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BJP STRIVES HARD TO IMBIBE 'INTEGRAL HUMANISM'

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BOAT CAPSIZES IN CONGO, KILLING AT LEAST 50 PEOPLE: WITNESSES

MONEY 10

SAMSUNG WORKERS PROTEST CONTINUES TO 4TH WEEK

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## Marital rape not a crime, Centre tells Supreme Court

### Government says punitive measures in place

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Thursday filed an affidavit before the Supreme Court opposing petitions that have called for the criminalisation of marital rape in India.

The affidavit filed by the Union Home Ministry said that in a marriage, there is a continuing expectation to have reasonable sexual access from one's spouse. It clarified that such expectations do not entitle a husband to coerce his wife to have sex against her will.

However, it may be excessive and disproportionate to punish a man under anti-rape laws for such an act, the Centre said. The affidavit further highlighted that the parliament has already provided different remedies to protect a married woman's consent within marriage.

In the counter-affidavit filed through advocate AK Sharma, the Union Home Ministry backed the existing Indian rape law that carves out an exception for sexual relations between a husband and wife. The Central Government



asserted that the issue is more of a social than a legal one, which has a direct bearing on society in general. While so, even if 'marital rape' is to be criminalised, it is not up to the Supreme Court to do so, the Centre argued.

"The (issue) cannot be decided without proper consultation with all the stakeholders or taking the views of all the States into consideration... the act colloquially referred to as 'marital rape' ought to be illegal and criminalised. The Central Government asserts that a woman's consent is not

obliterated by marriage, and its violation should result in penal consequences. However, the consequences of such violations within marriage differ from those outside it," the affidavit stated.

It added that a breach of consent should be punished differently, depending on whether such an act occurs within or outside a marriage. These remedies include laws punishing cruelty to married women (as it was under Section 498A under the Indian Penal Code then), laws punishing acts against the

modesty of women, and remedies under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

The Bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud with Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is currently seized of the matter. Marital rape is excluded from the ambit of "rape" by way of Exception 2 to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). A similar provision is also present in the newly enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) which replaced the IPC on July 1 this year. In 2022, the

Delhi High Court delivered a split verdict on whether marital rape should be a criminal offence. The matter then reached the Supreme Court in September that year. "The sexual aspect is but one of many facets of the relationship between husband and wife, on which the bedrock of their marriage rests... Given the nature of the marital institution in our socio-legal milieu, if the legislature is of the view that, for preservation of the marital institution, the impugned Exception should be retained, it is submitted that it would not be appropriate for this Hon'ble Court to strike down the Exception," the latest affidavit added.

The counter-affidavit was filed in response to a batch of petitions that have called for the criminalisation of marital rape. The Centre criticised the petitioners' approach of treating the institution of marriage as a private institution, terming this view unidimensional. The case of a married woman and her own husband cannot be treated in the exact same manner as other cases, it said.

## West Asia war hits Sensex

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

An escalation in the West Asia conflict had a massive impact on the Indian market on Thursday. The Sensex tanked 1,769 points to slide to a three-week low on Thursday as a spiralling triggered selling in oil, banking and auto shares, wiping out Rs 9.78 lakh crore investor money in a single day.

The NSE Nifty slumped 546.80 points or 2.12 per cent to 25,250.10 with 48 of its constituents ending lower. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 5,579.35 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Falling for the fourth day, the BSE Sensex tumbled 1,769.19 points or 2.10 per cent to settle at 82,497.10, its lowest closing level since September 11. During the day, it plummeted 1,832.27 points or 2.17 per cent to 82,434.02. As many as 29 Sensex scrips closed in the red while only one stock ended in the green.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, Asian Paints, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Titan, Adani Ports and HDFC Bank were the major laggards. JSW Steel emerged as the only gainer. A total of 2,881 stocks declined while 1,107 advanced and 88 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies dropped by around Rs 9.78 lakh crore to Rs



## Israeli hits Hezbollah in southern Lebanon

BEIRUT: An Israeli airstrike on an apartment in central Beirut killed seven Hezbollah-affiliated civilian first responders. Israel has been pounding areas of the country where the militant group has a strong presence since late September, but has rarely struck in the heart of the capital.

There was no warning before the strike late Wednesday, which hit an apartment in central Beirut not far from the United Nations headquarters, the prime minister's office and

parliament. Hezbollah's civil defence unit said seven of its members were killed. The Lebanese Red Cross, meanwhile, said an Israeli strike wounded four of its paramedics and killed a Lebanese army soldier as they were evacuating wounded people from the south. It said the convoy near the village of Taybeh, which was accompanied by Lebanese troops, was targeted Thursday despite coordinating its movements with UN peacekeepers.

Continued on page 8

4,65,07,685.08 crore (USD 5.54 trillion). Continuous foreign fund outflows and rising crude oil prices dented investors' sentiment, analysts said.

"The domestic market took a sharp downturn following Iran's launch of ballistic missiles at Israel, sparking fears of retaliation and escalation in the war," Vinod Nair, Head of

Research, Geojit Financial Services said. "New SEBI regulations for the F&O segment have raised concerns about reduced trading volumes in the broader market. Lastly, with attractive valuations in China, FIIs have redirected their funds, adding pressure on Indian stocks," Nair added.

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## Delhi Police summons Elvish Yadav, Bharti

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Delhi Police has summoned YouTuber Elvish Yadav, comedian Bharti Singh and three others in an alleged app-based scam involving a fraud of Rs 500 crore, an officer said on Thursday. Police received over 500 complaints alleging that many social media influencers and YouTubers promoted the HIBOX mobile application on their pages and lured people into investing through the app, the officer added.

The main accused in the scam, Sivaram (30), a resident of Chennai, has been arrested, police said. As per the complaint, social media influencers and YouTubers including Saurav Joshi, Abhishek Malhan, Purav Jha, Elvish Yadav, Bharti Singh, Harsh Limbachiyia, Lakshay Choudhary, Adarsh Singh, Amit, and Dilraj Singh Rawat promoted the application and lured people into investing through the app.

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## Drug mastermind has Congress link, says BJP



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Tushar Goyal, the mastermind behind Delhi's biggest drug bust worth over Rs 5,640 crore allegedly has Congress connections. Sources in Delhi Police's Special Cell said that he admitted to having held office in the Congress's IT Cell.

Later, a war of words broke out between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress. The BJP claimed that the kingpin arrested in the case of seizure of drugs worth Rs 5,600 crore is the chairman of the Delhi Youth Congress RTI cell. It asked if the money was brought in for the October 5 Haryana elections while a claim refuted by the opposition party as baseless.

According to sources, Goyal claimed

during interrogation that he has been the chairman of the RTI cell of Delhi Pradesh Congress till 2022, Delhi Police sources said. Photos of the accused with many Congress leaders have also surfaced.

Delhi police special cell has arrested Goyal, the main accused following the recovery of more than 500 kg of cocaine and 40 kg of hydroponic marijuana worth over Rs 5,600 crore in a raid conducted in south Delhi on Wednesday.

Later, a war of words erupted between BJP and Congress on this issue. "Drugs worth Rs 5,600 crore have been recovered from Delhi. The main accused in this case is Tushar Goyal, who is the chief of the RTI cell of the Indian Youth Congress," BJP spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said addressing a press conference in the national capital on Thursday.

Trivedi sought explanation from the Congress, questioning if the party used drug money in its election campaign and if its association with Goyal extended to business as well. Was there an arrangement between the drug dealers and the Congress that they will be given a free run in Haryana if the party comes to power, he asked, alleging that the neighbouring state of Punjab is already in the grip of drugs.

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## Revolving door in Haryana, Tanwar back in Congress

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ MAHENDRAGARH (HARYANA)/ NEW DELHI

The high-voltage campaign for a cut throat finish in Haryana for the October 5 Assembly polls came to an end on Thursday evening. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) suffered a major blow as its senior leader and former Member of Parliament Ashok Tanwar, who was the party's candidate from Sirsa for the Lok Sabha elections a few months ago, re-joined Congress at a rally of Rahul Gandhi in Mahendragarh district in Haryana on Thursday.

Interestingly, shortly before joining the grand old party, the former Sirsa MP, who represented it as a Congress member, was campaigning for the BJP candidate in Safidon Assembly constituency. As Rahul Gandhi finished his speech, an announcement was made from the stage asking the audience to wait for a few minutes. To their surprise Tanwar walked on to the stage and greeted Rahul.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with former BJP leader Ashok Tanwar as the latter joins Congress during a public meeting ahead of Haryana Assembly elections, in Mahendragarh district PTI

Tanwar, a former Haryana Congress president, shook hands with Rahul and greeted senior party leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Tanwar, who was considered close to Rahul and had left the Congress in 2019 following differences with senior party leader former Hooda and in between he had his stint with Trinamool Congress (TMC) as well as Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

Leading the campaign for BJP Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Congress stands for the "guarantee of casteism,

communalism and nepotism". The PM exhorted people to vote for the BJP, saying it is important that they elect a government which strengthens India at a time when the entire world is looking at the country with hope and expectations.

In his last speech for the campaign in Haryana, Rahul said his party will not let the "hatred" being spread by the BJP on the basis of religion, language, and caste win and appealed to the people of Haryana to oust the ruling party in the Assembly polls. More than two crore voters are eligible to exercise

their franchise in Haryana for 90 assembly seats. The key parties in fray are BJP, Congress, AAP, Indian National Lok Da-Bahujan Samaj Party (INLD-BSP) and Jannayak Janta Party-Azad Samaj Party.

While BJP focused its election campaign on the works and performance of the "double-engine" government, while it targeted the Congress on reservation, corruption, appeasement and dynastic politics, Congress wooed by announcing seven guarantees, including the promises of a legal guarantee for MSP, a caste survey, and Rs 2,000 per month to women, if voted to power.

On the last day of campaigning, Congress's Rahul Gandhi and Bhupinder Singh Hooda, BJP's Yogi Adityanath and Nayab Singh Saini, JJP's Dushyant Chautala and INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala were among the prominent leaders who canvassed for their respective parties. AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal also campaigned in Haryana for his party.



## Delhi's traffic needs divine intervention

### Navratri begins, and so does road congestion

New roads, fancy flyovers, route expansion but the traffic situation in the national Capital remains horrific. Due to the exponential growth of vehicular population, or poor traffic management, commuters are spending more time in their vehicles, including both private and public. Traffic comes to a standstill when a 'VIP movement' takes place. Major roads such as those in Lutyens' Zone, Sardar Patel Marg, Dhaura Kuan, RTR, Mathura Road, Tilak Marg, Bahadur Shah Marg, have remained a traffic nightmare for the past three decades. The festive season sees the highest number of traffic jams in the national Capital. The Pioneer begins a campaign on the crisis that unfolds on the city roads with a deep dive into the traffic around the temples in the city on the first day of Navratri, and Durga Puja festivities.

BY RAJESH KUMAR

From Mehrauli-Badarpur Road to Vikas Marg and Jhandewalan, Najafgarh to Peeragarhi, commuters in Delhi had harrowing experiences during the peak hours on the first day of the Navratri festival in the national Capital. However, according to frequent road users, this traffic stagnation is a routine affair. Wrecked roads, potholes, breakdown of vehicles, high volume of traffic and poor maintenance of major stretches result in massive jams.

On Thursday, the first day of the Navratri festivities, heavy traffic exacerbated congestion on all roads leading to prominent temples

Jhandewalan, Kalkaji, Maa Katyani Devi mandir in the national capital. The situation worsens each year as according to experts, while road size and capacity remains the same, the number of vehicles has grown exponentially. The vehicle movement was also badly affected on Vikas Marg in the carriageway from Karkari Mor towards Preet Vihar and vice-versa, due to ongoing work being carried out by Delhi Jal Board (DJB) at Preet Vihar Red Light and Najafgarh Road and Old Pankha Road in both the carriageways due to ongoing work being carried out by DJB at Old Pankha Road. Commuters had a harrowing experience on GTK Road on



Photo: Ranjan Dima

both the carriageways from Jahangirpuri to Azadpur flyover as the entire traffic came to standstill for two-three hours due to heavy vehicles movement in

Azadpur Mandi. According to a traffic police advisory, traffic was affected on Maa Anandmai Marg in the carriageway from ESI Hospital towards Govind

Puri due to breakdown of a bus at Crown Plaza Red Light. Traffic was affected on Ring Road in the carriageway from DND towards Ashram Chowk due

to breakdown of a water tanker on Maharani Bagh Flyover. A loaded truck near Peeragarhi flyover broke down which led to massive jam on the Main Outer Ring Road in the carriageway from Madhuban Chowk towards Peeragarhi. Traffic was also affected on Rohtak Road in the carriageway from Nangloi towards Tikri Border and vice versa due to potholes and water logging. There was a traffic jam on the SSN Marg in the carriageway from Satbari towards Mehrauli due to drain work being carried out by civic agency. Commuters were advised to plan their journey accordingly. "Traffic remained affected on

Dwarka Palam Road in the carriageway from Palam Flyover towards IOC Red light due to breakdown of a bus on Palam flyover. Kindly plan your journey accordingly. Traffic was affected on Mathura Road in the carriageway from Badarpur towards Sarita Vihar due to breakdown of a truck near Aali Village", traffic police advisory stated. According to traffic police, breakdown of vehicles during peak hours on major roads is also an issue that leads to traffic jams. Roads leading to the Jhandewalan temple and Shri Adhya Katyayani Shaktipeeth temple witnessed heavy traffic flow on the first day of Navratri festival.

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# Police foil self-immolation bid by family from Pilibhit

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
Frustrated by the "apathy" of the Pilibhit police, a family of five, including two women, approached the Vidhan Bhawan in Lucknow, allegedly intending to self-immolate. ACP, Hazratganj, Abhinav Verma stated that the family came to Lucknow to petition the chief minister but were unsure of how to reach the CM's residence, which led them to the Vidhan Bhawan gate. The ACP confirmed that the family had included a statement in their application expressing their intention to commit self-immolation if their demands were not met. "A letter was found on them in which they stated that the Pilibhit police had not addressed their problems and that they would self-immolate if their demands were ignored," he said. Earlier, the family had gathered outside the Vidhan Bhawan with the apparent intention of self-immolation, but police intervened in time. On Thursday, five members from the same family arrived

from Pilibhit around 1 pm. Noticing their suspicious behaviour, the police team on duty detained them for questioning. After the interrogation, they were transferred to Hazratganj police for further questioning. The family claimed that influential villagers had been bullying and assaulting them, and that the police sided with the accused. The head of the family, from Jogithera village in Bisalpur, had come with his wife, two sons, and daughter, intending to self-immolate. They were stopped by constables Pancharam Yadav, Shatruijit Rai, and Sudha Singh, who were deployed for security outside the Vidhan Bhawan. In their application, they alleged that two villagers, Vipin and Arun Rana, had been harassing the entire family. They noted that their elder son had died as a result of this harassment, although the letter did not specify the circumstances surrounding his death. According to the victim's family, Vipin and Arun had invaded their home and assaulted them. A complaint was filed at

the Bisalpur police station, but the harassment continued. They claimed that the assailants later attacked the sister, stripping her and assaulting her, which led to injuries when she protested. Her elder brother was also assaulted and taken to the police station, where he was detained. The victim's family alleged that after the assault on September 8, the perpetrators pressured the brother to withdraw the complaint and demanded money. When the family refused to pay, they learned on September 10 that the brother had been released on bail. The next day, the body of the elder brother was found on the railway tracks. Although a complaint was filed with the police, no action was taken. The Hazratganj ACP clarified that the family had come to Lucknow with their grievances, stating, "They did not attempt self-immolation; this was only mentioned in their application. We are investigating the matter and are in contact with the local police."

# Delivery boys protest demanding enhanced security measures

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
The anger of delivery boys at an e-commerce company erupted on Thursday, two days after the murder of their colleague, Bharat Kumar Prajapati. The prime accused in the case, Gajanand, surrendered in a Barabanki court on Tuesday, evading the Lucknow police. Delivery boys were agitated over the murder of Bharat in the Chinhat area, expressing concerns for their safety. They were particularly surprised by the surrender of the prime accused and suggested there must be loopholes that allowed him to evade justice. Anger over Bharat's death fuelled their demands for the swift execution of the culprits. The protesters voiced their concerns for their safety, insisting that the company take necessary steps to protect them. They said that they face indecency, rudeness from cus-

tomers, quarrels, and even attacks while delivering goods, putting their lives at risk. The tragic incident involving their colleague Bharat heightened their resolve, with family members of the deceased joining the protest to amplify demands for proper safety arrangements to prevent other families from enduring similar pain. The protest halted parcel services, disrupting deliveries in Chinhat and surrounding areas. Company officials arrived at the scene to address the situation, and local police were informed about the unrest. Gajanand, who had been absconding since Bharat Kumar's murder, surrendered in a Barabanki court on Tuesday. He was also involved in a separate assault case registered at the Kursi police station in 2021. The court granted him bail, but he failed to submit the necessary surety and was subsequently sent to jail. Police have already arrested another suspect, Akash, in connection with the murder.

# Latouche Road Durga Puja to showcase Ramlila scenes

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
This year, the Latouche Road Durga Puja Pandal will showcase scenes from Ramlila. Niloy Sen from the Latouche Road Puja Sangsad Society (LRPSS) announced that they have committed to presenting a theme each year for the next 14 years, focusing on UNESCO's representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity found in India. "Last year, we highlighted the Chhau dance. This year, we will present Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana, at our venue, Priti Prangan near Shivaji Marg from October 8 to 13," he said. The most renowned Ramlilas are those from Ayodhya, Ramnagar, Varanasi, Vrindavan, Almora, Satna, and Madhubani, he added. The entire pandal will be transformed into a massive depiction of various events from the Ramayana as portrayed in Ramlila. "The interiors will feature 20-foot-high replicas of heritage buildings and arched welcome gates inspired by Ayodhya. The Durga idol will be adorned with Ramlila-style ornaments and dresses. There will also be live performances depicting scenes of Lord Ram performing rituals and seeking the blessings of Maa Durga to vanquish Ravana in Lanka," he said. "Mr Kaushik from Kolkata is coordinating the event, and most of the pandal construction has been completed, and final touches are currently underway. We invite all Lucknowites to witness this grand celebration from October 8 to 13," he added. Sen noted that they typically welcome 10,000 to 15,000



Preparations underway at the puja pandal

devotees daily at the pandal. "Located on Hewett Road, the pandal attracts large crowds, with visitors coming from all over to participate in the Durga Puja. We have been celebrating Durga Puja for 83 years, since its inception in 1942, making it the third oldest puja in Lucknow," he pointed out. **TOPOR MATA AT GOMTI NAGAR PUJA PANDAL**  
The Gomti Nagar Durga Puja will feature "Topor Mata" this year. Gautam Mitra from the puja committee explained that the topor, a traditional Bengali headdress worn during weddings, would adorn the idols from October 9 to 13. "Topor is a trending theme in Kolkata's Durga Puja this year. Organisers back home in Kolkata constantly introduce new elements, and we aim to do the same at our pandal," he said. The idol is being crafted by Ashish Pal from Durgapur at Talkatora. "The statue will be 11 feet tall, with the topor extending up to 1.5 feet and the 'chala' (decorative element at the back of the idol) reaching 14 feet in height. The topor will be golden, and the Goddess's

jewellery will also feature gold," he explained. "We will have various stalls and swings for children in the park where we set up our pandal. There will also be entertainment programmes over the four days, showcasing a variety of cultural performances. On October 8, we will host an Anandi Mela where Bengali households will sell home-made delicacies," he added. The varisjan (immersion) is scheduled for October 13. "We expect over 10,000 to 15,000 devotees on Shashti, with numbers increasing each day. This year marks our 36th year of celebrations," he stated. "The bhog will include khichdi made from moong dal, chechadi (mixed vegetable curry), bhaja (brinjal fritters), and kheer. A large number of devotees partake in the bhog on these auspicious days," he said. Ashish Pal, the sculptor of the idol, noted that he has been making Durga Puja idols for many years. "The idols are crafted from clay sourced from the river in Lucknow. We perform a puja for Lord Ganesha before starting the process," he explained.

# 10-year-old old saves younger sister from kidnapping

**Lucknow (PNS):** A ten-year-old girl saved her younger sister from a potential kidnapping and possible molestation in the Rahimabad police station area. She bravely intervened by confronting the kidnapper and promptly alerting her parents about the situation. The incident occurred on September 30, and the accused was arrested by a police team on Thursday. The accused was identified as Sunil of Jamoliya village. According to the complaint filed by the girls' father on October 1, at around 6:30 pm on September 30, his four-year-old daughter was playing outside their house when Sunil approached her. "He picked up the child, putting her on his lap, and began taking her away under the pretext of buying her toffee. My elder daughter, who is ten years old, sensed something was wrong and tried to rescue her sister from the accused, but he refused to let her go. She then ran home and alerted me, saying Sunil was taking her sister away. I immediately chased after him. When the accused saw me and other villagers approaching, he abandoned my daughter in a nearby field and fled," the complainant stated. He also said that on the morning of October 1, the accused's family members came to his house, mouthed expletives, and threatened to kill him.

# Government plans trade shows at divisional level

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
Building on the success of the UP International Trade Show-2024 (UPITS-2024), the Yogi Adityanath government is now gearing up to host similar trade shows at the divisional level. Initially, these events will be organised in five divisional headquarters, with plans to expand it to all divisional headquarters in the near future. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Rakesh Sachan and Principal Secretary (MSME) Alok Kumar shared this information with the media during a press conference held at Lok Bhavan on Thursday. The minister also expressed his gratitude to everyone involved in the successful organisation of the UP International Trade Show-2024. Sachan stated that the second edition of the UP International Trade Show exceeded all expectations and marked a new chapter in the trade and industrial development of Uttar Pradesh. "This edition has established new benchmarks compared to the first one held in 2023, positioning UPITS as one of the premier trade events in India. Chief Minister Yogi envisions organising similar trade shows in divisional headquarters as well, and officials have been

instructed to develop an action plan for this initiative," he said. Principal Secretary (MSME) Alok Kumar stated that the programme had two main objectives: first, to provide a world-class platform for small industries, and second, to introduce the world to Uttar Pradesh's crafts, cuisine, and culture. "While many Indian brands have already made their mark abroad, Uttar Pradesh lacks its own distinct brand. This programme aims to showcase our state. We are now focused on organising similar events at the divisional level. Although we may not attract a large number of international buyers, we anticipate participation from buyers outside the state," Kumar remarked. He emphasised that Uttar Pradesh is often viewed as a 'mind-locked' state rather than a 'landlocked' state due to the state's traditional focus on the local market. "We have not yet pursued aggressive marketing to tap into external markets where we can generate greater revenue. This trade show will help us achieve that goal," he said. Emphasising that the state government is establishing three Unity Malls in Agra, Varanasi and Lucknow, Kumar stated, "These malls will provide space for artisan products. Additionally, we have acquired a mall in Bareilly through the

Smart City initiative, which is set to become operational soon, and we already have arrangements in Noida. With this, we have made provisions in five divisions and have requested the Central government to construct an exhibition centre in every divisional headquarters, allowing artisans to showcase their products at affordable rates." MSME Minister Rakesh Sachan noted that the state's products received significant appreciation from international buyers during the International Trade Show. "Uttar Pradesh is the first state to host its own international trade show, featuring 350 stalls dedicated to ODO products, along with displays from various industries such as MSME, agriculture, defense, and textiles," he pointed out. He added, "In total, enquiries and leads worth Rs 10,000 crore have been generated. This platform has been beneficial for small artisans; for instance, jute bag makers received an order worth Rs 5 crore, while Varanasi's Gulabi Meenakari also secured a Rs 5 crore order. Clearly, our government has created a substantial market for the products of our artisans and MSMEs, which aligns with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision of transforming the state's economy into a one-trillion-dollar powerhouse."

# First installment of funds released for beautification, restoration work

**Lucknow (PNS):** Taking a significant step towards revitalising the city, the state government on Thursday released the first installment of Rs 25 lakh for the restoration and beautification of roads, parks, ponds, and the G-20 road. Civil works are set to commence next week. During a meeting on Monday, Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob had proposed the allocation of funds to restore long-dried ponds and enhance the city's parks and roads, including the G-20 road. Many parks need repair, while the roads, riddled with potholes, have previously caused injuries to residents. Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) Vice-Chairman Prathmesh Kumar stated that Rs 70 crore of the total funds would be allocated to them for traffic regulation in Sarojini Nagar, as well as for beautifying lakes in areas like Butler Palace, Officer Colony, Moti Jheel in Aishbagh, and Viraj Khand lake. The divisional commissioner emphasised the importance of reviving the ponds to address the city's ongoing water crisis, particularly during the scorching summer months. Additionally, Rs 26 crore will be dedicated to restoring water sources in Jankipuram Extension and enhancing its surroundings.

# Dialogues in Awadhi resonate with viewers

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
The Chinhat Ramlila, which commenced on Thursday, is a celebration of the Awadhi language. Devendra Pandey, president of the Ramlila committee that organises this annual event, noted that it is the only Ramlila in the city performed in Awadhi. "It is a rare phenomenon to have a Ramlila in Awadhi," he explained. "Our performance is based on the Ramcharitmanas and Radhey Shyam Ramlila. The founding members used this language, and we have adhered to that tradition, memorising our dialogues in Awadhi since then," he added. Pandey contrasted their Ramlila with others in the city, which typically use Devanagari or Hindi for their dialogues. "Interestingly, many attendees ask about the language and the words used in our Ramlila. The use of Awadhi lends an authentic feel to the performance and makes it easily understood by the audience," he said. Celebrating its 88th year, the Chinhat Ramlila is performed by traders, both young and old, who take on roles akin to professional actors.

"You wouldn't be able to distinguish them from regular theatre performers. These traders temporarily close their shops during the season to participate in the Ramlila, with nearly 75 actors involved, many from affluent families," he shared. Pandey highlighted that it is an all-male Ramlila, with men portraying female characters. "The men embody their roles so convincingly that it's often hard to tell they are playing women," he noted. He also mentioned the diverse community involvement in the event. "Vendors who set up tents and decorate the Ramlila ground come from various faiths, contributing their services. Many also come to watch the performances alongside other spectators," he said. The actors are in the age group of 12-88 years. "Many senior actors began their journey in the Ramlila during childhood and have remained involved over the years," he explained. Pandey emphasised that their goal is to showcase as many episodes from the life of Lord Ram as possible.

**ब्रह्मानन्द कालेज, माल रोड, कानपुर-4**  
आवश्यकता  
01. प्रयोगशाला सहायक-भौतिक विज्ञान-01 पद (अनारक्षित)  
02. प्रयोगशाला सहायक-जन्तु विज्ञान-01 पद (अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग)  
उपरोक्त पदों की न्यूनतम योग्यता भौतिक विज्ञान हेतु इण्टरमीडिएट (गणित संवर्ग) तथा जन्तु विज्ञान हेतु इण्टरमीडिएट (जीव विज्ञान संवर्ग) है।  
समस्त पदों का चयनमान व आयु सीमा शासन के नियमानुसार।  
इच्छुक अर्हक कार्यलय अवधि में महाविद्यालय से आवेदन पत्र दिनांक 05/10/2024 से 19/10/2024 तक निर्धारित शुल्क रु० 100/- देकर प्राप्त करें। आवेदन पत्र महाविद्यालय में जमा करने की अन्तिम तिथि 22/10/2024 तक जमा करें।  
प्राचार्य/प्रबन्धक

**CLASSIFIEDS**  
NOTICE

I have changed my name from Priyanshu to Priyanshu Kumar. In future I will be known as Priyanshu Kumar. Priyanshu Kumar son of Manoj Kumar resident of Augasi Road Ghazipur, District-Fatehpur (U.P.)

**NOTICE**

I have informed that my wife's name written wrongly in my daughter Aleena's school records as Fatma Khan while her correct name is Fatima Khan. Abdul Haq Khan S/o Mr. Abdul Razaq Khan R/o Mohalla Purani Galla Mandi, Lakhimpur Kheri.

**सूचना**

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि भवन सं० 74/008 (741004A) क्षेत्रफल 1846.31 वर्ग फीट स्थित विजय नगर, नाका, आर्यनगर सखनऊ है। जो कि "गुरु कृपा पार्टनर वीरेन्द्र कुमार दुबे", तपिन्दर खान्ना, जिल्द सं० 26112 के पृष्ठ 225 से 248 क्रमांक सं० 9825 दि० 30.05.2022 एवं अनन्त कुमार राजपाल जिल्द सं० 25615 के पृष्ठ 265 से 288, क्रमांक 19586 दि० 25.11.21, अंजली उपाध्याय जिल्द सं० 26505 के पृष्ठ सं० 167 से 190 क्रमांक 18023 दि० 12.09.22 में रजिस्टर्ड है। परन्तु ये सभी रजिस्ट्री दस्तावेज मोती नगर से आर्यनगर के बीच कहीं जा गए हैं। भविष्य में कोई भी इस सम्पत्ति के दस्तावेजों का दुरुपयोग करने की कोशिश करता है। तो अविधे सम्पत्ति जाये एवं भविष्य में किसी को भी सम्पत्ति के दस्तावेज मिले तो इस मोर्चेनं 9415012235, 7355243550, नाम- वीरेन्द्र, कुमार दुबे, पता 288/227, आर्यनगर नाका, लखनऊ में समर्पक करें।

# Azamgarh included in rural tourism development plan

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
In a significant step towards promoting rural tourism, the Yogi Adityanath government has included the Azamgarh division in its ambitious project to showcase Uttar Pradesh's rich rural heritage to both domestic and international tourists. The initiative aims to highlight the cultural and environmental richness of the state's rural areas, adding a new dimension to its tourism landscape. Various tourist facilities, including homestays, will be developed to promote rural tourism across four villages in Azamgarh, Mau and Ballia under the scheme. With the inclusion of villages from the Azamgarh division in this scheme, the total number of villages being developed for rural tourism has now increased to 97 in the state. The project has already been implemented in Devipatan, Chitrakoot, Ayodhya, Lucknow and Varanasi divisions, and it is expected that the identified villages from other divisions of the state will soon be integrated into the initiative. All tourism development and construction activities are being carried out by the Uttar Pradesh Tourism department as per Chief Minister Yogi's vision, with efforts underway to

accelerate the progress of the scheme. As part of Yogi Adityanath's vision, a total of four villages in the Azamgarh, Mau and Jaunpur districts will be selected for the homestay project to promote rural tourism. Each of the four villages will have a dedicated team consisting of a village coordinator, a district coordinator, a tourism expert, a rural development expert and a team lead. In each village, 10 local guides, five storytellers and five families will be assigned the responsibility of providing local culinary experiences. Additionally, 20 artists and local residents will be engaged to offer various traditional activities, including Zardozi, Moonj crafts, woodwork, pottery, boating, fishing, fruit and vegetable picking, and cycling. Up to 10 homestays can be established in each village, with the registration, development and regulation processes carried out in accordance with local and state government policies. The entire project will be implemented under the guidance of the Uttar Pradesh Tourism department. According to the project, all homestays will be integrated with the Nidhi Plus portal. Additionally, opportunities for developing four isolated agro-tourism properties will be explored.

# CITYBRIEFS



**PRASAD DISTRIBUTION**  
Chairman of SR Group of Institution, Bakshi Ka Talab, and MLC Pawan Singh Chauhan organised a collective fast prasad distribution programme at his Janakipuram residence on the first day of Navratri. The event was attended by Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, Minister of State Rakesh Rathore Guru, former Union minister Kaushal Kishore, and MP Brijlal among others. Pawan Singh Chauhan and Piyush Singh Chauhan presented mementos to all the guests.

**KRISFLYER SBI CARD**  
SBI Card, in partnership with Singapore Airlines Limited (SIA), has launched the KrisFlyer SBI Card. This travel centric co-branded credit card has been designed to cater to super-premium cardholders, offering exclusive privileges in the air and on ground with the SIA Group. The credit card is available in two variants, KrisFlyer SBI Card and KrisFlyer SBI Card Apex. Abhijit Chakravorty, MD & CEO, SBI Card, said: "We are delighted to partner with Singapore Airlines to present

top-notch and luxurious experience to the super-premium cardholder segment, with an array of exclusive benefits, setting new benchmarks in the industry. Our collaboration is a significant step toward enriching travel experiences of the customers."

**KRUSHNA ABHISHEK**  
Funnyman Krushna Abhishek, who came to Lucknow recently for the promotion of a TV show, along with Kiku Sharda, revealed many interesting facts about himself. Belonging to Lucknow, he said he had great memories of the city where he used to roam on a bicycle. He said that he saw a movie starring his wife Kashmera Shah in Lucknow itself. Kiku said it is a virtuous act to make people laugh after a stressful day.

**TABLETS DISTRIBUTED**  
The RR Group of Institutions in Bakshi Ka Talab, Lucknow, on Thursday hosted a tablet distribution programme for students, organised by the Uttar Pradesh government. The programme aimed to empower students through technology, promoting digital inclusion and educational advancement. Chief guest Neeraj Singh, emphasised the vital role of technology in education and everyday life. The event was attended by Anil Kumar Agarwal, chairman of RR Group of Institutions, Chitranshu Agarwal, secretary, and other prominent faculty members and officials. During the programme, students were given tablets.

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' EMPOWERMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (AGRI.),**  
**SOUTHERN ZONE, BRAHMAPUR, RITE CAMPUS, RANGEILUNDA, GANJAM**  
No. 1055/SE (Agril.) Date. 26.09.24  
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)  
**e-procurement notice**  
Bid identification number / Tender call notice no – SE (A) S/Z-03/2024– 25  
The Superintending Engineer (Agril.), Southern Zone, Brahmapur who has been authorized as the procuring officer for the projects of Southern Zone, Brahmapur is directed to invite percentage rate bid on behalf of the Governor of Odisha for the Civil construction works under Southern Zone. The costs of the project is around 133.00 & 56.00 Lakhs (Excluding GST & LC) respectively. Bid document consisting of detailed tender call notice, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of the contract and other necessary documents can be downloaded from <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> from **04.10.2024 at 11:00 hours to 18.10.2024 at 17:30 hours**. The bid will be opened on **21.10.2024 at 11:30 hours** onwards in the O/o Superintending Engineer (Agril.), Southern Zone, Brahmapur, RITE Campus, Rangeilunda. All other details regarding term and conditions, corrigendum from time to time if any, DTCN etc. can be seen and downloaded from <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.  
**Superintending Engineer (Agril.)**  
**Southern Zone, Brahmapur**  
OIPR-0150411/0003/2425

**कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, खण्डवा ( म.प्र. )**  
टाउन हॉल एम.जी. रोड, खण्डवा ( म.प्र. ) फोन नं. - 450001, टेलीफोन/फैक्स नं. 0733-2223523, Email ID- smokhandwa@mpurban.gov.in  
खण्डवा, दिनांक 01.10.2024  
क्रमांक/यात्रिकी प्रकोट/या.प्र./ई-टेंडरिंग/2024/239,240  
--: द्वितीय ई-निविदा विज्ञापित --:  
निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन पोर्टल के माध्यम से निविदा निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ऑनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	टेंडर आईडी	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित लागत (लाख में)	प्रारंभ राशि	निविदा प्रपत्र की राशि	बिक्रेता/निर्माता की श्रेणी	कार्य पूर्ण की अवधि
1.	2024_UAD_373525.1	SUPPLY OF GARBAGE TIPPER 3.5 CUM ON VEHICLE CHASIS BS-VI ON ASHOK LEYLAND MAHINDRA/TATA OR ANY OTHER EQUIVALENT MAKE FOUR WHEELER WITH RTO INSURANCE & INCLUDING SOUND SYSTEM (28 No.)	168.00 Lakhs	4,00,000/-	10,000/-	प्रतिनिधि निर्माता/केन्द्रीय अधिकृत डीलर	01 माह
2.	2024_UAD_373538.1	SUPPLY OF GARBAGE TIPPER 2.2 CUM ON VEHICLE CHASIS BS VI ELECTRIC Vehicle (EV) ON ASHOK LEYLAND MAHINDRA/TATA OR ANY OTHER EQUIVALENT MAKE FOUR WHEELER WITH RTO INSURANCE & INCLUDING SOUND SYSTEM (28 No.)	168.00 Lakhs	84,00,000/-	10,000/-	प्रतिनिधि निर्माता/केन्द्रीय अधिकृत डीलर	01 माह

1. निविदा ऑनलाईन क्रय एवं प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि :- 16.10.2024 ( सार्व 5.30 बजे तक )  
2. निविदा खोलने की दिनांक :- 18.10.2024 ( सार्व 10.30 बजे तक )  
निविदा संबंधी समस्त जानकारी वेबसाइट <http://www.mptenders.gov.in> पर देखी जा सकती है। ई-निविदा में यदि किसी भी प्रकार का संशोधन किया जाता है, तो वह समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशित नहीं किया जावेगा।  
आयुक्त नगर पालिक निगम, खण्डवा



# Cong divisive tactics part of core strategy to weaken country: Yogi

PNS ■ KURUKSHETRA/  
KAITHAL/JIND

On the final day of campaigning on Thursday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath entered the electoral battlefield in Haryana, where he addressed three public meetings to seek votes for the Bharatiya Janata Party candidates and extended wishes for Shardiya Navratri to the people. Yogi criticised the Congress party for spreading misinformation during the Lok Sabha elections, accusing it of falsely claiming that if the BJP returned to power, the Constitution and reservation system would be abolished. He also recalled the Congress promise of giving ₹1 lakh to every poor person. "Ask Congress where their 'khat khat-khata' is now," he said, adding that Rahul Gandhi, who once championed this phrase, has disappeared from the scene and has been politically sidelined. Yogi urged voters to support BJP candidates Subhash Kalsana from Shahabad, Kamlesh Dhandra from Kalayat and Ramkumar Gautam from Safidon. He also highlighted the significance of Kurukshetra as a historical and spiritual site. Chief Minister Yogi accused Congress of making empty promises and pointed out that its divisive tactics — based on caste, region, language and religion — are part of the party's core strategy to weaken the country. "A weak nation means a weakened Sanatan, which threatens both the present and future generations," he said.

Yogi added that the conspiracies of Congress ensure that no honest, civilised or development-focused individual aligns with the party. Chief Minister Yogi accused the Congress of being complicit with drug cartels, land mafias, cattle smugglers, mining mafias and rioters. Alleging collusion between the Congress and the mafias, Yogi said: "Congress ka haath, Mafia ke saath." He reassured the public that no criminal or anti-national elements could harm a society that reveres Jagatjanani Maa Bhagwati. He likened the upcoming election to the BJP's battle against modern-day 'Chand-Mund and Mahishasur'. Yogi also pointed out that Uttar Pradesh has been riot-free for the last seven and a half years of his government, contrasting it with the frequent riots and extended curfews during previous governments. "We warned the rioters and their instigators that if they dared disrupt peace, they would face severe consequences," he stated, adding that those who harm daughters, kidnap businessmen, steal crops, or jeopardise youth employment now face strict punishment, with their assets seized and redistributed to the poor. He underscored that the BJP is the only effective solution against the mafia. Chief Minister Yogi also reminded the audience of the brutal burning of a Dalit father and daughter in Mirchpur 14 years ago during Congress rule. He emphasised that a society's future cannot be bright if it does not protect the dignity of its daughters and sisters.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath campaigns in favour of BJP candidates in Shahabad Assembly constituency, Haryana on Thursday

PTI

He asserted that no anti-national elements in UP can walk with pride today, and the government is committed to dealing firmly with wrongdoers. Chief Minister Yogi highlighted that lakhs of devotees from Kaithal and Kalayat travel to Uttar Pradesh for the Kanwar yatra each year. He said, "Before 2017, when there was no BJP government in UP, the Kanwar yatra faced difficulties." He added, "When my government came into power, I enquired about this, and I was told that the yatra caused inconvenience to some people. I responded by saying that such people should stay

indoors. If anyone creates obstacles for Kanwar pilgrims, strict action will be taken." He emphasised that the pilgrimage should be accompanied by good roads, electricity, shelters, food stalls, hot water and the protection of devotees' dignity. He also addressed complaints about loud music, bells and conches during the yatra. "If some are bothered by it, they should close their ears, but the Kanwar yatra in UP will be celebrated with grandeur. The microphones in places where there is unnecessary noise will be turned off," Chief Minister Yogi remarked, noting that more than four crore pilgrims

travel from the Dudheshwar Nath temple in Ghaziabad to Haridwar annually. He also mentioned that he participates in the yatra by showering flowers, an act that Congress, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) cannot replicate. Chief Minister Yogi praised Haryana's brave soldiers and athletes, stating, "Whether on the battlefield or in sports, the enemy cannot stand before Haryana's soldiers. The athletes from here consistently bring home medals from the Olympics, Asian and Commonwealth Games." He assured that as long as the double-engine government

remains, nothing can hinder Haryana's progress. He also expressed confidence that the BJP will form a government in Jammu and Kashmir, contrasting the BJP's commitment to good governance and development with Congress' false promises. Referring to January 22, 2024, when Ram Lalla was ceremoniously seated at his holy birthplace in Ayodhya by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi remarked that every Indian was filled with joy. "There were tears of happiness in the eyes of every Indian, and homes were lit with lamps in celebration," he said. The event, he added, sends a

powerful message to the marginalised and oppressed communities, showing that when all forces unite, success is inevitable. He credited the realisation of Ayodhya's success to the power of the judiciary and the double-engine government. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath highlighted that Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014, followed by the formation of the double-engine government in Uttar Pradesh in 2017. By 2019, the long-standing issue of 500 years was resolved. "Today, there is no structure of slavery in Ayodhya. The city is now filled with a renewed sense of security and prosperity," he stated. He cited the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and the abrogation of Article 370, which had become synonymous with terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, as clear examples of the power of the double-engine government. He also praised Haryana for making significant strides in development over the past decade. Chief Minister Yogi condemned drug dealers for exploiting the youth and compared them to forces aiming to weaken the nation. "Jagatjanani Maa Bhagwati will destroy the Mahishasur and Chand-Munds involved in the drug trade," he declared. Referring to Haryana as 'Haribhoomi', Yogi explained that the land is sacred, tied to the hard work of farmers who feed the nation. "Hari, meaning Lord Ram, Lord Vishnu and Lord Krishna, is invoked on this land to signify that whenever injustice occurs, Hari will return to restore balance. The double-engine government carries this

message of divine justice," he added. Chief Minister Yogi further reflected on India's historical struggle against colonial powers. "When the country was enslaved, the Mughals and the British did not desire its freedom," he said. While Congress formed the first government of independent India, it failed to build the Ram temple. He contrasted two cultural ideologies: one that reveres Ram and the other which follows the culture of Rome. "We, the devotees of Ram, stand for the values of Ram, while those who oppose the Ram Janmabhoomi follow the culture of Rome," he asserted. Chief Minister Yogi condemned Congress for dismissing the kirtans of Ram and Krishna as mere "naach-gaana" calling it clear evidence of the party's corruption.

## PEOPLE OF HARYANA LOVE YOGIJI: JINDAL

Kurukshetra MP Naveen Jindal told the crowd at public meetings that the people of Haryana love Yogi even more than the people of Uttar Pradesh. The entire venue resonated with chants of 'Yogi-Yogi' in response. Jindal went on to say that four months ago, during the Lok Sabha elections, the UP chief minister campaigned for him in Kurukshetra, and that he owed his victory to Chief Minister Yogi's support. The people of Haryana seemed genuinely thrilled and energised by Yogi Adityanath's presence. After the first public meeting in Shahabad, a song played continuously in front of Chief Minister Yogi: "Bhagwadhari aa rahe, ab hai Mathura ki bari."



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath performs a ritual at the Gorakhnath temple on the first day of Navratri in Gorakhpur on Thursday.

PTI

## Family of four shot dead in Amethi

Lucknow (PNS): In a sensational incident, a government school teacher, his wife and two children were allegedly shot dead at their home in Amethi on Thursday evening, police said. According to the police, the deceased were identified as teacher Sunil Kumar, his wife Poonam Bharti, and their two daughters, Driшти (5) and Mickey (2). Following the incident, police teams from multiple stations arrived at the scene. Forensic experts, along with surveillance and dog squads, were deployed to gather evidence. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that strict action would be taken against those responsible. The UP STF (Special Task Force) has been deployed to expedite the investigation, and Deputy SP DK Shahi, known for his role in the encounter that killed Sultanpur robbery accused Mangesh Yadav, is leading the team. As per reports, Sunil Kumar (34), a resident of Sudamapur vil-

lage in the Jagatpur police station area of Rae Bareilly district, had been employed in the Basic Education department since December 10, 2020. He started working at Panhauna Primary School (PM Shri Vidyalaya) in Singhpur block, 62 kilometres from the Amethi district headquarters, on March 12, 2021. Sunil had been living on rent with his family for the past three months at Munna Awasthi's house, located near the Ahorwa Bhavani intersection in the Shivratganj police station area of Amethi. According to locals, at around 7 pm on Thursday, a group of armed men arrived at Sunil's residence and opened fire on everyone inside. The sounds of gunfire caused panic in the neighbourhood, but by the time residents came out of their homes, the attackers had already fled the scene. The wounded family members were immediately rushed to CHC Singhpur, but doctors pronounced all four dead upon arrival.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031.  
Tel : +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

**IDFC FIRST Bank**

**APPENDIX IV [Rule 8(1)]  
POSSESSION NOTICE  
(For immovable property)**

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 23.09.2023 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors 1.Natraj Hosier, 2. Natraj Cosmetic And Gift Centre, 3. Anurudh Kumar Gupta, 4. Anurudh Kumar Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta), 5. Anjana Gupta, 6. Chitra Gupta, 7. Anjana Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta), 8. Chitra Gupta (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Santosh Kumar Gupta) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.1,77,77,566.76/- (Rupees One Crore Seventy Seven Lac Seventy Seven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Six And Seventy Six Paise Only) as on 22.09.2023, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Demand notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 27th day of SEP 2024.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of THE IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs.1,77,77,566.76/- (Rupees One Crore Seventy Seven Lac Seventy Seven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Six And Seventy Six Paise Only) and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) Of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.	
ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF THE HOUSE BEARING MUNICIPAL NO. 13375, FIRST FLOOR, ADMEASURING 156.133 SQ MTR., I.E. 1680 SQUARE FEET, SITUATED AT AMINABAD, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226018, BOUNDED AS BELOW: NORTH: SUHELRAJ SIDDIQUI PLOT OF SUSHIL NIGAM, SOUTH: PLOT OF MR. LAL CHAND RASTOGI EAST: AMINABAD ROAD, WEST: GOVERNMENT PROPERTY BADHU GALI	Authorised Officer IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)
Date: 27-09-2024 Place: LUCKNOW Loan Account No: 42670317.	

## Pink bus toilet inaugurated

Gorakhpur (PNS): To enhance facilities ensuring the dignity and respect of women, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the pink bus toilet on Park Road in Civil Lines on the first day of Shardiya Navratri. On this occasion, the chief minister flagged off door-to-door garbage collection vehicles, state-of-the-art sewage cleaning machines, the Bandicoot robot, and a de-watering faecal sludge safety machine imported under the Swachh Bharat Mission. Additionally, he released the Swachh Pandal poster for Navratri Durgotsav, encouraging people to celebrate a zero-waste festival. After cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the pink bus toilet, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inspected the facility and reviewed the arrangements inside. He also inaugurated the café located behind the pink bus toilet, engaging with and encouraging the women managing it. With the launch of this pink bus toilet in the Civil Lines area by the Municipal Corporation, the total number of such facilities has now reached two. The first pink toilet is already operational in front of the Buddha Gate on Ramgarh Taal Road. The pink bus toilet has been created by modifying roadways buses that were declared as junk. It features both Indian and western toilets, as well as a wash basin and a café. A solar system has also been installed to meet the electricity needs of the facility.

## HATHRAS STAMPEDE

### Mayawati questions absence of Bhole Baba's name in chargesheet

Lucknow (PNS): Former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh and Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, on Thursday, attacked the Uttar Pradesh government over the absence of the name of Narayan Sakar Hari also known as Surajpal Singh and Bhole Baba, in the charge-sheet filed in the Hathras stampede case. As many as 121 people, mostly women and children, had died in the stampede during a satsang in Phulrai Mughal Garhi in Sikandra Rao, Hathras on July 2. In the case, the police filed a 3,200-page charge-sheet in the court on October 1. In the charge-sheet, 11 people have been accused but the name of Surajpal Singh alias Bhole Baba is missing. However, the police said that the investigation was still going on and more people could be included in the charge-sheet. Mayawati tweeted on X regarding the charge-sheet in the Hathras satsang accident, questioning the absence of Surajpal Singh alias Bhole Baba's name in it. She said the charge-sheet proved that such people had the protection of the state government. Mayawati claimed that as per media reports, 11 sevadars have been accused in the 2,300-page charge-sheet in connection with the tragic incident of Sikandra Rao, but the government's silence about Baba

Surajpal is unjustified. "Is it possible to stop such incidents in future with such a government attitude? The common people are worried," she said in the tweet. The police arrested the main accused Dev Prakash Madhukar, Megh Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Manju Devi, Manju Yadav, Ram Ladete, Upendra Singh, Sanju Kumar, Ram Prakash Shakya, Durvesh Kumar and Dalver Singh and sent them to jail. Among these, interim bail of women Manju Devi and Manju Yadav has been approved by the High Court. The name of Narayan Sakar Hari aka Surajpal Singh aka Bhole Baba was not mentioned in the FIR lodged in connection with this accident. The charge-sheet has also been filed against the arrested accused with no mention of Surajpal Singh. The UP government had constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and a judicial commission to probe the Hathras stampede. A week after the stampede, the SIT submitted its report to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on July 9. In the initial action, six officials, including sub-divisional magistrate, tehsildar, circle officer and Sikandra Rau police station in-charge were suspended. The SIT did not rule out a 'big conspiracy' behind the stampede.

**IDFC FIRST Bank Limited**  
(Formerly IDFC Bank Limited)  
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792  
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031. TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

**IDFC FIRST Bank**

**APPENDIX- IV-A  
[See proviso to rule 8 (6)& 9 (1)]  
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES**

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) & 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) as per column (iii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (iv) mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) from Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as per column (i). For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on IDFC FIRST Bank website i.e. www.idfirstbank.com.

S. NO	(i) Demand Notice Amount	(ii) Agreement Id	(iii) Name of Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s)	(iv) MORTGAGED PROPERTY ADDRESS	(v) Reserve Price Amount	(vi) EMD Amount	(vii) Date and Time of Auction	(viii) Date and Time EMD of Auction	(ix) Date and Time of Inspection	(x) Authorized Officer Name & Contact Number
1	INR 32516444.78/- Demand Notice dated: 21-Sep-2022	47651441	Sanjay Iron Stores, Mangalka Shukla (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Sanjay Shukla), Mangalka Shukla, Shashank Shukla & Shashank Shukla (In The Capacity Of Available Legal Heir Of Late Sanjay Shukla)	All That Piece And Parcel Of House No. 8/83, Admeasuring 344.44 Sq. Mtr. Situated At Arya Nagar, Kanpur, Built On Plot No. 112, Block-M, Scheme-7, Gutaiya, Kanpur Nagar And Bounded As:- East: Plot No.111 (H. No 8/84), West: Plot No. 111 (H. No. 8/82), North: 6.09 Mtr Road & South: 4.57 Mtr. Road	INR 47634000.00/-	INR 4763400.00/-	08-Nov-2024 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	07-Nov-2024 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM	30-Oct-2024 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM	Name- Sardeep Singh Rathore Contact Number- 9887772255 Name- Vidyansh Gupta Contact Number- 899428998
2	INR 5923621.17/- Demand Notice dated: 20-Sep-2023	17486959 & 33763429	Krishna Kumar Pandey, Deepika Pandey, Rajesh Kumar Pandey & Rakesh Kumar Pandey	All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 154, Admeasuring 205.69 Sq. Mtrs., Situated At Block -H-2, Scheme-II, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208011, Adbounded As:- East: 30 Ft. Road, West: Plot No. 155, North: 60 Ft. Road & South: Plot No. 153	INR 18798900.00/-	INR 1879890.00/-	08-Nov-2024 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	07-Nov-2024 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM	30-Oct-2024 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM	
3	INR 8498994.51/- Demand Notice dated: 26-Jul-2023	40037143 & 45341146	Mishra Traders, Vijay Narain Mishra & Navneet Mishra	All That Piece And Parcel Of Plot No. 146, Sector-E, Scheme-ISPAT Nagar, Situated At Mohalla ISPAT Nagar, Tehsil & District: Kanpur Nagar (U.P.), Uttar Pradesh- 208001, Admeasuring Area 360 Sq. Mtrs., And Bounded As:- East: 18 Mtr. Road, West: Plot No. 111, North: Plot No. 145 & South: Plot No. 147	INR 14672000.00/-	INR 1467200.00/-	08-Nov-2024 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	07-Nov-2024 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM	30-Oct-2024 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM	
4	INR 33689061.73/- Demand Notice dated: 31-May-2019	8600115, 8878355, 12700647, 8607773, 8881453, 8606023 & 8880951	M M Traders, V K Steel Traders, Vimal Kumar Agarwal & Ashish Agarwal	Premises No- 203, Anandpuri, Omkar Nath, Dhawan School Road, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208020 Plot No 70, Block G, Ispat Nagar, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208020 Pvt Plot No 12B, situated at Rajapuram Daheli Sujapur, Kanpur, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh-208021	INR 29799600.00/- INR 10462500.00/- INR 23110000.00/-	INR 2979960.00/- INR 1046250.00/- INR 2311000.00/-	08-Nov-2024 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	07-Nov-2024 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM	30-Oct-2024 10:00 AM TO 4:00 PM	

Disclaimer: Please note that the said notice is issued for sale of immovable property only and IDFC FIRST Bank Limited has no right to sale of the movable property, if any, present at the immovable property.

Date: 03.10.2024 Place: KANPUR  
Authorised Officer  
IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd)



# Navratri begins, thousands throng Shailputri Devi Temple on first day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Shardiya Navratri began with traditional gaiety and religious fervour in this holy city here on Thursday as thousands of devotees thronged Shailputri Devi Temple near Shakkur Talab behind Varanasi City railway station on the first day. A long queue of devotees had formed since morning and barricading was done in the temple premises to control the crowd. Due to rush, the 'vrati' (on fast) devotees waited hours to reach the temple and offer prayers. Besides, a huge crowd of devotees was also seen throughout the day at the famous Durga Mandir (Durga Kund) where the devotees stood in long queues and waited for hours to offer prayers. Coconut, 'chunris' and other puja articles were sold in large quantities near the temple. Crowds were also seen at some other temples, including Navdurga temple at Navapura. Not only this, hundreds of devotees through various vehicles also rushed to Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district and Maihar Devi in Madhya Pradesh to offer prayer on this auspicious occasion apart from Old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar, Sheela



Crowd of devotees at Shailputri Devi Temple in Varanasi on Thursday on the first day of Navratri

Mata Mandir at Adalpur (near Chunar, Mirzapur) and others. At both Durga Kund and Shailputri Devi temples, elaborate security arrangements were made and due to the rush at Durgakund, the route of the vehicles was also diverted. Throughout the day, there was a festive look in the areas and even in the late afternoon and evening hours the temples witnessed huge rush of devotees. Kashi is a rare city where

there are separate temples of all the nine Gauris and Devis where the devotees reach to offer prayers on different days during Vasantik (Chaitya) and Shardiya Navratri respectively. This year, there will be no loss of day during this Navratri as it will be of nine days. It is also expected that the rush of devotees will also be seen at Brahmacharini Temple in Kotwali area on the second day of this Navratri while at

Chandraghanta Devi temple in Chowk on the third. Similarly, on the fourth day, there will be rush of devotees at Kushmanda Devi (Durga Mandir, Durgakund) while on Panchmi at Bageshwari Devi temple (Jaitpura), Shashti at Katyayani Devi (Chowk), Saptami at Kalratri Devi temple (Dashashwamedh), Ashtami at Mahagauri (Annapurna Mandir, Dashashwamedh) and Navmi at Siddhidatri Devi (Siddh Mata Gali, Golghar).

# Long queue of devotees at temples

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAVAGRAJ

With beginning the pious festival of Shardiya Navratri, a large number of devotees thronged the prominent city temples and aradhana math to pay obeisance to Goddess Shailputri, the first form of Goddess Durga on the first day on Thursday. The devotees first took a holy dip at Sangam during the auspicious hours, placed the urn and performed the 'aradhana' amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras. A large number of people turned up for 'darshan' of the goddess at most prominent temples like Sidhpeeth Kalyani, Sidhpeeth Lalita Devi, Sidhpeeth Alop Shankari, Kalibari temple. The famous temples of the city, including Kalyani Devi, Alop Temple, Kamakhya Devi Temple and others also witnessed a huge crowd. Siddha Devi will be worshipped on the ninth day of Navratri with which the fast will also end.



Devotees offering prayers at Shakti Peeth Alop Shankari temple on the first day of Navratri

A long queue of devotees was witnessed since early morning at almost all Durga temples of the city. Devotees offered coconuts, flowers and 'chunaris' to the deity and offered prayers.

Chanting slogans of 'Jai Mata Di', holding coconut, bangles and red 'chunnis' (shrouds) in their hand, devotees thronged city temples and formed a beeline outside famous temples of the Sangam city, including

Kalyani Devi temple, Alopibagh, Lalita Devi-which is one of the 51 Shakti Peeths-along with many other small temples. The temple authorities have made elaborate preparations to meet heavy rush of devotees. The temple authorities have also decorated the idols with colourful streamers and marigold flowers. The priest of the Sidhpeeth Kalyani Devi temple, Shyam ji Pathak said devotees paid obeisance to Maa Shailputri. As the number of devotees increases in the Devi temples during Navratri the police administration has made strict security arrangements. The temples are also being monitored through CCTV. Security arrangements have also been made around the Durga Puja pandals. The responsibility of security has been given to the officials of various departments. Female and male policemen have also been deployed in Lalita Devi, Kalyani Devi, Alopshankari Devi temples.

# Durga Puja begins in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With the installation of idols of Goddess Durga at several places, the Durga Puja in this holy city began on the first day of Shardiya Navratri here on Thursday. The city which is known as 'Mini Kolkata' for its grandeur of Durga Puja as around 250 places the idols are installed here every year. Though the festivities will be at its peak on the occasion of Saptami, the idols of Goddess at about five places, including

Sarvajani Durgotsav Samiti at Townhall, have been installed on the first day of Shardiya Navratri as these puja samitis organise their festival for nine days. The idols at these places were also installed amidst the chanting of mantras and traditional rituals. Crowds were seen at these places, including Maa Durga Pujanotsav Samiti at Daranagar, Maa Durga Puja Navyukt Samiti at Navapura, Sarda Mandir at Ghai Ghat and SB Durgotsav Samiti at

Sudia apart from Town Hall. Some of the famous puja samitis will also instal their idols on the occasion of Panchmi or Shashti. The Durga Puja of the city is also famous for its different colours as while most of the Bengali-dominated puja samitis maintained their traditional religious fervour giving focus on their idols of Maa Durga, some other groups make attempts to adopt new techniques and a few of them give focus on the use of electronic gadgets. To

maintain law and order situation during the puja, several samitis will also instal CCTV cameras to keep a regular watch on the visitors as well as anti-social elements. They were also instructed by the police administration to ensure proper electric fittings and fire safety equipment in their puja pandals. The district administration and Varanasi Police Commissionerate have already held meetings to review the security and other arrangements during the puja.

# CRS to conduct safety inspection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In order to upgrade passenger facilities and expand the infrastructure for ease of operation by the Railway administration, after the completion of the doubling of Khorasan Road-Shahganj (21.6 km) rail section with electrified line on Mau-Shahganj rail section of Varanasi division, Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), North Eastern Circle (NE Circle), Pranjeev Saxena will conduct safety inspection of this section on October 4 and 5. At the time of this inspection, the CRS will be accompanied by Chief

Manager (Infrastructure) of Varanasi Division Roshan Lal Yadav, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (SDEE/Traction) RN Singh, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) Pankaj Kesharwani, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer-II Yashveer Singh along with engineers/employees of RVNL and others were present. The PCEE first inspected Shahganj railway station and traction power station, then reached Khorasan Road station by motor trolley. He also inspected Khanja Halt, power sub-station at Didarganj Road station where he checked yard plan, neutral section, power substation, station working rule,



PCEE Sanjay Singhal inspecting the Shahganj section of Varanasi Division of NER on Thursday.

Administrative Officer (CAO/Construction) Abhay Kumar Gupta, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM/Varanasi) Vineet Kumar Srivastava along with senior officers of North Eastern Railway (NER) headquarters and Varanasi division as well as Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL). After the safety inspection, speed test is also to be done at full speed on Shahganj to Khorasan Road rail section by CRS Special. Meanwhile, on Thursday Principal Chief Electrical Engineer (PCEE) of NER Sanjay Singhal conducted a safety inspection and test of electrification of the newly-constructed second line under the doubling scheme on the Khorasan Road-Shahganj rail section. On the occasion of safety inspection of electrification, Additional Divisional Railway

platform clearance, point crossing, signalling, earthing track, height of overhead traction, block overlap, fouling mark, sand hump, feeder power supply distribution system and control feeder isolation etc as per the standard of electrified rail section. At Khorasan Road station, Singhal inspected various works developed as per electrification of the doubled rail section and found all the works as per standard. While inspecting the said rail section, the PCEE ensured proper distance of overhead from the level crossing gates in the block section, indent of curvature, pool culverts and line fittings as per electrified standard norms in the block section, ballasting and packing, clearance on curvature and installation of level crossing gates, boom lock and height gauges as per electrification.

# Jamaican PM watches Ganga Aarti in Kashi



Jamaican PM Dr Andrew Holness watching Ganga Aarti from a cruise in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Jamaican Prime Minister Dr Andrew Michael Holness, during his one-day visit to this ancient city, a parliamentary constituency of his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, watched the internationally famous Ganga Aarti here on Wednesday evening. Boarding the cruise, Dr Holness was amazed to see Ganga Aarti.

As after the recent flood, the water level of Ganga river is still high, the Ganga Aarti is not being organised at its original site with grandeur. However, when the Jamaican PM was watching it an attempt was made to give it a grand look. In the recent past, several heads of countries and others, including delegates of Parvati Bharatiya Diwas and G-20 programmes watched this famous show. Prior to this, he visited Trade Facilitation Centre (TFC) and saw the Indian handicraft items. The officers gave the details to the Jamaican PM about different handicrafts items. Earlier, Dr Holness also visited Sarmath viewing the archaeological sites and sculptures including the Lion Capital of Ashoka, the Emblem of India, etc preserved at museum there. Throughout the stay of Jamaican PM in the city, Governor Anandiben Patel and Uttar Pradesh Urban Development Minister and Minister in charge of Varanasi district Suresh Khanna on behalf of the state government accompanied the former. They also present at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur, at the time of departure of Jamaican prime minister.

# Devvrat: Goal of complete prosperity can be achieved only through Antyodaya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A national seminar on 'Peace and Sustainable Development in the Light of Educational Ideas of Mahatma Gandhi' was organised on Wednesday on the occasion of birth anniversary of 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri under the joint aegis of Inter-University Centre for Teacher Education (IUCTE), BHU (Varanasi) and Gujarat Vidyapeeth (Ahmedabad). The seminar began with the address of Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat through virtual medium. In his address, he said that the goal of complete prosperity can be achieved only through Antyodaya. "It was not just his imagination, but Mahatma Gandhi had sent groups from village to village to give his thought a practical form", he said, adding that Mahatma Gandhi dreamt of world welfare along with self-reliant India as he was of the view that without the development of the village, the prosperity of the country cannot happen. "That is why emphasis was laid on the education of cottage industry and crafts by Mahatma Gandhi. Acharya Devvrat further said that in Gandhi's thinking, there is also the ideology of natural farming and naturopathy, due to which today the Panchabhuta (five elements) can be saved from getting polluted. He said we have angered these five gods due to which the world is facing trouble. Dean (Academic and Research) of IUCTE Ashish Srivastava, said Gandhi's thoughts included every aspect of environment, earth crisis etc, after which it is



Ex-MGKV V-C Dr P. Nag receiving a memento from IUCTE Director Prof PN Singh at a seminar in Varanasi

being discussed in Stockholm and Rio conferences. He said Gandhi also wrote a lot on the crisis of earth and air in Hindi Swaraj in 1906. Former Vice-Chancellor (V-C) of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth Prof Prithvis Nag, who was presiding over the inaugural session, said Gandhi's freedom movement for India included all aspects — cultural, industrial, spiritual and philosophical. He described the activities of Gandhi's freedom movement from 1942 to 1947. The keynote speaker, Prof Sudhir Kumar Singh from Dayal Singh College, Delhi University, started his speech with Gandhi's inclusive thinking. IUCTE Director Prof Prem Narayan Singh, who was presiding over the inaugural session, said that till a few decades ago, the principles of Gandhi's basic education were present in every aspect of our education system. "Today, they need to be re-incorporated. Only then can we make the education system useful for the public", he said. In the closing session, the keynote speaker was former professor of DAV Degree College Prof Dina Nath Singh, who said that today, in the national interest, there is a need to adopt the eleven elements of Gandhi.

# Govt set to build 'Digital Kumbh Museum' ahead of Mahakumbh

PTI/PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW/PRAVAGRAJ

The Uttar Pradesh government is set to build a 'Digital Kumbh Museum' in Prayagraj ahead of the Mahakumbh next year, a minister said on Thursday. The Tourism Department will establish the museum for the devotees to digitally experience the 'Samudra Manthan' and learn about Kumbh, Mahakumbh and other spiritual landmarks, Tourism Minister Jaiver Singh said. The museum is slated to come up on

Arail Road Naini near Shivalaya Park in Prayagraj. The building, spread over an area of 10,000 square metres, will accommodate 2,000 to 2,500 visitors at a time. The total cost of the project is estimated at ₹21.38 crore, ₹6 crore of which has already been disbursed, he said. A gallery showcasing the 14 gems of Samudra Manthan will be created in the museum, he said. AWARENESS PROGRAMME: As part of week-long celebrations of the 75th Raising Day of Territorial Army which is being celebrat-

# Youth hit by dumper, dies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

While putting lights on the roadside poles for the Durga Puja pandal, a youth was knocked down by a dumper near Manilal Ka Idara on Jetwara Road as a result of which he died within a short time. Mohd Avaihs Rain of Lal Baba Ka Pura alias Khargu Ka Pura Mohalla in Lal Gopalganj town, used to support the family by doing electrical decoration work during weddings and festivals. After the accident, he was seriously injured and his colleagues rushed there but he died before being taken to the hospital. On getting information, the family and police also reached. The body was sent for the post-mortem.

# Cleanliness campaign held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A cleanliness campaign was organised by the Department of Physical Education, Faculty of Arts, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), under the leadership of Head of Department (HoD) Prof Vikram Singh, Prof T Onima Reddy, and Dr Binayak Kumar Dubey on Thursday. This initiative aimed to promote a clean and healthy environment, aligning with the national mission of Swachh Bharat. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of BPEd and MPEd, who displayed great teamwork and dedication. Under the guidance of the faculty, the students cleaned various parts of the department and the surrounding areas. Prof Vikram Singh active-

ly motivated the students, sharing words of encouragement and providing insightful instructions about upcoming departmental development programmes and other significant initiatives. Speaking at the event, Prof Vikram Singh emphasised the importance of cleanliness, not just within the university, but also as a lifelong habit. He shared plans for future infrastructural and academic developments within the department, fostering a sense of responsibility and pride among the students. The faculty members, including Prof Sushma Ghildyal, Prof BC Kapri, Prof Abhimanyu Singh, Prof Rajiv Vyas, Prof T Onima Reddy and others played an instrumental role in guiding and supervising the campaign.

# Workshop on diagnostic mycology commences

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A three-day national workshop and hands-on training on diagnostic mycology organised by the Department of Microbiology, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (IMS-BHU) was kick-started on Thursday. About 35 participants from all parts of India have come forward to gain first-hand experience on diagnosis of fungal diseases. The workshop was set in motion in the presence of IMS-BHU Director Dr SN Sankhwar, Prof Ashok Kumar (Dean, Academics), Prof Gopal Nath (Dean Research) and Prof Tuhina Banerjee, (Head, Department of Microbiology). Dr Rajendra Prasad also graced the occasion as observer on behalf of the State Chapter of NAMS, accompanied by Prof T P Chaturvedi, Convener, NAMS-Cell, IMS-BHU. The organising committee comprised Prof Ragini Tilak, Prof Munesh Kumar Gupta

and Dr Bitan Naik from IMS-BHU with Prof Malini R Capoor from VMMC and Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi and Prof Rungmei SK Marak from SGPGL, Lucknow. The workshop has been funded by national Academy of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, Institute of Eminence BHU and IMS-BHU, Varanasi. The participants attended lectures by Prof Ragini Tilak, Prof Malini R Capoor and Prof Rungmei SK Marak on agents causing fungal infections and their laboratory diagnosis. Prof Ragini Tilak said "We want to give our participants as much hands-on training as possible as we want them to go back and start testing for fungal pathogens at their centres by utilising simple diagnostic techniques like KOH Mount". The candidates enthusiastically participated in all the exercises and actively engaged in discussions with the resource persons.

# Snake charmer dies of snake bite

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A snake charmer was killed after being bitten by a snake in Unnao. The incident took place when he had gone to hunt for a snake. His colleague got him admitted to a hospital from where after first aid he was referred to another hospital. He died on the way while being taken to another hospital by an ambulance. Police sent his body for an autopsy. His colleague informed the kin of the deceased who used to camp with family members in Kanpur. Snake charmers Rishinath and Shivnath were showing snakes near Shitala Temple under Fatehpur Chaurasi police station area of Unnao on Thursday. Meanwhile, a bike-borne youth asked them to catch a snake from his house. When they were trying to catch the snake, the latter bit Rishinath on his arm. Both the snake charmers immediately reached the Bangermau community health

centre (CHC) where Dr Sunil Rathaur gave first aid to Rishinath and referred him to the district hospital. Rishinath died as soon as he boarded the ambulance. Colleague Shivnath said they were residents of Manawa village in Kakwan police area of Kanpur. Rishinath (50) used to camp in Araul (Bilhaur) with family members for earning his livelihood by showing snakes to the people. Shivnath said kin of the deceased had been informed about the incident. 'SHRAMDAAN': In honour of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary, Kanpur Metro staff embraced his message by dedicating an hour to 'shramdaan' as part of a cleanliness campaign across all nine metro stations, construction sites and the depot workshop. All officers and employees participated in this initiative. Project Director Arvind Meena led the 'shramdaan' effort alongside Metro staff at Motijheel station. In his message for Gandhi Jayanti, UPMRC Managing

Director Sushil Kumar stated, "Since its inception, UPMRC has wholeheartedly embraced Mahatma Gandhi's principle of 'Swachhta Hi Seva'. We have placed special emphasis on cleanliness in our offices, metro trains, and stations, from the construction stage to operations. Maintaining cleanliness in our surroundings is essential for a healthy lifestyle. Each step we take toward cleanliness contributes to making our entire country cleaner." WORKSHOP: Prof Narendra Mohan, former director, National Sugar Institute (NSI) and a sugar technologist of international fame will make presentations on "Innovative techniques for production of pharma sugar" and "Novel concepts for saving fuel in sugar mills" during the workshop being organised by International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists (ISSCT) from October 6 to 10 at Berlin, Germany. The workshop is being organised on the theme "Innovations in the sugar cane

industry for enhancing sustainability, quality and efficiency". Both the technologies have been tried and trusted on the commercial scale in India and have proved to be of immense utility in enhancing the revenues. While steam saving resulted in huge bagasse saving which is being utilised by the factory in the attached paper mill for production of various quality of papers, production of pharmaceutical grade sugar in another factory has opened a new door for producing premium product which is in great demand specifically by the pharmaceutical industry, said Prof Mohan. Adoption of these technologies can be game-changer for the sugar industry and showcasing of these technologies before at such an international platform will surely help the Indian companies, including technology providers in obtaining business in other sugar producing countries, Prof Mohan added.



# India rejects USCIRF report as political bias

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday took strong exception to a US Commission on International Religious Freedom report claiming worsening religious freedom in the country and said it is a biased organization with a political agenda. Giving this stern reaction here, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said "Our views on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) are well known. It is a biased organisation with a political agenda. It continues to misrepresent facts and peddles a motivated narrative about India. We reject this malicious report, which only serves to discredit USCIRF further. We would urge USCIRF to



desist from such agenda driven efforts. The USCIRF would also be well advised to utilise its time more productively on addressing human rights issues in the

United States." "Newagency PTI reported from Washington a US federal government commission has flagged the alleged worsening of religious freedom in India

and called for it to be designated as a "Country of Particular Concern". Authored by senior policy analyst Sema Hasan, the section on India describes the

use of misinformation and disinformation -- including hate speech by government officials -- to incite violent attacks against religious minorities and their places of worship, the US Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) said in a statement. In its annual report, the USCIRF also recommended that the US Department of State designate India as a "Country of Particular Concern" for engaging in systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom. The state department has so far refrained from accepting the recommendations. "This report highlights how, throughout 2024, individuals have been killed, beaten, and lynched by vigilante groups, religious leaders have been arbitrarily arrested, and homes and places of worship

have been demolished. These events constitute particularly severe violations of religious freedom," the USCIRF said. Beginning with the previous Manmohan Singh-led government, India has consistently denied visas to USCIRF members to visit the country, citing "interference" in its internal affairs, it added. India and several Indian-American groups have in the past accused the USCIRF of biased, unscientific and agenda-driven reporting to malign the country. "It (the report) further describes changes to and enforcement of India's legal framework to target and disenfranchise religious minorities, including the Citizenship Amendment Act, a uniform civil code, and several state-level anti-conversion and cow slaughter laws," the USCIRF said.

# J and K Assembly polls show 69.69 per cent turnout: ECI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Voter turnout of 69.69 per cent has been recorded in third phase of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, with women outnumbering men in casting votes, the Election Commission said on Thursday. Overall, 63.88 per cent turnout has been recorded at polling stations, as against 58.58 per cent in the Lok Sabha polls, the poll panel noted. In phase-three of the polls on October one, when 40 seats went for voting in the Union Territory, the turnout of male voters was recorded at 69.37 per cent as compared to 70.02 per cent of women, the Election Commission (EC) said. Nearly 44 per cent of voters from the third gender

category came to cast their votes in this phase. Referring to the overall turnout, the Election Commission said it stood at 63.88 per cent with male participation recorded at 64.68 per cent. The overall women turnout was recorded at 63.04 per cent and that of the third gender at 38.24 per cent. The final votes polled will be available post-counting with counting of postal ballots. Postal ballots include postal ballots given to service voters, absentee voters (those above 85 years of age, persons with disabilities, those part of essential services) and voters on election duty, the EC noted. Daily account of such postal ballots received, as per established guidelines, are given to all candidates, it said.

# Modi greets people on Navaratri festival

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday greeted people at the start of the auspicious Navaratri festival. "It is my wish that this sacred festival devoted to worshipping shakti is auspicious for everyone," he said in a social media post. The festival is marked by festivities in many parts of the country, while the devout involve themselves in religious practices, including fasting, during the period.

# Indian researchers develop road safety sensor prototype

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A prototype of a road safety sensor that can be implanted at high-risk turning points where accidents are frequent, has been developed by Indian researchers from a new polymer nanocomposite with pressure sensing and energy harvesting properties. The prototype may be implanted in the movable ramp and secured to the road just 100 metres before acute and fatal turning points. Thus, any vehicle approaching from the opposite side will see the signal on a screen and be alerted, according to a statement from the Department of Science and Technology which has funded the project under INSPIRE

-faculty fellowship programme. This prototype works on the principle of piezoelectric effect so it can generate energy that can be stored and used further to power electronic gadgets as well. Developed by the scientists from the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS), Bengaluru, the novel polymer nanocomposite, from which the prototype has been crafted, has been made of transition metal dichalcogenide, Scientists, Ankur Verma, Dr. Arjun Hari Madhu, Dr. Subash Cherumannil Karumuthil synthesised vanadium disulfide (VS2) with a very high surface charge which has the capacity of improving the piezoelectric characteristics of polymers. Polymer nanocomposite films



were prepared by integrating the nanoparticles at various concentrations into a well-known piezoelectric polymer, poly (vinylidene difluoride) (PVDF). Further they investigated how

the surface charge of nanoparticles will affect the piezoelectric properties of polymer nanocomposite. In addition, a laboratory-scale demonstration of a road safety sensor and smart door

was established, with the prototype as a pressure sensor. This study demonstrates that PVDF-VS2 nanocomposites will provide significant value to flexible, long-term energy

generating and pressure sensing applications. This work was recently published in the Journal of Material Chemistry A and an Indian patent application filed. This study is part of an ongoing project "Materials for self-powered energy generating and pressure sensing devices". Scientists are constantly trying to develop new materials for self-powered energy generating and pressure sensing devices and using them for several applications. Flexible, portable, long-lasting, and wearable sensors and energy harvesting devices can play an essential part in today's artificial intelligence era. Polymers and nanoparticles serve critical roles in today's flexible electronic systems, added the statement.

# Modi to address Kautilya economic conclave in Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the Kautilya Economic Conclave here on Friday, his office has said. The third edition of the conclave will be held from October four to six, the PMO said. The conclave will focus on themes such as financing green transition, geo-economic fragmentation and implications for growth, and principles for policy action to preserve resilience. Both Indian and international scholars are slated to discuss some of the most important issues confronting the Indian economy and economies of the Global South, the PMO said.



# India joins IMDRF as affiliate member, enhancing global collaboration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF), a development that will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide while strengthening the "Brand India" in the global market. The Union Health Ministry said on Thursday, the IMDRF, which was established in 2011, is a group of global medical device regulators whose aim is to speed up the adoption of international medical device regulatory harmonisation and convergence. Its members include national regulatory authorities of the US, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the UK, Brazil, Russia, China, South Korea, Singapore and the World Health Organisation (WHO). "To achieve global alignment in its medical device regulatory system, enhance the competitiveness of the domestic industry and boost transnational prominence, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), under the Union Health Ministry, applied for Affiliate Membership in the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) in 2024," the Ministry said in a statement. "After review of India's application for affiliate membership and meeting

discussions by the IMDRF Management Committee (MC) with the senior officers of CDSCO during the 26th Session of IMDRF held in September 2024 at Seattle, Washington, USA, the CDSCO has received approval from IMDRF as an affiliate member of the forum," it said. Becoming an affiliate member of the IMDRF will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide, it said. The membership helps to harmonise regulatory requirements across the globe, which reduces complexities for manufacturers and helps safeguard public health by promoting collaboration, harmonising regulations and promoting convergence. As an affiliate member, India will participate in IMDRF open sessions for information exchange on technical topics with other regulators, to discuss the latest medical device regulatory strategies and trends, provide feedback on its experience and perspectives and use IMDRF documents in part or in whole as the basis for its regulatory framework for medical devices, said the statement. This membership will also enable Indian medical device manufacturers to meet the regulatory requirements of IMDRF member countries, thereby strengthening the "Brand India" in the global market, it said.

# Air Marshal SP Dharkar appointed Vice Chief of Air Staff

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Air Marshal S P Dharkar, an accomplished fighter pilot with 3,600 hours of flying experience, on Thursday assumed charge as Vice Chief of the Air Staff. He succeeds Air Chief Marshal A P Singh who became the Chief of Air Staff on September 30. Air Marshal Dharkar has flown various types of fighter jets and trainer aircraft and commanded a MiG-27 squadron. He is an experienced qualified flying instructor, fighter strike leader and instrument rating instructor. Commissioned in the fighter stream in 1985, he is an alumnus of Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC),



National Defence Academy (NDA), Defence Services Staff College and the US Air War College. He has commanded a frontline fighter unit and served as the first Director General of the Defence Space Agency. Air Marshal Dharkar was serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Air Command prior to taking over as Vice Chief of Air Staff. He has also served

as the assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training) at the air headquarters. As the Director General of the Defence Space Agency (DSA), he was responsible for handling all aspects related to setting up of the new organisation. The DSA would control and oversee all aspects of space exploitation in the military domain by the Indian defence forces.

# Congress demands urgent relief for Bihar flood victims

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over the flood situation in Bihar, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday demanded that the Centre and state government should expedite the relief and rescue operations. According to the disaster management department, the number of people affected by flood has reached 14.62 lakh. "The flood situation in Bihar is becoming terrible. Nearly 15 lakh people in 17 districts are affected by the floods and the news of many deaths in the last few days is extremely painful," Kharge said in a social media post in Hindi. The Congress president said the bridges have collapsed



and the homes of citizens have been destroyed due to the disaster, especially in north Bihar. "We demand from the Centre and state government that the relief and rescue operations should be expedited so that the victims can get immediate help," Kharge said. "We thank the Indian Air Force, NDRF and SDRF teams wholeheartedly for the

help they are providing in these difficult circumstances. But we still need all possible help from the state government agencies," he added. Kharge also urged the Centre to provide adequate compensation to every flood victim and help the state government. The Congress president said the farmers, whose crops have been destroyed should also get compensation. The Congress workers are expected to be ready to serve the victims, he added. According to the state disaster management department, packets of food and other relief materials are being air-dropped by the IAF helicopters in the 17 flood-affected districts.

# Climate change fuels gender-based violence in Bangladesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Thirty-two-year-old Srestha, a mother of three from southern Bangladesh, has long relied on agriculture, cultivating rice and vegetables. However, the increasing frequency of floods due to climate change has dramatically impacted her family's livelihood. With no income, Srestha's husband, Shabbir, became increasingly stressed and frustrated. As months passed without financial relief, Shabbir's mood worsened. He began to lash out at Srestha, blaming her for their situation. What started as verbal arguments escalated into physical violence. Srestha found herself trapped in a cycle of fear and helplessness, often trying to placate Shabbir to avoid further conflict. However, Srestha's precarious situation is not an isolated case. She represents many women facing climate change-induced gender-



based violence which is set to aggravate in near future as impacts of global warming intensifies, as per a new analysis published in the PLOS Climate. A first of its kind analysis based on the data from 156 countries including India between 1993 and 2019 has shown that climate shocks—such as floods, storms, and landslides—are linked to higher rates of intimate partner violence in the two years following such events, particularly in patriarchal societies where violence against women is normalised. The study led by UCL researchers in collaboration with Exeter also shows that violence rates were found to be low in countries having a higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

# Reducing smoking could boost life expectancy: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

If smoking were cut down to just five per cent of current levels by 2050, men could expect an increase in life expectancy by about one year, while women might see an increase of 0.2 years, a recent study published in The Lancet Public Health has said. Achieving the five per cent smoking target could prevent 876 million years of life lost due to premature death, highlighting the profound impact of reducing tobacco use. The study suggests that banning the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products could prevent an estimated 1.2 million lung cancer deaths across 185 countries by 2095. Notably, about two-thirds of these preventable deaths would occur in low- and middle-income countries, where younger populations may be more vulnerable to the effects of tobacco. The researchers analysed the potential benefits of a



tobacco-free generation policy, which aims to restrict tobacco sales to those born after a specific year. This approach, however, has not yet been fully implemented in any country. For instance, noted the study, New Zealand had enacted a law to prohibit the sale of tobacco to individuals born on or after January 1, 2009, but this legislation was repealed earlier this year. Stein Emil Vollset, a senior author of the study from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the

University of Washington, emphasised the critical need to sustain and enhance efforts to reduce smoking rates worldwide. He noted that the potential for avoiding millions of premature deaths underscores the importance of comprehensive tobacco control policies. The study's estimates regarding preventable deaths were derived from analysing the implications of banning tobacco sales on lung cancer mortality among people born between 2006 and 2010.

"We must not lose momentum in efforts to reduce, and ultimately eliminate smoking around the world. Our findings highlight that millions of premature deaths could be avoided by bringing an end to smoking," said Vollset. Commenting on the study's observation, a representative from Mothers Against Vaping, a united front of concerned mothers combating the escalating vaping crisis asserted that there is a need to highlight health hazards of New-Age Gateway devices like e-cigarettes, vapes, and heat-not-burn devices for India to meet its tobacco control goals for the youth. In fact, the authors of the Lancet study have advocated for not only maintaining existing tobacco control measures but also implementing new strategies to address the ongoing risks associated with smoking which are major reasons for many preventable diseases including cancers.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## The caste contest

Haryana elections will be a tight contest. The BJP-JJP alliance breakup and Congress rebels have added uncertainty to it

As Haryana heads to the polls on October 5, 2024, the political landscape is marked by intense competition and shifting alliances. This election holds importance as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had formed a government in 2019 with the support of Dushyant Chautala's Jannayak Janata Party (JJP), is now contesting alone. The breakup of the BJP-JJP alliance has left the BJP in a precarious position, governing as a minority until the upcoming elections. The ruling party, which is contesting without its former ally, the JJP, is focusing on its development agenda, highlighting its work on infrastructure, education and women's safety. However, the party faces challenges, especially in rural areas, where discontent over issues like agricultural reforms remains strong. The Congress is positioning itself as the main alternative to the BJP. Led by Bhupinder Singh Hooda, the party is banking on strong support in rural areas, especially among Jat voters and hopes to capitalise on dissatisfaction with the BJP government. Dushyant Chautala is attempting to redefine his party's narrative, distancing himself from the BJP's policies and advocating for farmer-friendly reforms.



Another unpredictable player is Aam Aadmi Party which is contesting in Haryana with renewed vigour. AAP is aiming to replicate its success in neighbouring Punjab. The party is focusing on issues such as healthcare, education and anti-corruption measures, appealing primarily to urban voters. A strong contender of yesteryears, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) led by Abhay Singh Chautala has joined hands with Bahujan Samaj Party. But the agrarian sector remains a pivotal issue in Haryana, especially after the farmers' protests against the now-repealed agricultural laws. Farmers' resentment towards the government has not entirely subsided, and the opposition parties, particularly Congress and JJP, are using this to mobilise rural voters. Besides, Haryana has one of the highest unemployment rates in India. Both the BJP and Congress have promised to address the issue, with the BJP touting its industrial initiatives and the Congress proposing new employment schemes. But all said and done, it is the caste politics which decides who rules the State. The traditional Jat-non-Jat divide continues to shape Haryana's political landscape. The BJP, which has traditionally garnered support from non-Jat communities, faces the challenge of consolidating this base while the JJP and Congress focus on winning over Jat voters. Caste dynamics have always been a significant factor in Haryana's political landscape, deeply influencing voter behaviour and electoral outcomes. Jats, who make up approximately 25-30 per cent of Haryana's population, are the state's most politically influential caste group. The Congress, under Hooda, is attempting to bridge the gap between Jats and non-Jats by emphasising its rural-urban development plans but is plagued by rebels. The outcome of the elections will be favourable to the party which manages the complex caste matrix of the state well.

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### PICTALK



A man makes red handprints on a wall as part of a tradition on the first day of the 'Navratri' festival, in Ahmedabad PTI

## Online gaming industry needs regulation and govt support

A balanced, collaborative approach between the government and the online gaming industry is essential for responsible and sustainable growth

The online gaming industry in India is experiencing rapid growth but is often misinterpreted as being synonymous with gambling. This misconception fuels concerns about problem gambling and social harm, leading to a negative narrative surrounding the sector. In reality, much of the harm stems from illegal offshore betting and gambling platforms, which further exacerbate this misrepresentation. Every industry influences society in various ways, and it is the responsibility of regulatory frameworks to strike a balance—supporting legitimate enterprises while effectively curbing illegal activities. Conflating online gaming with gambling risks undermining an industry that is growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.68 per cent on a base of USD 3.49 billion. This sector contributes significantly to job creation and tax revenues in India. With 83 per cent of the world's gamers, India boasts 568 million users and registered over 9.5 billion gaming app downloads in 2023. Real Money Games



alone contributed 60 per cent of their revenues to the Indian exchequer in FY 2023-24. Misunderstanding the online gaming industry as gambling could jeopardize its potential for economic growth and its contributions to national development. Regulators must prioritise cracking down on offshore and illegal businesses and apps that operate in violation of Indian law. Measures such as whitelisting legitimate platforms, and initiating legal actions against those facilitating illegal activities are crucial. Steps like freezing the bank accounts of operators and intermediaries, and working with financial institutions to block transactions tied to illegal gambling, are urgently needed. Practical enforcement challenges cannot be an excuse for inaction, as the

risks are significant. A coordinated effort involving the Ministry of Finance, Information Technology, Home Affairs, and Consumer Affairs is essential, with each department playing a critical role in enforcement and raising public awareness about the legal implications of supporting illegal operations. Without robust enforcement and heightened awareness, illegal gambling platforms will not only make Indian citizens vulnerable to gambling addiction but also siphon their hard-earned money into criminal networks. The profits from illegal gambling often fund organised crime, money laundering, and terrorism, with global examples linking gambling profits to drug trafficking and terrorist financing. This not only destabilises local economies but poses a serious threat to national security. As the government takes strict action against illegal gambling, it must also work closely with the legitimate gaming industry to differentiate between legal online gaming and illegal gambling. Such a partnership would not only help clear the negative perceptions but also sup-

port the industry's growth. This collaboration could further enhance the crackdown on illegal gambling through combined awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts. Finally, the government and the gaming industry must work together to develop a responsible gaming framework. This should include self-exclusion tools, age verification systems, game time monitoring, and partnerships with mental health experts. By promoting responsible gaming, the industry can ensure ethical practices, protect consumers from addiction, and foster a sustainable, well-regulated gaming ecosystem in India. A balanced approach that differentiates legitimate online gaming from illegal gambling, alongside stronger enforcement measures, is vital for the sustainable growth of online gaming industry. With govt and industry collaboration, responsible gaming practices can be promoted, ensuring the sector's positive contributions to economic growth and job creation. (The writer is a partner at AP & Partners; views are personal)



ARJUN SINHA

## BJP strives hard to imbibe 'integral humanism'

As the BJP marks Deendayal Upadhyaya's 108th birth anniversary, it faces the challenge of aligning his "Integral Humanism" ideals with modern governance



K S TOMAR

On the occasion of the 108th birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyaya, a founding figure of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and the proponent of "Integral Humanism," the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) finds itself reflecting on how closely it has adhered to his visionary ideals. Upadhyaya's philosophy focused on a holistic approach to human well-being, emphasising decentralisation, indigenous culture, self-reliance, and ethical governance. Though the BJP has embraced these principles rhetorically, transforming them into practical realities remains a formidable challenge.

**Economic Ideals vs Modern Policies:** Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision of economic self-reliance and decentralisation stands in contrast to India's current globalised and capital-driven economic policies, particularly those introduced since the liberalisation reforms of the 1990s. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP has focused on economic growth through increased foreign direct investment (FDI), free-market reforms, and privatisation. Critics argue that this approach clashes with Upadhyaya's idea of a self-reliant economy, which emphasises supporting rural and local industries, creating jobs at the grassroots level, and minimising dependence on foreign capital.

**Balancing Indigenous Culture and Globalisation:** Deendayal Upadhyaya advocated for the preservation and promotion of India's indigenous culture, even as the nation embraced modern advancements. Striking this balance has been a delicate task for the BJP. On one hand, the party emphasises cultural pride, nationalism, and traditional values, promoting initiatives like Ayurveda and yoga on the global stage. On the other hand, India's integration into the global economy, alongside the rise of modern lifestyle trends and technology, risks diluting the deeper cultural roots Upadhyaya sought to preserve. The BJP has been critiqued for veering toward an exclusionary



cultural nationalism, which may diverge from Upadhyaya's more inclusive vision.

**Ethical Governance vs Corruption:** A key tenet of Upadhyaya's philosophy was the need for ethical governance, marked by integrity, honesty, and service to the people. While BJP leaders, including Modi, have presented themselves as champions of clean governance, the party has faced allegations of corruption, crony capitalism, and favouritism toward large corporations. Such accusations, particularly regarding land acquisition policies and privatisation, have cast doubt on the party's commitment to Upadhyaya's ethical standards.

**Inclusive Society vs Polarisation:** Upadhyaya's vision of an inclusive society focused on addressing the needs of all communities, ensuring harmony across social and religious divides. However, the BJP has often been criticised for promoting divisive politics, particularly along religious lines. Reconciling Hindu-driven politics with the ideals of inclusion and social harmony remains a central challenge for the BJP as it seeks to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality.

**Antyodaya - Uplifting the Last Person:** One of Upadhyaya's most important principles, Antyodaya, focuses on uplifting the most marginalised in society. The BJP has made significant strides in this area through its welfare schemes such as the PM Ujjwala Yojana (providing LPG to rural households), the PM Awas Yojana (affordable housing), and the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (improving sanitation). The BJP has adopted this principle through various campaigns, such as the global celebration of Yoga Day, the promotion of Indian languages, and the reassertion of India's historical achievements. **Political Decentralisation:** A core aspect of Upadhyaya's philosophy was decentralising power, ensuring governance was closer to the people. The BJP's emphasis on cooperative federalism and policies such as GST and the creation of NITI Aayog are steps in this direction. Moreover, the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system and the Jan Dhan Yojana have empowered citizens by reducing middlemen and ensuring that subsidies and welfare benefits reach the people directly. Self-Reliance through Atmanirbhar Bharat; The Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) initiative, launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, resonates with Upadhyaya's emphasis on self-



UNDER PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI, THE BJP HAS FOCUSED ON ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH INCREASED FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI), FREE-MARKET REFORMS, AND PRIVATISATION. THIS APPROACH CLASHES WITH UPADHYAYA'S IDEA OF A SELF-RELIANT ECONOMY

reliance. The promotion of local manufacturing, domestic industries, and efforts to reduce dependence on foreign goods align with his philosophy. The "Make in India" initiative, a key aspect of this vision, has made strides in boosting domestic production and job creation. However, the globalised nature of modern economics makes it challenging to fully realize a self-reliant economy.

**Striving toward Upadhyaya's Vision:** As the ruling party, the BJP's journey in adopting and implementing Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideals has been a mixture of successes and challenges. While considerable progress has been made in promoting nationalism, self-reliance, and Antyodaya, the party faces significant hurdles in achieving true economic decentralisation, upholding ethical governance, and fostering social harmony.

The complexities of modern governance, global economic integration, and political strategies often pull the BJP away from Upadhyaya's pure vision. However, the ideals of Integral Humanism remain a guiding light, challenging the party to strike a balance between philosophical ideals and contemporary realities in their pursuit of a better India. (Writer is a political analyst and strategic affairs columnist based in Shimla; views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### DECLINE OF GANDHIAN IDEALS

Madam — Since the Mahatma was an epitome of confidence and possessed an international mindset, he didn't treat the hymns of the Scottish gem "Abide with me" as threat enough to get blown off his feet! Rather, he allowed the window of his mind to let in the breeze of all possible cultures around the globe, including the evergreen Henry Francis Lyte classic. It is indeed a matter of utmost disgrace to notice the closure of minds in the country of Mahatma Gandhi—the epitome of liberal values and humanitarian thoughts with an all-embracing mindset.

Not to forget Gandhi's cardinal call: "Recall the face of the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything from it? Will it restore him to control over his own life and destiny? Will it lead to 'swaraj' for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?" Do the faces of any weak man get recalled today amidst the zealous trumpet of India being 'Viswaguru' (fast marching towards the status of "world's third largest economy") being beaten like a maniac! When none other than the Gandhians find themselves cornered and marginalised in the very state and den of Mahatma Gandhi himself (Sabarmati Ashram, Gujarat), rest assured about the fate of his values, ethics and humanitarian thoughts in the rest of the country!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

#### FLOODS HITS BIHAR

Madam— The rain in Nepal is wreaking havoc in Bihar. While 170 people have died in Nepal due to continuous heavy rains, floods and landslides, the terrible form of flooding is being seen in Bihar. In view of the flood, all 56 gates of Birpur Vairaj of the Kosi River and all 36 gates of Balmiki Nagar Vairaj of the Gandak River have been opened. This is not a disaster. It is a tragedy that

## India's triumph in Kanpur



Team India creates Test history on October 1. Kudos to Team India for defeating Bangladesh by 7 wickets on the fifth day of Kanpur Test and winning the Test series by

2-0. Team India has set a record of never losing to Bangladesh so far and has created a record on home ground by achieving a thrilling victory in the 18th series. With this extremely brilliant and powerful performance of Team India, India has reached the top position in the ICC World Test Championship table (WTC).

Yashasvi Jaiswal scored his second half-century with great skill and scored 51 runs to win the title of 'Player of the Match'. Bangladesh's so-called opening batsman Shadman Islam and former captain Mushfiqur Rahim were forced to kneel in front of Indian bowlers. India's next match with Bangladesh will be in the 3 T20 match series from October 6. It is hoped that Team India will be successful in maintaining its magical status.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

is repeated every year. Bihar floods are writing the story of new misery and devastation every year; it is a serious humanitarian crisis. But no permanent solution has been found so far. How long will people continue to bear this pain? People are losing their homes, land, and loved ones. How many more lives will be lost, and how many more dreams will be shattered? However, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar said that full attention is being paid to the flood at every level. All kinds of relief and rescue operations are being arranged. To stop this, the government should make immediate arrangements on a war footing. For which a permanent solution is needed so that this disaster is not faced in the future.

Anshu Bharti | Begusarai

#### KARNATAKA LAND SCANDAL

Madam — Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife, BM Parvathi, said she would return the 14 plots she received in exchange for her undeveloped land.

However, the return policy, seen as Siddaramaiah flipping, might actually be counter-productive. The Muda case pertains to allegations that compensatory sites were allotted to BM Parvathi in an upmarket area in Mysuru that had a higher property value as compared to the location of her land that had been "acquired" by the authority.

Siddaramaiah, BM Parvathi, Mallikarjuna Swamy, and one Devaraju were named in an FIR registered by the Mysuru-based Lokayukta police on September 27. This came after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) initiated a probe against her, Siddaramaiah, and her brother, Mallikarjuna Swamy, in what has now become popular as the Muda scam. Parvathi, the wife of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, has returned 14 plots of land to Muda. Thus, Siddaramaiah shot himself in the foot for gaining more wealth using power politics.

CK Subramania | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com





## FIRST COLUMN

## REBALANCING THE GLOBAL ORDER

The escalating missile strikes between Israel and Iran threaten regional stability in West Asia



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The escalating situation in India's extended neighbourhood is threatening internal security for the region. The recent elimination of several top Hezbollah commanders, especially the killing of its top leader Hassan Nasrallah, by Israel, and Iranian missiles raining on Israeli territory is likely to widen the crisis in West Asia. PM Modi realised the sensitivity of the situation and immediately made a phone call to their Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu. Indian PM's message to Israel was "the crucial need for preventing regional escalation and the safe release of all hostages, terrorism has no place in any form and manifestation and India stands ready to support early restoration of peace and stability." Last month on the sidelines of the Summit of Future in New York, the PM met the President of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas. A press statement released after the meeting read "The Prime Minister reiterated India's time-tested principled position on the Israel-Palestine issue, and called for ceasefire, release of hostages and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. He stressed that only a two State solution will deliver enduring peace and stability in the region. Recalling that India was one of the first countries to recognise Palestine, he conveyed India's continued support to Palestine membership of the UN." Even as the Indian PM was holding bilateral with several global leaders in the US, the newly appointed head of the interim government of Bangladesh Muhammad Yunus was getting a much-needed pat on his back from Western leaders. Yunus during his US trip met the US President Joe Biden, former President Bill Clinton, US Secretary of State, Canadian PM, President of the European Union, heads of the World



Bank and ADB. He topped it up by having an unusually warm meeting with Pakistan's PM, where he expressed the desire to deepen their bilateral ties and revive the regional body SAARC. For India, these ties could potentially lead Pakistan and China to use this newfound bonhomie with Bangladesh to push its subversive agenda against India. Almost on cue External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in his remarks at the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York spoke on rebalancing the global order. He said "Rebalancing a global order which started with 51 founding members of the United Nations, which has quadrupled in the last eight decades, where you not only have more independent countries in the world, but the economic, political and even demographic weight of individual members of the global order has shifted, shifted to a point where many of us believe that today we are actually at an inflection."

The minister carefully brought multipolarity and plurilateralism in same address while trying to define the evolving global order. He said "Today, we are looking really at a global landscape which is much more regional, which is, as I said, much more characterised by countries who have their strong interests and which have the ability to pursue that interest. And so a lot of what we see in terms of the world is really how does the politics of convergence of the world is really how does the politics of convergence play out. And a third word which would occur to me is 'plurilateralism'. It's a very ugly word, but it in a sense describes a world beyond bilateral relations but which are short of multilateral. That where countries form combinations based on these convergences and overlaps that I've talked about. And you have really this phenomenon of groups of countries coming together for often a limited agenda, sometimes in an agreed theatre to pursue their interests." The recent global events and India's measured stance on several of these reflect what the EAM spoke about in New York, and a rebalance is underway. (The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

Previously, ration cards were issued by the government to provide food grains and other rations to the poor at subsidised rates. However, when workers moved to another state, they often lost access to these benefits, particularly in more developed states like Gujarat. With this new system, that issue is resolved, adding another significant chapter to this revolutionary initia-

Union Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution, Nimuben Bambhaniya, recently inaugurated Gujarat's first grain ATM in Bhavnagar, facilitating 24/7 ration distribution under the Central Government's Public Distribution System (PDS). The grain ATM, called Annapoorti, was installed in the Karchaliapara area of Bhavnagar city to free the poor from India's outdated, bureaucratic ration distribution system. According to Minister Bambhaniya, the grain ATM represents a global success story. She expressed pride in the Annapoorti scheme, a globally awarded solution developed in India, which is set to be operational in multiple states. Based on a year-long pilot program, the Annapoorti technology, developed by WFP India, is an important step toward improving food security and ensuring that people receive their rations efficiently and accurately. The new system allows people to obtain their ration from any PDS shop, reducing dependence on shop owners and minimising corruption. After the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system, the biggest beneficiaries of grain ATMs will be migrant laborers and disadvantaged communities who live outside their home states for extended periods or are unable to reach grain shops. For



instance, if someone from Bihar or Uttar Pradesh trav-

els to Delhi or Mumbai for work, they will be able to easily access ration from PDS shops or ATMs in those cities. The 2011 census reported that about 4.1 crore people had migrated to other states for work. The Aadhaar numbers of family members on over 85 per cent of the country's ration cards are registered, enabling them to use the ATM system. India runs one of the world's largest food-based safety nets, providing subsidised grains to around 813 million people every month through a network of over 500,000 fair price shops (FPS). This initiative is key to the partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme to enhance food

security. ATMs will be installed across the state, offering 24/7 access to food grains under the National Food Security Act. The Annapurna Yojana allows anyone with a valid PDS ration card, regardless of their state or union territory, to access their entitlements. The ATM can deliver up to 50 kg of grain in just five minutes, reducing waiting time by 70 percent. Once biometric authentication with an Aadhaar card is complete, users will have continuous access to their entire ration. The modular design of the ATM allows for easy assembly based on the available space. Additionally, Annapoorti is energy-efficient and can be connected to solar panels for automa-

tic refilling. The grain ATM is designed to distribute wheat and rice and includes a tank with a capacity to hold 2,500 kg of grains, according to an official release. Officials explained that individuals covered under the National Food Security Act can visit the grain ATM at any time, punch in their ration card, authenticate their identity using the fingerprint scanner, and collect their monthly ration. However, there is speculation that the grain ATM in Bhavnagar could also be used to attract migrant voters in the upcoming assembly elections. (The writer is a senior journalist; views expressed are personal)

## How global powers exploit democratic ideals



V K BAHUGUNA

From the overthrow of governments to the double standards in addressing terrorism, democracy has been reduced to a fashionable tool of manipulation by global superpowers



One of the remarkable characteristics of the modern era is reflected in the progress of democracy, and the rise of nation-states. The modern era in the real sense started after the end of the Second World War with the establishment of the United Nations (UN) on October 25, 1945 at the end of the San Francisco conference which was attended by 50 countries and the UN Charter was adopted. The United Nations is the global diplomatic and political platform for ensuring international peace, progress and security. The democratic form of governance, freedom, equality and dignity of humanity is the cornerstone of the modern era. In this regard, world leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King played a very vital role in ending colonial rule in Asia, Africa and other such countries.

Since then world leaders swear by the power of the masses in democracy and the rule of the elected leaders. The UN Security Council assumes the role of overseeing the peace and security of the world, especially the five Veto yielding countries China, Britain, France, Russia and the United States yield enormous clout in the Security Council. However, the Veto power in practice and particularly is used by these powers for thwarting any issue if one of them does not like it due to their geo-political interests and international alliance.

More than 80 years after the establishment of the UN, the world is still in the grip of intense conflicts and the noble objectives of the UN for ensuring world peace and security are lost in the realpolitik of big powers which smacks of hypocrisy and inherent bias. There are several examples of the derailing of the true democratic edifice of the world's governments, especially in third-world countries by the United States and Western powers. A recent example is dethroning of Sheikh Hasina Wazed's government in Bangladesh a classical example of hypocrisy by America and its allies.

Similarly, in dealing with terrorism the white race has double standards. I can kill



MORE THAN 80 YEARS AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN, THE WORLD IS STILL IN THE GRIP OF INTENSE CONFLICTS AND THE NOBLE OBJECTIVES OF THE UN FOR ENSURING WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY ARE LOST IN THE REALPOLITIK OF BIG POWERS WHICH SMACKS OF HYPOCRISY AND INHERENT BIAS

my terrorist anywhere in the world like America did to Osama Bin Laden and Khalistani terrorists and protagonists are provided with a platform to bash up India recently when the American President and Bill Clinton former President hosted and hailed Muhammad Yunus as a saviour of democracy and human rights a few weeks ago with the promise of full support. Mr Yunus heads the puppet interim Government of Bangladesh as Chief Advisor. The world is asking America the lone super power is it permissible to oust a government by engineering well-orchestrated violent agitation. When the Indian Prime Minister was in the USA last month the Khalistani leaders were hosted by the white house. Every such thing is done in the name of democracy.

If this is allowed at the international level then any government can be ousted by the frustrated opposition in league with foreign powers. Is it, not neo-colonialism being practised under the nose of the United Nations itself? Though the Hasina government might have committed some blunders after all, it was an elected government and the world should not support such illegal seizure of power by students origin well-planned violent agitations. United States, China and the Western bloc have been supporting such regimes routinely in African countries and Pakistan and Bangladesh for the past several decades.

The anger against such hypocrisy of world leaders is growing and if the modern era has to survive the third world war which in any case is undergoing a different pattern in Europe and the West Asia, the people have to junk this system of the United Nations which is becoming a talking machine, a burden on resources and sub-serving the

geo-political undemocratic stance of powerful countries making a mockery of the lofty UN Charter. The democracy Western leaders in UN practice can aptly be termed as 'Fashionable Democracy'. This fashionable democracy is a tool to perpetuate and support all kind of undemocratic regimes that comes to power in the name of democracy, human rights and liberty. These lofty goals are being pooh-poohed by the powerful countries. There are talks about deep states interfering in the affairs of the countries to upset the ruling regimes that do not fall in line. In this regard, the non-state actors play a significant role though the national governments may not be promoting it directly but in the name of democracy, many outsiders do influence the government.

The Indo-US relations built steadily after the end of the cold war during the last 25 years are a shining example of two democratic governments ensuring a global alliance of strategic importance to thwart the attempts of Chinese ambitions to browbeat other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. But the Cold War psychology of the white house is still promoting countries inimical to democratic values in the Indian sub-continent especially Pakistan which is ruled by the Army with a proxy government.

This may derail the India-USA strategic relationship. Even Sheikh Hasina opined that her government was toppled after she refused to part with San Martin Island to the United States. China instead of supporting India, with which it has cultural affinity as well as trade interests, supports and aids Pakistan and has been fomenting trouble in the North-East and Ladakh for a long time with its expansionist vision and is a poten-

tial threat to world peace. Thus, it is a clear indication that the geopolitics of the world needs a serious rethink. If one analysis the sequence of events over the past 80 years or so the main reason for such behaviour of powerful countries is due to the patently undemocratic nature of assigning the Veto power to winners of the Second World War.

As for democracy, I would appropriately call it fashionable democracy to fool the people around the world in the name of democracy and liberty and this disease is also spreading in most of the countries all over the world including India where democracy has given way to Dynastic Democracy. The state of present day democracies was aptly forecasted by Socrates the ancient Greek Philosopher who said more than 2000 years ago that 'Democracies would elect Demagogues'. India is a glaring example of such leaders in states who pander to this and skilfully use democracies to perpetuate their family interests in power games and practising vote bank politics.

The Father of Athenian democracy was Cleisthenes who lived from 570 BC to 508 BC and who as Chief Magistrate successfully imposed democracy in the Athens assembly against the nobles hence is appropriately called as Father of World Democracy must be weeping in his grave seeing how democracy is being run by the world leaders and thus people of the modern era in the 21st Century. Is it, not food for thought for all of us who believe in true democracy because there is no alternative to true democracy like the ancient Indian panchayats system? At least India should reform from within and then lead the rest of the world.

(The writer is a former civil servant; views are personal)

## One Nation, One Ration: Revolutionising food security with 24/7 grain ATMs

These grain ATMs are a major step in India's fight against hunger. Biometric authentication and Aadhaar-linked portability ensures streamlined distribution

Since June 1, 2020, under the Modi administration, the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system has been implemented across India, marking the beginning of a revolutionary scheme. Its purpose is to provide food grains to the poor, particularly those who migrate from one state to another, through a single ration card. Initially, the system was launched in two clusters comprising four states (Andhra Pradesh-Telangana and Maharashtra-Gujarat). Even then, work was underway on inter-state ration card portability in other states. The government claimed that the common people would benefit most from this scheme.



# Cabinet confers Classical Language status to five more languages

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a clamour for classical status for many languages, the Union Cabinet on Thursday approved a proposal conferring status of Classical Language to Marathi (Maharashtra), Pali and Prakrit (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh) Assamese (Assam) and Bengali languages (Bengal) involving six states. The Union Cabinet has also approved the proposal of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs for Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase-II comprising three corridors. The total length of the approved lines will be 118.9 km with 128 stations. The project completion cost is Rs.63,246 crore and is planned to be completed by 2027. Once Phase-II is fully operational, the Chennai city will have a total Metro Rail network of 173 km.

According to the cabinet decision, the six languages which presently enjoy classical language status are Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Malayalam (2013), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008) and Odia (2014). The Classical Languages serve as a custodian of Bharat's profound and ancient cultural heritage, embodying the essence of each community's historical and cultural milestone. The inclusion of languages as Classical Language will create significant employment opportunities, particularly in academic and research fields. Additionally, the preservation, documentation, and digitization of ancient texts of these languages will generate jobs in archiving, translation, publishing, and digital media. According to a statement, a proposal from the Maharashtra Government in 2013 was received in the Ministry requesting Classical

Language status to Marathi, which was forwarded to the LEC. The LEC recommended Marathi for Classical Language. During the inter-ministerial consultations on the draft note for cabinet in 2017 for conferring classical status to the Marathi language, MHA advised to revise the criteria and make it stricter. PMO vide its comment stated that the Ministry may conduct an exercise to find out how many other languages are likely to become eligible. In the meantime, proposal from Bihar, Assam, West Bengal was also received for conferring status of Classical Language to Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali. The Ministry of Education has taken various steps to promote Classical Languages. Three Central Universities were established in 2020 through an Act of Parliament for promotion of Sanskrit language. The Central



Institute of Classical Tamil was set up to facilitate the translation of ancient Tamil texts, promote research and offer courses for University students and language scholars of Tamil. To further

enhance the study and preservation of Classical Languages, the Centres for Excellence for studies in Classical Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia were established under the auspices

of the Central Institute of Indian Languages in Mysuru. In addition to these initiatives, several national and international awards have been instituted to recognize and encourage achievements

in the field of Classical Languages. Benefits extended to Classical Languages by the Ministry of Education include National Awards for Classical Languages, Chairs in Universities, and Centers for promotion of Classical Languages. The Cabinet has also approved two major schemes -- PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and Krishonnati Yojana -- with an expenditure of over Rs 1 lakh crore to promote sustainable agriculture and ensure food security. The Cabinet approved the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) to promote sustainable agriculture and Krishonnati Yojana (KY) to achieve food security for self-sufficiency. The combined total expenditure will be Rs 1,01,321.61 crore, the government said in a post on social media platform X. "Cabinet approved rationalisation of all centrally

sponsored schemes operating under Ministry of Agriculture into two umbrella scheme," it added. The government on Thursday approved National Mission on Edible Oils-Oilseeds with an outlay of Rs 10,103 crore to make India self-sufficient in cooking oils. India imports more than 50 per cent of its annual edible oil requirement. "With an aim to make India self-reliant in oilseed production in next 7 years, Cabinet approves National Mission on Edible Oils ? Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds) for 2024-25 to 2030-31 with outlay of Rs 10,103 crore," the government said on social media platform X. The mission aims to increase primary oilseed production from 39 million tonnes in 2022-23 to 69.7 million tonnes by 2030-31, the government said. "It seeks to extend oilseed cultivation by an additional 40 lakh hectares," it added.

## SC sets aside caste-based provisions of prison manuals of many states

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday set aside caste-based discriminatory provisions of prison manuals of around 11 States while deprecating the practice of distribution of work and segregation of prisoners in separate wards on basis of their castes. The top court also directed the states to amend their prison manuals within three months. "State has a positive obligation to prevent such discriminations," a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra held while issuing a slew of directions to abolish caste-based discrimination inside jails. "All such provisions are held to be unconstitutional. All the states are directed to make changes (in prison manuals) in accordance with the judgment. "The references to habitual offenders shall be in reference to the habitual offender legislations and all such references of habitual offenders in state prison manuals are declared as unconstitutional if they are based on castes," the CJ said while pronouncing the verdict in a packed courtroom. The top court also took suo motu cognizance of the instances of caste-based discrimination inside prisons and directed the apex court

registry to list it with a title of "In re: Discrimination Inside Prisons" after three months. The Chief Justice said the PIL challenged the provisions of state prison manuals on the grounds of them being discriminatory. The CJ said there are divisions of manual labour, barracks inside jails in some states on the basis of identity of the prisoners. "We have said that the criminal laws of the colonial era impacts even the post colonial period...The constitutional laws must uphold equality and dignity of citizens," he said. "We have also dealt (in the judgement) with the concept of emancipation, equality and the fight against caste-based discrimination and said it cannot be won overnight," he said. This court is making a contribution to the ongoing struggle against caste-based discrimination and the judgement has dealt with aspects of non-discrimination under Article 14 (right to equality) under the Constitution, the CJ said. Based on the analysis of the judgment certain anti-discrimination principles emerge and such instances can be both "direct, indirect" and stereotypes they can further such discriminations, he said. "State has a positive obligation to prevent the same and the courts have to adjudicate claims of indirect and systemic discrimination...Not

providing dignity to prisoners is a relic of colonial period where they were dehumanised and the Constitution mandates that prisoners have to be treated humanely and prison system must be aware of mental and physical state of prisoners," the judgement said. The verdict said the states will be held liable if the prisoners are being made to do inhuman work and treated inhumanely. "Hatred and contempt towards the castes showed inherent and pervasive bias towards such castes. The colonial history indicates that social hierarchy was imbibed in their administration," the CJ said. Discrimination against the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the de-notified tribes have continued and the courts have to ensure there is implementation of protective legislations and ensure that marginalised people do not suffer, the judgement said. "We have held that the Constitution recognizes that SCs, STs for protective discrimination...Castes cannot be used to discriminate against the marginalised ones," the CJ said. There cannot be such a discrimination between prisoners and their segregation based on their castes will not lead to their rehabilitation and such a practice does not survive the

test of "intelligible differentia", the verdict said. "We have held that assigning cleaning and sweeping work to marginalised and assigning cooking to higher caste is nothing but violation of Article 15 (it forbids discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, gender, or place of birth or any of them)," the CJ said. The bench referred to an Uttar Pradesh law which provides that a person undergoing simple imprisonment will not work in degrading and menial work unless his caste is used to do such jobs. "We hold that no group is born as a scavenger class or to do or not do menial jobs. The classes who can cook and who cannot cook are aspects of untouchability which cannot be permitted...Sweepers should be chosen from 'chandal' caste is nothing but entirely opposed to substantive equality and a facet of institutional discrimination. "The prisoners shall not be permitted to undertake cleaning of sewers tanks in hazardous conditions," it said while ordering that the police will have to work in earnest to deal with the cases of caste-based discriminations. The apex court had in January this year sought responses from the Centre and 11 states, including Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, on a plea filed by Sukanya Shantha, a native of Kalyan in Maharashtra.

## BJP proposes renaming Sealdah station after Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There are credible reports that a section of Bengal BJP has started lobbying for rechristening Sealdah Railway Station as Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Railway Station a la Deen Dayal Upadhyay Railway Station. The proposal to change the name of the country's sixth oldest railway station after Mumbai VT, Howrah, Chennai, Kanpur and Vadodara was given by BJP Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya before Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav during his visit to Kolkata on Wednesday. "But what is in a name?" asked Trinamool Congress' Kunal Ghosh who wondered why the name of only Mukherjee and why not Swami Vivekananda who lived nearby, barely a mile or two away from the Station at Shimla Street should be considered. "Why the station should not be named after Swami Vivekananda because after returning from his glorious trip to Chicago his ship came to Budge Budge from where he took a train to Sealdah It is from this place where thousands of young people assembled and dragged his cart by hand," Ghosh said. However according to Bhattacharya, "When lakhs of



beaten and uprooted refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan thronged Sealdah Station post Partition it was Dr Mukherjee who stood by them and their cause I will request the honourable Railway Minister to consider renaming Sealdah Station after Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee." Historically speaking: British architect Walter Glanville in 1869 designed the Sealdah Main Railway Station as it stands today pursuing a Victorian-Gothic form. Sealdah which has 20 platforms today had only four in 1862 standing out amidst muddy, marshy and potholed

vicinity. It was a part of the East Bengal Railway and then Assam Bengal Railway set up in 1857 for the sake of establishing connectivity with northern and southern Bengal which then comprised a large province including Bihar, Odisha and portions of the present North East. Incidentally there was a tram terminus located just outside Sealdah Station before the year 1978 from where the concept of horse tram carriage started. Historically speaking Sealdah owes its name to Sealdahi or a village infested by jackals. In fact the station itself was built clearing a huge Pipal tree surrounded with bushes,

swamps and marshes and heavily colonized by jackals on two sides of the great Maratha Ditch (a canal) that surrounded the city and where today runs the Upper and Lower Circular Roads more lately called the Acharya Prafulla Chandra (APC) Road and Acharya Jagadish Chandra (AJC) Road. The Maratha Ditch was dug up to prevent Maratha invasions in those days. So historically today's Sealdah Station stands by the Maratha Ditch so to say. The Maratha Ditch could not however prevent Bengal Nawab Siraj ud Daulah from invading Kolkata in 1756 when he crossed the mighty canal and attacked the British garrison "causing a great loss to the white men's families by bundling about 64 of them including women inside an underground chamber leading to 43 deaths." Others however, put the figure to 146 captured and 123 dead. Sealdah stood witness to the brief but cruel battle between the Nawab and the British who avenged the cruelly post Battle of Plassey by allowing Siraj to be cut into pieces and ferried about the Murshidabad town on a bullock cart. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that his ministry was contemplating a Rs 60,000-crore investment schemes in Bengal and was awaiting the cooperation of the

## Israeli hits Hezbollah...

From page 1

In a separate development, the Israeli military ordered the evacuation of villages and towns in southern Lebanon that are north of a United Nations-declared buffer zone established after the 2006 war. The warnings issued Thursday signalled a possible broadening of Israel's incursion into southern Lebanon, which until now has been confined to areas close to the border. At least eight Israeli soldiers were killed in clashes with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, where Israel announced the start of what it says is a limited ground incursion earlier this week. The region was meanwhile bracing for Israeli retaliation following an Iranian ballistic missile attack. In a separate development, Iran-backed Houthis rebels in Yemen said they had launched two drones at Tel Aviv overnight. The military said it identified two drones off the coast of the bustling metropolitan area, shooting one of them down while the other fell in the Mediterranean Sea. The escalating violence in Lebanon has opened a second front in the war between Israel and Iran-backed militants that began nearly a year ago with Hamas' surprise Oct 7 attack from the Gaza Strip into Israel. The Israeli military said Thursday that it killed a senior Hamas leader in an airstrike in the Gaza Strip around three months ago. It said that a strike on an

underground compound in northern Gaza killed Rawhi Mushtaha and two other Hamas commanders. There was no immediate comment from Hamas. Mushtaha was a close associate of Yahya Sinwar, the top leader of Hamas who helped mastermind the Oct 7 attack. Sinwar is believed to be alive and in hiding inside Gaza. In recent weeks, Israeli strikes in Lebanon have killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and several of his top commanders. Hundreds more airstrikes across large parts of Lebanon since mid-September have killed at least 1,276 people, according to Lebanon's Health Ministry. The Israeli military said Thursday that it had struck around 200 Hezbollah targets across Lebanon, including weapons storage facilities and observation posts. It said the strikes killed at least 15 Hezbollah fighters. There was no independent confirmation. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled their homes, as Israel has warned people to evacuate from around 50 villages and towns in the south, telling them to relocate to areas that are around 60 km (36 miles) from the border and considerably farther north than a UN-declared buffer zone. Israel says it is targeting Hezbollah after nearly a year of rocket attacks that began on Oct 8 and have displaced some 60,000 Israelis from communities in the north. Israel has carried out

retaliatory strikes over the past year that have displaced tens of thousands on the Lebanese side. The vast majority of recent strikes have been in areas where Hezbollah has a strong presence, including the southern suburbs of Beirut known as the Dahiyeh. But Israel has also carried out strikes in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and a strike in central Beirut earlier this week killed three Palestinian militants. Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis are part of the Iranian Axis of Resistance, which also includes armed groups in Syria and Iraq. They have launched attacks on Israel in solidarity with the Palestinians, drawing retaliation in a cycle that has repeatedly threatened to set off a wider war. The region once again appears on the brink of such a conflict after Iran's missile attack on Tuesday, which it said was a response to the killing of Nasrallah, an Iranian Revolutionary Guard general who was with him, and Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas, who was killed in an explosion in Tehran in July that was widely blamed on Israel. Both Israel and the United States have said there will be severe consequences for the missile attack, which lightly wounded two people and killed a Palestinian in the occupied West Bank. The United States has rushed military assets to the region in support

## Delhi Police summons...

From page 1

"HIBOX is a mobile application that was part of a well-planned scam," Deputy Commissioner of Police (IFSO Special Cell) Hemant Tiwari said. Through this application, the accused promised guaranteed returns of one to five per cent daily, amounting to 30 to 90 per cent in a month, the DCP said. The app was launched in February 2024. Over 30,000 people invested money into the app. During the initial five months, the investors received high returns. However, from July the app

withheld the payments citing technical glitches, legal issues, GST issues, etc. "The alleged companies disappeared after closing their office in Noida in Uttar Pradesh," DCP Tiwari said. Police said the mastermind Sivaram was arrested and Rs 18 crore has been seized from his four different bank accounts. On August 16, police received complaints from 29 victims against the HIBOX application at the Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO). The complainants alleged that they were promised high returns on their investments. On August 20, the Special

Cell registered an FIR under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and relevant provisions of the Information Technology Act. During the investigation, many complaints from the cyber Northeast district have also been registered against the HIBOX application by nine people who were cheated similarly. These nine cases were transferred to IFSO. Police have received over 500 complaints from the northeast district, outer district, Shahdara and NCRP portal. "Our team gathered details of payment gateways and bank accounts involved in the

fraud. Analysis of the transactions led the team to identify four accounts which were used to syphon off cheated amounts," the DCP said. "To date, 127 complaints are clubbed and the roles of EASEBUZZ and PhonePe are under probe as the merchant accounts of the fraudsters operating HIBOX were opened virtually without following the due verification process and bypassing laid down norms of RBI, police said. "Involvement of EASEBUZZ and PhonePe employees can't be ruled out and an investigation is underway," DCP said.

## West Asia war...

From page 1

The BSE midcap gauge tumbled 2.27 per cent and smallcap index dropped 1.84 per cent. All indices ended lower. Realty tanked 4.49 per cent, while capital goods (3.18 per cent), auto (2.94 per cent), services (2.87 per cent), industrials (2.75 per cent) and oil & gas (2.52 per cent) were among the major losers. "Fears of FPIs and FIIs switching to China from Indian equities were prevalent, especially considering the sharp valuations of domestic markets compared to China," Devarsh Vakil, Deputy Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.37 per cent to USD 74.91 a barrel.

## Drug mastermind...

From page 1

Trivedi said Goyal not only had pictures with senior Congress leaders like KC Venugopal and Deepender Singh Hooda but also had the mobile number of Hooda, the son of former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. "The Hooda family should also explain," he said. Responding to the allegations, Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit said that the accused is a former member of the Indian Youth Congress and was expelled by the party two years ago. The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) said in a statement that Tushar Goyal, the suspected kingpin, was expelled from the organisation on October 17, 2022 for anti-party activities

soon after BJP spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi charged the opposition party with having links with the drug dealers. Hitting back, the IYC accused the BJP of trying to tarnish its image and that of the Congress leaders in order to influence the Haryana Assembly elections on October 5, asserting that the accused has not been associated with it since his expulsion. Trivedi's claims are "baseless and misleading" just to influence the Haryana elections, it claimed. "Rather than spreading half-baked political stories, the BJP should trust the Delhi Police to investigate and uncover the truth. We urge the Delhi Police to take strict action against those arrested in the alleged drug bust rather than allowing it to become a vicious

political campaign," it stated. Trivedi also read from Goyal's appointment letter, dated March 24, 2022 as the head of the Delhi Youth Congress' RTI cell, claiming that it made a mention of the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi as well. The BJP has also circulated photos purportedly showing Goyal with several Congress leaders. He said spreading confusion and the use of drugs are often used to destroy a society, claiming that the Congress' relations with international organisations involved in destabilising the country are already exposed. "Hateful stuff was already visible in Rahul Gandhi's 'mohabbat ki dukan,' Now drugs are also available," Trivedi said.

## Delhi's traffic needs...

From page 1

Heavy traffic flow around the Jhandewalan temple affected both carriageways of Rani Jhansi Road, Faiz Road, New Rohtak Road and DBG Road, and traffic flow around Shri Adhya Katayani Shaktipith Mandir is likely to affect Chattarpur Mandir Road, CDR Chowk on MG Road, Mandi Village exit on MG Road, Mandi Road, Andheria Mor on MG Road, Anuvrat Marg, 100 Feet Road, 60 Feet Road, MainChattarpur Road and the adjoining Y-junction. Currently, PWD is repairing a 3.5-kilometre-long stretch of the Outer Ring Road from Chirag Delhi to Modi Mills, which is affecting the traffic movement.

In an advisory for commuters heading to Kalkaji temple from October 3 to 13 - the Dussehra period - police said traffic on both carriageways of the road from Nehru Place to Modi Mills will be affected. "Commuters going to IGI Airport, New Delhi, Old Delhi and Nizamuddin railway station, and ISBTs should leave with sufficient time in hand to accommodate possible delays on the route. Avail public transport to help decongestion of roads. Park your vehicles only at designated parking lots and avoid roadside parking as it causes hindrance to normal flow traffic," traffic police stated.

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# Boat capsizes in Congo, killing at least 50 people: Witnesses

AP ■ GOMA

A boat carrying scores of passengers capsized on Lake Kivu in eastern Congo on Thursday, killing at least 50 people, witnesses told The Associated Press.

It was not immediately clear exactly how many people were on board or how many perished but witnesses said they saw rescue services recover at least 50 bodies from the water. They said 10 people survived and were taken to the local hospital.

The boat, overloaded with passengers, sank while trying to dock just metres (yards) away from the port of Kituku, the witnesses said. It was going from Minova in South Kivu province to Goma, in North Kivu province.

Local authorities said that the rescue efforts continued and the death toll remained unknown for the moment. In February, the majority of the 50 passengers aboard a wooden

boat were presumed dead after the vessel capsized on Lake Kivu. "This boat was carrying about a hundred people when it had the capacity for about thirty passengers," the governor of the province of South Kivu Jean-Jacques Purusi told a local radio station following the accident.

It was the latest deadly boat accident in the central African country, where overcrowding on vessels is often to blame. Maritime regulations also are often not followed.

Congolese officials have often warned against overloading and vowed to punish those violating safety measures for water transportation. But in remote areas where most passengers come from, many are unable to afford public transport for the few available roads.

In June, an overloaded boat sank near the capital of Kinshasa and 80 passengers lost their lives. In January, 22 people died on Lake Mai-Ndombe and in April 2023, six were

killed and 64 went missing on Lake Kivu.

Witnesses said the boat that capsized on Thursday was visibly overcrowded.

"I was at the port of Kituku when I saw the boat arriving from Minova, full of passengers," Francine Munyi told the AP. "It started to lose its balance and sank into the lake. Some people threw themselves into the water."

"Many died, and few were saved," she added. "I couldn't help them because I don't know how to swim."

The victims' families and Goma residents gathered at the port of Kituku, accusing authorities of negligence in the face of growing insecurity in the region.

Since the fighting between the armed forces and the M23 rebels made the road between the cities of Goma and Minova impassable, forcing the closure of the passage to trucks transporting food, many traders have resorted to mar-

itime transport on Lake Kivu. It's an alternative considered safer than road traffic, which is threatened by insecurity. But according to Elia Asumani, a shipping agent who works on this line, the situation has become dangerous: "We are afraid," he told the AP. "This shipwreck was predictable."

Bienfait Sematumba, 27, said he lost four family members.

"They are all dead. I am alone now," he said, sobbing. "If the authorities had ended the war, this shipwreck would never have happened."

The survivors, about 10 of them, were taken to Kyeshero hospital for treatment. One of them, Neema Chimanga, said she was still in shock.

"We saw the boat start to fill with water halfway," she recounted to the AP. "The door of the boat opened, and we tried to close it. But the water was already coming in, and the boat tilted." "I threw myself into the water and started swimming," she said. "I

# New NATO chief visits Ukraine in his first trip since taking office

AP ■ KYIV

New NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte visited Ukraine on Thursday in his first official trip since taking office and pledging the alliance's continued support for Kyiv in its war with Russia.

Rutte met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv as air raid sirens twice went off in the Ukrainian capital.

The new head of NATO vowed when he took office on Tuesday to help shore up Western support for Ukraine, which has been fighting Russia's full-scale invasion since February 2022 and has for most of this year been on the defensive due to a relentless Russian army push in the country's eastern regions.

Rutte expressed confidence that he can work with whomever is elected president of the United States, the alliance's most powerful member, in November. That could be a key moment for Ukraine's effort to ensure continuing Western support.

Zelenskyy said he discussed with Rutte elements of Ukraine's so-called victory plan, ahead of a NATO meeting at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany next week. The gathering draws together defence leaders from the 50-plus partner nations who regularly meet to coordinate weapons aid for the war. The two also discussed the battlefield situation and the specific needs of Ukrainian military units. Zelenskyy reiterated that Ukraine needs more armaments, including long-range weapons it has long requested.

Asked whether the war in the Middle East will affect the timeline he had envisioned for the victory plan, Zelenskyy noted that the US and Britain say Iran has supplied missiles and drones to Russia for use against Ukraine.

He also appealed for Western countries to scrap restrictions on Ukraine's use of Western-supplied long-range weapons to strike deep inside Russia. "Of course, we want Ukraine to not

be forgotten. But the best way not to forget about Ukraine is to provide the appropriate weapons and the necessary permissions," Zelenskyy said. "And to help shoot down...the same Iranian missiles or drones, just as they are shot down over Israel, to shoot them down in the same way over Ukraine."

Rutte reiterated the alliance's unwavering support for Ukraine, insisting that "Ukraine is closer to NATO than ever before". He said recent steps taken by NATO "build a bridge to NATO membership" for Ukraine, including 40 billion euros (\$44 billion) of funding assistance, bilateral security agreements between allies, and the formation of a new NATO command to coordinate assistance and training. Rutte arrived after a Russian glide bomb struck a five-story apartment block in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring at least 12 people, including a 3-year-old girl, local officials said Thursday.

The bomb hit between the third and fourth floors of the building on Wednesday night, igniting a fire, Kharkiv regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov said. Firefighters searched for survivors through smoke and rubble.

The city of Kharkiv, around 30 km (18 miles) from the Russian border, has been a frequent target of aerial attacks throughout the war against Russia that is now deep into its third year.

Increasingly common in the war, glide bombs have terrorized civilians and bludgeoned the Ukrainian army's front-line defences. Ukraine has no effective countermeasure for glide bombs, which are launched from Russian aircraft inside Russia. They were a key weapon in Russia's capture of the tactically significant town of Vuhledar on Wednesday, as Russian forces wreak destruction on the eastern Donetsk region and force weary Ukrainian troops to withdraw from obliterated towns and villages.

# Votes against party lines can be counted, rules Pak's top court

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the votes cast by lawmakers in parliament against their party directions can be counted, in a major relief to the government seeking support for a constitutional amendment to tweak laws related to the judiciary. The apex court's previous ruling had stated that the votes of parliamentarians who deviated from their party's directives were to be disregarded and not counted. The Supreme Court Bar Association had filed a review petition against the apex court's verdict related to the defection clause under Article 63-A of the Constitution.

Hearing the plea, a five-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa announced the unanimous verdict and approved the review petition with the top judge saying the detailed verdict would be issued later. The bench comprising Chief Justice Isa and justices Naeem Akhtar Afghan, Aminuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal issued the verdict after hearing the petition that the bench had started on Monday.

The court in its May 17, 2022 verdict had said that the votes of the lawmakers would not be counted but after granting of review petition, the vote would be counted but the person going against the party line would lose his seat.

The 2022 verdict was given in response to the presidential case filed by then-President Arif Alvi. It was then a 3-2 split decision, with then-chief justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar being the majority verdict authors. The development comes as the government is struggling to get support for its planned constitutional amendment to tweak laws related to the top judiciary.

# Imran Khan's party claims over 700 supporters held ahead of protests

Lahore (PTI): Over 700 supporters of the jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan were arrested from different parts of Punjab province on Thursday, a day before a major showdown in Islamabad by his party for the independence of the judiciary, release of the party founder and against rising inflation. "Do or die — October 4th is the battle cry! No more waiting, no more silence. This is the final stand at D Chowk (Islamabad), where the brave gather and the weak fall behind.

We are unstoppable, unbreakable, and ready to fight for the soul of this nation. Either we win or we perish trying," Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said soon after the arrests started. It said the Punjab police arrested over 700 its workers and leaders in different districts including Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Mianwali and Jhangh following its announcement to hold protests on Friday demanding independence of the judiciary, release of party founder Imran Khan and against rising inflation.

Punjab's provincial government had adopted similar measures to prevent PTI's Jalsa — the power show — at Lahore last month. Khan, 71, has been in jail since his arrest on August 5, 2023. Facing dozens of cases, he has been convicted in a few of them. His party has been staging protests demanding his release and claiming that the government should adhere to the constitution and the independence of the judiciary.

PTI's central information secretary Sheikh Waqas Akram said the government led by

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had sealed the Red Zone in Islamabad and was taking similar measures in other cities to stop PTI workers from holding protests and public meetings.

"PTI's call for protests has panicked the government which is why it is sealing the cities," he said.

The Punjab police have deployed heavy contingents of police and put in place containers at the entry and exit points of all cities to stop the protesters' movement, he said. "The selected districts were turned into no-go areas for the residents of Punjab and those inside the cities were not allowed to go out."

Punjab's provincial government on Thursday also imposed Section 144 in Lahore banning all kinds of political assemblies, gatherings, rallies and protests.

On Wednesday, despite the restrictions, party workers including women, took to the streets, managed to cross hurdles and survived tear-gas shelling to stage rallies in different cities, the PTI said.

Chief minister Maryam Nawaz, daughter of Khan's arch rival Nawaz Sharif, said political activity is allowed in the province but not terrorism by the PTI. "We will deal with such elements with iron hands," she said. Khan's party held three major political events, including a rally each in Islamabad and Lahore, and a protest in Rawalpindi. The party had called for protests in Mianwali, Bahawalpur and Faisalabad on Wednesday, which would be followed by a power show at D-Chowk in Islamabad on Friday.

# 12 hurt as Russian bomb hits Ukrainian apartment

AP ■ KYIV

A Russian glide bomb struck a five-story apartment block in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring at least 12 people including a 3-year-old girl, local officials said Thursday. The bomb hit between the third and fourth floors of the building on Wednesday night, igniting blazes, Kharkiv regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. Firefighters searched for survivors through smoke and rubble. The city of Kharkiv, located around 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the Russian border, has been a frequent target of aerial attacks throughout the war against Russia that is now deep into its third year. Glide bombs have become an increasingly common weapon in the war. They have terrorized civilians and bludgeoned the Ukrainian army's front-line defenses.

They were a key weapon in Russia's capture of the tactically significant town of Vuhledar on Wednesday, as



Rescue workers clear the rubble inside a building damaged by a Russian airstrike in Kharkiv, Ukraine, Thursday. AP/PTI

Russian forces wreak destruction on the eastern Donetsk region and force weary Ukrainian troops to withdraw from obliterated towns and villages. Ukraine has no effective coun-

termeasure for glide bombs, which are launched from Russian aircraft inside Russia. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the latest Kharkiv attack highlighted the urgent need for increased

support from Ukraine's Western allies. Zelenskyy recently held talks with officials in the United States in an effort to ensure further Western military support.

Russia has had the battlefield initiative since late last year, when a Ukrainian counteroffensive petered out. Ukraine is grappling with a critical manpower problem on the front line and is straining to hold back Russia's grinding assaults. Though Russia's battlefield gains have been incremental, its steady forward movement is adding up as the Ukrainians are pushed backward and yield ground.

Both sides have kept up regular cross-border aerial attacks, usually at night.

Ukraine's air force said Thursday that 78 out of 105 Shahed drones launched by Russia overnight were destroyed on Thursday as 15 regions of the country came under attack. The Russian military, meanwhile, intercepted 113 Ukrainian drones overnight, according to a statement by the Defense Ministry in Moscow. The drones were destroyed over four Russian regions on the border with Ukraine — Belgorod, Bryansk, Kursk and Voronezh, it said.

# Amid diplomatic reshuffle, B'desh recalls envoy from India

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh's interim government has recalled five envoys, including its high commissioner in New Delhi, as it carried out a second phase of reshuffle in the diplomatic service alongside the domestic administration, an official said on Thursday. The interim government led by Professor Muhammad Yunus as the Chief Adviser has asked Bangladesh's envoys in India, Brussels, Canberra, Lisbon, and the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York to return immediately and report to the foreign ministry here as part of the latest reshuffle. "The recalling of

the envoys is part of a government decision under which our High Commissioner to India, Mustafizur Rahman, has been asked to return to the foreign ministry in Dhaka," an official said on Thursday, preferring anonymity. Bangladesh High Commissioner in London Sadia Muna Tasneem was asked to return to Dhaka four days ago.

The foreign service witnessed a major change in late August, weeks after the ouster of the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5 after a massive student-led mass upheaval. The upsurge installed the Nobel Laureate's interim administration on August 8.

Dhaka, at that time, ordered its ambassadors to the United States, Russia, Germany, Japan, the United Arab Emirates & Saudi Arabia and the High Commissioner to the Maldives to return home. Several of these ambassadors were former diplomats or retired and serving civil and military officials appointed abroad by the deposed government. The foreign ministry is yet to make any fresh appointments in these countries. Meanwhile, after assuming the charge, the interim government carried out a major change in the domestic administration scrapping contractual appointments of several senior officials or top bureau-

crats while several police officers, including the chief of the main law enforcement agency, were sacked. They were accused of killing students and ordinary people during the anti-government protests in July and early August which originated from the demand for a change in the quota system in government jobs. Sacked senior secretary of the home ministry Jahangir Alam and sacked police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun both were arrested and remanded to police custody for interrogation for their actions during the deadly protests as part of the students' movement, which claimed nearly 1,000 lives.

# Poison in alcohol kills dozens in Iran

Tehran (AP): At least 26 people died in Iran after drinking alcoholic beverages that contained toxic methanol in recent days, state media said. The official IRNA news agency reported late Wednesday that toxic methanol had killed men and women in various cities and towns in the northern provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan and the western province of Hamadan. Alcohol poisoning also led to hundreds of hospitalisations, IRNA said. The source of the alcoholic beverages was not clear in the reports. The consumption of alcohol has been generally prohibited in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution brought hardline Islamists to power.

# Singapore court jails Indian-origin ex-min for 12 months

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore's Indian-origin former transport minister S Iswaran has been sentenced to 12 months jail on Thursday by the High Court for obtaining gifts worth about SGD 403,300 over seven years, from two businessmen he considered his friends. The 62-year-old pleaded guilty to four charges relating to receiving gifts and one blocking justice on September 24, the first day of trial proceedings, cutting short what was set to be a protracted trial with 56 prosecution witnesses. In sentencing, Justice Vincent Hoong said he had considered submissions on sentence from both prosecution and defence but was "ultimately unable to agree with both the positions taken".

In his sentencing remarks, Justice Hoong emphasised that trust and confidence in public institutions are the bedrock of effective governance. The judge added that the former minister abused the posi-

tion to accept gifts worth about SGD 403,300 (USD313,200). He said, "This can all too easily be undermined by a public servant who falls below standards of integrity and accountability."

The judge said it was significant that Iswaran had made public statements rejecting the charges as false.

"In a letter to the Prime Minister, Iswaran said he rejected the charges and was innocent, and believed he would be acquitted. Thus, I have difficulty believing that he was remorseful," The Straits Times quoted the Judge as saying.

As Justice Hoong addressed the court, Iswaran looked down and took notes. The judge added, "The higher the office held by the offender as a public servant, the higher his level of culpability." He said such individuals set the tone of public servants in conducting themselves with high standards of integrity, and they must avoid any perception that

they are susceptible to financial benefits.

Iswaran's lead lawyer Davinder Singh had argued for no more than eight weeks' jail, while Deputy Attorney-General Tai Wei Shyong sought a jail term of six to seven months.

"I'm of the view it is appropriate to impose a sentence in excess of both parties' positions," said Justice Hoong, adding that taking the submission of either prosecution or defence would result in a "manifestly inadequate sentence". Justice Hoong noted certain aggravating factors such as the total duration of Iswaran's offending, the high office he occupied and the overall harm to public interest as well as trust in public institutions.

Iswaran's lawyers asked for the jail term to be deferred to October 7 and for Iswaran to surrender at 4 pm at the State Courts that day, as reported Channel News Asia. However, he stressed that this is subject to the defence taking instructions from Iswaran,

alluding to the possibility of an appeal.

The sentencing comes more than a year after details of the probe by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) first came to light, and 10 months after Iswaran was first charged in court.

Iswaran, a political veteran from the ruling People's Action Party, resigned from office in January and made a voluntary disgorgement of SGD 380,305.95 to the state a day before his intended trial on September 24. This refers to giving up illegally obtained gains and differs from restitution. Gifts such as bottles of whisky and wine, golf clubs and a Brompton bicycle were also seized from him.

Between November 2015 and December 2022, Iswaran obtained valuables like musical, football and Formula 1 tickets from Singapore GP majority shareholder Ong Beng Seng, as well as bottles of whisky and wine from construction boss Lum Kok Seng.

This was while Iswaran held portfolios that had official dealings with the two men, said the prosecution.

Lum's company, Lum Chang Building Contractors, entered into a contract worth SGD 325 million with the Land Transport Authority in 2016 for works on the Tanah Merah MRT Station and its viaducts. Iswaran became transport minister in May 2021. Ong, a hotelier, was linked to two facilitation agreements between the Singapore GP and the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) to handle the annual Singapore Formula 1 race.

Iswaran was chairman of the F1 Steering Committee, established by the government to oversee F1 as a national project. He was also minister for industry in the Ministry of Trade and Industry from October 2015 to April 2018, with STB under him.

He was also minister-in-charge of trade relations from May 2018 until January 2024 when he resigned from office.



In this photo released by Pakistan's Prime Minister Office, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, right, walks with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, at the Prime Minister's House, in Islamabad, Pakistan, Thursday. AP/PTI



## Samsung workers protest continues to 4th week

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Workers of Samsung India Electronics Ltd on Wednesday observed a token fast near the factory in Chennai on Wednesday, as part of intensifying their ongoing protest which entered the fourth week. Communist Party of India (Marxist) led Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) which is spearheading the protest by the employees said they would be meeting the Director of Factories in a day or two, alleging that the Korean electronics giant has roped in temporary workers to work in the shop floors in view of the strike. About 1,100 employees of Samsung India Electronics Ltd are on strike since September 9 pressing for various demands including wage revision and better work conditions. While several rounds of talks held in the presence of the Labour Department and company



officials failed, another tripartite meeting has been planned for next week, said CITU leaders. "We are observing a token fast today. We want the state government to come forward and resolve the issue fast. Our most important demand is to recognise the Samsung India Workers Union by the labour department at the earliest." The temporary

labourers are not trained like regular employees and this attitude by the management is not acceptable. We will file a complaint with the Director of Factories in a day or two," said the trade union leaders. Samsung's Chennai unit produces consumer durables at the factory including air-conditioners, refrigerators and television sets. Recently, Union Labour Minister

Mansukh Mandaviya wrote to the Tamil Nadu government urging to resolve the issue amicably. On Tuesday, the CITU members staged a protest in some districts as part of extending their support to the Samsung India workers. They were detained by the police and were released later. Samsung India recently said scores of agitating workers have returned to work soon after it issued a show-cause notice. "The management has already indicated that all the issues can be resolved by discussions and has made various harmonious attempts to resolve differences and for your report to duty," Samsung had said. Due to the strike, Samsung India said the impact on the plant operations was minimal and added that the welfare of the employees is of top priority and would engage with them to address any grievances they may have.

## Government launches internship programme for youth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday rolled out the internship programme that will provide financial assistance of Rs 60,000 per annum to 1 crore youth over a period of five years. In 2024-25, the total cost of the pilot project will be around Rs 800 crore and will look to provide internship to 1.25 lakh candidates during this fiscal, government sources said on Thursday. Announced in the Union Budget 2024, the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme in Top Companies will also provide insurance coverage to the interns. The scheme will be implemented through an online portal developed by the corporate affairs ministry. Subject to certain conditions, youth aged between 21 and 24 years will be eligible for the scheme, the sources said.



The internship programme will commence on December 2. The other company/ bank/ financial institution can participate in the scheme with the approval of the ministry, which will take into consideration factors like sectors and areas under-represented by the top 500 companies. The interns will be provided a financial assistance of Rs 5,000 per month and out of

the total amount, Rs 4,500 will be disbursed by the government and Rs 500 will be paid by the company from its CSR funds. Also, a one time grant of Rs 6,000 for incidentals will be disbursed by the ministry to each intern, upon joining the place of internship. Expenses associated with the training of interns under the scheme will be borne by the company from its CSR funds. Insurance coverage will be

provided to each individual intern under insurance schemes of the Union government, PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana. The premium amount in this regard will be offered by the government. As part of the eligibility criteria, sources said, candidates enrolled in online/ distance learning programmes are eligible to apply. Candidates who have passed High School, Higher Secondary School, possess a certificate from an ITI, hold a diploma from a Polytechnic Institute, or are graduates with degrees such as BA, B.Sc, B.Com, BCA, BBA, B.Pharm, etc. Are eligible, sources said. Partner Companies will have a dedicated dashboard on the portal where they can post internship opportunities, detailing location, nature, required qualifications, and any facilities provided.



## Kia launches two new MPV

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kia India today launched the second-generation of their Kia Carnival Multi-Person Vehicle (MPV) and the EV9 electric MPV for Rs

63.9 lakh and Rs 1.29 crore respectively. The Carnival sold 14,500 units in its first generation and Kia expects the new vehicles to help it climb into the luxury segment in India.

## SEBI lowers InvIT trading lot to ₹ 25 lakh



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has drastically reduced the trading lot size of privately placed infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) to Rs 25 lakh in a bid to boost investors' participation and increase liquidity of such investment vehicles. The current trading lot for

privately placed InvITs is set at Rs 1 crore. Further, if the InvIT invests at least 80 per cent of its asset value in completed and revenue-generating assets, then the trading lot is Rs 2 crore. "Trading lot for the purpose of trading of units on the designated stock exchange shall be Rs 25 lakh," Sebi said

in its notification dated September 26. The move came into effect the same day. The move will help increase the liquidity of privately placed InvIT units by permitting a broader base of investors to participate in the market and boost diversification of investment portfolios. In separate notifications, Sebi

has amended its rules on infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs) to reduce compliance burden and facilitate ease of doing business. Under this, Sebi has fixed the timeline for undertaking distributions to unitholders by the REIT and InvIT to five working days from the date of declaration. The move is expected to bring efficiency to the distribution process and will aid in making funds available to investors within a relatively shorter period of time. The markets regulator has allowed REITs and InvITs to call a unitholders' meeting after giving shorter notice (less than 21 days) if consent is granted by writing or in electronic mode. In case of an annual meeting, consent by at least 95 per cent of unit holders will be needed and in case of any other meeting, consent by a majority of unit holders will be required.



## Mahindra Thar ROXX sees 1.76 lakh bookings in 60 minutes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mahindra which in September overtook Tata Motors for the third position in India's passenger vehicle market and came extremely close to dethroning Hyundai from second position today claimed that their new Thar

ROXX SUV has bookings of 1,76,218 units in the first 60 minutes. The Mahindra Thar ROXX which is the five door variant of the very popular Thar off-road SUV was launched on August 14 and prices start at Rs 12.99 lakh going up to Rs 22.49 lakh for the fully-loaded AX7L 4x4 model.

## Goyal seeks US investments for Indian manufacturing



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has had a series of meetings with US business leaders in New York to seek investments in India. He met Chief Operating Officer of BlackRock Robert Goldstein, Chairman and CEO of Systems Technology Group Anup Popat, CEO of Tillman Holdings Sanjiv Ahuja, chief executive officer of C4V Shailesh Upreti, and Janus Henderson Investors CEO Ali Dibadj. During the meetings, Goyal discussed

opportunities for collaboration to position India as a global manufacturing hub and invited the investors to increase their commercial and trade footprints in India, the commerce ministry said. In another meeting, the minister emphasised the government's commitment to improving ease of doing business, infrastructure development, IPR (intellectual property rights) reforms, and prioritising manufacturing sectors through appropriate incentive schemes.

## Coal production jumps 32 per cent in FY24-25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The coal production from both captive and commercial coal blocks rose by 32 per cent to 79.72 Million Tonne (MT) in the April-September period of the ongoing fiscal. The coal output from both captive and commercial coal blocks was 60.52 MT in the first half of the previous fiscal. The coal dispatch rose by 34 per cent year-over-year, from 65.37 MT in H1 of FY'24 to 87.86 MT in H1 of FY'25. There has been "a significant rise in coal production and dispatch from both captive and commercial coal blocks during the first half of FY 2024-25, from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, compared to the same period last year," the coal ministry said in a statement. The coal production in September rose by 32 per cent to 13.74 MT from 10.40 MT. Likewise, dispatch in the month of September has



grown by 47 per cent year-over-year, from 9.68 MT in FY'24 to 14.27 MT in FY'25. The coal ministry said that it applauds the efforts of all stakeholders, including coal companies and industry partners, for their invaluable support. The ministry, it said, is dedicated to helping all coal block allottees navigate challenges and optimise their

operations. Its primary objective is to significantly increase coal production, ensuring a steady and reliable supply to meet the country's growing energy demands. Through collaborative initiatives and focused assistance, the ministry aims to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and output across the coal sector.

## BPCL signs pact for green fuel ecosystem at Mumbai port

PTI ■ MUMBAI

State-owned BPCL has inked an initial pact with Mumbai Port Authority and Mumbai Port Sustainability Foundation (MPSF) for setting up a green fuel ecosystem at the port. The MoU is a pivotal step towards driving India's transition to cleaner energy solutions. By focusing on green fuel innovations, this initiative aims to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to the country's climate change goals, a BPCL statement said. Additionally, the pact outlines an exploration into the conversion of diesel-powered vessels to cleaner fuel alternatives, further enhancing the port's green infrastructure and reducing its carbon footprint, it said. The agreement was formalised during the launch of the Cruise Bharat Mission by Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal at Mumbai Port earlier this week, according to BPCL. As part of the initiative, the two partners will jointly set up



EV charging stations at Mumbai Port, promoting green energy adoption for port users and the general public, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) said. "This MoU is consistent with BPCL's plans towards a sustainable tomorrow alongside our own aspiration to achieve net zero emissions in Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2040. Enabling sustainable energy solutions like LNG and EV for the maritime sector is part of our endeavour to demonstrate social responsibility and partnering for our sustainable growth with that of the communities we serve," said G Krishna Kumar, Chairman & Managing Director, BPCL. The agreement also includes provisions for waste management, as BPCL and

MPSF will work on systems for source segregation, storage, and handling of recyclable and non-recyclable solid waste at Mumbai Port, it said, adding this initiative promotes socially responsible practices, ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable operational environment. "Our partnership with MbPA is a testament to BPCL's strategic vision of advancing the sustainable fuels business. By leveraging LNG and green energy infrastructure, we aim to reshape the future of maritime operations. This collaboration reflects our commitment to driving innovation in fuel solutions that not only reduce carbon emissions but also create long-term value for the environment and the industry," said Rahul Tandon, Business Head (I&C), BPCL.

## Ashok Leyland, Nidec tie up to develop e-drive motors for commercial vehicles

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland on Thursday said it has entered into a partnership with Japanese firm Nidec for developing e-drive motors for commercial vehicles. Under the multi-pronged collaboration, the two partners will work to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Electric Drive Units (EDUs), which will focus on developing motor technologies and power electronics systems for EVs, along with innovations in gear-shifting mechanisms, Ashok Leyland said in a statement. "This collaboration allows us

to co-develop, innovative e-drive motors specifically designed for the unique demands of India's commercial vehicle market, while significantly advancing our electric mobility capabilities," said Shenu Agarwal, Managing Director and CEO at Ashok Leyland. The collaboration will also involve joint research and development efforts, with both companies contributing to skilling, lab infrastructure, and defining novel, differentiated motor technologies for the EV portfolio of Ashok Leyland and its subsidiary Switch Mobility, the company said. Ashok Leyland further said it will continue to source motors



from Nidec for its existing EV lineup, while collaborating on research and development for future electric solutions. "Our investment strategy and motor technology are well complemented by Ashok Leyland, who understand the precise and specific demands of the commercial vehicle market," said Michael Briggs, President at Nidec Motion & Energy.

The announcement comes days after the government launched the Prime Minister E-Drive Scheme with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore for faster adoption of electric vehicles, setting up of charging infrastructure and development of EV manufacturing ecosystem in the country. The scheme has come into effect from October 1.

## Tata Power-DDL conducts Extensive Safety Awareness Drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited organised an extensive safety drive for its consumers and field staff to reduce the chances of electricity-related incidents. Under this drive, more than 2.28 Lakh installations including plain cement and concrete (PCC) poles, street lights, stay wires, towers, rail poles, fencing of sub stations, feeder & service pillars, PWD Poles, MCD Poles, ATMs & lights installed in parks were checked for any unsafe situation / hazard and rectifications thereof. Tata Power-DDL is dedicated to supporting Ramleela, Durga Puja, and other festive

events by providing temporary connections within 24 hours. While the discom is committed to offering tatkal connections during the festive season, the safety of people in mass gatherings remains of utmost priority. Tata Power-DDL's operations and maintenance teams would remain on high alert to handle any safety-related issues that may arise during this time. Additionally, consumers are advised to take due precautions with their wiring and avoid any loose connections, as these can lead to accidents. It is also crucial to install an ELCB (Earth Leakage Circuit Breaker)/RCCB to protect both people and equipment from electrical shocks.

## INBRIEF

**GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY RELEASES SCHEDULE**  
**AMRITSAR:** The online examination form submission and fee payments for December 2024 exams of Law FY1P/TYP, B.Ed., B.A.-B.Ed., B.Sc.-B.Ed, B.Com-B.Ed and B.Ed-M.Ed Sem-1 for Regular students through online portal have been scheduled.

**GNDU NSS UNIT ORGANISES WORKSHOP ON E-WASTE MANAGEMENT**  
**AMRITSAR:** The NSS unit of Guru Nanak Dev University, successfully organized a comprehensive E-waste management drive under the banner of "Swachhta Hi Sewa." The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the pressing issue of electronic waste.

**ZONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL OF "GCA ZONE" KICKS OFF**  
**AMRITSAR:** The three-day Zonal Youth Festival of "GCA Zone" of Guru Nanak Dev University began here today with great enthusiasm and energy, marked by an impressive inauguration ceremony presided over by S. Charanjit Singh Sohal, IPS SSP Amritsar (Rural). The festival will be concluded on October 5, 2024.





## WORLD ANIMAL DAY: OCTOBER 04, 2024

## A HOME FOR EVERY HEART

As we observe *World Animal Day 2024*, we embrace the theme, "The World is Their Home Too" This day serves as a powerful reminder that animals share our planet and deserve our care and protection. Let's come together to ensure that every creature feels safe and loved in the world we all inhabit, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Collage: Satish C Jakhmola

On *World Animal Day*, we are reminded of a simple yet profound truth: animals share our world and in many ways, they reflect the best parts of ourselves. As we go about our lives, it's easy to forget the loyalty, grace and beauty that animals bring to this planet. Whether it's the silent strength of a tiger in the wild or the trusting eyes of a stray dog, animals have a way of touching our hearts. As the author *Anthony Douglas Williams* once said, "We have more to learn from animals than animals have to learn from us." Their unconditional love, resilience and ability to live harmoniously with nature offer us lessons in compassion, humility and care.

October 4th, *World Animal Day*, is a time to highlight the pressing issues that animals face across the globe. The theme for this year, "The World is Their Home Too," is a powerful call for all of us to recognise the rights of animals, whether they are roaming freely in the wilderness or wandering the streets as strays. This day is a chance to reflect on how we treat the creatures that share our planet and to realise that they, too, deserve safety, respect and love. From the majestic *Royal Bengal Tiger* to the critically endangered *Indian Rhinoceros*, the wildlife in India is under constant threat.

Habitat destruction, poaching and human-wildlife conflict have left these species teetering on the edge of survival. The tiger, once a symbol of untamed power, now roams in small, fragmented patches of forest. The *Indian Rhinoceros*, whose numbers were once decimated by hunting, faces the constant pressure of habitat loss and illegal poaching for its horn. Similarly, the Asiatic Lion, which now has a population of approximately 600 individuals confined to the Gir Forest, faces an uncertain future in its last remaining natural habitat. This small population survives in a limited area, making them vulnerable to catastrophic events like disease outbreaks or forest fires, which could wipe them out forever. These creatures, emblematic of India's natural heritage, are not merely animals, they are vital parts of ecosystems that sustain life, including our own.

Yet, it's not only the rare and exotic species that require our attention. Animals that live closer to us, whether they are stray dogs, cattle, or even birds, also face significant challenges. *Stray dogs*, in particular, bear the brunt of urban neglect. But beyond the dogs, there are countless other animals like cows left to fend for themselves on the streets, often injured or malnourished. Birds, too,

## BOOKS TO CELEBRATE WORLD ANIMAL DAY

**The Gopi Diaries** is a charming series for children by *Sudha Murty*, published by *Harper Children's*. The series follows Gopi, a lovable pup. In *Coming Home*, Gopi is adopted by a loving family and quickly learns about his new world. In *Finding Love*, he grows stronger and cheekier, facing new challenges and meeting exciting dog companions. Finally, in *Growing Up*, Gopi matures and welcomes a new friend, Nova, into his life.

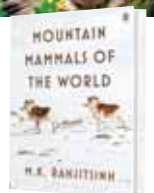
**Warrior Queens of Ranthambore** by *Manish Kalani*, is a unique coffee table book that captures the journey of five generations of tigresses in Ranthambore National Park. Featuring over 500 photographs taken over eight years, wildlife photographer *Manish Kalani* tells the story of the legendary tigress *Machhli* and her descendants, highlighting their beauty, strength and emotional bonds. The book emphasises the importance of tiger conservation and serves as a significant addition to wildlife literature in India.

**Mountain Mammals of the World** by *M.K. Ranjitsinh*, published by *Penguin Ebury Press*, is a definitive guide that explores the larger mammals inhabiting mountainous regions globally. The book features

detailed profiles of approximately 62 species and 78 subspecies, highlighting their behaviour, ecology and conservation status. This work serves as an essential resource for understanding these majestic animals within their breathtaking mountain habitats.

**Wildlife Chronicles** by *Adit Jain* (Publisher: Rupa) is a travelogue and guide to India's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. The book showcases the country's diverse landscapes and wildlife, featuring travel tips, must-see places, and captivating photographs. *Jain's* personal anecdotes aim to inspire interest in conservation while providing practical advice for travellers.

**Wildlife India @ 50: Saving the Wild, Securing the Future** by *Manoj Misra* (Publisher: Rupa) commemorates 50 years of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. The book chronicles India's wildlife conservation journey, reflecting on successes and missed opportunities through contributions from various experts. With a focus on the impact of colonial hunting practices and the need for wildlife legislation, it highlights the progress made and the challenges ahead in protecting India's biodiversity.

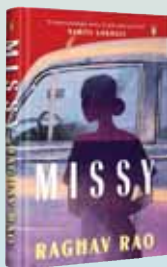


## NEW ARRIVALS



**First Flood**  
By **KALKI**, TRANSLATED BY **GOWRI RAMNARAYAN**  
(PRICE: ₹799, PAGES: 544)  
Penguin Random House

In *First Flood*, the first installment of *Ponniyin Selvan*, *Kalki* delves into the political intrigue of tenth-century Tamil Nadu. As Emperor *Sundara Chozha* lies unwell in *Tanjavur fort*, a sinister plot unfolds to dethrone *Crown Prince Aditta Karikalan*. Entrusted with a critical message, *Vallavarayan Vandiyatevan* faces perilous challenges as he navigates betrayal and ambition. Beautifully translated by *Gowri Ramnarayan*, this timeless tale of loyalty and intrigue captivates readers with its rich storytelling and complex characters.



**Missy**  
By **RAGHAV RAO**  
(Price: ₹699, Pages: 312) *Vintage Books*

In *Missy*, *Raghav Rao* follows *Savi*, a gifted young woman from *St. Ursula's Convent in Madras*, who dreams of escape. After a night of trauma forces her and her lover, *Ananda*, to flee to America under new identities, *Savi* transforms into *Missy*, a pillar of the South Asian community in *Chicago*. As she raises her two daughters, *Mansi* and *Shilpa*, the arrival of *Varun*, a charming doctor, threatens to unravel her carefully built life. This extraordinary debut delves into themes of identity, love, and the inescapable nature of the past, showcasing a woman's resilience and courage.

## Hindus and the Modern Struggles of Religious Persecution

Anand Ranganathan's book, *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*, offers a scathing analysis of the plight of Hindus in modern India, drawing parallels to historical persecution and raising crucial questions about religious dynamics in the country.

BY **KUMAR CHELLAPPAN**

"Sufferance is the badge of our tribe," *Shylock*, the Jewish money lender, says in the Shakespearean play "The Merchant of Venice." Had *Shylock* been around now, he would certainly have added *Hindus* too as the victims of hatred and cruelty perpetrated by the Abrahamic religions. History, as well as modern times, substantiate what *Shakespeare* made *Shylock* say in this path-breaking play. In October 2023, the dreaded *Hamas* organisation let loose one of the most barbaric attacks ever reported in history on the innocent Jewish residents of the *Gaza Strip*, kidnapping more than 300 of them and subjecting them to vicious torture. The *Hamas* terrorists were celebrating in style as their colleagues recounted how they raped young girls in front of their parents and tore them apart, a *la Nirbhaya* incident that shook India in 2012.

It was only when *Israel* retaliated (like any other nation would) in a bid to release their brethren from the torturing cells of *Hamas*, that liberals, secularists and pseudo-intellectuals came out extending their open-hearted support to *Hamas*. The *Israeli Defence Force* was portrayed as the aggressor while the *Hamas* terrorists were seen as angels in the eyes of these paid intellectuals. The history of the Jewish people is packed with stories of persecution faced by them and their struggles for survival. No other community, other than *Hindus*, has faced the kind of cruelty to which the Jewish were subjected by their tormentors. To lambast *Israel* and eulogise the *Arabs* as well as *Palestinians* became the measure of one's intellectual dexterity.

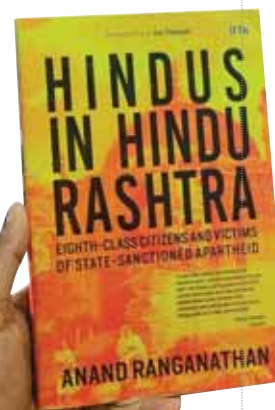
This is what the *Hindus* in *India* face now. Though 80 per cent of the *Indian* population are *Hindus*, they face the

same kind of torment and cruelty at the hands of the minorities. In the land of the *Sanatana Dharma*, the aggressors claim ownership of more than 70 per cent of the land. A cleric was heard claiming the other day that *Antilia*, the 27-storey personal residence of *Mukesh Ambani* in *Bombay* and valued at \$4.6 billion, has been constructed on *Waqf* land. It is for *Mukesh Ambani* to give clarification to this claim, while the day is not far off when the same people are likely to come forward claiming that *Rashtrapati Bhavan* as well as 7 *Lok Kalyan Marg* belong to them. Forget about these things. The *Hindus* have become eighth-class citizens and victims of State-sanctioned apartheid in their own country, according to *Dr Anand Ranganathan*, scientist, author and political critic who works in the Communist citadel *Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)* for short). *Dr Ranganathan* speaks and writes with conviction and articulation. True to his profession as a genetic engineer and biotechnologist, *Dr Ranganathan* has found out the basic reasons behind the plight of the *Hindus* in the country, and he has made it unambiguously clear with his latest book *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*, published by *BluOne Ink*. The book of 128 pages is a power-packed punch from this frail professor, which the rivals would not be able to counter. The author has made his intention clear from the word go. "To those who claim we are now living in a totalitarian *Hindu Rashtra*, one must ask: What kind of a *Hindu Rashtra* is this where a billion-strong *Hindus* have been, through our parliament, courts, education system and our Constitution, reduced to not just second-class but rather, eighth-class citizens? What kind of a *Hindu Rashtra* is this where *Durga Puja* and *Garba* celebrations are stoned with impunity, where a sitting Prime Minister claims minorities have the first right to



## ABOUT THE BOOK

Book : *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*  
by **ANAND RANGANATHAN**  
Publisher : *BluOne Ink*  
₹399



resources?" Even as I write about the book, TV channels scroll news headlines about *Ganapati* statue immersions in *Karnataka* and *Maharashtra* being stoned by a group of people. The *Marxist-Mullah-Congress* axis held State-wide protest rallies in *Kerala* to express solidarity with the terrorists and extremists of *Hamas* and *Hezbollah*. A TV channel and newspaper owned by *Jamaat-e-Islami* laments 24x7 that there is no freedom of expression and religion in *India* since 2014. The channel beams anti-*India* news round the clock, forcing the viewers to complain to the ministries of home and information and broadcasting about the hidden agenda behind the channel and the newspaper. The *Supreme Court* comes to the help of the channel by blasting the *Centre* for its high-handedness. This is the kind of privilege enjoyed by the minority communities in *India*, only in *India*. A *Hindu* cannot be blamed for feeling compelled to convert to *Islam*, but what prevents most of the *Sanatanis* from doing so is the severe pain it may cause in the process.

*Dr Ranganathan*, I feel, is lenient in his words. He explains through eight chapters the state of abyss the *Hindus* find themselves in. The powers that be, whether it is the *Congress*, *BJP*, or the motley crowd of the *Third Front*, do not have any answer for the questions posed by him in the opening chapter, "State Control of *Hindu Temples*". In *Kerala*, from where I hail, the most coveted post for which politicians who fail to make it to the assembly or parliament vie with each other is for the post of the chairman of the *Devaswom Boards* (*Travancore*, *Kochi*, and *Malabar*). Even rationalists and atheists in the *CPI(M)*, *CPI*, and *RSP* turn believers to occupy the chairmanship and to swindle the

*hundis* (treasure boxes in which the devotees make offerings to the presiding deities).

"The *Hindus* have no right to question the injustice meted out to them in the form of adding pig fat to *laddus*, a divine offering to *God*. If you dare to question the act, the *Lordships* would come down on you like an avalanche with the claim that 'Secularism is in danger.'" The term secularism has become the most nauseating one in *India*, as a jurist was heard asking the *Chief Minister* of *Andhra Pradesh* to keep quiet over the affair with the *Tirupati laddu*. To those who do not care about the ground realities facing the *Hindus*, we have to ask, "What happened to the *Veda Patasalas* and *Gurukulas*, which were the landmarks along the banks of *Krishna*, *Godavari*, *Kaveri*, *Ganga*, *Yamuna*, and *Brahmaputra*?" It is an unpardonable sin in the *Hindu* country to ask the questions posed by the likes of *Anand Ranganathan*, *R Vaidyanathan*, *Rajiv Malhotra*, *Sandeep Balakrishna* and of course *Arun Shourie*.

*India* may be the only country in the world that keeps its citizens from the real history (the *XI* volumes of the *History and Culture of the Indian People* edited by that wonderful historian *Prof R C Majumdar*). It is a "crime" in this country to pinpoint the directives given by the one and only *Prophet* that the idolaters only are unclean (*Surah 9*, *ayat 5*) and the disbelievers are an open enemy to you (*Surah 4:101*) (Quotes from *The Calcutta Quran Petition* authored by *Sita Ram Goel*). If the *Hindus* fail to take note of the observations by *Anand Ranganathan*, they are doomed to be *Pappus* and *village idiots*. In this era of religious hegemony, scholars like *Ranganathan*, *Vaidyanathan*, and *Rajiv Malhotra* are beacons of hope. Please do not miss out on what they speak and write.



# INDIA NEED TOP GUNS FIRING IN UNISON AGAINST NEW ZEALAND

PTI ■ DUBAI

A stellar effort by senior stars would be mandatory when India take on New Zealand in their opening Group A match of the women's T20 World Cup here on Friday, aiming for a strong start in their quest to wipe off the memories of past near-misses. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who in all likelihood, will be appearing in her last T20 World Cup, has been witness to several near misses and disappointing moments from close quarters, including India's capitulation to Australia in the final at Melbourne in 2020. As has been in the past, this Indian line-up is rich in talent and, arguably, only Australia have a similarly well-oiled unit. But the reigning champions have six titles in their cabinet, and India's is still dust-laden. So, what pegs India back in global events? It seems more a case of mental fragility at clutch moments, and the Women in Blue tried to address that during a preparatory camp at the NCA (National Cricket Academy) with a few counselling sessions. But such external measures can only be of limited help in big tournaments, as it boils down entirely to flawless execution of strategies on a given day. In that context, India will not get a

better opponent than New Zealand, which is not a fancied side like its Trans-Tasman neighbour. But the two-time runners-up are as tough as nails. A victory against them could well be counted as a sign of being in fine shape — tactically and mentally — and that's a pre-requisite for India in a group that also has Australia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. To start with, India will require heavy contributions from their top guns — the 35-year-old Harmanpreet, Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma. Among them, Shafali and Mandhana have been in excellent touch, making runs in their last international outing in the Asia Cup in Sri Lanka in July even though India lost to the hosts in the final. In fact, Mandhana's last five T20I innings include three fifties. But Harmanpreet and Shafali have been a tad underwhelming and the duo finding range is imperative for India's charge at the top and middle order. It is critical to India's chances as the pitches in the UAE, going through a harsh heat wave, might not be a treasure trove of turns, particularly deep into the tournament. However, the expected weariness of the track, in one way, will cater to India's strengths in the bowling department — spin.



They have only three pacers in their squad — Renuka Singh, Pooja Vastrakar and Arundhati Reddy. In all likelihood, India will only play two of them, while depending on a plethora of spinners in their line-up. India have exceptional variety in that department. The attack will be marshalled by off-spinners Deepti and Shreyanka Patil, leg-spinner Asha Shobhana and left-arm spinner Radha Yadav.

But the Kiwis have a good blend of experienced and young players, who can lift them above such obstacles. Their talismanic skipper Sophie Devine, experienced all-rounder Suzie Bates along with veteran pacers Lea Tahuhu and Leigh Kasperek form the crux of this New Zealand side. Add the exciting young all-rounder Amelia Kerr to the mix, and they have the wherewithal to spring a surprise or two in this tournament. But beyond them, the Kiwis are a bit green behind the ears and that could be their Achilles Heel.

**TEAMS:**  
**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Yastika Bhatia (subject to fitness), Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh Thakur, Dayalan Hemalatha, Asha Shobhana, Radha Yadav, Shreyanka Patil (subject to fitness), Sajana Sajeevan  
**Travelling reserves:** Uma Chetry (wk), Tanuja Kanwer, Saima Thakor.  
**New Zealand:** Sophie Devine (c), Suzie Bates, Eden Carson, Izzy Gaze, Maddy Green, Brooke Halliday, Fran Jonas, Leigh Kasperek, Melie Kerr, Jess Kerr, Rosemary Mair, Molly Penfold, Georgia Plimmer, Hannah Rowe, Lea Tahuhu.



## Biggest challenges for India in Women's T20 WC will be Australia, SL: Harbhajan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's World Cup-winning spinner Harbhajan Singh said the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side will face a tough challenge from Australia and Sri Lanka in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The global showpiece gets underway in the UAE from Thursday, and India are placed in Group A alongside Australia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and New Zealand. "I think India needs to be very careful when playing against Australia. Looking at this group, India has Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. But one match that I think will be a little tough is the India-Australia match," Harbhajan told Star Sports. "Australia is a good team, even though these matches are being played in Dubai, on subcontinent pitches that might not suit them as much as their home conditions. But Australia, no matter where they play, are hard to beat. So,

the biggest challenge for India may be Australia," he said. Harbhajan's fears were not entirely misplaced as the Australia have beaten India 23 times in 32 T20Is with the 'Women in Blue' winning seven of them. However, the 44-year-old warned India of another potential hazard on its way - Sri Lanka. The Islanders had recently trumped India in the Asia Cup final with Chamari Athapaththu and Harshitha Samarawickrama producing match-winning efforts. "Sri Lanka, too, after their recent series win against India, will be confident when they play against India. So, that will also be a good contest." But Harbhajan had little doubts that India have the skill sets to land their maiden ICC title. "Team India will be the team to beat in this tournament. They have both experience and youth. Harman (captain Harmanpreet Kaur) is in good

form, Smriti (Mandhana) is in good form, and Deepti (Sharma) is an unbelievable spinner. "They are a very capable team and have been playing very good cricket. The unit looks solid. If India plays good cricket overall, I believe they will win this tournament," he noted. The off-spinner, who has 711 international wickets, also advised the Indians to take it one match at a time, without succumbing to the big-moment pressure. "You have to try to give your best and not take pressure. At this stage, the only thing that matters is to know yourself, and play as a unit. Results will follow. "Don't think about the big picture; just take small steps with each match and focus on the process. I hope if they follow these things, our team will perform very well," he added. India open their campaign against New Zealand on Friday.

## Khushi seals dramatic bronze, takes India's tally to 15 at ISSF Jr Worlds

PTI ■ LIMA (PERU)

Khushi secured a hard-fought bronze in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions at the ISSF Junior World Championship here, dramatically qualifying for the final before rallying to claim the third spot. Her medal on Wednesday took India's tally to 15, including 10 gold, one silver, and four bronze medals, keeping the country at the top

of the standings. The youngster shot 447.3 in the final to finish behind Caroline Lund of Norway who won silver with 458.3. Caroline's compatriot Synnove Berg won gold with 458.4. However, Khushi's path to the podium was far from easy. She narrowly made it to the medal round, rallying brilliantly in the final standing position in qualifying to clinch the

seventh spot with a score of 585. It got so tight that there were four others on the same score. However, Khushi and Italian Anna Schiavon clinched the final two qualifying spots, scoring 29 inner-10 shots, while two Swiss athletes — Alexa Tela and Emely Jaeggi — managed 27. Khushi finished ahead of Anna on countback. In the eight-woman final, Khushi was fourth at the end

of the first two positions — Kneeling and Prone. A strong finish in the Standing position allowed her to pip Norwegian Pernille Nor-Woll after the 40th shot to move up to third. Synnove and Caroline were having their own battle for top-two throughout the 45-shot final. Khushi wobbled again on the 41st shot with 9.1 which put her back down to fifth, but a brilliant 10.7 in the 42nd and

10.4 in 43rd ensured the bronze. In the team competition in junior women's 3P, the trio of Sakshi Padekar, Melvina Joel Gladson and Prachi Gaekwad, finished fifth with a tally of 1757. Anoushka Thakur also shot 585 in qualification, but 26 hits in the inner-10 ring meant she ended 11th. Sakshi, Melvina and Prachi finished 24th, 32nd and 41st respectively.

## Weight management is athlete's responsibility: Mary Kom

PTI ■ MUMBAI

No stranger to the physical toll of weight management during a competition, six-time world champion boxer M C Mary Kom Thursday waded into the debate surrounding wrestler Vinesh Phogat's Olympic heartbreak for being 100gm over, saying that to be within the prescribed limit is an individual responsibility. The 42-year-old mother of four, who is India's only woman boxer with an Olympic medal (a bronze in London, 2012), was in the city to promote Utkarsh Small Finance Bank, which named her as its brand ambassador. Speaking for the first time on Phogat, who was disqualified on the day of her 50kg finals in the Paris Games for being marginally over the prescribed limit, Mary Kom said weight management is an athlete's responsibility. "I felt so disappointed in the sense that I have also done the same (weight management) for the last so many years. Weight is important, that is my responsibility. I cannot blame anyone," she said. "I do not want to say this in her case. I am saying this in my case only. If I do not cut the weight properly then how will I play? I am there to win a medal and that is what I think," she continued.

Mary Kom, in the past, has spoken about her weight cut routines and how difficult the process can be. The Manipuri started out as a pin-weight (46kg) category boxer before settling for the flyweight (51kg) division in her amateur career. Phogat, who was being seen as gold medal contender in Paris, skipped meals and fluids, worked out an entire night and also cut her hair to be within the requisite category but the effort fell short eventually. She challenged her disqualification, calling the rules inhumane, but her appeal was rejected by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The wrestler retired to join politics after the heartbreak and is contesting the Haryana assembly elections on a Congress ticket. **WANT TO DISCUSS INDIAN BOXING WITH SPORTS MINISTER:** Mary Kom was also quizzed about India's boxing campaign in Paris and she was still perplexed by how poor the performance was. She said she wants to have a meeting with the national federation and sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya to understand "what is lacking" and clear her "doubts". The Indian boxing contingent, which included two reigning world champions in Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain, cut a sorry figure



in the Games and failed to win even one medal. "We know what the result was, it was so, so bad. I want to know what is lacking," said the Manipuri, who became the first Indian woman boxer with an Olympic medal when she won bronze in the 2012 London Games. One of the most successful athletes in the history of Indian sports, Mary Kom felt the boxers got all the logistical support they needed but she does have some "doubts" regarding how their training was managed by the Boxing Federation of India. "I will meet the boxers too if the

situation demands. If the sports minister has the knowledge (about the issues) I want to discuss that also," she said. Refusing to share her exact concerns, Mary Kom said she would rather discuss them in the meeting with Mandaviya and BFI brass. "The federation has provided all the coaches. But I have a few doubts as well. But what is the point in saying them now, the Olympics are done. Now there is no point in saying all that, but I want to discuss it with them in the meeting," said the former Rajya Sabha MP. "(The) sports minister is doing whatever he can do from his side, infrastructure, facilities or whatever (other) needs are there. But how did the federation handle the training? Was it done systematically or not? What happened exactly, I do not know," she wondered. "If I do not meet them and not discuss, how will I know about them?" Mary reiterated that she wants to participate in professional boxing "I have not retired yet but I want to compete. I am trying to get opportunities, waiting for my chance to fight pro. I just want to come back." "I can continue for another three-four years, that is my will. I have the passion and hunger. I want to continue," she added.

## Lionel Messi, Inter Miami win MLS Supporters Shield with 3-2 win at Crew

AP ■ COLUMBUS (OHIO)

Lionel Messi and Inter Miami have another trophy, along with home-field advantage throughout the Major League Soccer playoffs. Messi scored twice in the final minutes of the first half, goalie Drake Callender stopped a penalty kick in the 84th minute and Inter Miami beat the defending MLS Cup champion Columbus Crew 3-2 on Wednesday, wrapping up the Supporters Shield given annually to the team with the best regular-season record. It was Messi's 46th major trophy won for club or country, extending his record for the most by any men's soccer player in history. And it is the second he has won with Inter Miami, this Supporters Shield being added to the Leagues

Cup trophy the Herons claimed shortly after Messi joined the club in 2023. "We knew this was a group that could fight for this," Messi said. Luis Suarez also scored for Inter Miami, which will open a best-of-three first-round playoff series in the final weekend of October. If the team wins that series, it would have the right to host every match it plays the rest of the season - an Eastern Conference semifinal (scheduled for Nov. 23 or 24), the East final (Nov. 30 or Dec. 1) and the MLS Cup final on Dec. 7. "We have a nice opportunity to go down in history... And now we think about what is coming," Messi told Apple TV after the match. "We have a great advantage in that we play all the games at

home, which was what we were looking for. I think that we are very, very strong at home." Also still within reach for Inter Miami: the best MLS regular-season mark ever. Wednesday's win pushed Inter Miami's record to 20-4-8 this season, giving it 68 points. If the club wins its final two matches - Saturday at Toronto and Oct. 19 at home against New England - it would finish with 74 points. New England has the single-season points record, finishing with 73 in 2021. Messi opened the scoring in the 45th minute, taking a long pass from Jordi Alba - his longtime teammate at Barcelona, the club with which Messi won 35 of his trophies - and splitting two defenders before somehow getting the ball past Columbus goalkeeper

Patrick Schulte for a 1-0 lead. And about five minutes into first-half stoppage time, Messi struck again on a free kick from about 30 yards out. Schulte seemed fooled, and Messi squeezed the ball between the goalie and the near post for a 2-0 lead. "Dominant," Inter Miami coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino said. Diego Rossi scored in the first minute of the second half for Columbus to cut the lead in half, but it didn't take long for Inter Miami to restore the two-goal cushion. Almost immediately after play resumed, Schulte was upended by one of his own defenders and Suarez sent a header into an empty net for a 3-1 edge. Juan "Cucho" Hernandez's penalty kick in the 61st minute

got Columbus within 3-2. But once again, the momentum didn't last for long. Rudy Camacho was sent off for his second yellow card in the 63rd minute, meaning the Crew had to play with 10 men the rest of the way. Didn't matter. Columbus still created some big chances down the stretch. A deflected ball in the 76th minute got across the box and onto the right foot of Mohamed Farsi - but his shot was blocked by Callender, who was perfectly positioned to protect the lead. Then came more drama, when Inter Miami was called for its second handball inside the box - an automatic penalty kick - of the second half. Hernandez picked the left side of the net, but Callender made the save look almost easy.

That save helped finish what Messi started. It was the fifth two-goal game of the MLS season for Messi, who now has 17 goals in 17 league matches this season. He's missed 15 of Inter Miami's MLS matches in 2024, either because of commitments to Argentina's national team or the two-month absence that he needed to recover from a badly injured ankle - an injury that happened during his nation's run to the Copa America title in July. Inter Miami, in MLS play this season, is now 10-1-6 with Messi in the lineup. "Throughout the year we had many, many injuries, where we couldn't all be together... But the group was getting the most out of every tough game," Messi said. The Crew and the LA Galaxy

entered Wednesday still with a mathematical hope of passing Inter Miami in the race for the Supporters Shield, and Cincinnati was nine points back with nine points still possible. But now, they're all playing for second. "Dec. 7 is what we want," Martino said, referring to the date of the MLS Cup final.

**UTTAR PRADESH METRO RAIL CORPORATION LIMITED**  
 Administrative Building, Vipin Khand,  
 Gomti Nagar, Lucknow - 226010

**"PUBLIC NOTIFICATION"**

Notice is hereby given to all users of Kanpur Metro Rail Lines and premises on the completed section of the Kanpur Metro Rail that the 750 volts, DC Third Rail will be energised on or after the date specified against the section. On and from said time & date the 750V DC Third Rail traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorised person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said Third Rail.

S. No.	Section	Length (In Km)	Date of energisation
1	Motijheel dead end (Chainage 8261.55) to Nayaganj platform end (Chainage 13224.00) DN line	4.962	04.10.2024 at 08:00 Hrs

UMRC/Elect/KNPE1&2 Chief Electrical Engineer/Project-IV

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