally paid job, and if you look at football as an example, even though there is still controversy, a referee, they are professionals and that is their full-time job." He said financial fines levied against drivers and teams should go to fund permanent stewards. "Collectively, from the drivers and the GPDA, we have asked about the financial fines and where they are going. We have been asking for a bit of transparency on this front," Russell said.

"It does seem a little bit ridiculous that if a driver gets a 50 grand fine for walking over a race track, but if that 50 grand fine is going towards financing the best stewards in the world, maybe we won't be so upset about it."

Inter Miami beats Atlanta United 2-1 in Messi's MLS playoff debut

AP ■ FORT LAUDERDALE (US)

Lionel Messi had chances at goals late and time again, only to keep being denied. Turns out, all he needed to do was deliver the right pass at the right time.

Jordi Alba turned a pass from Messi into the go-ahead goal in the 60th minute, Luis Suarez also scored and Inter Miami beat Atlanta United 2-1 on Friday night in the opening game of a best-of-three first round Major League Soccer playoff series. It was not the easiest of openers for the Supporters Shield winners, the No. 1 overall seed in the MLS Cup playoffs - a team that set a league record with 74 points in the regular season, 34 points ahead of wild-card Atlanta in the standings. Saba Lobjanidze scored for Atlanta, which got eight saves from goalkeeper Brad Guzan. Game 2

will be November 2 at Atlanta - the last road game of the season, no matter what, for Inter Miami. Game 3, if necessary, will be November 9 in Fort Lauderdale.

"It's going to be difficult for us," Inter Miami coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino said.

"It's going to be difficult as this rival has been throughout the season."

Inter Miami's first-ever home playoff game and Messi's MLS playoff debut was sold out - Messi games almost always are, everywhere in the world - and MLS even had a camera isolated on him throughout the match, streaming that view on TikTok. There were plans to also show the match live on a massive screen in New York's Times Square; that ended up getting called off Apple will schedule a viewing of another match there. Atlanta was the only team that beat



Inter Miami when Messi was in the lineup this season, and it was almost like the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner - and finalist for MLS MVP honours - knew it wouldn't be easy.

"It gets settled on the field," Messi said in an interview taped before the playoffs, one that MLS teased on social media and said will be distributed on its Season Pass platform. "Anything can happen in a match."

And for 60 minutes, the scoreboard said these teams were even. Suarez scored with the match barely a minute old, and Messi had three high-quality chances later in the half.

Messi's left foot nearly made it 2-0 after six minutes; Guzan had to sprawl to his right to barely deflect the shot away. Messi found a bit of space and fired again in the 26th

minute; this time, Guzan punched it over the crossbar. And in the 29th minute, it wasn't Guzan that denied Messi - it was the post. The rebound came to Inter Miami's Marcelo Weigandt and his shot got punched away by Guzan.

If not for Guzan, it could have been 2-0, 3-0, maybe even 4-0 at that point.

Instead, it was 1-1 at intermission. Lobjanidze got behind the defense and beat Drake Callender from close range in the 39th minute, and Atlanta - which won at Chase Stadium in May - was all square going into the second half.

"We were frustrated," Martino said. In the 52nd minute, Messi's direct kick from 25 yards nearly gave Inter Miami the lead again but curled just wide of the post to Guzan's left. The breakthrough came about eight minutes later, with Messi getting

lifted into the air by Alba in celebration after the goal.

"We've got to keep our heads up and we've got to go again," Guzan said.

"We've had our backs against the wall for quite some time now. And when our backs have been against the wall, we've found a way. Our backs are against the wall now. We've got to go into Game 2 and we've got to win."

The night took a bad turn for Inter Miami late. Ian Fray, a South Florida native who has already dealt with three ACL tears, left in the 90th minute after a non-contact injury left him unable to put any weight on his right leg. There was no immediate word on the severity of Fray's injury.

"It was a very good game ... But we're not feeling as satisfied as we could because of Ian," Martino said.



THE RUNWAY OF CREATIVITY

As the curtains closed on Lakme Fashion Week, the event celebrated innovation and artistry. With breathtaking collections from designers like Rohit Bal, Payal Singhal and KALKI, it showcased the essence of craftsmanship and sustainability. The grand finale, featuring Bal's Kaaynaat: A Bloom in the Universe, elegantly captured the spirit of nature, marking a spectacular conclusion to the season

BY SAKSHI PRIYA

Lakme Fashion Week, presented by the Fashion Design Council of India, celebrated the artistry and innovation of over 20 acclaimed designers this season. With collections that ranged from the whimsical to the sustainable, the event showcased the dynamic evolution of Indian fashion. Esteemed designers such as Rohit Bal, Monisha Jaising and Tarun Tahiliani took centre stage, each unveiling their unique visions. This year's week-long event not only highlighted the richness of contemporary Indian aesthetics but also served as a platform for emerging talent, making it a vibrant tapestry of creativity and elegance. The festivities kicked off with péro's enchanting collection, "HELLO péro," which marked its 15th anniversary in collaboration with Hello Kitty. This joyful presentation blended playful nostalgia with modern design, featuring vibrant textiles inspired by everyday delights like cherries and cupcakes, infused with the spirited essence of Japanese Harajuku street style. The show radiated with richly embroidered garments and a cheerful palette of pinks, reds, and yellows, exemplifying the artistry behind handcrafted textiles and the spirit of modern Indian fashion. Day 2 showcased the R|E|lan Circular Design Challenge during Sustainable Fashion Day, where seven visionary finalists presented their imaginative collections. The air buzzed with excitement as Ritwik Khanna's Rkive City captured the coveted title, embodying innovation and eco-consciousness. This initiative, in collaboration with the UN in India, underscored the fashion industry's commitment to sustainability while nurturing emerging talent, setting the stage for a greener, more creative future.



Photos: Pankaj Kumar



On Day 3, Payal Singhal celebrated 25 years of her illustrious label with the stunning "Tazhib" collection. The show, which opened with the enchanting Shriya Saran, featured a delightful mix of deconstructed Anarkalis, chic corset cholis, and ruffled lehengas crafted from luxurious fabrics like organza and velvet. Drawing inspiration from Mughal artistry, the collection sparkled with intricate embroidery and iridescent embellishments, perfectly marrying traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics, making it ideal for the

upcoming festive season. On Day 4, Monisha Jaising unveiled "The Sailing Bride 2.0," a breathtaking collection for the modern holiday bride. Shalini Passi opened the show in a stunning metallic kaftan that beautifully blended contemporary glamour with heritage detailing. Monisha's designs featured fluid drapes and playful co-ord sets in serene ocean hues, culminating in a show-stopping moment when Riddhima Kapoor dazzled in a Banarasi-inspired gown. This day also highlighted



Lakme Salon and designer Samant Chauhan's "Ethereal Bloom Collection," featuring Bollywood star Dia Mirza as the showstopper. This collection celebrated the modern Indian bride with its vibrant colours and elegant styles, setting new standards for bridal elegance. Day 4 of Lakme Fashion Week marked a grand closing with the highly anticipated launch of Tarun Tahiliani's luxury prêt line, OTT. This collection seamlessly fused traditional Indian aesthetics with contemporary design, showcasing a stunning array of reimagined classic garments, from

saris to trench coats. Aditi Rao Hydari captured the audience's attention in a corset-style bodysuit paired with a flowing wrap-around skirt, epitomising the essence of India Modern. This collaboration not only set a new standard for luxury but also redefined innovation in the fashion landscape. On the final day, Shradha Kapoor took to the runway as the showstopper for KALKI, unveiling their exquisite new collection, Mushk. Rooted in rich heritage, this couture line showcased intricate hand woven embroidery in soft hues like antique gold and dusky pink.



With elegant silhouettes that included embroidered jackets and modern lehengas, the collection beautifully merged tradition with contemporary style. Dazzling in a baby pink lehenga made from luxurious brocade velvet, adorned with intricate embellishments, Shradha expressed her connection to the collection, stating, "Walking for KALKI was amazing! The Mushk collection felt personal and connected me to my roots." This stunning line not only emphasised sustainable practices but also celebrated the artistry of skilled artisans, serving as a homage to timeless tradition. The House of Lakme Grand Finale brought the week to a breathtaking close with a spectacular showcase by the illustrious designer Rohit Bal, unveiling his collection Kaaynaat: A Bloom in the Universe. This captivating collection celebrated nature's beauty through flowing fabrics, intricate embroidery, and vibrant hues that mirrored the essence of blooming flowers. Lakme muse Ananya Panday graced the runway as the showstopper, embodying timeless elegance and ethereal grace. Rohit Bal described Kaaynaat as a journey through the wonders of nature, showcasing his artistry and vision. The grand finale marked a fitting conclusion to an unforgettable season, leaving an indelible impression of creativity, tradition, and elegance in the ever-evolving world of fashion. With its enchanting showcases and pioneering spirit, Lakme Fashion Week reaffirmed its position as a beacon of innovation and artistry in the Indian fashion landscape, inspiring the next generation of designers and fashion enthusiasts alike.



REDEFINING LUXURY INDIAN WEDDINGS

Bandhan at Shangri-la is a personalised wedding experience that blends tradition with modern elegance, says ABHI SINGHAL

A wedding is a momentous occasion that signifies the beginning of a lifelong journey together, and couples cherish this day as a beautiful memory forever. It is a celebration of love, joy and togetherness, not only for the couple but also for their families and loved ones. The choice of venue plays a crucial role in setting the tone for this special event, and Shangri-La Group has elevated luxury Indian weddings with the grand unveiling of "Bandhan by Shangri-La." This exclusive wedding service is designed to create breathtaking, culturally rich celebrations across the globe. The newly launched ballroom at Shangri-La Eros New Delhi adds a touch of grandeur to luxury weddings in India. This service seamlessly blends timeless traditions, stunning settings, and Shangri-La's renowned hospitality, promising couples an unforgettable journey of love and celebration.



Bandhan by Shangri-La elevates the art of weddings by offering meticulously curated experiences that combine elegance with cultural authenticity. Whether it's a vibrant Mehndi ceremony surrounded by hues of yellow, a meaningful Haldi with touches of green, or a Sangeet illuminated by dazzling disco lights, the service ensures every moment reflects the couple's unique love story. Each celebration impeccably integrates age-old rituals with modern sophistication. To make the wedding day truly memorable, Bandhan provides

personalised services, including a dedicated wedding specialist at each participating property to cater to every need, a celebratory gift from the hotel, and attractive room and suite rates for the wedding couple and their guests. Shangri-La also offers couples the opportunity to create lasting memories with luxury experiences at stunning destinations such as the vibrant allure of Istanbul, the coastal charm of Sri Lanka, and the majestic landscapes of Muscat. Bandhan's bespoke approach ensures that every celebration, whether a private beachside vow exchange or a grand ballroom extravaganza, is crafted to perfection. In addition to luxurious settings, Bandhan offers an exceptional culinary experience for guests, featuring gourmet cuisine that delights the senses. The service also provides opulent accommodation, ensuring a comfortable and lavish stay for all attendees.

DO PATTI THE HARSH TRUTH OF LIVES

Kriti Sanon's Do Patti voices the social issue of domestic violence as a romantic thriller, says ABHI SINGHAL

Kriti Sanon shines in her dual role debut in the captivating romantic thriller, Do Patti. Released on Netflix, this film marks several firsts: Sanon's inaugural double role and her venture into production under her banner, Shaheer Sheikh's cinematic debut, and Kajol's maiden appearance as a police officer. The film is directed by Shashanka Chaturvedi and stars Sanon as the twin sisters Saumya and Shailee, Sheikh as Dhruv Sood, Kajol as the enigmatic police officer Vidya "VJ" Jyothi and Shah Paandya as Shobhana Pundir, Saumya and Shailee's mother. The movie commences with the past, a troubled childhood life of two twin sisters, Saumya and Shailee (both played by Kriti Sanon). Both the twins have a lack of love for each other, converting it into hate. Saumya, the first twin falls in love with Dhruv but Shailee the other twin comes in as the antagonist in the film snatching away Saumya's love. The characters have aced their roles in acting and that adds life to the 127 minutes thriller. Kriti Sanon is a give star at both the double roles she has played beautifully with complete expressions which are horizons different. The flip between the two characters is smooth like slime and is Sanon's best performance by far. Shaheer playing Dhruv goes

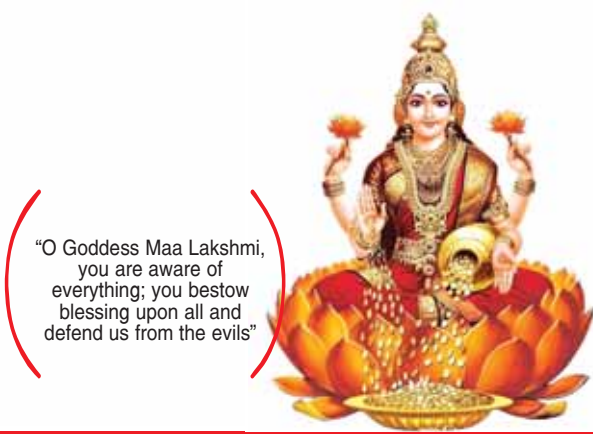


THE MAJOR PLOT UNVEILS ITSELF IN THE END OF THE FILM WITH A MESSAGE WHICH IS A VOICE FOR MANY WOMEN IN A COUNTRY LIKE INDIA.

completely in the element and doesn't make it look like his debut. His role as the aggressive husband to Saumya defines his acting skills. Kajol as the cop could have done better to overcome the flat performance. The film skillfully weaves a gripping social message of domestic violence, raised in the

movie and Shashanka Chaturvedi blends it perfectly with the film till the end. The major plot unveils itself in the end of the film with a message which is a voice for many women in a country like India. Visually, Do Patti is a treat, with picturesque locations like Mussoorie, Nainital, and Manali providing a stunning backdrop to the story. The film's skillful direction and captivating cinematography enhance the overall viewing experience. The film starts to build the plot from the very beginning, engulfing the minds of the viewers. At some point with its emotional songs the movie will also be successful in touching the emotional corner of your heart. The songs like Raanjhan by Parampara Tandon had already won hearts before the release and describes the emotion beautifully. Other songs like Akhiyaan De Kol by Shilpa Rao, Maiyya by Sachet Tandon and Parampara Tandon are a treat to the ears. The climax of the movie is the hotshot scene with the restored love between the twin sisters. It is the climax you might have imagined but unfolds in a different way. Do Patti is a compelling film that offers a unique blend of romance, suspense, and social commentary with exceptional performances, coupled with a gripping storyline.

Rating - 4/5



As we illuminate our homes with lights and laughter, let us also extend our warmth to those who may feel isolated. This Diwali, let us celebrate not only the joy of togetherness but also the resilience of the human spirit, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

DIWALI FESTIVAL THAT UNITES HEARTS AND HOMES

Where there is light, there is life." This sentiment resonates deeply during Diwali, a festival that holds unparalleled significance in the hearts of millions, especially in India. As homes begin to sparkle with twinkling lights and the scent of sweets fills the air, Diwali transforms into so much more than just a holiday. It becomes a celebration of life, love and togetherness, reuniting families eagerly awaiting the return of their loved ones. The festivities start with Dhanteras, the day dedicated to wealth and prosperity, when people purchase new items, often precious metals, to bring good fortune. This year, after much speculation and confusion about the dates, Diwali will be celebrated on the 31st of October. The thrill of homecoming resonates throughout the country, as people prepare to light up their homes and hearts. Each diya lit represents a moment of togetherness, a shared memory and the promise of brighter days ahead. Amidst the hustle and bustle, Diwali serves as a powerful reminder that the connections we cherish with family and friends illuminate our lives like nothing else. For many, Diwali is the one time in the year where homecoming is guaranteed. Students travel back from distant universities, workers journey long hours to be with their families and travel tickets are secured well in advance. In hostels, laughter and conversation fade as students depart, while homes come alive with the buzz of preparations, cleaning and decorating. The excitement of being together during this time makes the festival unforgettable.

DIWALI'S SPIRITUAL ESSENCE

Diwali, rooted in deep spiritual and religious traditions, marks Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana, symbolising the triumph of light over darkness. The festival also honours Goddess Lakshmi, the deity of wealth and Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles. Devotees seek their blessings for prosperity and joy. A key Diwali ritual is Lakshmi Puja, held on Amavasya, the new moon night. Families clean their homes, light diyas and offer prayers to welcome the Goddess. A clean, well-lit home is believed to attract her blessings for a prosperous year ahead.

A MONTH OF CLEANING AND SHOPPING

The excitement for Diwali builds up weeks, even months, in advance. The first step towards celebrating the festival is the traditional cleaning, known as Diwali safai. Families deep-clean their homes, shops, and offices, as it is believed that cleanliness is essential for welcoming Goddess Lakshmi. This act of cleaning is not just about tidying up; it symbolises getting rid of negativity and making space for positivity, peace and prosperity. From dusting the furniture to repainting the walls, no task is left undone. Many also take the time to paint their houses, creating a fresh and inviting environment.

Once the cleaning is complete, the shopping begins. Markets and shopping centres come alive with eager customers, browsing through colourful clothes, decorations, gifts, and sweets. The atmosphere is vibrant, filled with laughter and chatter, as families prepare to celebrate this joyous occasion together, ensuring that their homes are not just clean but also adorned with love and warmth. The spirit of Diwali resonates through the bustling crowds, as everyone eagerly gathers items to make their homes shine bright during this special festival.

CHANDNI CHOWK: THE HEART OF DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

As Diwali approaches, Delhi's famous Chandni Chowk becomes a lively and colourful marketplace filled with excitement. The narrow streets are bustling with people looking for lights and



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

decorations to brighten their homes for the festival of lights. The energy is visible, with every corner filled with the sounds of bargaining, laughter and excitement. Upon entering Chandni Chowk, visitors are greeted by rows of vendors showcasing beautifully painted diyas. Classic red diyas are available in sets of six for just ₹60, while glittery designs in sets of twelve cost ₹120. These diyas are essential for every home during Diwali, accompanied by colourful candles and rangoli stickers featuring auspicious symbols like "Shubh Laabh."

In Chandni Chowk, the lighting options are endless. You can find warm yellow lights that create a cosy atmosphere or bright, multi-colored LED strings. Prices start as low as ₹80 for simple string lights and can go up to ₹300 or more for elaborate pieces. Many shoppers enjoy video calling family members to show them different lighting options, making sure everyone is involved in the preparations, even if they're far away. This year, a unique find in Chandni Chowk is the water diya, which lights up when you pour water into it. These creative diyas are

not only beautiful but also practical, adding a modern touch to traditional Diwali decorations. Vendors promote these eco-friendly options, encouraging customers to use them year after year. Chandni Chowk is always busy, but during Diwali, it truly comes alive. Shops and corners burst with colours and lights. Vendors and shoppers alike share in the excitement. The crowded streets, lively sounds and delicious smells make it a unique, festive experience. This is what makes Diwali in Chandni Chowk so special - it's a time of togetherness and joy as families, friends and even strangers come together to celebrate the festival of lights. Each diya tells a story of hope and every smile shared adds to the festive spirit of Diwali.

THE ARTISTRY OF DIWALI

The streets of Chandni Chowk shimmer with vibrant lights and colours, but it was in Uttam Nagar that I discovered the heart and soul behind Diwali, the artisans whose hands craft the beloved diyas that illuminate homes each year. Among them

was Suresh, a warm-hearted artist who welcomed me into his place, where the air was rich with the earthy scent of clay, a scent that spoke of history and tradition. "My grandparents started making diyas from scratch," he shared, his eyes sparkling with pride and a hint of nostalgia. "We've kept this tradition alive and it feels like a true blessing that the diyas we create will light up homes. Each diya carries a piece of our heart and our family's legacy." His words resonated deeply, reminding me that these diyas are more than just decorations, they are symbols of love, hope and the warmth of family gatherings. As I watched Suresh skillfully shape each diya, I felt the passion and devotion radiating from his every move. He and his family create thousands of these beautiful diyas daily, pouring their hearts into each piece. For them, Diwali is not just about making money; it's about spreading joy and contributing to the happiness of families celebrating together. Witnessing their craftsmanship was a humbling experience. The red diyas, adorned with intricate designs, symbolise the very essence of Diwali. The warmth of their hospitality and the richness of their tradition illuminated my understanding of Diwali. This festival is not just about the lights; it's about the hearts and souls that create them, the love they pour into each diya and the joy they bring to countless homes filled with laughter and celebration. As Diwali approaches, let us honour artists like Suresh, whose selfless dedication ensures that the spirit of the festival shines brightly, lighting up not just their own homes but thousands of others, filling them with hope, love, and the promise of togetherness.

SPREADING LIGHT AND KINDNESS

With Diwali just around the corner, the vibrant festivities stir a mix of emotions. For many, it's a time of joy, family reunions and shared traditions. Yet, there are those among us who find themselves away from home, whether due to work commitments, distance or other circumstances. To those individuals, remember: it's okay to feel a sense of longing during this time. Your feelings are valid and you are not alone. While the lights may not shine in the familiar corners of your childhood home, the spirit of Diwali can still flicker brightly within your heart. This festival is about more than just being physically present; it's a celebration of love, hope and the connections we share, no matter the distance. You can still find joy in the little things, perhaps by lighting a diya in your own space, reaching out to loved ones through video calls or even creating new traditions with friends and colleagues who are nearby.

As we prepare for the celebrations, it's essential to remember the well-being of our furry companions, both at home and on the streets. The loud noises of fireworks can be distressing for pets and street animals alike. Let us ensure a safe Diwali for them by creating quiet spaces away from the sounds of firecrackers. A comforting environment can help ease their anxiety and allow them to feel secure during the festivities. For those who are able to gather with family and friends, let us not forget those who are unable to join in the celebrations. A simple gesture, a call, a message or even a small gift - can make a world of difference to someone feeling isolated this Diwali. As we light up our homes with lights and laughter, let's also shine on the hearts of those who may feel left out. This Diwali, let us embrace the spirit of kindness and generosity, extending our hearts to those in need, whether human or animal. It's a time to celebrate not just the joy of togetherness but also the resilience of the human spirit. Wishing you all a safe, joyful and love-filled Diwali!

THE FESTIVITIES START WITH DHANTERAS, THE DAY DEDICATED TO WEALTH AND PROSPERITY, WHEN PEOPLE PURCHASE NEW ITEMS, OFTEN PRECIOUS METALS, TO BRING GOOD FORTUNE. THIS YEAR, AFTER MUCH SPECULATION AND CONFUSION ABOUT THE DATES, DIWALI WILL BE CELEBRATED ON THE 31ST OF OCTOBER

AS WE PREPARE FOR THE CELEBRATIONS, IT'S ESSENTIAL TO REMEMBER THE WELL-BEING OF OUR FURRY COMPANIONS, BOTH AT HOME AND ON THE STREETS. THE LOUD NOISES OF FIREWORKS CAN BE DISTRESSING FOR PETS AND STREET ANIMALS ALIKE. LET US ENSURE A SAFE DIWALI FOR THEM BY CREATING QUIET SPACES AWAY FROM THE SOUNDS OF FIRECRACKERS



CELEBRATE INDIA'S DIVERSE CULINARY LANDSCAPE

A culinary destination for a fusion of traditional Indian flavours and modern innovation, is perfect for festive dining, says **SHARMILA CHAND**

IDYLL known for serving Regional Indian plates & craft cocktails in its most rustic, nostalgic & idyllic state, presents a unique dining concept that celebrates the essence of India's rich culinary heritage. The restaurant's menu, inspired by the diverse flavours of Rajasthan, Kashmir, Lucknow, Orissa, and Maharashtra, perfectly complements the festive spirit of Diwali. Each dish is a testament to the restaurant's commitment to honouring traditional recipes while infusing them with contemporary flair. The IDYLL experience goes beyond mere sustenance, offering a holistic sensory journey that resonates with the joyous atmosphere of Diwali. From the moment guests step in, they are enveloped in an intimate setting ideal for festive gatherings.

Talking to *Namokar Jain*, the co-owner of IDYLL, I got to understand the philosophy that drives their innovative approach to Indian cuisine, as he explains their logo and what it stands for. "The five circles in the logo are reminiscent of the rings of a tree trunk. They symbolise the depth and richness of our commitment to reconnecting with tradition through food and beverages. Just as the ageing process of a tree trunk is slow and steady, so is our approach to crafting the perfect dining experience." He continues to explain, "At the heart of IDYLL's appeal is a reflective insight into the depth of Indian cuisine. Drawing inspiration from the age-old technique of fermentation, the menu offers a range of gut-friendly delights that are perfect for the

THE IDYLL EXPERIENCE GOES BEYOND MERE SUSTENANCE, OFFERING A HOLISTIC SENSORY JOURNEY THAT RESONATES WITH THE JOYOUS ATMOSPHERE OF DIWALI. FROM THE MOMENT GUESTS STEP IN, THEY ARE ENVELOPED IN AN AMBIANCE THAT PAYS HOMAGE TO JAIPUR'S CELEBRATORY STRUCTURES

indulgent Diwali season. From tangy handcrafted pickles to complex kombuchas, every dish and drink is designed to please both the palate and the gut."

FESTIVE AMBIENCE

The restaurant's two-level layout provides versatile spaces for different types of Diwali celebrations. The lower level offers an intimate fine dining experience, while the upper floor houses a vibrant cocktail room. Here, an open circular island bar becomes the epicentre of festivity, serving meticulously crafted cocktails that incorporate regional Indian ingredients, perfectly complementing the celebratory mood of Diwali.

IDYLL's commitment to nostalgia and tradition makes it an excellent choice for multi-generational Diwali gatherings. The culinary team, led by expert chefs, has infused the menu with their childhood favourites, creating dishes that evoke fond memories while offering a fresh, modern twist. This blend of the familiar and the innovative ensures that there's something for every family member to enjoy during the Diwali feast.

TO CONCLUDE

IDYLL offers a dining experience that honours tradition while embracing the new. With its thoughtfully crafted menu, ambient setting, and commitment to creating memorable experiences, IDYLL stands ready to make your Diwali celebration in Bangalore truly extraordinary.

"It was our endeavour to create a space that would offer a sense of calm to our diners. We hope our IDYLL is that space - rustic and nostalgic, offering a holistic sensory experience! Echoing a story of tradition, innovation, and passion," quip *Namokar Jain* and *Jai Sharma*, the co-founders of the restaurant. (*Sharmila Chand is an Author, Columnist and independent Journalist, who writes on Food, Travel and Lifestyle*)



Porcini Mushrooms Risotto, and the classic *Spaghetti Alla Carbonara*. Each dish was a celebration of authentic Italian flavours, infused with *Chef Calvani's* unique twists that elevated the dining experience to new heights. One standout was the *Pistachio Crusted Tuna Fillet*, perfectly seared and complemented by a delicate sauce that highlighted the fish's natural flavours. The *Walnut and Gorgonzola Gnocchi* was another revelation, with its rich, creamy texture enveloping the soft pillows of pasta - truly a dish that lingered in my memory long after the meal. As I savoured each bite, it became evident that *Chef Calvani's* philosophy of using the finest ingredients

was at the heart of this dining experience. The attention to detail and the passion infused into every dish were palpable, making this not just a meal but a journey through the diverse landscapes of Italy. The exclusive pop-up at *Farmer's Basket* is not merely about dining; it is a celebration of Italian culture and culinary tradition. Reservations are highly recommended for those wishing to indulge in this exquisite gastronomic experience.

For an unforgettable evening that transports you to the heart of Italy, visit *Farmer's Basket at Pluck, Pullman New Delhi Aerocity*. Reserve your and prepare to embark on a

culinary adventure that showcases the very best of Italian cuisine. Strategically located near IGI Airport and the bustling business hubs of Gurgaon and New Delhi, Pullman New Delhi Aerocity stands as a stylish and modern destination. Combined together with Novotel Aerocity as a part of the same complex, the hotel boasts of 670 elegantly appointed rooms and suites, along with a state-of-the-art convention space featuring 13 meeting rooms and one of the largest ballrooms in the Delhi NCR region. With six innovative dining outlets, the hotel draws on international and local culinary specialties, ensuring that every meal is a celebration. Leisure facilities, including a spa, a fully-equipped health club, and an outdoor swimming pool, complete the experience, making it a true sanctuary for both business and leisure travellers.



A HEALTHY DIWALI WHOLESOME RECIPES FOR FESTIVE INDULGENCE

TEAM AGENDA

With Diwali approaching, it's the perfect time to enjoy homemade treats that are both delicious and healthier. This festive season, why not try recipes that bring a balance of taste and wellness to your table? Here are four simple and flavourful dishes that will brighten your celebrations and keep the indulgence guilt-free.

ALMOND DATE CHOCOLATE BALLS

(by Australian Almonds)

These Almond, Date and Cranberry Balls are a perfect energy-boosting snack. Easy to prepare, they're rich in nutrients, with a festive touch of dark chocolate and edible gold dust.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup whole blanched almonds
- 1 cup Medjool dates (seeds removed)
- 1/3 cup cranberries
- 3 tbsp cacao or Dutch cocoa powder
- ¼ cup desiccated coconut
- 3 tbsp almond butter

Method

- Blend almonds, dates, cranberries, cacao, coconut and almond butter in a food processor.
- Roll small portions into balls and coat with chopped or flaked almonds.
- Refrigerate before serving. For a special touch, drizzle melted dark chocolate and sprinkle it with gold dust.



SPECIAL COCONUT LADDOO

(by Bristhi Kumari, on behalf of Chilean Prunes)

A Diwali classic, these laddoos get a unique twist with prunes, adding a rich flavour to the traditional coconut and condensed milk combo.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp ghee
- 1 cup desiccated coconut
- ½ cup condensed milk
- 2 tsp milk
- ¼ tsp cardamom powder
- Prunes and chopped pistachios for garnish

Method

- Heat ghee in a pan, fry the coconut on low heat until lightly coloured.
- Add condensed milk, 2 tsp milk and cardamom powder, and mix well.
- Shape the mixture into small balls, placing a prune in the centre.
- Refrigerate for 30 minutes before serving.



PISTACHIO BAKLAVA CAKE

(by Chef Najmieh Batmanglij, on behalf of American Pistachio Growers)

This cake is a delightful fusion of Baklava and cake, combining the flavours of pistachio, cardamom, and rose water for a unique Diwali dessert.

Ingredients: Glaze

- 1 cup honey
- ¼ cup rose water
- Zest of 1 orange
- 2 tbsp fresh lime juice

Cake

- 3 eggs, separated
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 tsp cardamom powder
- 2 tsp rose water
- ½ cup milk (or almond milk) and ½ cup oil
- 1 cup flour (with 1½ tsp baking powder)
- 1½ cups ground pistachios
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and chopped (optional)

Garnish

- Pistachios, almonds and dried rose petals

Method

- Mix all glaze ingredients and set aside. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- Whisk egg yolks and sugar until creamy, add cardamom, rose water, milk, and oil. Fold in flour, pistachios, and apple.
- Whip egg whites to soft peaks and fold into the batter.
- Bake for 40-45 minutes, then pour half the glaze over the cake. Garnish with pistachios, almonds, and rose petals.



CARAMEL WALNUT KHEER (by Chile Walnuts)

A rich and creamy kheer with a caramel twist, this dish is the perfect blend of traditional and modern flavours, enhanced with crunchy Chilean walnuts.

Ingredients

- 7-8 Chilean walnuts (roughly broken) + 3-4 for garnish
- 3 tbsp rice (soaked for 2 hours)
- 1 litre milk (divided)
- 1/3 cup sugar and 1 tsp butter (optional)
- Water

Method

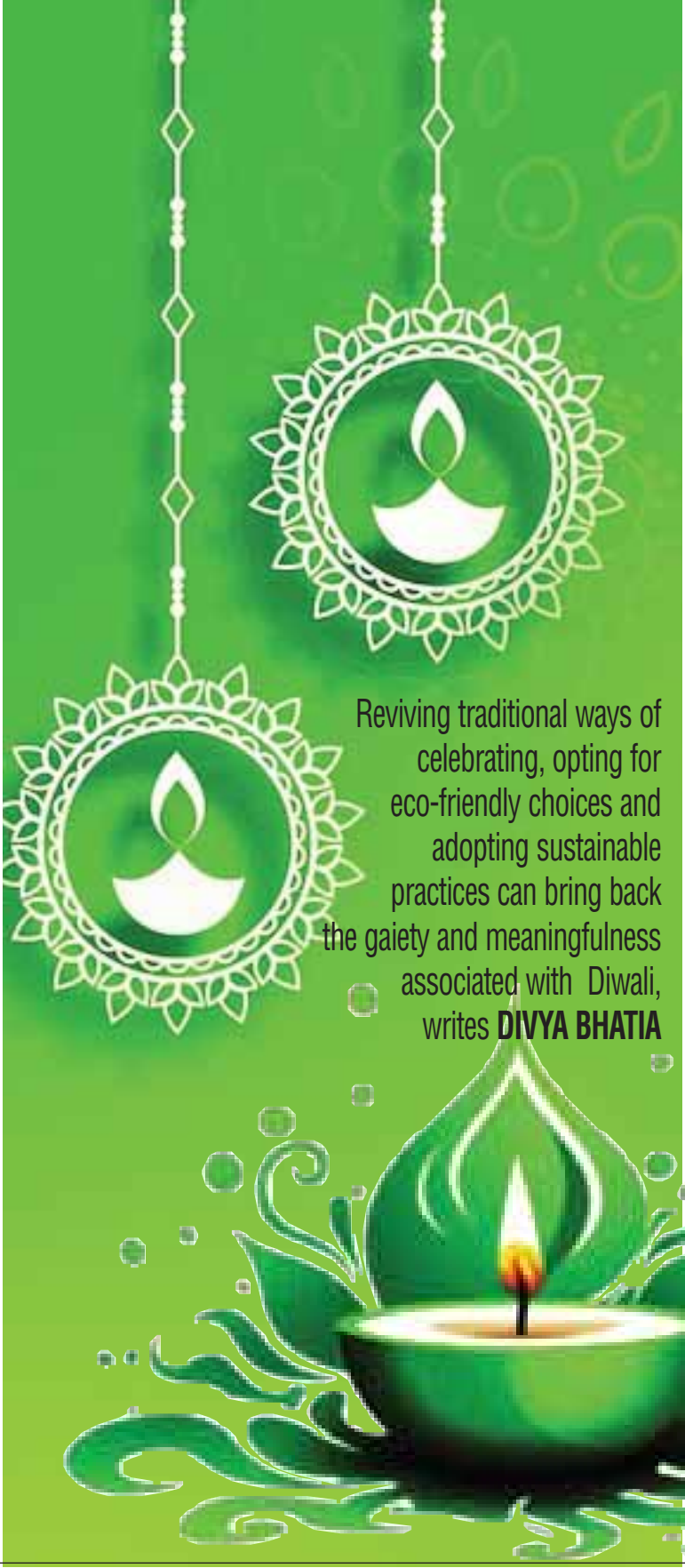
- Cook soaked rice with ½ cup milk in a pressure cooker for 2 whistles.
- For caramel, heat sugar with water until golden brown, then stir in butter (optional) and 2 tsp warm milk.
- Boil the remaining milk, add the cooked rice, and cook for 5 minutes. Stir in walnuts and caramel.
- Garnish with more walnuts and serve.



These festive recipes not only bring vibrant flavours to your Diwali celebrations but also add a healthy twist to traditional treats. By incorporating wholesome ingredients like almonds, prunes and walnuts, you can enjoy the best of both worlds - delicious sweets and mindful indulgence. So, light up your home with joy and fill your table with these delightful dishes that everyone will love, guilt-free. Wishing you a bright, flavourful and health-conscious Diwali!

WHEN YOU RECOGNISE THE FESTIVE AND THE STILL MOMENTS AS MOMENTS OF PRAYER, THEN YOU GRADUALLY REALISE THAT TO PRAY IS TO LIVE
— JHENRI NOUWEN

GO GREEN THIS DIWALI



Reviving traditional ways of celebrating, opting for eco-friendly choices and adopting sustainable practices can bring back the gaiety and meaningfulness associated with Diwali, writes **DIVYA BHATIA**

Diwali, the festival of lights, is one of the most anticipated and cherished celebrations in India. Traditionally, Diwali has been a time for family gatherings, sharing sweets, lighting oil lamps (diyas) and engaging in heartfelt festivities. However, in recent years, the essence of Diwali has been overshadowed by excessive noise, air pollution and a culture of pomp and show. Remember the days when Diwali was celebrated with genuine joy - families dressed in new clothes, shared homemade sweets, and children delighted in simple fireworks like chakris and phuljharis? But today, Diwali has become a commercial spectacle, where promotions overshadow tradition.

THE NEED FOR HEALTHIER CELEBRATION

During Diwali, health concerns often spike due to increased air pollution, skin allergies and burn injuries, largely from firecrackers and chemical-based rangoli colours. *Dr Vaibhav Kubal*, Consultant in Respiratory Medicine at Holy Family Hospital, notes, "Every year, we see a noticeable increase in hospital admissions, especially due to respiratory issues and firecracker-related injuries." Likewise, *Dr P Venkata Krishnan* from Artemis Hospitals advises that those with respiratory conditions stay indoors during peak pollution hours and use air purifiers. Advocating for animal safety, *Tarunjeet Rattan*, an animal welfare advocate, passionately encourages a cracker-free Diwali. "Firecrackers were never part of our tradition and are harmful to both animals and humans," she shares, urging people to comfort pets and welcome stray animals seeking shelter.

THE DIFFERENCE GREEN CRACKERS CAN MAKE

Green crackers offer a viable alternative to conventional firecrackers. Developed with a reduced chemical composition, these eco-friendly options are designed to produce less smoke, lower noise levels, and minimise harmful emissions. Unlike traditional crackers, which release high levels of pollutants such as carbon dioxide, sulphur oxides, and nitrogen oxides, green crackers contain non-toxic materials that



THE JOY CAME FROM TOGETHERNESS, NOT FIRECRACKERS OR EXTRAVAGANT DISPLAYS. TODAY, MANY SEND WHATSAPP MESSAGES INSTEAD OF VISITING LOVED ONES, AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES HAVE REPLACED PERSONAL CONNECTION. REVIVING OLD CUSTOMS LIKE LIGHTING DIYAS TOGETHER AND SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY CAN RESTORE THE TRUE SPIRIT OF DIWALI

produce a significantly smaller amount of air pollutants.

EMBRACING SUSTAINABLE GIFT-GIVING

Diwali is traditionally marked by gift exchanges as a gesture of goodwill. To help conserve the environment, opting for sustainable, eco-friendly gifts can make a big difference. Instead of plastic-wrapped sweets or mass-produced decorations, choose alternatives like reusable jute bags, handmade products, plantable stationery, bamboo decor, artisanal candles, or potted plants. *Pranay Pasricha*, Brand Head of Pakka Limited suggests opting for gifts that offer genuine value and support the environment, such as reusable cloth bags, stainless steel bottles, or items made from agri-residue. "Choosing sustainable gifts not only reduces waste but also reflects a deeper commitment to the planet," says Pasricha.

EAT HEALTHY THIS DIWALI

Diwali sweets once captured the festive spirit with a blend of wholesome, homemade ingredients and traditional flavours. Today, however, mass-produced treats often come laden with sugars and unhealthy additives, which can lead to

increased health risks. *Chef Arokiya Doss*, Head Chef at The Malabar Coast, highlights the importance of mindful ingredient choices, saying, "Festive food tempts us with indulgent flavours, but balancing these with wholesome options is entirely possible. Opting for whole grains, legumes, and fresh vegetables adds fibre and reduces calorie density." *Chef Aditi Dixit* from CYK Hospitalities recommends "sweets that bring both indulgence and nutrition, like ladoos or halwas made with jaggery or dates instead of refined sugar. Baked gujiyas filled with coconut and dry fruits keep the festive spirit alive with less oil, and ragi or millet-based barfis offer fibre and wholesome ingredients."

TAKE CARE OF MENTAL HEALTH

Diwali offers the comforting sense that some things remain unchanged. Talking about handling this mental burden, *Jasneet Kaur*, Co-Founder & CEO of Unfazed Therapy Solutions, shared, "While it's natural to miss loved ones, taking time to appreciate what we have can uplift our mood. Finding ways to celebrate meaningfully, even through community activities or volunteering, can restore a sense of purpose."



A Night of Dandiya and Festive Cheer

This Diwali, Rajasthan Club brought the festive spirit to life with Dandiya Raas: Rhymes of Diwali at Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, featuring music, dance and vibrant celebrations.

BY SAKSHI PRIYA

Diwali - the festival that brings people together in joy, light and celebration - came alive in the heart of Delhi this year in a spectacular way. A grand cultural program, *Dandiya Raas* (Rhymes of Diwali), was organised by the Rajasthan Club, one of the city's leading social and cultural organisations, at the *Major Dhyan Chand Stadium*, also known as the National Stadium at India Gate. This vibrant event attracted thousands of people, turning the stadium into a lively hub of music, dance and festive cheer. From the moment you entered the stadium, the festive spirit enveloped you. Strings of lights decorated every corner, casting a warm glow that seemed to reflect the happiness in everyone's faces. Families, friends and even complete strangers came together to celebrate the essence of Diwali. The sounds of laughter and conversation filled the air, but it was the music that truly set the mood. As captivating tunes played, with singer and artist *Rahul Vaidya* setting the stage ablaze, people couldn't help but move to the rhythm. The beauty of this event lay in its ability to bring everyone together - no matter where you were from or who you were with, you were part of the same celebration. *Dandiya Raas* is more than just a dance;



it's a cherished tradition. Dressed in colourful ethnic wear, people of all ages twirled and clashed their Dandiya sticks in perfect harmony. There was a certain joy in the simplicity of it all. The bright colours of lehengas and kurtas, the clatter of sticks, and the smiles on people's faces created an atmosphere that was truly unforgettable. It didn't matter if you were an expert or a first-timer; the excitement was infectious, and everyone found themselves joining in the fun. Beyond the dancing, the stadium was filled with the sights and smells of Diwali. Food stalls, with their tempting aromas of traditional sweets and savoury treats, were a popular spot throughout the night. Whether you were grabbing a plate of *hot jalebis* or a *bowl of spicy chaat*, the food was as much a part of the experience as the dancing. It added to the warmth of the evening, as people shared meals and stories, deepening the sense of community that Diwali always brings. What made this night truly magical was the feeling of unity. Diwali is a festival that symbolises the victory of light over darkness, and this event was a shining example of that. The energy of the crowd, the shared joy of dancing together, and the simple pleasure of being part of something bigger than yourself all came together to create an unforgettable Diwali experience. *Anurag*



Garg, the head of the Rajasthan Club, along with General Secretary *Sunil Prakash*, highlighted how the organisation, founded 56 years ago in 1968, has always aimed to carry forward cultural traditions while providing healthy entertainment to the community. As the night went on, the dancing only seemed to grow more lively. With every beat and every twirl, the crowd became more in sync, moving as one in celebration. It was a reminder of the beauty of togetherness and how, in moments like these, the true essence of Diwali shines through. Everyone left the event with full hearts, knowing that this night had captured the true spirit of the festival. This Diwali, Delhi didn't just light up with lamps and fireworks - it lit up with the smiles, laughter and joy of people coming together for a night of unforgettable celebration.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar



Dubai's Real Estate Boosting India's Tourism Industry This Diwali

BY TEAM AGENDA

As Dubai's real estate market reaches new heights, the benefits are spilling over to India's tourism sector. Real estate companies from Dubai are organising major events across various regions in India, leading to significant growth in both the hotel and tourism industries. A notable real estate event was hosted by *Tesla Properties*, a renowned Dubai-based company, at the *Royal Plaza Hotel* in *Connaught Place, Delhi*. Esteemed developers from Dubai showcased their projects and provided investors with comprehensive information on the advantages of investing in Dubai's real estate, which offers freehold ownership, excellent profitability, and attractive rental returns. Additionally, those residing in Dubai can obtain golden visas for their entire families. *Satish Balyan*, CEO of *Tesla Properties*, emphasised the company's commitment to contributing to India's development while residing in Dubai. "Delhi holds a special place in our hearts, which is why we choose it for our Dubai property events," he stated. He further explained that their team comprises citizens from various countries, whom they bring

to India to promote tourism and familiarise them with the local cuisine and culture. Interactions with Indian attendees help enhance the country's positive image globally. During the event, *Tesla Properties* experts highlighted how Indian investors can secure substantial returns by investing in Dubai. They addressed all real estate needs for individuals looking to start businesses, both residential and commercial. Moreover, the property management services offered ensure excellent appreciation in value. Investors benefit from a tax-free, crime-free, and pollution-free environment, coupled with a stable currency in Dubai. Various other developers, including the well-known Dubai-based firm *Binghatti*, also showcased their projects. *Tesla Properties* team members *Pershan* from Iran savored the rich flavours of Indian cuisine, while *Marta* from Poland was left craving more after trying the local dish "soya chaap" in *Connaught Place*. The events in Dubai's real estate sector are consistently providing profits to India's aviation, food, hotel, and tourism industries, contributing to the nation's goal of achieving a five trillion-dollar economy

