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MONEY 10 DGCA ISSUES ADVISORY ON BOEING 737 RUDDER RISKS

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SINDHU, SEN EYE COMEBACK AFTER PARIS SETBACK 11 SPORTS

TOMATO PRICES LEAVE BITTER TASTE ON FESTIVE PLATES

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The price of tomato, a crucial kitchen staple, has skyrocketed to ₹100 per kg and in some colonies prices have touched ₹120 a kg. The surge in tomato prices is not the only concern for Delhi and NCR residents, prices of other vegetables including onion and potato have also increased. Onions are being sold at ₹80 per kg while potato prices range between ₹30 to 40 per kg. The retail rate of tomato was ₹50 per kg till the third week of September.

This has increased the cost of a home-cooked vegetarian meal by up to 11 per cent in September. The average cost of a vegetarian meal was ₹31.3 in September. While vegetables account for about 37 per cent of a vegetarian meal cost, pulses, which constitute 9 per cent, also saw a 14 per cent rise in prices last month.

There are reports that the retail price of tomatoes, onions and potatoes across the country has almost doubled in a month. The reasons for the increase are said to be adverse weather conditions such as high humidity in producing states such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra, and crop loss due to prolonged monsoon. Traders attributed this to a supply shortage from Karnataka and Maharashtra as the second crop cultivation ended.

The rates of tomatoes have also gone up in the major wholesale vegetable markets of Delhi, including Azadpur Mandi, Ghazipur Mandi, and Okhla Sabzi Mandi. According to tomato traders at Azadpur Mandi, presently 30 to 35 trucks arrive daily now, as against 50 to 60 trucks per day.

The wholesale market sells the tomatoes at ₹70-80 a kg and traders anticipate that the price might touch 150 a kg in the coming days. The wholesale price of onion was at ₹45 a kg, and Potatoes at ₹30 a kg. It will take at least five to six weeks or more for the supply to normalise.

This is the third time since July when retail tomato prices have crossed ₹100 a kg in Delhi and NCR. Similar trends were seen in July and August this year, due to the supply disruption from the producing centres owing to rains.



Notably, the Ministry of Agriculture estimated an increase of tomato production by 4.38 per cent to 21.32 million tonnes, driven by last year's price surge. As per Price Monitoring Division of the Department of Consumer Affairs, average price of tomato was at ₹90 a kg in Delhi on Monday. Similarly, onions were being sold at ₹58 a kg and potatoes at ₹40 a kg. In the past three months, the wholesale price of tomatoes surged by 73.24 per cent.

In a bid to address rising tomato prices, the National Cooperative Consumers Federation (NCCF) on Monday initiated a market intervention by directly procuring tomatoes from mandis and selling them at a subsidised rate of ₹65 per kilogram at 50 locations of Delhi-NCR. Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare initiated the retail sale of tomatoes through mobile vans and NCCF retail shops at Krishi Bhawan.

Other vegetables have also seen price increases. Beans are now selling for ₹120 a kg, Capsicum between ₹80 to ₹100 a kg, Bitter Gourd at ₹60 a kg, Bottle Gourd at ₹50 a kg, Cabbage at ₹80 a kg, Drumstick at ₹70 a kg, Cucumber at ₹60 a kg, Brinjal at ₹60 a kg and elephant foot yam at ₹80 a kg. Coriander Leaves have prices ranging from ₹100 to ₹120 a kg. Rajeev Parmar, a Saket resident, said, "We have to reduce consumption to manage expenses."

According to Ministry of Agriculture's estimates, onion production is likely to drop by 19.76 per cent to 24.24 million tonnes due to lower yields in key regions. Other vegetables such as brinjal, elephant foot yam, and capsicum may also see reduced output. Potato production is also set to decline by 5.13 per cent to 57.05 million tonnes. These drops could pose challenges in controlling prices of two essential items, which play a crucial role in food inflation.

RG Kar case not gangrape: CBI chargesheet suggests



A chart shows medical parameters of some junior doctors protesting against the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital rape and murder incident, in Kolkata. PTI

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The RG Kar Medical College and Hospital rape and murder case does not indicate gang-rape, the preliminary charge-sheet filed on Monday by the Central Bureau of Investigation suggests. Though other possibilities are not ruled out as there are still some missing links, "as of now Sanjoy Roy is the prime accused who perpetrated the crime," sources said. In the 45-page charge-sheet Roy has been quoted as telling his interrogators that he first strangled the victim because she was resisting and then raped without realising that she had died. "If that be so then he had raped the victim when she was dead," lawyers at SealDAH Court said. The charge-sheet was filed on the 58th day of the rape and murder taking place inside

the seminar hall of the chest medicine department of the RGMCH. Roy was arrested a day after the body of the 31-year-old postgraduate trainee doctor was recovered at the place of crime on August 9. The incident had resulted in nationwide protests by the fraternity that are still continuing.

Roy, a civic volunteer working with the Kolkata Police, was also subjected to a polygraph test. He reportedly told the investigating officials that he had gone to the fourth floor on the fateful morning where the lady doctor was sleeping during a break. A Bluetooth device found near the victim's body led to the arrest of Roy who was also captured in CCTV footage while he was going to the third floor of the hospital building. Claims made in the CBI charge-sheet notwithstanding, the general view of the doctors of the RGMCH is that the way the victim was raped and the number of injuries she

sustained could not be the handiwork of a single person. Suspicion got stronger when the hospital authorities upon the orders of the then college Principal Sandip Ghosh started renovation in the area where the crime had taken place. Ghosh has since been arrested along with the officer in-charge of the local Tala Police Station which has jurisdiction over the area on charges of tampering of evidence.

Apart from Roy, four persons have been arrested in the RG Kar rape and murder case, on charges of tampering evidence and carrying out a corruption racket inside the Health Department. Meanwhile, the junior doctor's indefinite fast in demand of justice for the victim entered its second day on Monday with the senior doctors too joining them in a symbolic fast. Apart from demanding justice for the victim, the doctors have placed a ten-point demand before the State government that includes centralised referral system for patients so as to save the harassment of shuttling between hospitals in search of beds, total CCTV coverage, adequate security deployment inside hospitals, restrooms and washrooms for the doctors, end of the "threat syndicate" perpetrated by doctors loyal to the ruling party and not least the removal of Principal Health Secretary NS Nigam from his post. Elsewhere a team of doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences on Monday conducted the postmortem of the 11-year-old girl who was on Saturday evening raped and murdered at Mahishmari village in Joynagar block of South 24 Parganas.



Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan during a meeting with farmers. PTI

Will implement NRC in Jharkhand: Shivraj

PNS ■ RANCHI/NEW DELHI

Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Centre on Monday said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Jharkhand if voted to power. Chouhan who announced NRC for the State accused the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led government of "patronising" Bangladeshi infiltrators. He claimed that 'mati' (land), 'beti' (daughter) and 'roti' (bread) in Jharkhand are in danger. Chouhan said a citizen register will be drafted and the NRC will be implemented. "The infiltrators will be chased out of the state," Chouhan said. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) has been created to contain names of all genuine Indian citizens, and at present, only Assam has such a register. The NRC in Assam is a list of Indian citizens living in the state. The citizens' register sets out to identify foreign nationals in the state that borders Bangladesh. The Centre has been planning to exercise NRC to other states as well. Nagaland is already creating a similar database known as the Register of Indigenous Inhabitants. The Centre is also planning to create a National Population Register (NPR), which will contain demographic and biometric details of citizens.

"The BJP is not concerned about coming to power only. In Jharkhand 'maati', 'beti', 'roti' are in danger because of infiltration. It is our pledge to protect them," Union Agriculture minister said at Ranchi's Birsra Munda Airport while leaving for Delhi. Chouhan, who is also election in-charge for Jharkhand, alleged there has been infiltration from foreign land and the Hemant Soren-led government patronising them by making their Aadhaar and voter identity cards. "Infiltrators are coming to Jharkhand, marrying daughters here, purchasing land and increasing their influence in local bodies. This is very dangerous and it is ruining Jharkhand," he said. The BJP on Saturday released five key points of its manifesto for the assembly polls in Jharkhand, promising financial assistance of Rs 2,100 to women every month, five lakh jobs to youths, LPG cylinders at Rs 50 to every household and housing for all if the party came to power. Speaking about a proposed meeting with farmers' bodies in Delhi on Monday, he said, "I meet farmers and their organisations every week. I am meeting them today as well. We decide about their welfare after talking to them." Chouhan on Sunday attended the BJP's election committee meeting in Ranchi where strategies for the upcoming assembly polls were discussed.

No China-made decorations for Diwali: Ram Janmabhoomi trust

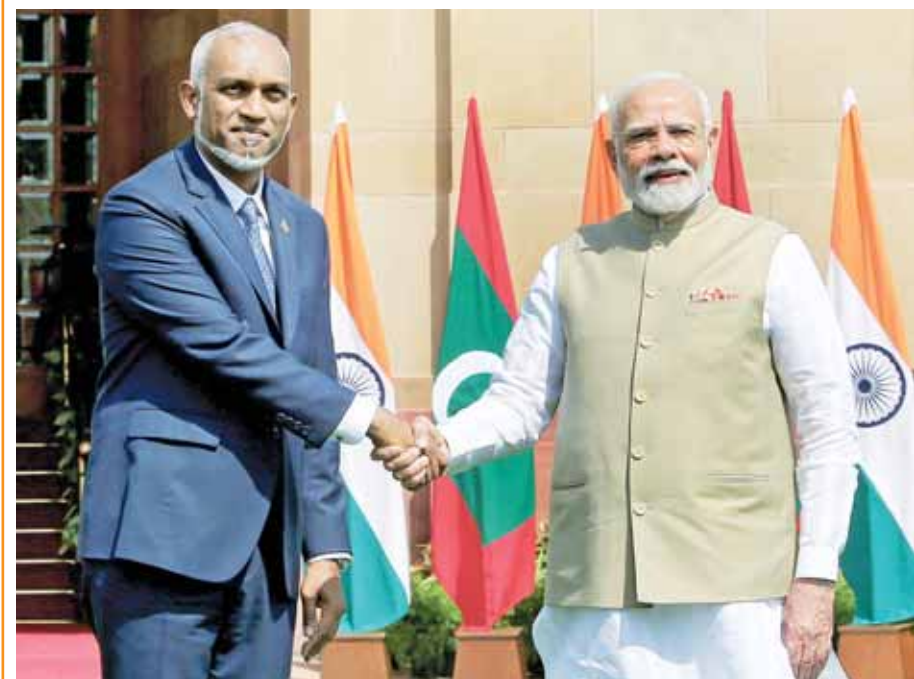
BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra has taken a step toward supporting the "Make in India" initiative by banning the use of Chinese decorative items, including lights, for this year's Diwali celebrations at the Ram Janmabhoomi campus and proposed custom designed outfit for Ram Lalla by fashion designer Manish Malhotra. "The Trust will make all arrangements for the Diwali celebrations, ensuring that no Chinese items, including lights, are used on the campus," announced Champat Rai, general secretary of the Trust. In keeping with this vision, the Diwali festivities at the Ram Mandir will focus on promoting local artisans and traditional crafts. This celebration, the first since the grand opening of the temple on January 22, 2024, will highlight India's rich cultural heritage. The temple will be illuminated with two lakh diyas, handcrafted by local artisans, to honour India's traditional craftsmanship. The Trust has carefully planned the diya placements to preserve the beauty of the temple. A standout feature of this year's celebrations is

the custom-designed outfits for Ram Lalla and his brothers, created by renowned Indian fashion designer Manish Malhotra. Known for his intricate craftsmanship and blend of tradition and modernity, Malhotra's designs will add a special charm to the deity's adornment. "Manish Malhotra is preparing these special outfits for the deities, aligning with the 'Make in India' spirit of the celebrations," said a Trust member.

The festivities will also include special offerings and four arts throughout the day. Acharya Satyendra Das, the head priest, will lead the Vedic rituals, while the temple complex will be decorated with locally sourced flowers and traditional decorations, further emphasizing the focus on Indian artisanship. The Uttar Pradesh tourism department is contributing to the celebrations by lighting diyas along the Sarayu River and organising cultural events to recreate the joyous return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has also set an ambitious goal of lighting 25 lakh diyas during the Deepotsav, aiming to set a new Guinness World Record. Continued on page 8

HEALING TOUCH



Prime Minister Narendra Modi shakes hands with Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu prior to a meeting at Hyderabad House. Photo: Ranjan Dirri/The Pioneer

New Rohtak Road is the worst: Chief Minister Atishi

Traffic jams, potholes, broken patches make it dangerous for two wheeler commuters



BY RAJESH KUMAR

New Rohtak Road, one of the most densely populated areas connecting Mundka and Tikri Border is arguably the worst road in the National Capital. It has huge traffic jams round the clock and is also dangerous for two wheeler commuters due to potholes and broken roads. A major arterial road that links north, northwest, west Delhi to Central and New Delhi, heavy traffic and consequent snarls are common here with stoppage sometimes extending over two to three hours.

Addressing a press conference along with Aam Aadmi Party national convener and former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Monday admitted that New Rohtak Road is the worst road in the capital city. "One of the most problematic roads identified during the inspection is New Rohtak Road, which passes through Nangloi and Mundka, leading to Tikri Border. This

road is possibly the worst in Delhi today. The population in its surrounding unauthorised colonies has increased and the drainage system needs upgrading," Atishi said, adding "work on the new drain and road will begin within four weeks."

In this traffic jams series, we have been highlighting that poor traffic management, and broken roads lead to traffic jams round the clock in the national capital. Be it Wazirabad road to Vikas Marg, Mehrauli Badarpur road to New Rohtak Road and all ISBT's, 1 and surroundings of metro stations, commuters face traffic jams on a daily basis.

Real time data from TomTom showed that it took 25 minutes to cover 10 kilometres at 1 pm. Experts say poor planning, broken roads, high volume of traffic and illegal parking are reasons behind jams, making Delhi one of the worst cities when it comes to daily commutes.



The Delhi government's Public Works Department (PWD) manages a road network of 1,400 km, with a total lane length of 7,000 km. The inspection identified 6,671 potholes and over 230 km of road requiring re-carpeting and strengthening. "As many as 2,53,000 sq m of road patches have been identified for repair, and 39,500 sq m of patchwork was completed within the last week," the CM added.

The Pioneer has been highlighting in its traffic jams series that poor and broken roads lead to traffic jams round the clock in the national capital. Sharing details of pathetic roads, CM Atishi said the party has identified 89 damaged PWD (Public Works Department) roads for strengthening. She said 74 tenders have already been floated for this. The CM added that AAP leaders identified a total of 6,671 potholes during a series of inspections, and 3,454 of the patches have already been filled. This is an indication that

broken roads cause traffic jams. Meanwhile, residents of New Rohtak Road say they are now used to round-the-clock traffic jams. Traffic bound to Central and New Delhi from areas like Punjabi Bagh, Model Town, Pitampura to Punjabi Bagh, Rohini and Najafgarh use this road during morning peak hours. Following this the 'shopping crowd' descends on Karol Bagh and other major markets. In the evening home bound traffic chokes the stretch. After 9.30 pm, trucks are allowed to ply, so there are hardly any quiet moments along this stretch.

Using Zebra crossings, staying behind stop lines at red lights, and usage of pavements seem to be alien concepts here. Pedestrians walk on the traffic carriageway, and two wheelers zoom on the pavements. Many commuters say they avoid the stretch even if it means taking a long detour. Residents enclaves on both sides of the road also generate substantial pedestrian traffic.

Man sets self ablaze in front of Vidhan Bhawan

Admitted to hospital with 50% burns

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Piqued over delay in his salary and alleged police torture for filing a complaint, a man set himself on fire in front of Vidhan Bhawan in Lucknow on Monday, breaching the security cordon. He doused himself with some inflammable liquid which he had brought with him before reaching near the Vidhan Bhawan. Police personnel present at the spot doused the fire by throwing a blanket over him and rushed him to the Civil hospital. He is said to have suffered over 50 per cent burns, and his condition is critical. As per reports, Munna Vishwakarma (40) of the Saadatganj police station area reached the Vidhan Bhawan gate near the BJP office, and set himself on fire. Police investigation revealed that Munna had doused himself with an inflammable liquid before he reached in front of the Vidhan Bhawan. According to the initial investigation, Munna worked at a tent house in Alambagh. The tent house owner had allegedly not been paying his salary for several months, and there was a dispute between the two as a result. He had filed a complaint at the Mawaiya police outpost and also at Alambagh police station, but the cops did not take any action. It was alleged that instead of resolving his issue, the cops beat him up at the police station and shooed him away. Munna was unable to pay his

Tipsy youth sets fire to room, threatens suicide; rescued

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a high-voltage drama, a youth in an inebriated state set fire to a room on the second floor of his house while locking himself in the balcony, with his elderly parents trapped on the ground floor, in Jaiprakash Nagar under Krishna Nagar police station area on Monday afternoon. He was threatening to end his life. After the Fire department received the information at 13:37 pm, a fire team, along with a police team, reached the scene. Due to the house being located in a narrow lane, the fire unit immediately deployed an emergency fire motorbike with a bullet-attacked pressure pump, led by the incharge of Alambagh fire officer. On reaching the spot, it was observed that the fire was burning in the room on the second floor, and a person was in the balcony behind the room after locking the door. Despite repeated requests to unlock the door and come out,

child's school fees and was feeling low. He told policemen that due to lack of money, he could not pay his child's school fees, and it led him to take the extreme step on Monday. The victim, in his statement to police, is said to have made serious allegations against the Alambagh police, claiming that his complaints were ignored and that he was taken to

The fire unit extinguished the flames in the room, cut the latch and lock of the closed door, and safely rescued him

the man refused to comply. "As the person was not coming out, the fire unit extinguished the flames in the room, cut the latch and lock of the closed door, and safely rescued him," a fire official said. After extinguishing the fire and completing the rescue, police questioned the youth, who identified himself as Aditya Pal of New Basti, Jaiprakash Nagar, under Krishna Nagar police station. Aditya had set fire to the room while drunk and was sitting in the balcony next to the room, refusing to come out. Police are investigating the case and will initiate legal action against the man.

Mawaiya police outpost and tortured several times. DCP (Central) Ravena Tyagi, who is investigating the allegations, said that Munna has suffered 50 per cent burns. "He is undergoing treatment at Civil hospital. Information is being collected about Munna's allegations. Further action will be taken on the basis of evidence and facts," the officer said.

Mother-daughter duo electrocuted

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman and her eight-year-old daughter were electrocuted in Chhatauni village, Nagam on Sunday. The victims have been identified as Sunita and her daughter Anmol, both residents of Mohanlalganj. On Monday, numerous social workers and political leaders visited the family's home to offer financial support and announced their commitment to take responsibility for the education of Sunita's children. According to reports, Sunita's husband Sunil had gone to work on Sunday afternoon. While preparing to remove husk and dirt from mustard at home, Sunita set up a fan to blow away the debris. As she was adjusting the fan, an electrical fault caused a sudden shock. In a desperate attempt to save her mother, Anmol ran to help, but she also suffered a shock. The other children present raised an alarm, drawing neighbours to the scene. The villagers quickly disconnected the electricity supply and rushed the mother-daughter duo to the hospital. However, their condition did not improve, and they were referred to the Mohanlalganj Community Health Centre (CHC). Unfortunately, both died before reaching the hospital, according to police reports. The sudden loss of Sunita and Anmol has deeply affected the local community. BJP leader Naveen Mishra visited the family on Monday, providing financial assistance and pledging to support the education of the deceased's children. Many social workers followed suit, offering help in various forms. Some provided financial aid, while others assisted with household tasks. The deceased

left behind four children: three daughters and a son. Social workers have committed to supporting their education and upbringing during this difficult time.

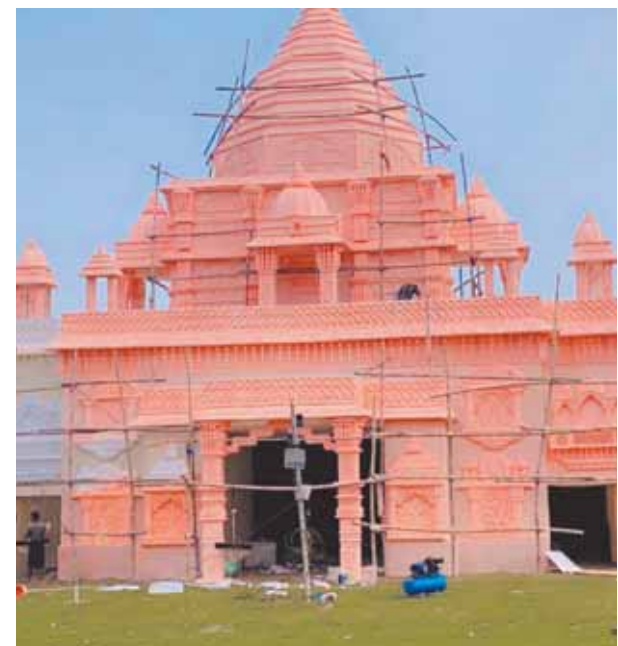
MISSING WOMAN FOUND MURDERED

A missing woman was found murdered, with her body recovered from a servant quarter behind a bakery in the Manak Nagar police station area on Monday. She had left her house on Sunday to buy rations and did not return. Her family reported her missing to the police. The 46-year-old victim, a resident of the Para police station area, went to a shop at Langda Phatak to buy groceries around noon on Sunday. After waiting for an extended period without her return, her family searched the surrounding area but could not find her. They subsequently filed a missing report at the Manak Nagar police station. Around 12:30 pm on Monday, her body was discovered in a servant quarter behind a bakery in Sleeper Ground Colony, Manak Nagar. Police informed the family, who confirmed her identity. Inspector, Manak Nagar, stated that an investigation was underway based on the complaint filed. The deceased's daughter told the police that her mother had gone to get groceries, but the shop was closed. While returning, she got into an e-rickshaw, after which she went missing. The house where the body was found belongs to Ramu, a former neighbour, and there are allegations that Ramu and his accomplices were involved in her murder. The victim is survived by four daughters and a son. Her husband passed away in 2023.

SGC Durga Puja showcases Guj's Akshardham Temple

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Sushant Golf City Durga Puja pandal is themed on the Akshardham Temple of Gujarat for this year's festivities. Sushant Golf City Durga Puja Samiti secretary Anoop Gupta said this is their second year celebrating with a unique theme. "Lucknow's Durga Puja features numerous pandals with various themes. We explored several options and found the Akshardham Temple theme particularly interesting, so we decided to adopt it," Gupta explained. He emphasised that themes significantly attract visitors to the pandals. Last year, the committee constructed a pandal representing the Poornadevi Mata Temple. Gupta noted that the puja is held on a spacious lawn in Sushant Golf City and will continue to be celebrated in the coming years. The pandal stands 65 feet tall. The puja typically draws a daily footfall of 2,000 to 3,000 attendees, but this year, even more visitors are expected. "This is a new colony developed in the last four to five years, and before our initiative, there was no Durga Puja here. The colony has a population of 5,000 to 6,000 Bengalis, and the non-Bengali community organises this puja for them. A core group of 15-20 people manages the funds, supplemented by donations from the general public," he added. The puja will commence on Tuesday with the installation of the idol, followed by a children's fashion show and classical dance competition on October 9, and a Jagrata on October 10. Dandiya celebrations will take place on October 11 and 12. The Jail Road Durga Puja features a pandal resembling a Hindu temple. Tapas Kant Ghosh stated that



this year marks their 75th anniversary, and they rely on donations from the community to organise the event. "We attract a significant crowd, and we will host cultural programmes for children. Bhog will be served on Ashtami, Navami, and other days," he mentioned. Avik Bhattacharya from Vidyant College emphasised the traditional aspects of their puja, stating, "We prioritise the puja itself over the pandal theme. All rituals are conducted early, adhering to specific timings." The menu includes khichdi, chachadi, and payas on Saptami; pulao, paneer, dum aloo-puri, and payas on Ashtami; and steamed rice, sukhto, moong dal, baingan fry, chutney, and payas on Navami. This year marks the 89th anniversary of this Durga Puja. Organisers noted that due to timing issues, some events will begin on Tuesday, while others will commence on Wednesday with the pran pratishthana.

BENGALI CLUB TO HIGHLIGHT KOLKATA RAPE/MURDER CASE
This year, the Bengali Club Durga Puja will focus on the Kolkata rape and murder case. Secretary Arun Banerjee announced that a separate stage will feature a daily slogan competition, judged by a panel. "We aim to convey the public's feelings about the incident. While authorities have their perspectives, we want to share the sentiments of the general populace," he explained. The initiative is being led by the ladies wing, with vice-president Meenakshi Sinha and secretary Chandrani Mukherjee guiding visitors through the campaign's purpose. "We will unite in support, linking our cause to Maa Durga. Dhak will be played in front of the idol and at our demonstration, raising awareness. We want to emphasise that women embody the spirit of Maa Durga and demand justice—not only for this case but for all similar incidents. Our goal is to change societal mindsets," he added.

Fire erupts in building, no injuries reported

Lucknow (PNS): A fire broke out at a building in Parking 7, Phase 2 of Transport Nagar, on Monday morning. The incident drew attention following a previous building collapse in the area that resulted in fatalities and numerous injuries.

No injuries were reported in this mishap, and firefighters extinguished the blaze in time. According to reports, around 8:28 am on October 5, the Sarojini Nagar fire station and control room received a call from a local resident named Ankit, who reported that the building was filled with smoke and experiencing a chemical reaction due to a fire. A team led by fire officer Sumit Pratap Singh rushed to the scene only to discover that

toxic smoke was emanating from a storage area on the first floor of the building. The smoke was so dense that visibility was severely compromised. Firefighters donned breathing apparatus sets and entered the office to assess the situation. They opened windows, broke glass panes to ventilate the area, and set up smoke exhaust equipment to clear the air. After intense efforts, the fire was brought under control, and the smoke filling the storage area was evacuated. A spokesperson for the fire department confirmed that there were no casualties. The building and company owners were identified as Chitranganj Verma and Himanshu Arora.

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Bid to extract women panel member's personal info

Lucknow (PNS): A member of the State Women Commission, Dr Priyanka Maurya, has filed a complaint at the Krishna Nagar police station following a spook call from unidentified individuals seeking her personal information. In her complaint, Dr Maurya alleged that the callers impersonated the personal assistant to the principal secretary, Uttar Pradesh chief minister, and the district magistrate of Unnao, asking for her personal details. Dr Maurya expressed concern that these actions were an attempt by opposition figures to tarnish her image through deceitful means. The police have registered a case based on her complaint. According to the report, Dr Maurya received the first call on September 9 while at her residence in LDA Colony on Kanpur Road. The caller claimed to be the district magistrate of Unnao and requested her personal information. On September 30, she received a second similar call. This time, the caller identified himself as the PA to the chief minister's principal secretary and again demanded her personal details, stating that she was to be entrusted with a significant responsibility that required her information. Realising the seriousness of the matter, she filed a complaint at the Krishna Nagar police station. The police registered the case on Saturday and have initiated an investigation into the matter.

Artistes from Varanasi to perform at 'Chhoti Ramlila'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Khajua Ramlila, also known as the 'Chhoti Ramlila' stands in contrast to the grander Aishbagh Ramlila, which is staged nearby. Secretary, Khajua Ramlila, Durgesh Mishra explained that both Ramlilas complement each other and were originally organised by two brothers. "This Ramlila is managed by Sri Bal Ramlila Samiti," Mishra states. "The main characters are portrayed by children. Our Ramlila has a rich history of 78 years. While Aishbagh Ramlila is known as the 'Badi Ramlila', ours is fondly referred to as the 'Chhoti Ramlila'. The founder of this Ramlila is Lala Mukul Lal," he added. The Ramlila festivities commenced on October 7, with the Ravana Dahan scheduled for October 17 and the 'Rajya Abhishek' on October 19. "The Ravana Dahan occurs after Dussehra as we align our schedule with the Aishbagh Ramlila. Once it takes place there, we follow suit with our own Ravana Dahan," he said. Mishra noted that they invite performance groups from other districts to participate in the Ramlila. "Last time, we welcomed a troupe from Mathura, and this

year, artistes from Varanasi will be performing. We ensure that the main cast consists of children," he added. When asked about the enduring legacy of the Ramlila, especially in the vicinity of the more prominent Aishbagh Ramlila, Mishra reflected on their long-standing attachment to the tradition. "Many of our members have passed on, but our love for this Ramlila keeps it alive," he remarked. The Khajua Ramlila also features a baraat during the Bharat Milap, which begins and ends at Yahiyan, making a round through Pandeyganj. "We adopt the Radhey Shyam style of Ramlila performance. Unlike others, our dialogues are delivered live by the actors without lip-syncing. There are about 15-16 characters in our Ramlila," he added. Mishra highlighted a unique aspect of their Ramlila: the operation of an Aushadhi Kendra, or Tulsi Swasthya Kendra, which provides medicines for just Rs 10. "This service runs year-round for the benefit of the community," he explained. The clinic operates at the same venue as the Ramlila, and Mishra noted that the largest crowds gather for the Ravana Dahan.

A city temple where Ravana is worshipped

Lucknow (PTI): While Ravana is killed throughout the country on Vijaydashami or Dussehra, there is a temple in Lucknow where the demon king is worshipped on the occasion. In the Char Dham temple at Rani Katra in the old city area, the 'Ravana Darbar' is present where he is worshipped by some people, Siyaram Awasthi, a priest at the temple, told PTI Videos. He said that the temple was constructed about 135 years ago. "The Char Dham temple was built by Kundan Lal Kunj Bihari Lal and now his sixth generation is managing it. In this temple, all four Dhams are there and it is famous as Chhoti Kashi also. We have Ravana Darbar here also," the priest said. He said that people who come here also visit this darbar, where Ravana is worshipped on Vijaydashami. "It (Ravana Darbar) is there for people to realise what type of deeds they want to do in their lives which can lead them to hell or heaven," Awasthi said. "Here Ravana's entire court is present. While Ravana's ministers are seen sitting on both sides in the court, the demon king is seated at the top," he said.

NOTICE

I, ARVIND PRAJAPATI, S/o Late Shri RAMNARAYAN, R/o Village Jogipur, Post Sempur, Atraulia, Azamgarh, have legally changed my name to ARVIND KUMAR, my wife's name to ANTIMA DEVI, and my daughter's name to AYISHI PRAJAPATI. Henceforth, we shall be known by these names.

NOTICE

My house No.-254, LIG, 1st floor, Barra - 2, which was Registered sale by Kanpur Development Authority in favour of Smt. Prabha Tripathi W/o Sri Vinod Tripathi on 29.02.2012 has been lost. F.I.R.d.t.24.09.2024 has also been filed for which, Rajesh Tripathi 87/241, Acharya Nagar Kanpur

NOTICE

Previously name of my son was ATHARV SINGH and Dt of Birth 16/7/2019. Now his name is PRANAV SINGH & Dt of Birth 16/07/2022 with which he will be known & identified. Binit Kumar, R/O Dharma Nagar Chhapra Bargaon, Kushni Nagar (U.P.).

NOTICE

To be informed that my name was recorded as HAYAT KAZMI in my son ABRAHAM ABBAS KAZMI's TC, which is incorrect. My correct name is SYED HAYAT KAZMI, and this should be considered as the correct name. My son has got new admission in La Martiniere college Lucknow

AUCTION NOTICE

दिनांक 15-10-2024 को अपरान्त 3:00 बजे डा० श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी (सिविल) अस्पताल, लखनऊ में चिकित्सासालय के निष्काय्य घोषित फर्नीचर, उपकरण, विद्युत् यंत्र एवं अन्य सामग्रियों इत्यादि की जहाँ है- जैसा है आधार पर नीलामी होगी. इच्छुक बोलीदाता जमानती धनराशि रु. 50,000/- का बैंक ड्राफ्ट को निदेशक एवं प्रमुख अधीक्षक, डा० श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी (सिविल) अस्पताल, लखनऊ के नाम देय हो फर्म के जी. एस. टी. ची. पी. की. आचार्य, फैन कार्ड के साथ जमा कर नीलामी प्रक्रिया में भाग ले सकते हैं। आई० पी० सिंह एण्ड सन्स,

NOTICE

My Army number is 1541 8106P, HAV Tuhani S/o Jhilaee Singh Village Kathpurwa Post Bedoud Karma Sonbhada uttar pradesh. I inform that my son's name has been written as CHADNI MAURAYA in my service record, whereas his actual name is CHANDANI MAURAYA. Chadni Maurya and Chandni Maurya are the same person.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pintu Paswan S/o Mahandra Paswan R/o Asaichandpur Abhaipur Ghazipur Uttar Pradesh-232331 changed my name to Rudra P.

PD(829)A I, Phool Singh alias Prateek Singh S/o Ayudhya Prasad Singh R/o 446 Abhishek Eldeco Uddyam-2 Lucknow U.P.-226025 changed my name to Prateek Singh.

PD(830)A I, Shri Mati Sultana alias Meh Jabin Sultana W/o Quaiyoom Ali Khan R/o 21/3 19 Ramaiyayipuram Tilak Marg DGP Office Dalibagh Lucknow Uttar Pradesh - 226001 changed my name to Meh Jabin Sultana.

PD(831)A I, Sohni Arora S/o Rakesh Arora R/o E-12 Chaupatiyan Colony Lucknow Uttar Pradesh - 226003 changed my minor Daughter's name Jasreet Arora to Takshvi Arora aged-09-Months.

PD(832)A

'Dead' woman found living with her lover

Lucknow (PNS): In an interesting twist to the alleged kidnapping and murder of a married woman in Gonda, she has been found living with her lover. According to reports, 24-year-old Kavita Devi of Nagar Kotwali area of Gonda district was married to Vinay Kumar of Dadua Bazaar in the same district on November 17, 2017. After the marriage, the couple was living happily until 2021, when Kavita mysteriously disappeared from the house of her in-laws. A report of kidnapping and murder was lodged by her parents against her husband and in-laws. Later, when the police started harassing Vinay, accusing him of killing his wife, he too filed a complaint, alleging that his wife was kidnapped by someone, six months after she had disappeared. When the police did not register his complaint, he moved the court, seeking help to trace out his wife. When the court summoned details of police action in the case from the superintendent of police, the police swung into action. Last week, the police recovered Kavita from Lucknow where she was living with her lover Satyanarayan Gupta.

Strengthen JD(U) organisation: Kumar

Lucknow (PNS): Bihar's Rural Development Minister and Janata Dal (United) co-incharge of Uttar Pradesh, Shrawan Kumar, held a meeting with party office-bearers at PWD guest house in Chandauli on Sunday. Kumar was in Chandauli in connection with organisational work of Uttar Pradesh unit of Janata Dal (United). He reviewed the party's organisational expansion and membership campaign with the local senior leaders and workers of the Janata Dal (United). A large number of workers participated in this meeting. Addressing the party workers and leaders, Kumar exhorted them to strengthen the Janata Dal (United) under the leader-



Bihar cabinet minister Shrawan Kumar with JD (U) workers and leaders in Chandauli

the party's policy and ideas among the people at the local level. **ADVOCATES JOIN RLD** Hundreds of advocates from various political parties on Monday, led by senior High Court advocate Ramnaresh Shukla, joined Rashtriya Lok Dal, expressing full faith in the leadership of party president Jayant Chaudhary and the policies and ideology of late Bharat Ratna Chaudhary Charan Singh and late Chaudhary Ajit Singh. They were welcomed into the party fold by RLD national spokesperson Anil Dubey in the presence of national general secretary and former MLA Shiv Karan Singh at RLD headquarters here.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda	Regional Office Kanpur Dehat Region : 118/330, 2nd Floor, Kaushalpur, Gumti No. 5, Kanpur -208012
	Possession Notice Branch: Auraiya, Distt. Auraiya
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization 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 calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules.	
The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.	
The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.	
Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property and Out Standing Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand & Possession Notice Date	
Borrower : M/S DOLLY GOLD WHEELS PRIVATE LIMITED, CIN No. U50401UP2014PTC062452, Address : Kanpur Road, By Pass, Auraiya, Directors : Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha S/o Shri Ravendra Pratap Singh & Smt. Kavita Singh W/o Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha, Both R/o : House No. 74, Tilak Nagar, Auraiya.	
Guarantor : (1) Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha S/o Shri Ravendra Pratap Singh & Smt. Kavita Singh W/o Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha and Smt. Rakumari Kushwaha W/o Shri Ravendra Pratap Singh, All R/o : House No. 74, Tilak Nagar, Auraiya. (2) Shri Devendra Gupta S/o Shri Narendra Kumar, R/o : Tilak Nagar, Auraiya.	
Demand Notice Date: 10-07-2024 • Date of Constructive Possession: 07.10.2024	
Description of Mortgage Properties : Property (1) Land & Building situated at Mauza Bhikampur, Pargana & Distt. Auraiya mentioned in the two Sale Deed Dated 22-12-1999 & One Sale Deed Dated 02-06-2000 Details of which have been described in case No. 35/2007 (Sudheer Singh Kushwaha Vs. Rajeev Kumar Shukla) Order Dated 12-03-2007 Passed by Learned Civil Judge (Senior Division) Auraiya and Nazri Naksha, Total Area Measuring 617.80 Sq. Mtr. in name of Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha, Bounded as per Naksha Nazri-North : Plot Shanti Verma, South : PWD Road, East : Road, West : Property of Uphayay Ji.	
Property (2) Land & Building situated at Plot No. 79, Mauza Bhikampur, Pargana & Distt. Auraiya in the name of Smt. Kavita Singh and Shri Sudheer Singh Kushwaha. Area : 325.16 Sq. Mtr. Bounded As per Valuation - North: House of Shambhu Pandey, South : Property of Shri Anil Sharma (U.P. Agro), East : Plot Shri Vinod Kumar Purwar, West : Road 20 Ft. Wide	
O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 1,89,73,508.30 + Intt. + Others Charges	
Total Dues Amount as on Dated 07-10-2024 : Rs. 1,95,86,629.52 + Intt. + Others Charges	
Date : 07-10-2024	
Place : Auraiya	
Authorised Officer	

Protests against Narsinghanand's remarks in AMU, many parts of UP

PTI ■ GHAZIABAD/ALIGARH/SAHARANPUR

Protests were held on Monday in several parts of Uttar Pradesh, including the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), demanding arrest and strict punishment for controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand over his remarks against Prophet Muhammad.

Anarchy in name of protest will not be tolerated: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, stated that while derogatory remarks against deities, great figures or saints of any caste, religion or sect are unacceptable, anarchy in the name of protest will not be tolerated either.

ry remarks against great men, deities or sects will be dealt with strictly under the law and punished. He also stressed



that people of all religions and sects must show mutual respect. Chief Minister Yogi made it clear that anarchy, vandalism or arson in the name of

protest will not be tolerated, warning that anyone attempting such actions will face consequences. Directing the police administration, the chief minister instructed that every district and police station must ensure that the Shardiya Navratri and Vijaydashami festivals are celebrated in an atmosphere of joy, peace and harmony.

Hundreds of students of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) took out a protest march on the campus against Narsinghanand's remarks amid heavy deployment of police and PAC personnel. The protesters marched from Duplek point crossing inside the campus and up to Babey Sir Syed Gate and handed over a memorandum to district officials addressed to the President. The memorandum alleged that Narsinghanand had "repeatedly stoked communal passions in the country by his hate speeches, but the law enforcement services have failed to take exemplary action against him" which has "emboldened him to continue his diatribe against Muslims".

this incident. The protesters also filed a complaint at the Civil Lines police station. Similar protests were held in a number of places in the old city and a complaint was also lodged at Kotwali police station. Circle officer-1 Abhay Kumar Pandey told PTI that all such complaints are being redirected to Ghaziabad through a Zero FIR, as the incident took place there. Members of the Muslim community under the banner of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind also held a sit-in protest in Modinagar in Ghaziabad to press for strict action against the priest and handed over a memorandum, ACP Modinagar Gyan Prakash Rai said. Multiple FIRs have already been registered against Yati Narsinghanand. His aides have claimed that Narsinghanand has been kept in illegal detention, but the police have denied it. Meanwhile, Ghaziabad Police said that they have taken four more people into custody in connection with the violence on Friday night outside the Dasna Devi temple, headed by Narsinghanand. "Mehboob, Jishan, Mazid and Shueb have been arrested. They confessed that they had pelted stones," ACP Lipi Nagaich told PTI. Six people were earlier arrested for the incident.

In Saharanpur, a case had been registered against 20 named and other unidentified individuals under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for stone pelting at Sheikhpora Qadeem post during a protest on Sunday. "Of these 20 named individuals, 13 accused persons were arrested on Sunday. Police teams have been constituted, and efforts are on to nab other accused," Superintendent of Police (city) of Saharanpur Abhimanyu Manglik on Monday told PTI. District Magistrate of Saharanpur Manish Bansal, who visited the village along with SSP Rohit Sajwan on Monday, said, "The situation in the village is absolutely normal and peaceful. We held a meeting with people of that village, who were present in large numbers, and all of them expressed regret that an incident of this type had taken place in the village." Meanwhile an FIR was registered in Ghaziabad on Monday against Alt-News co-founder Mohammad Zubair for allegedly promoting enmity among religious groups and other offences following a complaint by an aide of controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand, according to police.

Modi's leadership serves as a beacon for all public representatives: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked 23 years of distinguished service in key constitutional roles, first as chief minister and later as prime minister, on Monday. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took to his social media account on X to extend heartfelt congratulations to the prime minister on this significant milestone. In his message, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath praised Prime Minister Modi as the visionary behind the 'Viksit Bharat, Atmanirbhar Bharat' (developed and self-reliant India) mission, working tirelessly for



dedicated service, both as chief minister and prime minister, have been marked by unwavering commitment to public welfare and the nation's progress. Prime Minister Modi has prioritised faith, identity, modernity, Antyodaya (uplift of the last person), and economic growth, all while safeguarding and advancing India's heritage, he stated.

Chief Minister Yogi further emphasised that Prime Minister Modi's policies and schemes have opened new pathways for the comprehensive uplift of the underprivileged. "Under his visionary leadership, which brings to life the ideals of 'Uphoga Shunya

Swami' by Swami Samartha Ramdas and Chanakya Niti Sutra's concept of 'Raja Prathamosevak', New India is steadily advancing towards becoming a global superpower. Prime Minister Modi stands as the true architect of cultural nationalism in modern India, with his life being a living example of democratic values," Chief Minister Yogi remarked. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath concluded that Prime Minister Modi's remarkable 23-year journey, defined by his steadfast commitment to good governance and national security, serves as an inspiring beacon for all public representatives.

Blast in Gonda firecracker unit kills 2

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In yet another massive explosion in a firecracker factory, two people, including a boy, were killed while three others received burn injuries in Gonda on Monday. The incident took place in Belsar locality under Tarabganj police station on Monday afternoon. As soon as the information of the incident was received, top police officials reached the spot. The forensic team also reached the spot and collected many samples. Last week, a similar blast was reported from Bareilly in which half a dozen people were killed while several others were injured. Reports said the explosion took place in the house, belonging to Mohammad Farooq, in Ragadganj village when some people were making firecrackers inside it. According to reports, the house remains locked from outside but a firecracker factory is run illegally in its back portion. Entry to the house is also through the back door. The reports said five people came to the house on Monday to make firecrackers. Four other people were also there along with the owner of the firecracker factory. Suddenly there was an explosion in the factory in the afternoon. The blast was so powerful that the back portion of the house collapsed and the adjacent houses also developed cracks. Akash (15), Lallu (30), Ishitiyaq (40), Ayaas (17) and Krishna Kumar (24) were injured in the blast and they were rushed to Belsar community health centre from where they were referred to the medical college,

hospital. Akash and Lallu died, on the way to the medical college hospital. Two of the injured are critical and have been referred to Lucknow for better treatment. According to the police, Farooq used to live in Punjab. Rajjan Baba, an eyewitness, said the owner of the house lives in Punjab's Jalandhar district and some people were making firecrackers when the explosion took place. Gonda's Superintendent of Police Vineet Jaiswal said strict action would be initiated against those found guilty. Meanwhile, in Kushinagar district, the police unearthed an illegal firecracker manufacturing unit. Four people were arrested and a large quantity of firecrackers and explosives was seized. Acting on a tip-off, police arrested the key accused, Nanhe Hussain, near Katanwar Road in Padrauna on Sunday and recovered

explosives from his possession. ASP Ritesh Kumar Mishra said during a press conference on Monday. During the probe, three other individuals — Qaiser Alam, Alisar, and Zahida — were apprehended from a rented house owned by Ashok Gupta, where they had allegedly been operating the firecracker pro-

duction unit. Police recovered 28 bags of finished firecrackers, eight bags of partially made firecrackers, and nearly 1.7 kg of gunpowder from the site on Monday. According to police, the gang was manufacturing firecrackers in bulk, intending to sell them during the festive season for hefty profits.

Advertisement for UPSIDA (Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation) regarding a public hearing for the proposed upgrade of High Mast at Bijauli Industrial Area & Growth Center Housing Jhansi with 03 year AMC of installed High Mast.

Yogi govt takes various initiatives to enhance ease of doing business

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the objective of enhancing 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) in Uttar Pradesh by introducing new investment facilities, the Yogi Adityanath government has taken various initiatives, including simplification of investment processes. The ultimate objective of EoDB is to help achieve the goal of transforming Uttar Pradesh into a one-trillion-dollar economy. In line with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, a comprehensive framework for investment reforms is being developed within Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA). The single window platform of the Nivesh Mitra portal will be further optimised in two phases, ensuring modern facilities for investors. To streamline business processes, the portal will be upgraded with a unified G2B interface, microservice architecture, and an efficient content management system. Invest UP has already begun preparations for these enhancements. The state has achieved remarkable progress in recent years. Building on this momentum, the government has now introduced two key initiatives to further accelerate this progress. On one front, a comprehensive framework for investment reforms will be established within the UPSIDA, aimed at simplifying the investment process, streamlining approvals and extending incentive schemes to investors. This will pave the

way for investment promotion and facilitation while making the process more investor-friendly. At the same time, Invest UP is focused on enhancing the single window platform of the Nivesh Mitra portal. The system will undergo upgrades in two phases, incorporating a unified G2B interface, microservice architecture, and an efficient content management system, providing seamless access for business users. In line with Chief Minister Yogi's vision, investors in various industrial projects across the state will benefit from the key aspects of ease of doing business, including process simplification. To achieve this, the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) will be implemented in UPSIDA, adhering to the standards set by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). This will serve as a comprehensive framework to enhance the performance of UPSIDA officials, upgrade online services, and integrate them with the Nivesh Mitra portal. Additionally, it will pave the way for the Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS Ranking). This initiative will open up new development and investment opportunities across various industrial areas under UPSIDA, identifying areas for improvement through gap analysis. Furthermore, it will focus on several key areas such as the development and expansion of investment promotion strategies, business process re-engineering, knowledge creation, database manage-

ment, business promotion and marketing, and evaluation of the GIS system. To ensure the successful execution of this plan, a consultancy agency will be engaged for three years, and work on the project has already begun. In alignment with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, Invest UP has initiated the process of enhancing the single window system of the Nivesh Mitra portal by adding new features. This process will be executed in two phases. In the first phase, the design, development and implementation will be completed, while the second phase will focus on the operational maintenance of the portal. These efforts will enable business users to access a unified G2B interface, microservice architecture, seamless integration and an efficient content management system. The digital facilitation mechanism will also be further strengthened as part of this process. Invest UP will develop new models to streamline operations, ensuring that the portal connects with the existing systems of various Uttar Pradesh government departments, as well as the national single window system. Additionally, the portal will offer a range of services to investors, such as Know Your Approvals (KYA), Unified Affiliation Forms (UAF), Document Repository, Payment Gateway, Individual Licence Modules, Grievance Redressal, User Profile Management, and Reporting and Dashboard features. These services are set to be further enhanced to meet the growing needs of investors.

UP govt to establish agricultural export hub near Jewar airport

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to establish an export hub near the Jewar airport to boost agricultural exports. It will be developed under UP AGREES project, facilitating large-scale export of two to three key crops. The project, with the objective of boosting income of farmers, agricultural productivity and related industries in Uttar Pradesh, will be set near Jewar international airport under the UP AGREES (Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprises Ecosystem Strengthening) project. The initiative will be implemented with support from the World Bank. In addition, agricultural special economic zones (SEZ) will be established to facilitate large-scale export of two to three selected crops. Moreover, plans are in place to set up two to three world-class hatcheries. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed officials to make comprehensive arrangements for promoting loans to farmers under the UP AGREES scheme. This initiative by the Yogi government marks a significant stride toward transforming the state's agriculture sector into a powerhouse for the entire nation. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has recently approved the UP AGREES project, aiming to transform the state's agriculture sector and achieve global recognition for its agricultural products. As part of this initiative, an export hub will be set up near Jewar airport to facilitate the promotion and export of high-value agricultural products such

as peanuts, vegetables, Kala Namak rice and sesame. Uttar Pradesh already has a significant export portfolio, including meat, basmati rice, fruits, vegetables and various food processing products. With this new initiative, the state aims to enhance its agricultural exports further. To support this effort, 30,750 cluster farmer groups will be developed, and a common facility centre for exporters will also be established. Under the UP AGREES project, agriculture SEZs will be established to facilitate the large-scale export of two to three key agricultural products from the state, focusing on forward linkages to capture a significant share of the export markets. These SEZs will be developed in 11 districts across Uttar Pradesh. Specifically, SEZs will be set up in Siddharthnagar and Gorakhpur for Kala Namak rice, while Jhansi will have SEZs for peanuts. Additionally, districts like Lalitpur will focus on urad, and Jaunpur, Bhadohi, Varanasi, Ghazipur and Ballia will concentrate on vegetables. The project aims to implement comprehensive measures to increase the productivity of major crops by 30 per cent to 50 per cent over the next five years, resulting in at least a 25 per cent increase in the incomes of farmers. Furthermore, a world-class carbon credit market will be established to promote organic farming practices. Local weather stations will be set up to provide accurate weather information to food producers, and two to three world-class hatcheries will be created to enhance fisheries.

Advertisement for Bank of India (BOI) featuring a 'POSSESSION NOTICE' regarding the securitisation and reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest, Act 2002, and exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Advertisement for Indian Bank (A Govt. of India Undertaking) featuring a 'POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property) [Under Rule-8 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]' regarding the securitisation and reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, (Act 54 of 2002) and exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3, 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

CM lays special emphasis on vigilance during festivals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath laid special emphasis on ensuring full vigilance during Durga Puja, Vijayadashami and other upcoming festivals as well as deployment of security personnel at every nook and corner. The chief minister, who arrived here on Monday, visited the Kashi Vishwanath and Kal Bhairav temples in Varanasi after offering prayers to Maa Durga at Bharat Sevashram Sangh. He also paid a visit to the Vishalakshi temple.

He reviewed the development projects and law and order in detail with public representatives, administrative and police officials in the Circuit House auditorium. "The general public should not face any kind of trouble during the festivals", he instructed the officers, laying emphasis on making the traffic system strong and smooth. He said in view of upcoming festivals, special attention should be paid to ensuring 100 per cent spiral lighting on all roads and proper lighting arrangements.

"Ensure special cleanliness at idol immersion sites/ponds, repair roads and all proper arrangements. Ensure adequate security arrangements in view of festivals", he said, instructing Nagar Nigam, Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) and Electricity department to make proper arrangements for cleanliness, electricity supply etc and laid emphasis on making the city plastic free. Yogi directed the departmental officers and engineers of the implementing agencies to complete the ongoing projects with quality by running a campaign on a war footing. "Delay at any level in com-



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reviewing progress of projects and law and order situation at the Circuit House in Varanasi on Monday.

pleting the projects will not be tolerated", he warned. He reviewed the projects to be inaugurated and whose foundation stone is to be laid during the upcoming visit of the prime minister to the district. In order to make a concrete action plan for the future to solve the problems of sewerage and drinking water in the city, he directed to prepare a concrete and better plan by getting a survey done by an institution. For this, he called the principal secretaries of Housing, Irrigation, Urban Development and Namami Gange to Varanasi and directed them to sit with the local officers and make a concrete action plan. "The working agencies concerned should ensure the expected progress by getting the sewerage and drinking water works being done by L&T in the city done under their supervision responsibly", he said. The chief minister asked the officers concerned to reconsider the better operation of the shops of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham so that maximum number of visitors can reach there easily. He said efforts should be made to make the gram panchayats self-reliant and for this, measures should be taken for

rural haat bazaar, fisheries,



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath distributes sewing machine to women during Durga Puja festival in Varanasi on Monday.

shopping complex etc. "Ensure fast progress in the construction work by removing the obstacles/hindrances coming in the construction of the ropeway", Yogi instructed the officers stressing on making a concrete action plan and starting the work by holding meetings with the heads of all the departments concerned for channelisation and other works of Varuna river. He instructed the police officers to run maximum awareness programmes to deal with cyber crimes in the district. For this, awareness pro-

grammes should be run in various groups, business organisations, schools/colleges. During the meeting, Divisional Commissioner (DC) Kaushal Raj Sharma presented the details of the proposed arrival of the prime minister, various projects to be inaugurated and foundation stone to be laid by him as well as future projects through a PowerPoint presentation. Mayor Ashok Tiwari, Zila Panchayat Chairperson Poonam Maurya, MLCs Hansraj Vishwakarma and

Dharmendra Singh, MLAs Saurabh Srivastava, Dr Neelkanth Tiwari, Dr Awadhesh Singh, Dr Sunil Patel, T Ram and Sushil Singh, Commissioner of Police Mohit Agarwal, Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma, District Magistrate S Rajalingam, ADG (Zone) Pijush Mordia, JCP Dr K Ajilrason, ACP S Chinnappa, VDA Vice Chairman Pulkit Garg, Municipal Commissioner Akshat Verma, CDO Himanshu Nagpal and officers from various departments were present.

'Plants are basis of environment & revered in Indian culture'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A seminar on the importance of the interrelationship between environment and music followed by a cultural evening 'Haritima' was organised in the auditorium of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) under the joint aegis of Green Eco Movement Society, IGNCA (Regional Centre Varanasi) and Bhav Prabha Padma Institute here on Sunday. On the occasion, the chief guest of the programme and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kashi Vishwanath Temple Vishwa Bhushan Mishra was honoured with the 'Sanatan Sanskriti Nishtha Samman' on behalf of the three institutions.

The honour was jointly given by Padma Shri Dr Rajeshwar Acharya and Dr Abhijit Dixit and Dr Ramesh Kumar Bhatia. The key speaker was Prof JC Bose National Fellow Prof Madhulika Agarwal and the guests were welcomed by



ing to melodious music in a sensitive manner, this is scientifically proven. In the cultural evening, Prof Krishnakant Shukla gave a soulful presentation of bhajans composed by Guru Goraknath. He concluded with another bhajan with lyrics 'Ud Jayega Hans Akela...'. After this, the second presentation was of Kajri 'Hamaar Maiya Sabko Kajri Sikhawe...' based

on the environment presented by Dr Shivani Shukla. The artistes were accompanied by Ankit Singh on tabla and Praveen Singh on samvadini. On this occasion, tree plantation was done in the campus of the centre and saplings were given to all the guests. It was conducted by Dr Preetesh Acharya. Piyush Acharya and others were also present.

Five phone snatchers held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Prayagraj police arrested five mobile snatchers on Monday and recovered 41 stolen mobile phones whose estimated value is ₹6 lakh and ₹14,600 cash from them. A joint team of Meja police station and SOG Yamuna Nagar was engaged and photos of miscreants were found on the basis of CCTV footage following which they were identified and caught. According to DCP Yamuna Nagar Vivek Yadav, the arrested accused are hardened criminals. These criminals used to target passengers, snatch their mobiles and run away. After a few days, they sold the mobile at a cheaper rate. Shivkumar of Kolhepur Meja, Subhash

Kumar Yadav of Sharda Prasad of Parmandpur Rikhipur Handia, Valmiki of Harijan Basti, Daraganj, Hasnain of Akoda Kondhiyara and Ajay of Maiyan under Vairad police station, Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh, were arrested on Monday near Navodaya Vidyalaya turn. **RAM DAL PROCESSION:** The historic Ram Dal procession of Civil Lines will be taken out with great fanfare here on Tuesday. Its preparations have been going on for several days. On Monday the Civil Lines Udyog Vyapar Mandal and Adarsh Vyapar Mandal held a meeting regarding its preparations. Municipal Corporation Chief Engineer Sanjay Kataria and Junior

Engineer Rahul Shukla assured to keep the electricity system of the entire area in order. A huge 'aarti' will be organised. It is believed that when Lord Shri Ram came to Prayagraj after his exile in Treta Yuga, the people here performed his 'aarti'. The aarti and Dhedhiya dance will be organised by singer and Mahanagar President Women's Cell Swati Nirakhi. Divisional in charge of Adarsh Vyapar Mandal, district president Ramesh Kesarwani, city president of Mahila Vyapar Mandal Swati Nirakhi, Pawan Srivastava, Ujjwal Sachdeva, Kanhaiya Lal Harchandani, Nikhil Kesarwani, Piyush Jaiswal, Ravi Shankar and other businessmen were present.

Heavy rush at temples

Varanasi (PNS): Thousands of devotees thronged Skanda Mata temple located in the Bageshwari Temple premises in Jaitpura area on the auspicious occasion of Panchmi during the ongoing Shardiya Navratri here on Monday. Right from the morning hours, there was a long queue of devotees. Besides, heavy rush of devotees was also seen throughout the day as usual at the famous Durga Mandir (Durga Kund). Rush was also seen at some other temples, including Navdurga Temple at Navapura. Hundreds of devotees also went to Vindhayachal in Mirzapur to offer prayers on this auspicious occasion.

BOB signs Sachin Tendulkar as global brand ambassador

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Bank of Baroda (BoB) announced that it has signed cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar as its global brand ambassador. The strategic partnership between Sachin Tendulkar and Bank of Baroda is built on a profound alignment of core values like excellence and trust. The partnership comes at an opportune time with Bank of Baroda poised to script the next phase of its transformation journey as it pursues a faster growth trajectory, leveraging Sachin's brand aura.

Bank of Baroda is launching its first campaign featuring Sachin called 'Play The Masterstroke'. The campaign encourages people to play a masterstroke and score big to realise their financial aspirations by choosing a bank that is trusted by millions and backed by a legacy of over a century. With his mass appeal cutting across all corners of the country and encompassing India's diverse demographics, Sachin will be positioned as Bank of Baroda's Brand



Bank of Baroda, Debadatta Chand, said, "It is a moment of great pride for Bank of Baroda to announce Sachin Tendulkar, one of India's sporting legends, as our brand ambassador. Sachin is a global icon who has always led by example, inspiring us through his actions both on and off the field. Just as he galvanised a nation through his remarkable career, Bank of Baroda has been a trusted partner for millions across the coun-

try, enabling them to achieve their financial aspirations. Sachin represents the epitome of leadership, excellence, trust, consistency and a legacy that transcends generations - values that form the bedrock of Bank of Baroda's century-long journey. We are excited to partner with Sachin and bring this association to life." Sharing his thoughts on the partnership, Sachin Tendulkar said, "I am happy to partner with Bank of Baroda, an organisation which has evolved and continues to be relevant with the times. From its modest beginnings over a century ago, Bank of Baroda has grown into a leading banking institution, built on the principles of excellence, integrity, and innovation. These values resonate with me, and I believe they are crucial for success in any endeavour. I look forward to a meaningful collaboration with Bank of Baroda." "Our aspiration is that every citizen of the country "Plays The Masterstroke" by choosing Bank of Baroda as their preferred banking partner," Chand added.

Rly tracks cleaned

Varanasi (PNS): Swachhta Abhiyan is going on in full swing at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) under Swachhta Pakhwada 2024. The main objective of this fortnight, which started from October 1 under the direction of the Ministry of Railways, is to increase awareness towards cleanliness and to actively involve everyone in it. At BLW, under the leadership of Deputy Chief Engineer Saket and Safety Officer SB Patel intensive cleaning of railway tracks inside the factory was done. This campaign is an important step towards ensuring cleanliness and safety of the track. A cleanliness awareness programme was organised in the office of the Planning and Progress department by removing old records, unusable items and furniture. The supervisors and employees of the department enthusiastically participated in this programme and contributed to the cleanliness of the office. Many more cleanliness activities will be organised in various departments of BLW during this fortnight which will continue till October 15.

75 QRVs to tackle fire incidents during Maha Kumbh Mela

PTI/PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Seventy-five quick response vehicles (QRVs), with fire-extinguishing capacities 20 times more effective than normal vehicles, will be used for the first time to tackle fire incidents during the Maha Kumbh Mela in January 2025. Director General of Police (DGP) (Fire) Avinash Chandra said that fire fighting boats, stationed in the Sangam area, will also be deployed for the first time. These boats can extinguish fires up to 300 to 400 metres using river water, especially if there is a fire in the tents located along the river bank, Chandra said. "The

department is purchasing six such boats. Along with this, all-terrain fire fighting vehicles capable of moving on sand will also be used," he added. He said this time 135 fire fighting motorcycles have been purchased for the Maha Kumbh Mela which will also be deployed in the fair. "Our target is a response time of 2 to 3 minutes. That is, the work of extinguishing the fire should start within two to three minutes of the fire breaking out," Chandra said. He said preventive measures are also being taken to avoid fire incidents, for which the fire department will coordinate with the Electricity department from the very beginning. Personnel from the Fire department will be involved during the electrification of the tents and an inspection team will ensure that the electrical work has been done properly, he added. Fifty fire stations and 20 temporary fire posts are being set up for the event, along with 50 watch towers, from which any smoke sightings

will be immediately reported to the control room, he said. Chandra said that 350 fire tenders are likely to be deployed in 2025 against 166 fire tenders in the 2019 Kumbh Mela. This time more than 2,000 employees will also be deployed as compared to 1,550 fire personnel in the last (2019) Kumbh, he said. The fair area has increased by 25 per cent, from 3,200 hectares in 2019 to 4,000 hectares, increasing the responsibilities of the fire department, Chandra added. **BODY FOUND:** The body of a 22-year-old youth was found on the side of the railway line under Jhansi police station here on Monday. Suraj Verma of Jhansi left for home from an electronic shop on Sunday night but did not reach there. The body of the youth was found on Monday morning. On receiving information about the body being found on the side of the railway line on Jhansi-Varanasi route, the family reached there and identified it. The GRP said investigation is being done.

Importance of tiger conservation efforts highlighted

Prayagraj (PNS): In support of Prime Minister's vision to protect Environment, College of Forestry of Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences (SHUATS), has been celebrating the 70th edition of Wildlife Week from October 2 with the theme "Wildlife Conservation Through Co-Existence." It will continue till October 8.



informed that India is the only country in the world where Asiatic lion and tiger both exist together and stressed that in situ and ex-situ conservation is very important for wildlife conservation. Dr Singh added that human wildlife conflict is increasing day by day due to the encroachment of wildlife habitats. He shared his experiences as an expert in the government high-level committees for wildlife conservation. Dr Singh called upon the students to go with a broad vision towards wildlife conservation and management. Dr Anubha Srivastava (scientist D of ICFRE-Eco Rehabilitation Centre) was present as the guest of honour in the Wildlife Week celebration function. In the welcome address,

Dr Afaq M Wani, Head of Forest Biology, Tree Improvement and Wildlife Sciences revealed that the idea of Wildlife Week was conceived by the Indian Board of Wildlife in the year 1952. Dr Afaq informed that initially First Wildlife Day was observed on October 2, 1955, but later the name was changed to Wildlife Week. He added that the first Wildlife Week was observed from October 2 to 8 in the year 1957. Dr Abhishek James, Associate Dean of College of Forestry, proposed the vote of thanks. Dr James thanked Dr Sanjay Singh, Dr Anubha Srivastava, Prof Antony Joseph Raj (Dean of College of Forestry), Dr Afaq M Wani (Head), all faculty members and students for making the Wildlife Week celebrations in College of Forestry a grand success. The important events and competitions for the students were quiz competition, drawing competition, wildlife photography competition and Scientific Name (wild animals and birds) Writing Competition. Certificates and prizes were distributed to the winners.

Blood donation camp today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The 'Daan Utsav' is celebrated nationwide each year on Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary. This year, Kanpur Metro is hosting 'Daan Utsav' from October 6 to 8 in collaboration with organisations such as Shramik Bharti, Blood Connect, Raktarpan, and Komalpath. Various NGOs have set up stalls at Motijheel, Vishwavidyalaya, and Rawatpur metro stations. During the event, attendees participated in engaging activities and games that raise awareness about social issues. One can donate books, clothes, toys, rations and other essential items. Additionally, a blood donation camp will be held at IIT Metro Station on October 8 where people can contribute by donating blood. **CULTURAL PROGRAMME:** Festivals bring happiness, faith, devotion and a sense of unity to everyone. A cultural programme was organised on the occasion of Navratri in Jhalkari Bai Hostel of CSAUA&T.

Useful tips given for staying healthy



A health check-up camp was organised at MMV PG College on Monday.

A health camp was organized by the Health and Hygiene Committee of Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar, on Monday. In it Dr Aarti, Dr Brijesh and Dr Amrit Lal from Narayana Hospital conducted the health check-up of the girl students and lecturers of the college and gave useful tips to stay healthy in the current fast-paced life. Principal Prof Anju Choudhary, while welcoming the guests, said such health camps are often organ-

ized in this college to check the physical and mental health of girl students. In the camp, sugar, blood pressure and weight of the girl students, lecturers and all the employees was checked. Prof Pratibha Srivastava, Prof Mamta Gangwar and committee in charge Prof Manisha Shukla, co-in charge Prof Mamta Dixit, Prof Archana Srivastava, Dr Preeti Dwivedi, Dr Sangeeta Kumari, Dr Seema Kanojia, Dr Pratima Shukla, Dr Smita Yadav, Dr Anju Srivastava, Dr Saba Yunus, Dr

Sudha Yadav and the faculty of the college were present. **MOOT COURT COMPETITION:** The Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Legal Studies at CSJM University, Kanpur, successfully concluded its first National Moot Court Competition 2024, which witnessed fierce legal battles between some of India's most promising law students. The event provided a prestigious platform for students to engage with complex legal challenges and showcase their advocacy skills while fostering collaboration and innovation among the nation's future legal leaders. A total of 34 teams from National Law Universities (NLUs), law colleges and universities across the country participated in the competition. The event began with the draw of lots qualifying 17 teams for the octa final rounds. After intense scrutiny, eight teams advanced to the quarter finals, followed by four teams in the semi-finals. The finalists were selected after rigorous rounds judged by five eminent legal professionals.

Amit Shah celebrates PM Modi's 23 years of political journey

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's long journey of public service is a symbol of "unique dedication" of how a person can devote his entire life to national interest and welfare of the people.

As Modi completed 23 years in public life, first as chief minister of Gujarat and then as prime minister, Shah said the long journey is a living inspiration for those who are in public life.

Today Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji has completed 23 years in his public life as Chief Minister and Prime Minister.

This 23-year long journey of public service is a symbol of the unique dedication of how a person can devote his entire life to the national interest and welfare of people," he said in a post on 'X' in Hindi.

The home minister, who has been a constant companion of Modi in his political journey, said it was a matter of good fortune for him that he has been a



witness to this long public life of Modi. "Modi showed how to carry out the work for the welfare of the poor, country's development, security and strengthen India's global identity at the same time," he said.

Instead of looking at the problems in pieces, Modi presented the vision of holistic solution to the country, Shah said.

"I congratulate Modi, the nation

builder, who is dedicated to the service of the nation and its people for 23 years uninterrupted, without getting tired, without caring for himself," he said. Modi took oath as the chief minister of Gujarat for the first time on October 7, 2001 and continued in that post for 13 years before becoming the prime minister in 2014. He has taken charge as prime minister for the third consecutive term in June this year.

India, Maldives strengthen ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Strengthening their bilateral ties, India and the Maldives on Monday inked a currency swap agreement to the tune of USD 400 million, a move that would help the archipelago nation overcome foreign exchange reserve issues. Prime Minister Modi described India as the "first responder" for Maldives, in times of crisis - from the pandemic to drinking water shortage.

Prime Minister Modi and visiting Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu also launched Rupy card in the Maldives, inaugurated the new runway at the Hanimadhu International airport and agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations that had hit a rocky patch last year.

Muizzu, who is on a four-day state visit, held talks with Prime Minister Modi at the Hyderabad House here. After the talks, India also handed over 700 social housing units to the Maldives built under the EXIM Bank's buyer's credit facilities.



"Today, we have inaugurated the redeveloped Hanimaadhu Airport. Now, the Greater Male Connectivity Project will also be expedited. We will also support the development of a new commercial port in Thilafushi," Modi told reporters here with Muizzu by his side.

Modi said India and Maldives have decided to initiate discussion on the Free Trade Agreement to further strengthen economic ties.

The prime minister described Maldives as a "close friend" which had an important position in India's neighbourhood policy and SAGAR vision.

"India has always fulfilled the

responsibilities of a neighbour. Today, we have taken up the vision of a comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership to give our mutual cooperation a strategic direction," Modi said.

Earlier, Muizzu was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Rashtrapati Bhawan by Prime Minister Modi who was also present on the occasion.

Muizzu was given a tri-services guard of honour before he drove down the Rajhat to offer his respects at the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi.

The ties between India and the Maldives came under severe strain since Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, took charge of the top office in November.

Muizzu won the presidential election last year on the 'India out' campaign and asked New Delhi to withdraw its military personnel posted in the archipelago nation by May this year.

The bilateral ties also hit a rocky patch when Maldivian

ministers were critical of Modi. However, Muizzu has since toned down his anti-India stance and even sacked ministers who were critical of the Indian prime minister.

As the Maldives was grappling with a serious economic downturn, India has decided to extend vital budgetary support to the Maldives government with the rollover of a USD 50 million Treasury Bill for another year.

Muizzu said, "The Maldives will remain a friend committed to our shared vision of peace and development in our countries and our region." He also invited Modi to visit Maldives next year to celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties.

On the economic help for the Maldives, Muizzu said, "I would like to thank Prime Minister Modi, the government and the people of India for generous assistance and cooperation extended to the Maldives over the years, including the recent budgetary support in the form of rollover of the T (treasury bills) bills."

RaGa advocates brotherhood during dalit kitchen visit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress will protect that Constitution that gives Bahujans their rights but true inclusion and equality for all in the society will be possible only when every Indian strives with the spirit of brotherhood in their hearts, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said on Monday.

Rahul Gandhi shared a video on his social media handles of his recent interaction at a Dalit household where he helped out in cooking a meal in their kitchen. "Even today, very few people know about Dalit kitchens. As Shahu Patole said, 'Nobody knows what Dalits eat.' Intrigued by what they eat, how they cook, and its social and political significance, I spent an afternoon with Ajay Tukaram Sanade and Anjana Tukaram Sanade," Rahul Gandhi said



in his post in Hindi along with the video. "They honored me by inviting me to their home in Kolhapur, Maharashtra to help out in the kitchen. Together we cooked 'chane ke saag ki sabzi', 'harbharyachi bhaji', and 'tuvar dal' with brinjal," the former Congress president said.

"Drawing on Patole and the Sanade family's personal experiences with caste and discrimination, we discussed the lack of awareness about Dalit cuisine and the importance of documenting this culture," he said. The Constitution gives

Bahujans a share and rights, and we will protect that Constitution, he asserted. But true inclusion and equality for all in the society will be possible only when every Indian strives with the spirit of brotherhood in their hearts, Gandhi said. In the video, Rahul Gandhi is seen helping out in the kitchen and then having a meal with the family at their home. Shahu Patole informed Rahul Gandhi that he had written a book in Marathi and now translated into English 'Dalit Kitchens of Marathwada', to highlight foods eaten by the Dalits.

Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar dithches Ajit, joins Sharad Pawar's NCP

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After the entry of former Minister and senior BJP leader Harshvardhan Patil, it is now the turn of senior leader from the Ajit Pawar-led NCP Ramraje Naik-Nimbalkar to join the Sharad Pawar-led NCP on October 14.

On Monday when Harshvardhan Patil and his daughter Ankita Patil joined his party, NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar himself indicated that Ramraje - who is the 29th descendant of the royal family from Phaltan - would soon join his party.

"As I was coming for this function at Indapur, I received a call...I will go to Phaltan on October 14 for a similar function...Hope you understand what I am saying," Sr Pawar said at a function organised at Indapur near Pune to welcome Patil, his daughter Ankita and their supporters into his party.



Informed sources in the NCP (SP) said that Ramraje met Sr Pawar and expressed his desire to return the party led by the latter. A political heavy weight from Satara in western Maharashtra, 75-year-old Ramraje was a minister in the

erstwhile Democratic Front government and a former Chairperson of the Maharashtra Legislative Council. Speaking at a rally held on Sunday, Ramraje had himself indicated that he would return to the NCP (SP).

"I feel guilty about deserting Pawar Saheb, who made me a minister in 2009, when I was not even a legislator. I joined Ajit Pawar so to ensure the security of my workers. But that doesn't seem to be happening," Ramraje said. "Many of my supporters have told me to join Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP)...they have asked me something for the first time," Ramraje said.

Earlier in the day, speaking at a function organised at Indapur to welcome him to the NCP (SP), Harvardhan Patil said: "This is the wish of the people and the workers of Indapur...All the people of all castes and religions wanted to join the NCP (SP) and we are bowing to their wishes." At the function, Patil, his daughter Ankita and their supporters were welcomed formally to the NCP (SP) party by Sharad Pawar, its national working President Supriya Sule, MPs, MLAs and other party leaders.

Sanjeev Kumar Singla appointed India's ambassador to France



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Senior diplomat Sanjeev Kumar Singla has been appointed as the country's next ambassador to France, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Monday. He is currently India's envoy to Israel.

"Sanjeev Kumar Singla (IFS:1997), presently Ambassador of India to Israel, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to France," the MEA said in a statement.

He is expected to take up the assignment shortly, it said. In another appointment, senior diplomat Ajit Vinayak Gupte has been appointed India's next ambassador to Germany, MEA said.

"Ajit Vinayak Gupte (IFS: 1991), presently Ambassador of India to Egypt, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Federal Republic of Germany. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly," the MEA said in a statement.

The appointment comes ahead of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's scheduled visit to India later this month.



Modi pens down a garba song for Goddess Durga

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday shared on social media a 'garba' song he wrote as a tribute to Goddess Durga.

"It is the auspicious time of Navratri and people are celebrating in different ways, united by their devotion to Maa Durga. In this spirit of reverence and joy, here is

Aavati Kalay, a Garba I wrote as a tribute to Her power and grace. May Her blessings always remain upon us," he said in the social media post. He thanked Purva Mantri, whom he lauded as a talented upcoming singer, for singing the garba song and presenting such a melodious rendition of it. Garba is a traditional Gujarati dance which is especially performed during the Navaratri festival.

Opposition walks out after CM's unexpected statement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOCHI

A "googly" bowled by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday morning shocked the Congress-led UDF and they staged a walk out from the House, the reason for which the latter is reluctant to explain.

When the House commenced sitting on the first day of the session, the Congress MLA Sunny Joseph submitted an adjournment notice seeking discussion on the statement made by the Chief Minister that Malappuram topped the table in the seizure of smuggled gold and hawala money and his subsequent retraction following the resentment among the Muslim community. The decision of the Speaker A N Shamsier to grant

permission for a discussion on the adjournment notice took the Opposition by surprise as they were hoping that the government would not allow the same. The submission of adjournment notice and its refusal followed by the walk out by Opposition benches is a routine affair in the Kerala legislative assembly. But Monday's decision by the Speaker literally shocked the Opposition and they trooped into the podium with banners and flags.

Despite the Speaker's plea to go back to their seats, the Opposition members stayed put in front of the podium and shouted slogans against the LDF Government. Chief Minister Pinarayi had unleashed a verbal attack on Leader of the Opposition V D Satheshan and the latter

turned furious over certain comments made by the former.

"Pinarayi Vijayan is trying to become Narendra Modi. God alone would be able to save the people from him," charged Satheshan to which the chief minister retorted that one has to be careful in the words used in the Legislative Assembly. What surprised political Kerala was the action of the Opposition in walking out of the House despite the Chair agreeing to the adjournment notice served by the, "This is the first time in the history of Kerala the movers of adjournment notice running away from the battlefield without furnishing a reason for their action," P Rajeev, minister for industry and a strong contender for the chair of the Chief Minister told reporters.

Lalu and sons granted bail in case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The fast track court on Monday granted bail to former Union Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav and his sons Tejaswi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav in the land-for-jobs in Railways case. The Rouse Avenue Court granted bail to all three on a condition that they each furnish a bail bond of Rs One lakh. The matter will be heard next on October 25. Earlier, the Court had directed them to appear before it on October 7. While summoning Yadav and his sons, the Court had prima facie observed that Yadav had been in a position of power to facilitate public employment when he was Union Railway



Minister from 2004 to 2009. The case pertains to alleged appointments made in the Railways in exchange for land transferred to Yadav's family when he was a Minister. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has claimed that the appointments were not in consonance with the hiring standards and guidelines established by the Indian Railways. The Delhi court had granted bail to Lalu Yadav, his wife Rabri Devi and daughter Misa Bharti in the case in March 2023.

DESW launches campaign to streamline Ex-Servicemen services

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), Ministry of Defence is undertaking a number of initiatives under the 'Special campaign for Disposal of Pending matters' (SCDPM 4.0) between October two-31, officials said here on Monday. Giving details, they said the department is carrying out the pan Indian campaign, identifying various sites including the remotest offices having the highest public interface such as various Zila Sainik Boards, Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) Polyclinics and Zonal Resettlement Offices. It has identified more than 250 files to be reviewed for the purpose of weeding out recognised Ex-Servicemen Associations are also



undertaking cleanliness drives through various activities like swachhata rally, minimising single use plastic, village common area cleaning etc. at various locations. Those making significant

contributions are also being honoured during the campaign. Preparatory phase of the campaign started with Secretary, Ex-Servicemen Welfare Niten Chandra administering the 'Swachhata

Pledge' to head of all the attached offices along with the department officials on September 17. He urged them to avoid using single-use plastic and create awareness about segregation of waste at source itself in their offices as well as their communities.

The focus areas of Special campaign 4.0 include removing pendency and improving cleanliness, better record management, improvement in work efficiencies, and enhancement in transparency. Steps are being taken for optimal maintenance of documents and files and getting rid of the obsolete documents. The Campaign seeks to institutionalize Swachhata as a matter of habit in the day to day functioning of the department.

Scurvy risk in older adults' health: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Older adults experiencing abnormal bleeding and fatigue should be assessed for scurvy, a disease linked to vitamin C deficiency, according to a recent study. Vitamin C is crucial for maintaining overall health, offering significant antioxidant properties that protect cells from free radical damage. Chronic deficiency of this essential nutrient can lead to scurvy, which impairs immune function and collagen production. The condition primarily arises from inadequate consumption of vitamin C-rich fruits and vegetables. Detailing a case study of a 65-year-old woman with mobility issues and social isolation, the study published in CMAJ (Canadian Medical



Association Journal) showed that scurvy, or vitamin C deficiency, is not just an 18th-century seafarers' disease. Researchers from the University of Toronto in Canada implored clinicians to consider scurvy in patients with abnormal bleeding and nonspecific symptoms. The elderly patient visited the emergency department at a downtown Toronto hospital for leg pain and weakness, skin lesions, and discoloration. She also had several chronic health conditions.

Mobility issues restricted her ability to go grocery shopping, cook, and perform other daily activities. She lived largely on canned soup and fish, with no fresh produce. "This case presents a complex example of food insecurity manifesting as an uncommon diagnosis," said Dr. Sarah Engelhart, a general internist at Mount Sinai Hospital and the University of Toronto. The researchers noted that vitamin C deficiency is more common than expected in the 21st century. However, its

diagnosis is often challenging as symptoms are often nonspecific, such as fatigue, weakness, and shortness of breath.

The patient also smoked, which further contributes to vitamin C deficiency. Her symptoms improved once she started on vitamin C treatment, and a blood test for vitamin C deficiency eventually confirmed the diagnosis, said the doctors.

"Clinicians should be alert to vitamin C deficiency when assessing patients, including children and isolated older adults," the doctors said. The team noted that people who follow restrictive eating patterns (for example, those with autism spectrum disorder or those on a tea and toast diet), who smoke cigarettes, who have a substance use disorder, or who have malabsorption syndrome, can also be at risk of scurvy.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Strategic balancing act

Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu assures India that he would never jeopardise India's security interests

The first state visit of Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu to India marks a milestone in the evolving diplomatic relationship between the two neighbouring countries. President Muizzu's visit, represents not only a continuation of the historically strong India-Maldives ties but also signals a renewed commitment to fostering regional stability and cooperation. To put it in perspective, China has made inroads into Maldives much to the consternation of India. Chinese presence in its backyard is a clear security threat. But now things are looking better. President Muizzu has emphasised that while the Maldives follows a 'Maldives First' policy, it remains committed to ensuring that its actions would never undermine India's security interests. The Maldives occupies a key strategic position in the Indian Ocean, making its foreign policy decisions crucial to India's security and regional aspirations. India has long viewed the Maldives as an important ally in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region. This visit, following a period of political transition in the Maldives, underscores the importance of maintaining a strong bilateral relationship, especially amid concerns over the growing influence of China in the region.



President Muizzu has reaffirmed that its engagements would never compromise India's security which indeed is music to Indian ears. This statement comes at a time when concerns have arisen regarding the Maldives' expanding ties with China, especially in defence and trade. President Muizzu sought to allay these fears, stressing that the relationship with India, built on 'mutual respect and shared interests,' remains a priority. One of the key aspects of the India-Maldives relationship

has always been defence cooperation. Earlier President Muizzu's decision to expel Indian military personnel was seen as a clear sign of Maldives acting on Chinese advice. Though on his part he explained that this move, though sensitive, was aligned with the will of the Maldivian people and aimed at ensuring the sovereignty of the Maldives. But that is diplomacy for you. Historically, defence and economic cooperation has long been a cornerstone of India-Maldives relations. But things changed after President Muizzu took over last year in November. President Muizzu has expressed satisfaction with the progress of key Indian initiatives, including the Greater Male Connectivity Project, which is expected to significantly boost the country's infrastructure and local economy. India has also restructured a line of credit arrangement to facilitate smoother execution of developmental projects, which President Muizzu acknowledged as a positive step. The visit is expected to further strengthen economic ties between the two countries, with discussions centered on boosting trade, tourism and investment. Perhaps shift in Maldives' stance comes with the realisation of perils of aligning with China as many countries like Sri Lanka have paid a heavy price for their dependence on Chinese investments and grants.

PICTALK



An artisan gives finishing touches to effigies of Ravana and Meghanad ahead of the Dussehra festival, in Nagpur PTI

Mitigating heatwaves and floods in rural India

Only by engaging in comprehensive dialogue can India hope to counter the growing threats of climate change and protect its rural population

India is currently facing the severe consequences of climate change. At the very onset of summer, a severe heatwave gripped vast regions of the country. More recently, heavy rainfall and floods have disrupted numerous lives and livelihoods in many states. Owing to a lack of infrastructure and resources, communities in rural areas are the worst impacted. In the face of this crisis, the power of dialogue emerges not just as a tool but as a necessity to formulate effective policies and mitigate the impact of climate change on vulnerable populations.



Impact on Rural Communities
The recent heatwave in India was relentless, with temperatures soaring well above 40 degrees Celsius in many regions. This is now succeeded by an onslaught of floods in various regions, especially in Assam. Rural communities, often more exposed and less equipped to cope with extreme weather events, bear the brunt of these conditions. Agriculture, the backbone of rural livelihoods, suffers as crops wither under scorching tempera-

tures or are submerged during floods, leading to reduced yields and income losses. Many states have implemented State Climate Change Programmes (SCCCs) and Heat Action Plans (HAPs) to deal with the situation. Effective as many of these initiatives are the severity of the problem leaves scope for much more to be done. **Dialogue as a Way Forward**
Dialogic processes and methods often serve as useful mechanisms to address various complex social challenges and can be potentially valuable in addressing extreme weather conditions, both in the short and long run. Dialogue as an idea and a rigorous academic discipline that has found its place across multiple domains ranging from conflict resolution to

policy making and even business and management, involves more than just conversation. Dialogue is essentially an approach that weaves together multiple elements to craft effective and long-lasting solutions. **Dialogic Approach for Climate Crisis**
From its various applications across problem-solving, community mobilization, building policy narratives, and engaging with diverse stakeholders, a dialogic approach may be integral to addressing the challenges posed by heat waves, particularly in rural India. First, by engaging stakeholders—from policymakers and scientists to community leaders and affected populations—dialogue facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand and fosters consensus on actionable solutions. It encourages the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and local insights necessary to tailor policies that are responsive to the needs of vulnerable communities. Next, putting dialogic methods into place can also help uncover local solutions and adaptation strategies that can

be built into nationwide policy. Farmers, for instance, possess invaluable traditional knowledge and practices that can complement scientific interventions. Through dialogue, these insights can be integrated into agricultural policies aimed at promoting climate-resilient farming practices, improving water management, and enhancing crop diversity to withstand extreme weather events. Finally, dialogue can enhance community mobilization and self-governance, which can lead to community-driven initiatives to counter the current crisis—from community heat shelters, and water management practices, to creating awareness of related health risks such as heat strokes and increase in vector and waterborne diseases. **From Discussion to Collaborative Action**
Dialogue-driven policies ensure that interventions are inclusive, transparent, and accountable, thereby fostering trust and cooperation among stakeholders. *(The writer is CEO of Kshetra Foundation; views are personal)*



KRISHNA UDAYASANKAR

policy making and even business and management, involves more than just conversation. Dialogue is essentially an approach that weaves together multiple elements to craft effective and long-lasting solutions.

BRICS: Dealing with emerging challenges

As geopolitical tensions escalate and new security challenges emerge, the upcoming 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan promises to be a critical turning point



SUDHIR HINDWAN

The 16th BRICS Summit, set to take place from October 22-24, 2024, in Kazan under Russia's chairmanship, comes at a critical juncture for global affairs. The summit will address pressing issues like the geopolitical tensions caused by escalating regional conflicts worldwide, the need for effective governance in emerging societies, and the evolving challenges of environmental degradation.

With these multifaceted threats becoming more severe, there is a growing urgency for BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, along with newly inducted members Egypt, Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia—to modernise and diversify their security and economic frameworks. A recent BRICS National Security Advisors' (NSA) conclave in St Petersburg underscored the urgency of these challenges. India's National Security Advisor highlighted the critical role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in tackling modern security concerns, particularly the evolving threat of transnational terrorism.

ICT will likely remain a focal point during the Kazan summit as BRICS nations look to leverage advanced technology to mitigate security risks and ensure more effective regional and global cooperation. Russia has expressed its intention to prioritise five key areas of partnership at the summit: politics, security, the economy, finance and cultural and humanitarian ties. In light of the rising number of security threats confronting the BRICS nations, this broad-ranging focus is timely. The inclusion of the five new BRICS members adds to the group's strategic importance. Their cooperation will be vital in addressing the sudden and unpredictable threats that arise from both state and non-state actors. This includes real-time sharing of geospatial data, which will be instrumental in improving border security and countering transnational terrorism. The Kazan summit will likely focus on enhancing cooperation in areas such as



economic development, public health, border security, and geospatial information sharing. These discussions could lead to tangible outcomes in the form of new initiatives for infrastructure development, increased bilateral trade, and innovative technological solutions.

These developments would further strengthen ties between India and BRICS, especially Russia, while fostering a new era of defense cooperation. Given the rise of security challenges across the BRICS countries, particularly concerning border disputes and terrorism, the summit presents an opportunity to improve international coordination on these matters. Satellite data sharing, military intelligence cooperation, and logistical support are expected to be central components of future BRICS security strategies.

For instance, one significant point of discussion could be China's expansionist policies, which have raised concerns about regional stability. Additionally, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is another issue that could dominate the agenda, with hopes for a possible resolution. The summit holds great potential for strengthening global cooperation in fighting transnational terrorism. This cooperation could encompass several key areas, including the financing of terrorist activities, enhancing police cooperation, and



THE SUMMIT MAY EXPLORE STRATEGIES FOR ANTICIPATING AND NEUTRALISING THESE THREATS, FOCUSING ON COOPERATION BETWEEN THE SECURITY AND DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENTS OF BRICS MEMBERS

addressing cyber threats. The summit may also discuss tightening security measures at borders and maritime zones, alongside the development of advanced communication networks and security management systems. One of the key challenges in counter-terrorism will be dealing with groups motivated by religious ideologies. The summit may explore strategies for anticipating and neutralising these threats, focusing on cooperation between the security and defense establishments of BRICS members. As nations adopt a more pragmatic and bilateral approach to foreign policy, there is less concern that enhanced BRICS cooperation would adversely affect relations with other major powers, such as the United States. Another area requiring immediate attention is the threat posed by chemical weapons in the hands of terrorists. These weapons, often difficult to detect and transport, pose a significant risk. International collaboration in formulating stricter regulations and preventing the acquisition of such weapons could be vital in managing this growing concern. Furthermore, the BRICS nations could work together to establish a robust mechanism to limit the accessibility of dangerous materials like RDX, Erythritol Tetranitrate (Penta), and advanced weapons such as AK-47s. Efforts to curb drug traffick-

ing are also expected to feature prominently at the summit, particularly in light of the strong nexus between drug cartels and terrorist groups in regions like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Southeast Asia.

Enhanced policing cooperation among BRICS members could lead to more effective crackdowns on these criminal networks. India's leadership approach, as demonstrated by Prime Minister Modi in recent international forums like the UN Summit on September 23, 2024, emphasises a human-centric focus.

At the BRICS summit, India is expected to push for policies that address economic, technological, and social gaps, thereby advancing the interests of the Global South. India's growing influence on the global stage is also reflected in its strong relationships with both the United States, the world's largest democracy, and Russia, one of its closest strategic partners.

These ties place India in a unique position to play a leading role at the BRICS summit. The meeting in Kazan is likely to provide a framework for enhanced security-related information sharing and greater confidence-building measures among BRICS nations.

(The author is a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav Award and an expert in strategic affairs; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ESCALATING CONFLICT IN WEST ASIA

Madam — After Iran supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's penchant claim that the "Zionist nation would not last long" and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's vow of retaliation, "Whoever attacks, we will attack them," the two countries are closer to a destructive all-out war. West Asia is being pushed into a nuclear firestorm by the challengers in conflict and the proxy groups. Israel is allied with the United States of America and NATO nations, while the Islamic militant groups, Hamas, Hezbollah and Houthis, are proxies of Iran. Hamas' failed missile attack gave Israel an opportunity to bomb Gaza indiscriminately. Since then, Israel Defence Force has killed and injured thousands of innocent Palestinians. The mass annihilation of women and children served as a reminder of the genocide committed against European Jews during World War II. The United States seamlessly provides Israel with strategic support, advanced weaponry and manpower. Their occasional counsel for sanity is for the world to hear and not for Israel to heed. Neither side-Israel, America and other NATO nations, or Iran and the proxy groups-is seeking a lasting peace. This war threatens to wreck world peace and economies, with the chance of more countries being sucked into it. India is stuck between two stools.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

RESERVATION POLICY CRITICISED

Madam— The news report titled 'Removing 50 per cent cap on reservation necessary to protect Constitution: Rahul Gandhi' (October 6) hardly evokes surprise as Rahul Gandhi constantly chants the ridiculous statement "Rights and benefits in proportion to share of population" since several months! What a criminal wastage of time, energy and resource to determine which caste group will receive what quantum of share in job openings, higher education and other rights and benefits in this heterogeneous country—that too through the yardstick of numerical strength only!

IAF celebrates 92nd anniversary



The clear blue skies over Chennai were incandescent with adventurous excitement last Sunday, as the Indian Air Force (IAF) staged a stunning air show at the famous Marina Beach in celebration of its 92nd anniversary. Much to the pride of the city, the event, which was reportedly attended by 15

lakh people, set a new world record, earning a place in the Limca Book of Records for the largest-ever gathering at an air show. Spectators were treated to a breathtaking display of aerial acrobatics. The highlight of the show was the Rafale fighter jets demonstrated their skills in mid-air refuelling, a sight that added an extra layer of wonder to the spectacle.

Saddeningly, however, the event saw five people have died and many reportedly suffered from dizziness and fainting due to searing heat. Though the air show displayed its pageantry, and the event was a proud reminder of India's growing self-reliance in defence, it raises an important question over the need for IAF aggressively pushing the occasion to set a new world record by aiming to mobilise a crowd much beyond the manageable level.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

When demands should have been raised to treat all downtrodden and economically weak Indians equally in terms of opening the door of opportunities to prosper and flourish by providing food, shelter, education and medical services for free or through nominal service cost and thereafter allowing the best to enter the field of higher education, service and all sectors of the country by according eligibility and merit the sole yardstick, Indians are being continuously fragmented through all sorts of demographic equations, that too by relegating all norms of quality and efficiency to oblivion! Nothing can be more tragic than this mindset. Already the caste-based reservation policy has posed a severe threat to the country as absolutely ineligible candidates are often attaining "pride of place" in government offices and educational institutions with innumerable candidates of merit quality getting scandalously deprived of their rightful seats and jobs despite scoring high marks! Now even private universities are being coaxed to go such a fatal way!

Kajal chatterjee | Kolkata

FINANCIAL AID FOR FARMERS

Madam — The release of the 18th installment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme is a significant achievement, benefiting over nine crore farmers across the country. Both the central and state governments deserve recognition for their collaborative efforts in supporting the agricultural sector. The Central government's direct financial aid to farmers, particularly the inclusion of 31,51,700 beneficiaries from Odisha, highlights a continued commitment to rural development. At the state level, the Odisha government's CM Kisan scheme, complementing the PM Kisan Yojana, is another positive step towards ensuring that small and marginal farmers receive much-needed financial assistance. This dual support, reaching farmers through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system, is a model for efficient governance.

Manoj | Almor

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

THE GIFT OF ATTENTION

Offering our full attention not only strengthens bonds but also gives us clarity and wellbeing



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

It's paradoxical that in a world where distractions never stop and sincere appreciation of attention is as precious as it is a type of most valuable coin. Notifications echo from every direction, screens compete for our attention, and in our quest to be "present," I fear we have lost sight of who we truly are. Amidst the chaos, there exists a profound reality: the act of giving one's attention may indeed be the most precious gift one can bestow. Think about it. When was the last occasion you experienced someone's full focus—no devices, no interruptions, just an authentic, human connection? If that moment is hard to remember, you're not the only one. The fast pace of modern life has taught us to multitask, to balance discussions with brief looks at our devices, and to believe that speed equals efficiency.

Yet in this pursuit, we have sacrificed something invaluable: the capacity to truly engage with the moment. When we focus on someone, we absorb more than just their words. We are expressing, "I acknowledge your presence." Your existence is significant. In this manner, attention serves as a quiet endorsement of an individual's value—it transcends superficial exchanges and paves the way for a more profound comprehension, fostering empathy, compassion, and genuine connection. Engagement serves as the foundation of confidence in connections. By focusing our attention on our partners, friends, or family members, we convey a powerful message regarding the significance of their thoughts, feelings and experiences. It's no surprise that the depth of our connections often reflects the level of attention we invest in them—the stronger



our bond with those who truly listen and comprehend us. And personal connections are the final aspect of it. Focus holds immense power in the professional realm. Think about a manager who listens to his team or a leader who takes the time to interact with employees, rather than rushing through meetings.

These individuals foster loyalty, ignite creativity and guide collaborative environments. What is the reason behind this? People naturally feel invigorated when they believe their actions hold significance and are appreciated. Focus fosters involvement, and involvement leads to achievement. Yet, perhaps the most significant impact attention has lies in how we relate to ourselves. In our rush to achieve and accumulate, we often overlook the importance of self-care. Mindfulness—the practice of immersing ourselves in the present moment—reveals that genuine wellbeing is at the heart of our experiences: pursuing goals, dedicating time to others and even engaging with our feelings.

By taking a moment to observe, we can discover a profound clarity and tranquility that has the potential to transform our lives. In a realm where time is an actual finite commodity, the gesture of dedicating our complete focus is truly transformative. It requires no expense yet holds immense significance.

As we navigate our daily lives, constantly facing new demands on our time and energy, it's important to remember that the most valuable gift we can offer is not material wealth, but rather our full presence. Next time you're engaged in a conversation, set your phone aside. Pay close attention. Offer your focus willingly and without interruption. It might surprise you that by focussing your attention, you receive something far more valuable in return—a profound and significant bond that enhances the lives of both individuals.

(The writer is a motivator and freelance writer; views are personal)

Will the three farm laws be revived?



UTTAM GUPTA

Were the laws a missed opportunity to address the deep-seated issues faced by millions of India's struggling farmers and consumers?

Recently, a BJP Member of Parliament talked of resurrecting the three national Farm Laws. Faced with criticism from the opposition parties, a spokesperson of the BJP clarified that 'her statement does not represent the party view'. Modi - The government doesn't intend to bring back these laws.

What were those laws?

Enacted in September 2020, the most far-reaching of these laws was the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020. It allowed the Centre to regulate inter-State trade and intra-State trade, providing for freedom of choice to the farmer or trader to conduct trade and commerce while allowing traders to purchase specified farm commodities directly from farmers anywhere in the country, even outside the designated State APMCs (Agricultural Produce Market Committee).

The second law was the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020. It provided a legal framework for farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers etc in a 'fair' and 'transparent' manner.

The third law was the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020. It took off pulses, cereals, edible oil, oil seeds, onions and potatoes from the purview of this archaic law. The enactment of these laws triggered prolonged protests - mostly confined to Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. In January 2021, the Supreme Court stayed their implementation and set up a committee to undertake a thorough review. The report of the committee submitted within the set deadline of three months was never made public. Meanwhile, the farmers continued with their stir. On November 19, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced their repeal.

Was there anything wrong with them? But, first, we need to ask as to how the subsisting laws on the marketing of farm produce are treating farmers. The widely reported plight of a farmer from Maharashtra's Solapur says it all. Last year, he got a measly Rs 2.49 from the sale of 512 kg of onions to a trader at Rs 1 per kg on sale at the Solapur market yard, the total sale value was Rs 512; after deducting labour, weighing, transportation and other charges adding to Rs 509.5, the net back was Rs 2.5. Let's be clear, it isn't a profit. To arrive at it, we need to deduct from this the cost of producing 512 kg onions which includes the expenses on seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, etc.

This would result in a colossal loss. This leads to a mounting debt burden as the farmer is forced to take a loan (often at a high interest rate) to finance the loss. The condition of tens of millions of poor farmers with small land holding sizes of fewer than 2 hectares (they are about 86 per cent of the total number of land-owning farmers) is no different.

Why does the farmer get a low price? This is because she can sell her produce only in the 'designated' mandi under the State APMC Act. In the mandi,



THE APMC MANDIS CAN HANDLE ONLY A FRACTION OF THE QUANTITY FARMERS BRING TO SELL. SO, MOST OF THEM ARE FORCED TO COME TO PRIVATE LOCAL MARKETS, WHERE SALES ARE LEGALLY BARRED

arthritis - the local term for commission agents (they arrange for auction and delivery of the produce) - and the licensed trader/buyer rule the roost. The duo exploit her to the hilt by giving a low price, rejections, weighing less, delaying payment, etc. Levies such as market fees, anthias commission, rural development cess (RDC) etc further erode her net-back.

The APMC mandis can handle only a fraction of the quantity farmers bring to sell. So, most of them are forced to come to private local markets, where sales are legally barred.

At these markets, they end up selling their produce to traders at throwaway prices. The latter have the blessings of corrupt bureaucrats and politicians (in many cases, they or their kin also masquerade as traders) and hence, won't face any action for violating the law.

True, the state agencies such as The Food Corporation of India (FCI), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) etc purchase in the mandis specified crops needed for running welfare Schemes such as the distribution of free food under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). They make purchases at the minimum support price (MSP) notified by the Centre. But, their purchases are limited. Except for paddy and wheat where the agencies buy only 30 per cent of farmers' produce, for all other crops their purchase is minuscule. Even so only 6 per cent of farmers - mostly rich with larger land holdings - get the ben-

efit of government procurement. In short, under the existing State APMC laws, most poor farmers have no hope of getting a better price. They are forced to live in abject poverty and run high debt leading to even suicides that have become a national phenomenon.

The millions of consumers too are at the receiving end. They pay high prices for the foodstuff they buy from the market. People getting free food under NFSA 820 million, but that leaves out a mammoth number who buy their needs from the market; even NFSA beneficiaries depend on the market for buying their needs other than wheat/rice. The extra money they pay fills the coffers of the commission agents, traders and middlemen. Retail inflation very often gets out of control primarily because food inflation (it has a share of 40 per cent in the retail basket) remains sticky most of the time. It remains so even when there is a normal monsoon enabling surplus production. This, in turn, has a lot to do with the cartelization of the supply chain by a few middlemen working in collaboration with the political brass in states - abetted by the State APMC laws.

High inflation doesn't let the RBI reduce interest rates and that imposes an additional burden on millions of borrowers whose EMIs remain high; small businesses getting crippled due to the high cost of servicing their loans. Even the government's budget comes under stress due to higher interest payments on its debt.

The solution lies in liberating all such stakeholders from the stran-

glehold of the big sharks. The way forward is to give more options to the farmers to sell and more options to consumers to buy. This is precisely what the three laws sought to do. The laws legitimized sales on all non-APMC platforms such as private traders, processors, aggregators, exporters etc without disturbing APMC mandis. These opened up unlimited opportunities for farmers to sell their produce, thereby helping them get higher prices, which could even exceed MSP depending on the demand-supply. They don't have to pay any levies for selling at non-APMC platforms. These enabled the farmers to enter into contracts with enterprises (private companies, cooperatives etc) that would not only give them an assured market at pre-set good prices but also the timely supply of quality inputs viz. fertilizers, seeds, pesticides etc and good agronomic practices for securing higher yield and quality foodstuff. In short, the laws gave a fair deal to millions of poor farmers on one hand and millions of consumers on the other. This would have reined in the unjust enrichment of a few and left more money to the farmers and consumers. Resulting lower inflation would prompt RBI to reduce interest rates helping millions of borrowers at one level and improving the Centre's fiscal health. ALAS! Their withdrawal has restored the status quo. Thanks to the political compulsion of the BJP, it is unable to even talk about those laws; forget resurrection.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views expressed are personal)

India and UNICEF: Celebrating 75 years of transformative partnership for child welfare

India and UNICEF have worked hand in hand, advancing the health, safety and rights of millions of children across India

For 75 years, India and UNICEF have worked together, advancing the rights and well-being of millions of children. The long-standing trusted and multi-faceted partnership is deeply rooted in shared values and a commitment to children's wellbeing in India and around the world, encompassing child health, safety, protection, equality, rights and wellbeing.

An important, but lesser-known aspect of India's partnership with UNICEF is India's role as a key source of procurement of lifesaving supplies around the world. From 2016 to 2023, India supplied to UNICEF, commodities worth \$3 billion, including vaccines, and health supplies essential for



CYNTHIA MCCAFFREY

UNICEF's humanitarian and development response to children's health and nutrition needs, globally. In 2023 alone, India ranked as the third-largest source of essential supplies for UNICEF, with procurements totalling \$483 million. Of this expenditure, approximately 74 per cent was allocated to vaccines, underscoring India's integral role in supporting

global immunisation efforts. India's collaboration with UNICEF in advancing global health was best exemplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. Demonstrating exceptional leadership, resilience, and innovation, India, as the world's largest vaccine producer, played a key role in providing COVID-19 vaccines globally. During 2021 and 2022 in partnership with UNICEF, India supplied 292 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines under the COVAX initiative to 47 countries, all of which were delivered to low and middle-income countries. Efficiently managed supply chains that allow children, adolescents, and mothers access to quality, safe, equi-

table, and affordable health-care and essential services are critical. UNICEF supports the government in establishing and managing these agile, cost-effective, and sustainable end-to-end supply chains. These have also strengthened UNICEF's ability to respond swiftly to emergencies and ensure the sustained availability of essential supplies. During COVID-19, UNICEF supported the government address critical challenges by installing oxygen plants, providing medical equipment, and distributing PPE equipment, strengthening the country's pandemic response. In fact, over the past decades, UNICEF supported the government's efforts



to strengthen immunisation systems by investing in the capacity building of health workers, upgrading and expanding cold chain capacity, and introducing electronic management information systems to track progress.

These efforts have improved the system's resilience, preparing the country for future public health emergencies. Supplies are essential to fulfil children's rights and innovations with sustainable supply chains are important considerations.

By partnering with the private sector, UNICEF promotes product innovation, digital transformation, and sustainable procurement, aligning with national priorities and SDG-12 on responsible consumption. In India, UNICEF works with suppliers to adopt eco-friendly business practices, ensuring essential supplies are sourced ethically, supporting both environmental goals and child welfare. Both India and UNICEF recognise that the well-being of children is inextricably linked to the prosperity of future generations.

India has made significant progress in reducing child mortality, increasing immunisation coverage, achieving high enrolment in primary

education, and improving access to sanitation and clean water. The 75th anniversary of the collaboration between UNICEF and the Government of India this year is a historic milestone that bears evidence of the legacy of progress. India's collaboration with UNICEF has remained steadfast which has accomplished millions of children having been vaccinated, educated, and lifted out of poverty. UNICEF remains committed to supporting India, for every child in the country to have equal access and opportunities that help them realize their dreams and aspirations.

(The writer is Representative, UNICEF India; views are personal)

Political parties jittery ahead of Jammu and Kashmir counting day

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the counting day, the leaders from different political parties appeared jittery as they anticipated the hung verdict may further delay the process of stable government formation in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. National Conference Vice-President Omar Abdullah on Monday alleged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would like nothing more than to extend central rule if they are not in a position to form a government in Jammu and Kashmir. The NC leader was reacting to the statement made by the Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) Chief Abdul Rashid Sheikh who during a press conference during the day had said whoever will get the majority should not form the government until the statehood is restored in Jammu and Kashmir. "The man goes to Delhi for 24 hours and comes back to play straight into the hands of the BJP," Omar posted on X

(formerly twitter). Rashid during the press conference also revealed that he had been to Delhi for two days. "The BJP would like nothing more than to extend central rule in J&K if they aren't in a position to form a government," Omar said. However, the mood in the Bharatiya Janta Party camp was upbeat despite adverse projections by the different exit polls. J&K BJP Assembly election in-charge Ram Madhav Monday took stock of the ground situation before addressing a meeting of the Election Management committee here at the party headquarters. In his brief address, Ram Madhav conveyed his gratitude to the party workers who worked hard during the month-long campaign to realize the dream of forming a BJP-led government in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina also asserted his position claiming that the BJP will emerge as the single



largest party in the region by securing 35 seats and will form Government with the help of like-minded and independent candidates. He also said that the nomination of five MLAs by the Lieutenant Governor is being carried out as per the Reorganisation Act. "We are confident of winning 35 seats in Jammu and Kashmir, and with the support of independents and like-minded groups, who will secure around 15 seats, we will

cross the majority mark of 50 to form the Government," Raina told reporters here. "The people have voted for us, endorsing our vision for development and peace", he said. On the other hand, PDP leader Iltija Mufti Monday said giving power to the Lieutenant Governor to nominate five members to the Jammu and Kashmir assembly was a "brazen pre-result rigging" of the polls. "All of the five MLAs

nominated by LG are BJP members or associated with the party. Brazen pre result rigging & shameful manipulation," Iltija Mufti posted on X. She said it seems no lessons were learned from the rigging of 1987 elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir Congress President Tariq Hameed Karra also termed the power to nominate five members in the new Assembly by the Lieutenant Governor as "unconstitutional" and "undemocratic." Karra said, "If the Centre has implemented and given powers to the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir to nominate five members for the new Assembly, it is in my view unconstitutional and undemocratic." "How could it happen where a President of India could not have the arbitrary powers and a Lieutenant Governor would be given such powers," Karra questioned. In Srinagar, National

Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Monday said his party was open to the idea of taking support of Mehbooba Mufti's PDP to form a government in the Union territory. He also flayed the move to give powers to the Lieutenant Governor for nominating members to the five reserved seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, and said his party would approach the Supreme Court if the BJP-led Centre went ahead with it. Abdullah, while ruling himself out of the race for chief minister's post, said statehood should be restored to Jammu and Kashmir so that the new government has powers to address the people's problems. The NC president said he was not averse to taking support of the independents as well but he would not go begging for it. "I will not go to beg before them. If they feel they can strengthen the state, most welcome. It should be their initiative. They should want to do good for the people," he added.

Will stay put at Ladakh Bhawan: Wangchuk

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Social activist Sonam Wangchuk on Monday said he and his supporters will stay put at the Ladakh Bhawan till the authorities tell them when they will be able to meet country's top leadership. Wangchuk and his supporters began their indefinite fast at the Ladakh Bhawan on Sunday. He said the protesters, who are demanding the inclusion of Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, are not asking for anything unusual and are here to remind the ruling BJP of its poll promise. The Sixth Schedule pertains to the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram as "autonomous districts and autonomous regions". "We are going to sit here till we get a reply on when we will be able to meet our leaders. We walked for 30-32 days, we deserve to get a meeting at least," Wangchuk said. The people of Ladakh had welcomed the government's decision to make it a union territory because they were promised a legislature and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule, the climate activist said. "We are not asking for anything unusual, we are here to remind the BJP of the promise it made in its manifestos," he said. Wangchuk and his supporters marched to Delhi from Leh to press their demands and were detained at the capital's Singhu border on September 30. The 'Delhi Chalo Padyatra' is being spearheaded by the Leh Apex Body (LAB). The protesters were released by Delhi Police on the night of October 2. On Sunday, Wangchuk stepped out of the Ladakh Bhawan around 4 pm and announced that he was going to sit on a fast.



Security forces achieving success against naxals says Amit Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said security forces have been carrying out "offensive operations" instead of defensive against Naxals and have achieved big successes in recent times. Addressing Chief Ministers and top officials of the Naxal-affected States, Shah said due to the improved security situation, high voter turnout up to 70 per cent was witnessed in the Maoist-hit region in the last Lok Sabha polls. There was zero polling in the region earlier, he said. The crucial meeting, which discussed anti-Naxal operations and development initiatives carried out in the affected areas, came days after the security forces killed 31 ultras in the forests of Chhattisgarh in one of the most successful operations against them in recent times. "Security forces are now carrying out offensive operations instead of defensive operations earlier," Shah said. Describing Naxals as the biggest hurdle to development, Home Minister said they are the biggest

human rights violators who have been depriving over eight crore people of development and basic welfare opportunities. The Naxal-affected states include Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The Left Wing Extremism (LWE) violence has come down by 72 per cent while there was an 86 per cent decline in deaths in 2023 as compared to 2010. Naxals are fighting their last battle now, officials said. More than 230 LWE cadres have been eliminated so far this year, 723 LWE cadres have surrendered and 812 have been arrested. The number of LWE-affected districts is just 38 now. The Central Government has taken many steps, including giving impetus to road and mobile connectivity, to take development schemes to the remotest areas of the affected States. A total of 14,400 km of road length has been constructed and nearly 6,000 mobile towers have been installed in LWE-affected areas so far, said Home Ministry in a statement.

AB-PMJAY expansion to benefit 120 million families: JP Nadda

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With the expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPM-JAY) bringing all citizens aged 70 years and above under its ambit, around 45 million families, including 60 million elderly population are expected to get the medical benefits, by ensuring them free health insurance coverage. "This initiative covers over 120 million families, providing an annual hospitalisation benefit of USD 6,000 per family," JP Nadda, Union Health Minister said on Monday during his inaugural address to the 77th session of WHO Southeast Asia Region

(SEARO), here. "This expansion will benefit around 45 million families, including 60 million elderly population, by providing them free health insurance coverage. It underscores the government's commitment to ensuring universal and inclusive healthcare for India's growing elderly demographic", he said, pointing out the program's potential to alleviate financial burdens associated with healthcare. Nadda said that India as a lighthouse country in the digital health arena, is poised to share its Digital Public Infrastructure (DPIs) such as Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, e-Sanjevani, Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP), SAKSHAM etc. by providing

technical and financial support through the Global Initiative on Digital Health - a WHO-managed network, launched during India's G20 Presidency. He also stated that "following the remarkable success of the CoWIN digital platform during the COVID-19 pandemic, India has conceptualised the online digital platform-UWIN, for the Universal Immunisation Programme. The portal will register, track and monitor all vaccination events." He said that "India's experience in integrating this system with the conventional system of medicine has led to the provision of holistic healthcare, promoting overall well-being and expanding the range of healthcare services". Highlighting the significant

progress made in global health since 1948, particularly in reducing infant mortality rates, Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO SEARO said, however emphasised the emerging challenge of antimicrobial resistance. "In 1948, when the first Regional Committee for South-East Asia was formed, the infant mortality rate globally was around 147. Today it is 25. Then, the antibiotic age had just begun. Today, we are faced with antimicrobial resistance." "And so, as we conquer old threats, we are faced with new ones. It is upon us to confront the perils of today, with the collective wisdom of all who came before us - and with the tools of the 21st century," she added.

Rajnath Singh urges private sector to innovate for defence needs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday here exhorted the private sector to move ahead from imitative to innovative technology to cater to futuristic needs of the Armed Forces. He made this appeal while launching the second edition of Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI 2.0) challenges and the 12th edition of Defence India Start-up Challenges (DISC 12) during DefConnect 4.0. ADITI 2.0 features 19 challenges from the Armed Forces and allied agencies in the domains of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Quantum Technology, military communication, anti-drone

systems customised for military platforms and adaptive camouflage, etc. This scheme offers a grant of up to Rs 25 crore to Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) winners, focusing on critical technological areas crucial for strengthening the defence ecosystem of the country. DISC 12 presents 41 challenges across key technology domains, including Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), AI, Networking and Communication, with grants up to Rs 1.50 crore. Notably, it introduces the Medical Innovations and Research Advancement (MIRA) initiative, featuring nine challenges aimed at fostering the development of medical technologies to meet the



medical demands of the Armed Forces. To provide momentum to the iDEX initiative, DISC was launched in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, aimed at supporting Start-Ups/MSMEs/Innovators to create prototypes and/or commercialise products/solutions in the area of national defence and security. In his address, the defence

minister commended DefConnect for playing a crucial role in developing the culture of innovation in the country. He stated that the platform is bringing a new energy to the defence industrial ecosystem, and making the nation's talent a partner in strengthening the security apparatus. Rajnath highlighted the vibrant and dynamic

ecosystem of innovators, entrepreneurs, scientists and start-ups in the country, stating that the world is acknowledging the strength and talent of India's youth. He reiterated the Government's commitment to further enhance the role of the private sector in the defence ecosystem. Their involvement is necessary to achieve self-reliance, he said. He pointed out that as soon as the Government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, came to power in 2014, it identified 'lack of private sector participation in the defence sector' as a major hurdle in attaining self-reliance, and strived to increase their contribution in nation building. On the new technologies being incorporated in wars and conflicts, the defence minister said apart from conventional arms and ammunition, many dual use or purely civilian tech is being weaponised. He called for an in-depth understanding of these technologies, exhorting the innovators to make imaginative use of the advancements for the defence of the nation. Stressing on the need to move forward from imitative to innovative and distinctive technologies, Rajnath called upon the private sector to think beyond the solutions to challenges being provided through ADITI & DISC. He urged them to bring forth the technology which is far ahead of the requirements of the Armed Forces and would be beneficial to deal with future threats.

Officials responsible for Marina beach stampede: Ex CM

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Despite the "best" efforts by the Government of Tamil Nadu and its 'friendly' media houses to put the blame on the Indian Air Force for Sunday's stampede at Chennai's Marina Beach which resulted in the death of five persons, intelligence officials blamed the state administration for the mishap and hospitalisation of hundreds of people due to suffocation and poor medical facilities. The Air Show held in connection with the 92nd anniversary of the IAF had drawn a crowd of more than 1.2 million to Marina Beach and surrounding areas to watch the adventurous pilots of the IAF in action with their state-of-the-art flying machines. The IAF in its communique issued days before the event had said that nearly 1.5 million people are expected to converge in Marina Beach, the longest sea shore in South Asia, to watch the action. While the air show featuring the pilots displaying



breathtaking feats was about to conclude, there was chaos as people were moving towards the exit gates in large numbers and many fell down and died due to suffocation. "Administrative arrangements and crowds were not managed properly and the police force was inadequate. People were stuck in heavy traffic with no drinking

water available, and many were hospitalized due to heatstroke," said former Chief Minister and AIADMK leader Edappadi Palaniswamy. A senior intelligence officer said that the administration, especially the Police failed in taking effective crowd management measures which resulted in this mishap. It seems someone in

the hierarchy failed in his duty. I give full credit to the IAF for the steps it had taken to organize such a mammoth show," said the officer. He also pointed out that Chennai had hosted such an event in 2003 when Jayalithaa was the chief minister. "Crowd management at that time was of high quality," said

the officer who did not want his name to be quoted. Tamil Nadu's Minister for Health, M Subramanian issued a statement on Monday claiming that the government has done a good job. "We had extended all help to the IAF for Sunday's Air Show. Several rounds of meetings were held with the IAF authorities and we had met all their demands to manage the crowd. Two health teams, with adequate number of doctors and nurses, had been deployed by the state government at the venue. We had provided all the facilities and arrangements beyond what they had requested," said Subramanian. Kanimozhi MP, who is the daughter of M Karunanidhi, who is engaged in a fight with chief minister M K Stalin for control of the party, blamed the huge crowd for the disaster. "We should avoid unmanageable crowds," said Kanimozhi indirectly hinting that people should have stayed at their homes.

6 dead as explosive goes off while unloading



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

At least 6 people died and as many injured when dynamite being unloaded from a truck went off blowing up the vehicle. The accident occurred at Gangaramchak Mining Private Limited colliery, located near Badulia in Birbhum district. Some sources put the toll to seven or eight as some bodies had been hurriedly transported by the management, villagers said. "Six bodies have been

recovered. One is severely injured, his condition is serious, and two are out of danger," Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Pant said. The truck full of explosives was being unloaded when things exploded tearing the bodies of the labourers unloading truck into smithereens, sources said adding the body of the driver of the truck was found about 500 feet away. The intensity of the blast was such that the bodies of the victims had to be identified by their clothes. Alleging illegal mining in the

area the locals said that they are not allowed to come near the open cast coalmine. The police rushed to the area upon hearing about the incident and started rescue work, Bolpur ASP Rana Mukherjee said. "We found six bodies, three people were injured who are undergoing treatment in the hospital," the ASP said adding the Government had announced jobs to the next of kin of those killed in the explosion. The company would also give compensation to the family of those killed and those injured, he said.

Pak suicide attack kills 2 Chinese nationals, suspected militant

PTI ■ KARACHI

Two Chinese nationals were killed and 17 people injured in a suicide attack by a Baloch insurgent group late at night that targeted a convoy of Chinese workers near Pakistan's busiest airport here, authorities said on Monday.

The explosion near the Jinnah International Airport on Sunday night also killed a suspected suicide bomber. The attack is the latest in a string of violence against Chinese workers in Pakistan. It comes less than two weeks before the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit to be held in the national capital. The banned Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the attack, saying the blast was a suicide attack targeting a convoy of Chinese engineers and investors leaving the Jinnah International Airport.

The attack occurred less than a mile from the airport's main terminal. Authorities briefly suspended all traffic going to the airport. It targeted a convoy carrying

Chinese staff of an electric power company.

"Initial investigations show that a small vehicle was used to carry out the suicide attack when the vehicle carrying the Chinese nationals reached the main signal near the Karachi Airport," Deputy Inspector General of Police Asif Sheikh said.

He said that it appeared the vehicle used by the suicide bomber had explosives and as soon as it hit the target it exploded.

The Chinese embassy confirmed that two of its nationals had died and another was injured, along with "some local casualties."

"Three bodies were brought to the hospital and two of them are Chinese nationals," surgeon Dr Summaiya at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical College (JPMC) said.

A senior police official at the Counter Terrorism Department said the third body could be that of the suicide bomber.

Another police official said that the explosion was heard far and wide in the city and an oil

tanker which was at the signal had also caught fire and exploded.

"It was the tanker explosion which caused so many injuries and damage to at least a dozen vehicles in the close range," he said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called the attack a "heinous act" and offered his condolences to the Chinese people. "Pakistan stands committed to safeguarding our Chinese friends," he wrote on X.

Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) on Monday said last night's terrorist attack near the Karachi airport would not "go unpunished." "This deplorable act of terrorism is an attack not only on Pakistan but also on the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China. We remain resolute in bringing to justice those responsible for this cowardly attack, including the Majed Brigade," the FO said in a statement. "Pakistan's security and law enforcement agencies will spare no effort in apprehending the perpetrators and their facilitators. This barbaric act will not go unpunished," the FO said.

It said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in close contact with the Chinese embassy for coordination and facilitation. "Pakistan and China are close partners and iron brothers, united by a bond of mutual respect and shared destiny. Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the safety and security of Chinese nationals, projects, and institutions in Pakistan, and will continue to work hand in hand with our Chinese brothers to defeat the forces of terror," it said.

Thousands of Chinese personnel are working in Pakistan on several projects under the aegis of the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The Chinese embassy on Monday asked its citizens and Chinese enterprises in Pakistan to be vigilant and to "do their best to take safety precautions". It also asked Pakistan to thoroughly investigate the incident and "severely punish the murderer".

In a statement, the Pakistan Airport Authority (PAA) said that airport buildings and assets remained safe in the

incident. Flight schedules at the airport are continuing as normal.

Balochistan, bordering Iran and Afghanistan, is home to a long-running violent insurgency. Baloch insurgent groups have previously carried out several attacks targeting CPEC projects.

The BLA accuses China and Islamabad of exploitation of the resource-rich province, a charge rejected by the authorities. It has fought a long-running insurgency for a separate homeland.

The group in the last two years carried out similar suicide bomb attacks in Karachi targeting foreign nationals.

The BLA in March this year claimed responsibility for an attack on a Pakistani naval air base near China-run Gwadar port. In April 2022, the group killed three Chinese tutors and a Pakistani driver in a suicide bombing near Karachi University's Confucius Institute.

In November 2018, gunmen killed at least four people in an attack on the Chinese consulate in Karachi.



Security officials examine the site of an explosion that caused injuries and destroyed vehicles outside the Karachi airport, Pakistan, early Monday. AP/PTI

Life returns to normal in Pakistan's capital, Imran Khan's party ends protest

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Life was returning to normal in the Pakistani capital on Monday after the violent protest by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters subsided in the wake of high drama involving the mysterious disappearance of the party leader Ali Amin Gandapur. Gandapur, the chief minister of the restive Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province in the northwest, is a mercurial PTI leader and confidante of jailed party founder Imran Khan.

With shoulder-length flowing hair, a thick moustache, a broad chest and considerable height, he boasts a towering personality.

Following Imran Khan's directives, he announced that the party will stage a protest at the famous D-Chowk of Islamabad in the heart of the city on Friday - the same venue where the PTI had organised a sit-in for 126 days in 2014.

Leading a caravan of dozens of vehicles and overcoming road blockades and resistance by police, he finally managed to reach the capital on Saturday afternoon.

After arriving in the national capital, he left his supporters and went to the KP House, the property of his government in Islamabad, for refreshments, but disappeared from there.

After remaining incommunicado for more than 24 hours, he suddenly appeared Sunday evening at the provincial assembly building in Peshawar. He made a fiery speech to the assembly but failed to give exact details about his whereabouts when he was not accessible to his family or party.

As the media frenzy focused on his disappearance, hundreds of protesters whom he had led to Islamabad silently melted away and probably went back to their homes, except those arrested by police.

As the protesters went away, the authorities began to lift the siege of the city, clearing most of the roads and restoring the

suspended mobile services.

By Monday morning, life returned to normal in twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Public transportation resumed its regular routes, although the Islamabad Metro Bus service remains partially suspended.

Roads and thoroughfares in Islamabad have reopened. Containers obstructing major arteries in Islamabad and Rawalpindi have been removed. Government offices, private businesses, and schools have reopened.

Civic bodies were busy at several places in Islamabad repairing and renovating sidewalks, roads and bridges ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit to be held here next week.

Meanwhile, Pakistan authorities registered new cases under terrorism laws against Imran Khan and dozens of his supporters for violence and vandalism in Lahore and Rawalpindi.

The Express Tribune newspaper reported that according to the FIR lodged in Lahore, police accused that Khan has been provided with extraordinary privileges inside prison, which allowed him to communicate with his party leaders and incite them to engage in violent actions.

Additionally, several cases have been registered against PTI workers for violating Section 144 by holding protest in the city. The protest was prohibited under the emergency law, which was in effect at the time.

Meanwhile, a case was registered at Naseerabad Police Station in Rawalpindi against Khan and 300 party workers under the Anti-Terrorism Act. So far, 16 protesters have been arrested. On Monday, the Punjab government banned Imran Khan from meeting his family members, lawyers and party leaders till October 18, citing "security concerns." Khan has been lodged in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail in multiple cases since August 2023.

Pak's Punjab gov't bans Imran from meeting wife

Lahore (PTI): Pakistan's Punjab government on Monday banned jailed former premier Imran Khan from meeting his family members, lawyers and party leaders till October 18 due to "security concerns", amidst his party staging anti-government protests in several cities.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Khan has been lodged in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail in multiple cases since August 2023.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has accused PTI of trying to disrupt the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit scheduled to be held on Oct 15 and 16 in Islamabad and emphasised that the government will ensure that these plans do not succeed.

"Incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi have been banned from meeting their family, lawyers, and party leaders at Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, till Oct 18," a Punjab government official said.

The government has taken the decision in view of "security concerns", he said.

According to sources, the government has taken the decision in anticipation of the upcoming SCO summit.

The coalition government led by PML-N's Shehbaz Sharif has alleged that PTI is staging protests in Islamabad to sabotage the summit. The Pakistan Army has been called in to provide security for the SCO summit. Earlier, security agencies arrested six Adiala jail staff for aiding the PTI founder.

Meanwhile, a PTI spokesperson said its legal team of Khan will file a petition in court, requesting the lifting of a ban on meetings with Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi. "Justice Sardar Ijaz of Islamabad High Court had ordered the authorities not too long ago to arrange meetings via video link, if not possible physically, given the number of cases Imran Khan has to deal with, legal consultation is given and, therefore should be provided," he said.

UK PM names new chief of staff in Downing Street shake-up

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday named a new chief of staff after a high-profile resignation amid a wider shake-up of his top team at 10 Downing Street to mark his Labour Party government's first 100 days in office.

Sue Gray, previously a top civil servant appointed by former prime minister Boris Johnson's to investigate the partygate scandal of COVID lockdown law breaching parties within the then Tory government, resigned as Starmer's top aide saying the "intense commentary around my position risked becoming a distraction to the government's vital work of change".

She was referring to weeks of media revelations and controversies surrounding her role, including her salary package of GBP 170,000 being GBP 3,000 more than the Prime Minister being leaked to the BBC.

"It is for that reason I have chosen to stand aside, and I look forward to continuing to support the prime minister in my new role," said Gray, who has been demoted to a part-time role as Starmer's envoy for nations and regions.



Morgan McSweeney, the Labour Party's former campaign director who masterminded July's general election landslide for the party, will replace Gray as the new chief of staff. His appointment comes alongside political director Vidhya Alakeson and director of government relations Jill Cuthbertson being promoted to deputy chiefs of staff. Nin Pandit, the director of the Downing Street policy unit until now, has been appointed

principal private secretary to Starmer, while former journalist James Lyons will join to head up a new strategic communications team. "I'm really pleased to be able to bring in such talented and experienced individuals into my team. This shows my absolute determination to deliver the change the country voted for," said Starmer in a statement.

He thanked his outgoing chief for "all the support", both in Opposition and government and her work to prepare Labour for government. "Sue has played a vital role in strengthening our relations with the regions and nations. I am delighted that she will continue to support that work," he added.

According to media reports, junior staff at Downing Street were disgruntled and some had resorted to leaks to the media at a time when Starmer and the Cabinet were battling allegations of accepting "freebies" of clothes and hospitality from wealthy party donors.

"In fewer than 100 days Sir Keir Starmer's Labour government has been thrown into chaos - he has lost his chief of staff who has been at the centre of the scandal the Labour Party has been engulfed by," a

Conservative Party spokesperson reacted. Meanwhile, in a statement to mark the anniversary of the October 7 Hamas attacks in Israel, Starmer said the UK must "unequivocally stand with the Jewish community and unite as a country."

"As a father, a husband, a son, a brother - meeting the families of those who lost their loved ones last week was unimaginable.

Their grief and pain are ours, and it is shared in homes across the land. A year on, that collective grief has not diminished or waned," he said. He added: "We must never look the other way in the face of hate. We must also not look the other way as civilians bear the ongoing dire consequences of this conflict in the Middle East. I reiterate my call for immediate ceasefires in Gaza and Lebanon, and for the removal of all restrictions on humanitarian aid into Gaza.

"We will not falter in our pursuit of peace and on this day of pain and sorrow, we honour those we lost, and continue in our determination to return those still held hostage, help those who are suffering, and secure a better future for the Middle East."

Ukraine strikes Russian oil hub as Zelenskyy says war is in 'very important phase'

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine's military claimed it struck a major oil terminal Monday in Crimea that provides fuel for Russia's war effort as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the war has entered a key phase.

Both sides are facing the issue of how to sustain their costly war of attrition - a conflict that started with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and that shows no signs of a resolution.

Ukraine's General Staff said on social media that the oil terminal in Feodosia, on the south coast of the Russia-occupied Crimea Peninsula, has been supplying the Russian army with fuel and that the strike was part of an ongoing effort to "under-

mine the military and economic potential of the Russian Federation". Russian-installed authorities in the city of Feodosia on the coast of the Black Sea reported a fire at the terminal on Monday morning but did not say what might have caused it.

Ukraine has increasingly targeted rear areas that are essential for Russia's onslaught, now deep into its third year. It has developed long-range drones that have hit oil depots and refineries as well as armories.

Ukraine's aim is to impair Russia's ability to support its front-line units, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where the main Russian battlefield effort is stretching weary Ukrainian forces.

Kyiv is still awaiting word from its Western partners on

its repeated requests to use the long-range weapons they provide to hit targets on Russian soil.

Developments on that question could come next weekend at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, when defence leaders from the 50-plus partner nations that coordinate military aid to Ukraine are due to meet.

The conflict has largely been a war of attrition, which requires large amounts of ammunition. Late on Sunday, Zelenskyy said the war is in "a very important phase" as the Ukrainian army works hard to hold the bigger Russian forces at bay in the east while also holding ground in Russia's Kursk border region, which it captured two months ago.

Ukraine needs to "put pressure on Russia in the way

that's necessary for Russia to realise that the war will gain them nothing," Zelenskyy said in a video statement.

"We will continue to apply even greater pressure on Russia - because only through strength can we bring peace closer," he added.

Meanwhile, Russia fired six missiles of various types and 74 Shahed drones at Ukraine overnight, Ukraine's air force said. Missile debris fell in three districts of Kyiv, causing minor damage to civilian infrastructure and starting a fire, Mayor Vitalii Klitschko said.

He said nobody was hurt. Three missile fragments fell on a kindergarten, he said without elaborating. Russia's Defence Ministry said it shot down almost two dozen Ukrainian drones overnight.

Myanmar's ex-ruling party's member dies while serving prison sentence

Bangkok (AP): Zaw Myint Maung, a senior member of Myanmar's former ruling party arrested during the 2021 military takeover, died Monday while serving a prison sentence that was considered politically motivated. He was 72.

He was a close colleague of ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi and spokesperson of her National League for Democracy party. He had been a second vice president and chief minister of the central Mandalay region before the army seized control of the government in 2021, arresting him, Suu Kyi and many top members of her NLD party and government.

Zaw Myint Maung had been jailed at least twice under previous governments for his political activities.

He had had leukemia since 2019. His death was confirmed by Tun Kyi, a party colleague from Mandalay, and another friend, who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by the authorities.

In a statement expressing condolences, the National Unity Government, the main shadow opposition group organizing against army rule, lauded Zaw Myint Maung for being "unwaveringly committed to the democratic cause, fighting alongside the people and other democratic forces to dismantle military dictatorship."

The NLD won a landslide victory in Myanmar's 2020 election, but the army seized power Feb. 1, 2021, the day it was supposed to begin a second five-year term in office. The country now is enmeshed in civil war between the military and pro-democracy forces allied with armed ethnic minority groups. Zaw Myint Maung was serving a prison sentence of 29 years after being convicted in closed court in 2021 and 2022 on charges of violating coronavirus restrictions.

Nobel Prize in medicine honours US duo for discovery of microRNA

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

The Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine was awarded Monday to Americans Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun for their discovery of microRNA, tiny pieces of genetic material that alter how genes work at the cellular level and could lead to new ways of treating cancer.

The Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute, which awarded the prize, said the duo's discovery is "proving to be fundamentally important for how organisms develop and function."

"Their groundbreaking discovery revealed a completely new principle of gene regulation that turned out to be essential for multicellular organisms, including humans," the assembly said in

a statement explaining the importance of their work.

Ambros performed the research that led to his prize at Harvard University. He is currently a professor of natural science at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Ruvkun's research was performed at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Harvard Medical School, where he's a professor of genetics, said Thomas Perlmann, Secretary-General of the Nobel Committee.

Perlmann said he spoke to Ruvkun by phone shortly before the announcement.

"It took a long time before he came to the phone and sounded very tired, but he quite rapidly was quite excited and happy, when he understood what it was all about," Perlmann said. Ambros and

Ruvkun, the assembly explained, were initially interested in genes that control the timing of different genetic developments, ensuring that cell types develop at the right time. To do that, they studied two mutant strains of worms commonly used as research models in science.

The two scientists set out to identify the mutated genes responsible in these worms and what their role was. The mechanism they ultimately identified - the regulation of genes by microRNA - has allowed organisms to evolve for hundreds of millions of years.

The Nobel committee said Ambros and Ruvkun's discovery ultimately "revealed a new dimension to gene regulation, essential for all complex life forms". MicroRNA

has opened up scientists' approaches to treating diseases like cancer by helping to regulate how genes work at the cellular level, according to Dr Claire Fletcher, a lecturer in molecular oncology at Imperial College London.

Fletcher said microRNA provide genetic instructions to tell cells to make new proteins and that there were two main areas where microRNA could be helpful: in developing drugs to treat diseases and in serving as biomarkers.

"MicroRNA alters how genes in the cell work," said Fletcher, who is an outside expert not associated with the Nobel prize. "If we take the example of cancer, we'll have a particular gene working overtime, it might be mutated and working in overdrive," she said.

Russian court sentences 72-year-old American to nearly 7 years in prison

Moscow (AP): A Russian court on Monday sentenced a 72-year-old American in a closed trial to nearly seven years in prison for allegedly fighting as a mercenary in Ukraine.

Prosecutors said Stephen Hubbard signed a contract with the Ukrainian military after Russia sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022 and he fought alongside them until being captured two months later. He was sentenced to six years and 10 months in a general-security prison.

Prosecutors had called for a sentence of seven years in a maximum-security prison.

Hubbard, from the state of Michigan, is the first American known to have been convicted on charges of fighting as a mercenary in the Ukrainian conflict.

The charges carried a potential

sentence of 15 years, but prosecutors asked that his age be taken into account along with his admission of guilt, Russian news reports said.

Arrests of Americans have become increasingly common in Russia in recent years.

Concern has risen that Russia could be targeting US nationals for arrest to use later as bargaining chips in talks to bring back Russians convicted of crimes in the US and Europe.

Also on Monday, a court in the city of Voronezh sentenced American Robert Gilman to seven years and 1 month for allegedly assaulting while serving a sentence for another assault.

According to Russian news reports, Gilman was arrested

in 2022 for causing a disturbance while intoxicated on a passenger train and then assaulted a police officer while in custody. He is serving a 3 1/2-year sentence on that charge.

Last year, he assaulted a prison inspector during a cell check, then hit an official of the Investigative Committee, resulting in the new sentence, state news agency RIA-Novosti said.

The US and Russia in August completed their largest prisoner swap in post-Soviet history, a deal involving 24 people, many months of negotiations and concessions from other European countries, which released Russians in their custody as part of the exchange. Several US citizens remain behind bars in Russia following the swap.

India, Maldives strengthen ties; inaugurate new runway, RuPay card

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The inauguration of a new runway in the Maldives built under an airport redevelopment project assisted by India and the official launch of the RuPay card in the island nation on Monday are aimed at boosting economic ties and tourism cooperation between the two countries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu jointly virtually inaugurated the runway at the Hanimadhoo International Airport and also witnessed via weblink a live transaction using a RuPay payment service card in the Maldives.

The launch took place after the two leaders held extensive talks which Muizzu in his press statement said were to "chart a new path for the future".

The Maldivian president accompanied by First Lady Madam Sajidha Mohamed and a Maldivian delegation arrived in India on Sunday evening.

Though the Maldivian president attended PM Modi's swearing-in ceremony in June, it is his first bilateral visit to India.

Prior to the launch of different India-assisted projects in the Maldives, a small official video was played in which details about these projects were shared in the presence



of the two leaders at the Hyderabad House.

"The bonds between India and Maldives stretch back centuries, woven together through rich trade and cultural exchanges," it was narrated in the video.

Over the years, this relationship has evolved, characterised by "mutual respect and unwavering support", underpinned by India's

Neighbourhood First policy and SAGAR vision, it said. India has always been the first responder in the Maldives during times of crisis.

"Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Mohamed Muizzu, this relationship is to achieve greater heights," it added.

The RuPay card launch today will pave the way for strengthened India-Maldives relations by boosting tourism and economic cooperation, according to the India-Maldives video.

"It will allow Indian tourists to make cashless transactions easily, reducing cost and enhancing convenience, especially in the Maldives tourism sector," it said.

The inauguration of the new runway at Hanimadhoo International Airport marks a "significant milestone in the airport's ongoing expansion project".

Its redevelopment, under an "Indian Line of Credit of USD 132 million", aims to provide complete new infrastructure including runway, ATC tower, ARFF block, hangar, cargo facilities, and passenger terminal building, it added.

Prime Minister Modi in his press statement after the bilateral talks said President Muizzu's visit adds "another chapter to our ties".

DGCA issues advisory on Boeing 737 rudder risks



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation regulator DGCA on Monday issued an advisory to Indian airlines operating Boeing 737 planes regarding the potential risk of a jammed rudder control system.

The move follows the recent probe report by the US National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) that highlighted safety concerns involving Boeing 737 aircraft lanes equipped with Collins Aerospace SVO-730 Rudder Rollout Guidance Actuators. Against the backdrop of the potential risk of a jammed or restricted rudder control system, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued safety recommendations to the Indian carriers.

Currently, Air India Express, Akasa Air and SpiceJet

operate Boeing 737 planes. DGCA said all flight crews are to be informed through a circular/advisory regarding the possibility of a jammed or restricted rudder control system.

"Appropriate mitigations must be communicated to help crews identify and handle such a situation," it added.

Further, all operators have been asked to conduct a safety risk assessment for aircraft to evaluate and mitigate the risk associated with the rudder control system.

The regulator also said that all Category III B approach, landing, and rollout operations, including practice or actual autoland, must be discontinued for these planes until further notice. Category III B pertains to operations in low visibility conditions.

Among other measures,

airlines have been asked to mandatorily include discussion about potential rudder control system issues as a mandatory topic in recurrent training sessions.

It will also be included in the Instrument Rating/Proficiency Checks (IR/PPC) during pre-simulator briefings.

"Operators have been instructed to include specific exercises in Recurrent Training and IR/PPC that simulate scenarios involving a jammed or restricted rudder control system, including rollout procedures.

"Appropriate flight crew responses and mitigations should be practised during these exercises," the regulator said in a release.

DGCA also said the interim measures aim to enhance safety and ensure that flight crews are well-prepared to handle potential rudder control issues effectively. Transparency and efficiency in services provided to apple growers," the chief minister said.

HPMC has enhanced its processing capacity, with this year's crushing capacity increasing from 21,000 MT to 39,000 MT compared to the previous year. Additionally, the grading and packaging line capacity has been enhanced from 15,900 MT to 33,900 MT.

Automobile sales in India drop 9 per cent amid sluggish demand: FADA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile retail sales in India declined 9 per cent year-on-year in September amid a massive buildup of passenger vehicle inventory due to sluggish demand, dealer's body FADA said on Monday, urging original equipment manufacturers to take corrective steps.

The overall registrations declined to 17,23,330 units last month from 18,99,192 units in September 2023, as most of the categories including passenger vehicles and two-wheelers witnessed a year-on-year (Y-O-Y) drop.

"Despite the onset of festivals such as Ganesh Chaturthi and Onam, dealers have reported that the performance has been largely stagnant," Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President C S Vigneshwar

said in a statement. Given the critical festive season around the corner, FADA urges OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) to take immediate corrective measures to avoid a financial setback, he said.

This suggests that overall market sentiment during these festive periods has been underwhelming, with a trend leaning towards flat or negative growth, he added.

Passenger vehicle sales declined 19 per cent Y-O-Y to 2,75,681 units last month from 3,39,543 units in the year-ago period.

"Seasonal factors such as Shraddh and Pitrpaksha, coupled with heavy rainfall and a sluggish economy, have exacerbated the situation, leaving dealers with historically high inventory levels of 80-85 days' equivalent to 7.9 lakh vehicles worth Rs 79,000 crore,"



Vigneshwar said. FADA also calls on the Reserve Bank of India to issue an advisory to banks, mandating stricter channel funding policies based only on dealer consent and on actual collateral, to prevent dealers from facing additional financial pressure due to unsold stock, he

added. This is the final opportunity for PV OEMs to recalibrate and support market recovery before it's too late, he said. Two-wheeler retail sales saw a dip of 8 per cent Y-O-Y to 12,04,259 units due to low consumer sentiment, poor inquiries, and reduced walk-ins, FADA said.

Shraddh period and heavy rains further impacted demand, resulting in delayed purchases and a subdued market environment, it added.

Commercial vehicle registrations declined 10 per cent year on year last month to 74,324 units.

While there was positive sentiment and marginal growth in regions supported by infrastructure projects, overall demand remained weak due to low government spending, extended monsoon delays and seasonal challenges, the industry body said.

Three-wheeler sales rose marginally to 1,06,524 units last month as compared with 1,05,827 units in September 2023. Tractor sales rose 15 per cent year on year to 74,324 units last month.

For the April-September period, this fiscal, overall

retail sales across segments witnessed a growth of 7 per cent to 1,19,15,963 units against 1,11,83,734 units in the same period of last fiscal.

Passenger vehicle registrations rose 1 per cent to 18,70,991 units as compared with 18,51,249 units in the year-ago period. Two-wheeler sales increased 9 per cent year on year to 85,66,531 in the first half of the current fiscal.

Commercial vehicle registrations, however, fell marginally to 4,77,381 units in the period under review from 4,80,488 units in H1 of last fiscal. On near-term sales outlook, FADA said that while dealers and OEMs are betting on robust festive sales, especially in rural markets where positive cash flow and better agricultural conditions are expected to spur demand, the outcome remains uncertain.



India's domestic air passenger traffic to touch 300 million by 2030: Naidu

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's domestic air passenger traffic is projected to touch 300 million by 2030 and about USD 11 billion is being spent to develop airports, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said on Monday.

The minister also said India and France can work together to develop a robust global SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel) supply chain.

He was speaking at the conference organised by the French Aerospace Industries Association (GIFAS) in the national capital.

India is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets and airlines are expanding their fleets well as networks to meet the rising demand. Naidu said the domestic air passenger traffic is projected to touch 300 million by 2030 while 200 more airports are expected to be developed in the next 20-25 years.

Currently, India has 157 airports, heliports and waterdromes.

The number of operational airports is expected to reach 200 by the end of 2025. The potential for partnership between India and France is immense, the minister added.

India to establish 100 food testing labs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Food Processing Minister Chirag Paswan on Monday said the government will build 100 food testing labs and 50 food irradiation centres as part of its efforts to boost processing levels and ensure quality.

The minister asked the industry not to compromise on the quality of products as this will affect not only brands but the country's image as well.

He said the ministry will set up 100 food testing labs to ensure that products meet standard norms set by regulators.

The minister assured the industry that he would try to address any issues and challenges affecting the growth of the food processing



sector. Addressing a Ficci seminar, Paswan emphasised the need to minimise wastage and promote value addition. The minister also exhorted industry players to make India a global food basket.

"Indian food products should become popular globally. Indian food standards should be recognised as global standards," Paswan said.

To boost processing levels, Paswan said as many as 50 food irradiation units will be established. On the sidelines of the event,

he said the ministry has already invited Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from prospective entrepreneurs to set up multi-product food irradiation units.

These units will be set up under Integrated Cold Chain & Value Addition Infrastructure (cold chain scheme), a component of Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) with support from the ministry.

Financial assistance in the form of grants-in-aid/subsidies will be provided to the eligible projects under the demand-driven cold chain scheme.

Paswan said the food industry has been demanding reduction in GST on some items and he has taken up the issue at the right forum.

IT department invites public suggestions for I-T Act review

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax department on Monday invited public inputs for review of the six-decade old I-T Act with regard to simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and obsolete provisions. Pursuant to the Budget announcement by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for a comprehensive review of the Income-tax Act, 1961, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) had set up an internal committee to oversee the review and make the Act

concise, clear, and easy to understand, which will reduce disputes, litigation, and provide greater tax certainty to taxpayers.

"The committee invites public inputs and suggestions in four categories: simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and obsolete provisions." The Finance Minister said. A webpage on the e-filing portal -- https://portal.incometax.gov.in/ie/cfoservices/#/prelogin/ita-comprehensive-review -- has been launched and the public can access the

page by entering their mobile number and validating it via OTP.

Suggestions should specify the relevant provision of the Income-tax Act, 1961 or Income-tax Rules, 1962 (mentioning the specific section, sub-section, clause, rule, sub-rule, or form number), as the case may be, to which the suggestion relates under the aforementioned four categories.

The Finance Minister in the 2024-25 Budget presented in July had proposed that the I-T law review will be completed in six months.

Tata Power-DDL wins the prestigious Deming Prize 2024

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited wins 'Deming Prize 2024' in recognition of its Total Quality Management (TQM) practices. Although, the award ceremony to felicitate the winners will take place in November 2024. The Deming Grand Prize, is one of the longstanding quality awards presented by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE). It is awarded to companies that not only achieve the Deming Prize but also consistently maintain and improve their TQM standards for an extended period. Tata Power-DDL has been on the TQM journey for over six years towards

becoming a global benchmark. With this recognition, the company has set the benchmark of being the First Power Distribution Company in the world to achieve this feat. The TQM practices have enabled the transformation of the processes and elevated the business performance to benchmark levels.

Commenting on the win, Mr. Gajanan S. Kale, Chief Executive Officer, Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited said, "We're deeply honored that Tata Power-DDL has been awarded the Deming Prize. It is a remarkable achievement for us, signifying global recognition of the company's unwavering commitment to excellence in quality management practices."

Zhejiang International Trade Exhibition kicks off in Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2024 Zhejiang International Trade Exhibition commenced on October 5 at the Pragati Maidan Convention and Exhibition Center in New Delhi. Running until October 7, the event is headlined by the 39th MEDICAL exhibition, widely regarded as the premier medical trade show in India and South Asia. The exhibition has attracted medical manufacturers and providers from countries such as Germany, the United States, Japan, South Korea, and Italy. A key feature of the three-day event is the dedicated

Zhejiang area, comprising 70 booths representing 41 companies from cities like Hangzhou, Wenzhou, Jinhua, Yiwu, Shaoxing, Taizhou, Jiading, and Huzhou. Exhibits cover a broad range of products including medical devices, consumables, in vitro diagnostics, disinfectants, protective equipment, rehabilitation care, traditional medicine, home healthcare solutions, and cutting-edge innovations in smart healthcare and medical industry services. Prominent Zhejiang-based companies are showcasing their advanced products and technologies, further cementing the reputation of the "Made in Zhejiang".

UGC-recognized beauty, wellness programs launched

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Medhavi Skills University (MSU), India's largest skills university, has partnered with Orane International, a leading skilling pioneer, to introduce UGC-recognized degree programs in the beauty and wellness sector. The collaboration aims to address the skills gap in the industry by offering specialized B.Voc (Bachelor of Vocation) courses in Cosmetology and Makeup Artistry. This partnership, formalized through an MoU signed on September 24, combines MSU's expertise in industry-

led education with Orane's extensive network of over 120 skill centers across India and abroad. The initiative will provide hands-on training to professionals in the beauty and wellness industry, projected to reach 75 lakh crore by 2030, and which employs a 70% female workforce. Key highlights of the partnership include industry-driven curricula with a 70% practical component, the use of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) framework for experienced professionals, and a focus on empowering women through formal qualifications.

INBRIEF

REC LIMITED DISBURSES LOAN IN H1 FY25

GURGAON: REC Limited, a maharatna CPSE under the Ministry of Power and a leading NBFC, has disbursed loans worth ₹90,955 crore, up 20.10% year-on-year for the half year ended September 30, 2024. The quantum of renewable energy loans grew 92.68% year-on-year to Rs. 11,297 crore.



INDUCTION PROGRAM HELD FOR LL.B CLASSES AT GNDU



AMRITSAR: Department of laws, GNDU, RC JALANDHAR, organised an induction programme for its new batch of students in LL.B TYC 2024-2027 and BALL.B 2024-2029. The event aimed to welcome and familiarise students with academic environment.

EDUCATION COLLEGES ZONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL

AMRITSAR: The Education Colleges Zonal Youth festival of Guru Nanak Dev University will be held on October 9, 2024 in the Dashmesh Auditorium of the University. Students-artists from Education Colleges affiliated to the University are participating in this zone. As many as 00 student-artists are expected to participate in 35 items of Music, Theatre, Dance, Literary & Fine Arts during this festival. Dr. Amandeep Singh, In-charge Youth Welfare said that on the first day ie October 9 the festival begins with the competitions of Costume Parade, Mimicry, Skit, Geet/Gazal & Folk Song will be organized in the Dashmesh Auditorium.

SINDHU, SEN EYE COMEBACK AFTER PARIS SETBACK

ARCTIC OPEN SUPER 500



PTI ■ VANTAA (FINLAND)

Star shuttlers PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will lead the Indian contingent at the Arctic Open Super 500 tournament commencing here on Tuesday, as they eagerly look to reclaim their

momentum on the international stage following a medal-less outing at the Paris Olympics. This tournament marks the first outing for Sindhu and Sen since the Olympic Games, and they are keen to reset their goals. The duo has reassessed

their performances and implemented changes to regain their rhythm. Sindhu has roped in Anup Sridhar and Korean legend Lee Yuon Il as her new coaches, moving on from her previous coach Indonesia's Agus Dwi Santoso.

Sen, who narrowly missed a medal in Paris, spent time at the Red Bull Arena in Austria for physical assessment. In the opening round, Sindhu, who exited in the round of 16 in Paris, will face familiar rival Canada's Michelle Li, while Sen, who lost in the bronze

medal play-off, will compete against Denmark's Rasmus Gemke. Double Olympic medallist Sindhu is favoured to overcome Li and could face 18-year-old Japanese sensation Tomako Miyazaki, the 2022 junior world champion, in the

next round, an opponent against whom she lost at the Swiss Open earlier this year. For Sen, it's a chance for revenge against Gemke, having lost to him at the India Open in 2023. If he overcomes Gemke, he might face seventh-seeded Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei.

Kidambi Srikanth, returning to action at the Macau Open after a four-month injury layoff, will compete in the qualifiers alongside younger compatriots Kiran George and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran. Former world number one Srikanth is set to face George, while Sathish will battle against France's Arnaud Merkle.

In women's singles, besides Sindhu, in-form Malvika Bansod and Aakarshi Kashyap are also in contention. Malvika, who reached the quarterfinals at the China Open Super 1000, will open against World No. 24 Sung Shuo Yun of Chinese Taipei, while Aakarshi will be up against Yvonne Li of Germany in the first round. Another promising player, Unnati Hooda, who won the 2022 Odisha Masters, will take on Heli Neiman of Israel in the qualifiers.

While there is no Indian representation in men's doubles, Rituparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda will compete in women's doubles, and Sathish will partner with Aadya Varyiyath in mixed doubles.



Women's Champions League begins with reinforced Barcelona going for third straight title

AP ■ MADRID

Barcelona will go for its third straight Women's Champions League title with a squad boosted by Poland's star striker Ewa Pajor and with Aitana Bonmati and Alexia Putellas playing on new contracts. The group stage of the European club competition begins Tuesday and the Catalans are trying to become only the second team after Lyon to win three titles in a row or reach five straight finals.

Barcelona beat Lyon in last season's final, when Ballon d'Or winners Bonmati and Putellas scored a goal each. Both had their contracts with the club extended ahead of the new season, and now they will have Pajor as a teammate. Pajor, who joined from Wolfsburg, was the competition's top scorer in 2022-23 as the German club reached a final that it lost to Barcelona despite a goal by her.

In her nine seasons with Wolfsburg, Pajor won 14 titles and scored 136 goals despite a series of injuries. She was not able to win a Champions League crown even though she played in three finals and was part of a run to another. Barcelona has also added Kika Nazareth from Portuguese club Benfica. The team's first game in the competition this season will be on Wednesday against Group D rival Manchester City in a rematch of the 2020-21 quarterfinals, where the Spaniards triumphed after a 4-2 first-leg win and a 2-1 second-leg defeat in what was Barcelona's only loss that campaign.

Barcelona's squad also includes former City players Keira Walsh and Ellie Roebuck. Lyon's firepower takes on Galatasaray, which could prove a busy night on Tuesday for Galatasaray's defense and goalkeeper Gamze Yaman.

Group A opponent Lyon boasts the all-time top scorer in the Women's Champions League, Ada Hegerberg, who has managed two 50-plus seasons for goals during her 10-year spell at the club. The Norway striker, who won the first women's Ballon d'Or award, has 64 competition goals, while teammate Eugénie Le Sommer, third on the all-time list, needs two to reach 50. They form the spine of the team along with veteran captain Wendie Renard, the women's Champions League record holder for appearances with 116.

Lyon has been in good scoring touch so far, netting 16 goals in its first three French league games, with American midfielder Lindsey Horan getting five and France striker Kadidiatou Diatta scoring two. French hopes rest on Lyon after Paris Saint-Germain - a semifinalist last season - was eliminated by Juventus in qualifying, losing 5-2 on aggregate.

Lyon is the competition's record eight-time winner but last won the trophy in 2022. It

was runner-up last season to Barcelona. The club hired a new coach in June, with Australian Joseph Montemurro replacing Frenchwoman Sonia Bompastor, who joined Chelsea. The contrast in experience between the sides is noticeable. Galatasaray's team was founded in 2011 and the senior team only started in 2021. As well as European success, Lyon's women's side has won a national record 17 league titles and 10 French Cups.

Galatasaray will be making its competition debut after a qualifying run that included triumphs over former quarterfinalist Slavia Praha. It is the first Turkish team to get to the group stage. It won its first national title last season in only its third campaign.

Wolfsburg starts against Roma. Two-time champion Wolfsburg begins its Group A campaign on Tuesday at Italian champion Roma, which drew with the German club on its last visit two years ago. Both teams will want to make a good start with Lyon and Galatasaray the other teams in Group A.

Wolfsburg warmed up with a 5-0 rout of Leipzig in the Bundesliga on Friday, when Alexandra Popp set up three goals. The 33-year-old Popp announced her international retirement last week, meaning her focus is fully on leading Wolfsburg to more honors.

She is just two games away from becoming the second player to reach 100 Champions League appearances, after Wendie Renard. Wolfsburg is unbeaten in five away meetings against Italian sides, but Roma is unbeaten in 14 home games in all competitions. Chelsea without HayesLife after Emma Hayes has started well for Chelsea.

Hayes left to take over the United States women's team in the offseason and carried on her winning ways by taking gold at the Paris Olympics. After 14 major titles she left big shoes for her replacement Bompastor to fill, but it has been an impressive start for the former Lyon coach.

Chelsea opened its Super League campaign with a 1-0 win against Aston Villa and followed that by routing Crystal Palace 7-0. First up for the Blues in Group B is a home game on Tuesday with Real Madrid, which has made a perfect start in the Spanish league, winning five out of five to trail leader Barcelona on goal difference.

Bayern's momentum Arsenal, the 2007 winner, faces a tough opening Group C match on Wednesday at two-time defending German champion Bayern, which has made a seven-game winning start to the season, including a 1-0 victory over Wolfsburg in the German Supercup.

A 1-0 win over Cologne on Saturday stretched Bayern's unbeaten run in the Bundesliga to 44 games.

Alaskan Knights beat SG Pipers to remain unbeaten in GCL



PTI ■ LONDON

PBG Alaskan Knights narrowly defeated Alpine SG Pipers with a 9-7 score to continue their unbeaten run at the Global Chess League here. Alaskan Knights won all their five of encounters after 15 matches, the halfway stage of the tournament.

Despite the team's top player, Anish Giri blundering a piece and losing to Magnus Carlsen in just 20 minutes, the Alaskan Knights came out on top garnering 58 game points. Defending champions Triveni Continental Kings climbed to second place after defeating the upGrad Mumbai Masters. Continental Kings' icon, Alireza Firouzja, continued his winning streak by defeating France's top-rated player, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

Though just three game points behind the leaders, Triveni Continental Kings has recorded three wins and two losses, earning nine match points and 55 game points. Meanwhile, the upGrad Mumbai Masters sit in the fifth place with only three match points.

An epic encounter between Carlsen and Nakamura highlighted the final match of the day between the Alpine SG Pipers and the American Gambits. Both the players traded winning positions in a time scramble, and the duel ultimately ended in a draw.

The match came down to the youth board, where Daniel Darda defeated Jonas Bjerre, securing a narrow 9-7 victory for the Alpine SG Pipers, which placed them in third place with nine match points and 43 game points.

With one win and one loss in Sunday's matches, the American Gambits hold fourth place with six match points and 33 game points. At the bottom of the standings, the Ganges Grandmasters continue to struggle, having lost their match on Sunday against American Gambits.

Former world champion Vishwanathan Anand lost to World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura after sacrificing a queen for a drawing fortress, only to lose on time.

Fritz and Dimitrov finally advance at rain-soaked Shanghai Masters. Shanghai, (AP) Two days after starting, seventh-ranked Taylor Fritz and 10th-ranked Grigor Dimitrov finally got to complete their second-round matches at the Shanghai Masters on Monday.

Fritz, the U.S. Open finalist, had led 4-3 in the opening set against Frenchman Terence Atmane when rain suspended play on Saturday at the Qizhong Forest Sports City Arena, and then washed out all matches on the outside courts until Monday.

The 26-year-old American needed two tiebreakers to see off the No. 161-ranked Atmane 7-6 (4), 7-6 (5), with only one break of serve for each in the 122-minute match. Fritz will play Japanese qualifier Yosuke Watanuki in the third round. Dimitrov, playing in his 100th Masters event, resumed Monday with a set lead but down a break in the second against Zizou Bergs.

The No.73-ranked Belgian converted his advantage to take the second set before Dimitrov responded by breaking Bergs three times - for the loss of one of his own service games, to clinch the match 6-3, 3-6, 6-2.

The 33-year-old Bulgarian will play Australian Alexei Popyrin in the third round. Also, U.S. Open semifinalist Frances Tiafoe routed Zhou Yi of China 6-2, 6-4, while Tallon Griekspoor beat the 26th-seeded Jordan Thompson 6-3, 6-2 and Roman Safiullin had a 6-4, 6-2 win over Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan.

Later Monday, No. 16-ranked Ben Shelton plays Roberto Carballes Baena of Spain in a third-round match, with the winner to meet top-ranked Jannik Sinner in the 4th.

Wuhan Open No. 12-ranked Beatriz Haddad-Maia beat Madison Keys of the U.S. 7-6 (7), 6-2 in the opening match of the Wuhan Open.

The Brazilian, winner of the Seoul Open last month for her fourth career title, converted five of her eight break point opportunities - to Keys' three from 12 - as she advanced in 128 minutes at the tournament in China. One-time U.S. Open finalist Leylah Fernandez of Canada rallied to beat 12th-seeded Diana Shnaider 6-7 (7), 6-3, 6-3.

Rain in Wuhan meant play on the outside courts was suspended. The top eight seeds, including second-ranked Aryna Sabalenka and China Open champion Coco Gauff, received a first-round bye.



Mohun Bagan considered withdrawn from ACL 2: AFC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mohun Bagan Super Giant are considered to have withdrawn from the AFC Champions League 2 after the Kolkata side decided against travelling to Iran to face Tractor FC, the continental body AFC said on Monday, pending further decision on the matter. Keeping their players' "safety and security" in mind, Mohun Bagan Super Giant had last month decided against travelling to Iran for the October 2 match owing to the volatile situation that prevailed in the west Asian nation at that time.

"In accordance with Article 5.2 of AFC Champions League 2 2024/25 Competition Regulations, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) confirms that India's Mohun Bagan Super Giant are considered to have withdrawn from the ACL 2 competition

after the club failed to report to Tabriz... Against Tractor FC on October 2, 2024," the AFC said. "Consequently, all matches played by Mohun Bagan SG are cancelled and considered null and void in accordance with Article 5.6 of Competition Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, no points and goals in the club's matches shall be taken into consideration when determining the final rankings in Group A pursuant to Article 8.3 of the Competition Regulations."

Mohun Bagan SG were to play Tractor FC on October 2 in their Group A match of the ACL 2 - the continent's second tier club competition - but their players expressed unwillingness to play in Iran, which had announced a state of mourning following the death of a prominent general of the Revolutionary Guard in an Israeli air strike.

"The matter will now be referred to the relevant AFC Committee(s) as appropriate for their decision(s)," the AFC said in the statement. In their first match of Group A, Mohun Bagan had played out a goalless draw against Tajikistan's FC Ravshan.

It was learnt that 35 registered players, including seven foreigners, wrote to the club that they didn't wish to go to Iran at that point in time.

"So we tagged their letters and wrote to the AFC, asking them to either reschedule the match or move the game to a neutral venue," a Mohun Bagan source had told PTI. "We have decided to not travel to Iran keeping our players' safety and security in mind, because that is paramount. We have also written to the ministry of external affairs as their advisory states that you can go to Iran or Israel on your own responsibility."

PSG held to 1-1 draw at Nice despite return of Dembélé

AP ■ PARIS

Even with Ousmane Dembélé back in the starting lineup, Paris Saint-Germain had a sleepy first half before being held to a 1-1 draw at Nice to leave Monaco alone at the top of the French league. The defending champion enjoyed much of the possession but was largely unproductive during the first half on Sunday. Luis Enrique's team played better after the interval and PSG finally created chances as Nuno Mendes leveled the scoring following Nice defender Ali Abdi's first-half opener. "We were not really into it during the first half," PSG

forward Bradley Barcola said. "We woke up in the second half, it's a shame we could not take our chances." Lagging three points behind unbeaten Monaco before kickoff, PSG was too timid to hope for a better result on the Riviera. Marquinhos came close to snatching the three points for PSG soon after Mendes' goal but his header ended its course on the left post. Dembélé started the match after being left out of the squad that lost 2-0 to Arsenal in the Champions League midweek. Luis Enrique, who had blamed Dembélé for a perceived lack of commitment, was criticized after the loss for not selecting

the France star, one of the most creative players in the team following the departure of Kylian Mbappé to Real Madrid. Nice took a deserved lead in the 39th minute when Abdi controlled the ball on the edge of the box and followed up with a left-footed shot that took a slight deflection and went in. Luis Enrique replaced the largely inefficient Randal Kolo Muani with Lee Kang-in, who greatly improved the connection between PSG's midfield and its attack in the second half. Dembélé's effort in the 47th minutes later when Nuno Mendes equalized with a



deflected shot from outside the box. Monaco has a two-point lead

over PSG, with third-place Marseille five points off the pace. LYON EXTENDS WINNING RUN: Seven-time French champion Lyon continued its recovery with a fourth straight win in all competitions by beating Nantes 2-0.

The match was marred by fan violence and Lyon said the clashes that broke out at Groupama Stadium were "unworthy" of the seven-time French champion. A goal from Nicolas Tagliafico and an own-goal from Nantes defender Nicolas Pallois earned Lyon its third win in seven league matches, giving the club some room to breathe at five points above the

relegation playoff spot. Tagliafico put the hosts in the lead in the 22nd minute from Saïd Benrahma's cross for his first goal this season.

Nantes wasted several occasions to level and was punished after the interval when Pallois accidentally beat his own goalkeeper as he tried to defend a cross from Corentin Tolisso.

REIMS SINKS MONTPELLIER: Host Reims moved up to fourth place with a 4-2 win over Montpellier. The Champagne side took the lead in the sixth minute with a header from captain Marshall Munetsi. "We all share the same ambition to win the most

matches, and enjoy ourselves" Munetsi said after his team produced a fourth league win. Keito Nakamura exploited a poor clearance to show his dribbling skills and make it 2-0 with an impressive strike. Oumar Diakité and Teddy Teuma scored Reims' other goals while Arnaud Nordin had a brace for Montpellier. The southern team remained in the relegation zone with the worst defensive record in the league, having already conceded 21 goals.

In other matches, Brest followed up its 4-0 midweek win over Salzburg in the Champions League with a 2-0 defeat of Le Havre, and Lens drew 2-2 at Strasbourg.

OUR BATTERS DON'T KNOW HOW TO SCORE 180 RUNS, SKIPPER SHANTO

PTI ■ GWALIOR

Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto has candidly admitted that his team doesn't know how to consistently post 180 plus totals in a T20 game. Batting has been Bangladesh's weak link for a while, especially their approach in the powerplay. They struggled to 39 for two in six overs on Sunday night before managing a below par 127. India chased that down in just 11.5 overs to go 1-0 up in the series. "We have the ability, but we have room for improvement in our skills. We have been batting in this way for the last 10 years. Sometimes we do well. We have to make some changes, perhaps where we practice back home." Shanto feels that tracks in Bangladesh aren't conducive for big scoring games of T20 and that has affected their collective batting performance. "We play on 140-150 wickets at home. Our batters don't know how to score 180 runs. I won't blame just the wickets, but we have to consider skills and mentality," Shanto said following the crushing loss. The batters' shot selection was also questioned with the likes of Litton

Das falling to ordinary shots. "I wouldn't say we played badly. We are a better team than this. We haven't done well in this format for a long time, but I don't believe we are such a bad team," said Shanto. "I don't want to talk about any individual player. I think the batting unit didn't do well today. There will be aggression in the way we approach our scoring, but sometimes we have to select the deliveries correctly. We will think about it, but we can't rush in changing our approach." Shanto went on to say that their powerplay approach needs to be reviewed with the opening stands having contributed only 69 runs in the last eight innings. "Powerplay is definitely a worry. The approach we talked about (before the game), it will be successful if we make a good start with the bat. "We have to keep the wickets in the first six overs, and score runs in those. Otherwise those coming in next, it becomes too challenging for them. We have struggled in the powerplay. Those batting in the power play must take more responsibility," said the southpaw. Rookier Indian pacer Mayank Yadav made a promising debut on Sunday, generating speeds close to



150kmph in his first competitive game in five months. He hurried the batters but Shanto said they are used to facing such speed in the nets. "We have some similar fast bowlers in the nets. I don't think we were too worried about (Mayank Yadav). But he is a good

bowler," he added. Surya gives you freedom, he is a calm captain: Debutants Mayank, Nitish Gwalior, (PTI) Mayank Yadav and Nitish Kumar Reddy were expectedly nervous ahead of their India debut in the first T20 International against Bangladesh

here but the newcomers said skipper Suryakumar Yadav helped them stay calm with his comforting words. Mayank, the 22-year-old pacer sensation, made his debut here on Sunday after recovering from a recurring abdominal strain after playing only four matches in this

year's IPL. He impressed in the first match returning with figures of 1/21 from his four overs. Nitish, 21, also made instant impact by remaining unbeaten on 16 off 15 balls, to help India register a commanding seven-wicket win in the series-opener. "He (Suryakumar) gives you freedom. When I was taking the run up, he was telling me 'do what you feel, what you feel best'. So that's very important for any fast bowler, specially when you making your debut," Mayank told BCCI.TV. Nitish added: "He is very calm and cool. He is doing fabulous captaincy, not giving any pressure to us. We were debutants, obviously we will have nervousness and pressure. He gave that license to us. Any youngster would like to get it from the captain." Taking about his debut after the long injury layoff, Mayank became emotional. "It's a great moment because I am coming from an injury. I was a bit nervous, like I was telling myself don't stress yourself. "When I got to know I am going to play my first match, making my debut, complete flashback of last four months came in front of my eyes," he said.

The speedster started his international career with a maiden over on Sunday and credited bowling coach Morne Morkel for shaping him. "It felt good. I was not like thinking that I am going to bowl a maiden over. Just wanted to live in that moment, enjoy that moment," Mayank said. "It's very comfortable for me, I am with him (Morkel) for the last three years. I know him, he knows me very well. So, it's very easy for me to work with him. He knows which things are better for me." Nitish too was satisfied with his debut performance, saying it was a dream-come-true moment for him. "For any cricketer in India it's a big moment. Playing for Indian cricket team is a dream-come-true moment. Obviously, there was nervousness but I enjoyed that. It was a very proud moment for me and my family as well," he said. "There are senior players and I got a lot of experience as well from the coaching staff. Even in bowling as well getting some keen points. I love this kind of atmosphere in the dressing room." The second T20 of the three-match series will be played in New Delhi on Wednesday.

I have completely shifted to overspin from sidespin: Varun

PTI ■ GWALIOR

Mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy says he is reaping the rewards of putting over-spin on the ball instead of side-spin following his successful India comeback. The 33-year-old, whose India career came to an abrupt halt after an underwhelming debut in the 2021 T20 World Cup, took three wickets against Bangladesh in the series opener. As the great Nathan Lyon has shown over the years, putting over-spin on the ball generates sharp bounce and turn, which aided Varun on Sunday night. His googly to get rid of Jaker Ali showed the former architect's total control over his craft. "I used to be a side-spin bowler, but right now, I have completely shifted to being an over-spin bowler," said Varun

after playing a part in India's seven-wicket win. "It's a minute technical aspect of spin bowling, but it took me more than two years. I gradually tested it in TNPL and IPL. While the mental aspect also had to be worked on, the major chunk of effort I put in was on my technical side." Despite doing well in the IPL and domestic cricket over the past two seasons, Varun did not get a recall to the Indian team and that only made him hungrier. Now that he is back in blues, it feels like a rebirth. "Whenever there was a squad that was announced, I used to feel like, 'Why is my name not there?' and I used to keep thinking about that. So that kind of brought the motivation within me that I should not leave this. "I should go all out and make a comeback, so I started



playing a lot of domestic games and giving importance to it. That kind of helped me," said the soft-spoken cricketer. A catch was dropped in Varun's first over that eventually went for 15 runs with Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hasan Shanto and Towhid Hridoy going on the offensive against spinner in

the powerplay. However, skipper Suryakumar Yadav trusted Varun to bounce back in the following over and he did that by having Hridoy caught at long-on. "Yes, in the first over the catch could have gone my way but that's how T20s are played. I felt the reverse-sweep six was a good ball but it still went for

a six, so it's all mixed emotions." He played the series opener of leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi who too has had done well fairly well in the limited opportunities that he has got after the T20 World Cup, reflecting India's robust bench strength. Varun acknowledged the fierce competition. "There is good competition and there is good camaraderie also. And the person who was cheering me was Ravi Bishnoi; he was coming and telling me messages, so I can't ask for more. "It's actually good to have such competition so that people will keep pushing each other. Someone will be better than others at one point of time and he will definitely get the Cup for India, so that competition is very required," Varun added.

Jayasuriya appointed full-time head coach of Sri Lanka till 2026 T20 WC

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Former captain Sanath Jayasuriya was on Monday appointed as full-time head coach of the Sri Lankan cricket team until the end of the 2026 T20 World Cup. The former left-handed opener was Sri Lanka's interim coach since early July, and after he impressed in the role against India and

England, Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has decided to hand him full-time responsibility. Under Jayasuriya's guidance, Sri Lanka won their first bilateral ODI series against India in 27 years, and then defeated England in an away Test for the first time in 10 years. Most recently, Sri Lanka defeated New Zealand 2-0 in a Test series at home. "The Executive Committee

of Sri Lanka Cricket made this decision taking into consideration the team's good performances in the recent tours against India, England, and New Zealand, where Jayasuriya was in charge as the interim head coach," SLC said in a statement. "The appointment came into effect on October 1, 2024, and will remain until March 31, 2026."

PCB chief 'confident' that Champions Trophy would be held in Pakistan

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Monday expressed confidence that the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy would be held in the country and all teams, including arch-rivals India, would participate in the tournament. The 2025 edition of the Champions Trophy is scheduled to start on February 19, and the final is on March 9. Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi have been earmarked as the venues. India hasn't sent its team to Pakistan since July 2008 due to tense political relations between the two countries. "The Indian team cancel or postpone coming here and



we are confident we will host all the teams in the Champions Trophy in Pakistan," Naqvi said. He also said that Pakistan was prepared to host all the teams including India and preparations were on schedule. "The stadiums will also be ready to host the matches on schedule and any remaining work would be completed after the tournament," he added. Naqvi said the stadiums would "definitely" be in a much better shape to host the

tournament in February-March. Asked about Babar Azam's resignation from captaincy and who is going to replace him, the PCB chief said he had told the selection committee to take their time and make a long-term decision. "I have told them to take a decision after careful consideration because the captain's position is important." Naqvi also said he had inquired from the selection committee including the captain and head coach of the teams whether it was the right time to introduce some fresh blood in the national sides. "They said they are okay with the current set-up of players so I told them 'fine, it is your call'" he added.

Gulveer Singh in squad for Asian cross-country

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Asian Games medallist Gulveer Singh was on Monday named in the eight-member Indian senior team that will take part in the Asian Cross Country Championships to be held on October 20 in Hong Kong. The 26-year-old Army man had won a bronze medal in the men's 10,000m race in the Hangzhou Asian Games last year. Singh had an excellent run on the track this season. In September, he improved his national 5,000m record to 13:11.82 seconds during a World Athletics Continental Tour event in Japan. Athletics Federation of India (AFI) selection committee

has also named the national senior and junior teams for the South Asian Cross Country Championships to be held on November 24 in Islamabad, Pakistan. "Any athlete who is unfit will be dropped from the national squad," he added. **TEAM FOR ASIAN CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS:** **Senior Men:** Gulveer Singh, Karthik Kumar, Abhishek Pal, Arun Rathod. **Senior Women:** Ankita, Seema, Sanjivani Jadhav, Sonika. **Junior Men:** Amardeep Pal, Kripashankar Yadav, Vinod Singh, Gaurav Bhaskar Bhosale. **Junior Women:** Ekta Dey, Sunita Devi, Shilpa Dhiora, Prachi Ankush Devkar.

India win team gold in men's 50m pistol event

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The trio of Deepak Dalal (545), Kamaljeet (543) and Raj Chandra (528) won the men's 50m pistol team gold medal on the concluding day of the Junior World Shooting Championship at the Peruvian capital of Lima. Indian shooting team won the yellow metal with a combined tally of 1616 points beating Azerbaijan by a point. Armenia came third. In all, India's junior shooters finished the championship on top with a rich haul of 24 medals which included 13 gold, three silver and eight bronze. Italy finished second with five gold and four silver and bronze medals each while Norway was third with four gold and a total of 10 medals. On Sunday, Mukesh Nelavalli



also won an individual bronze in the event, his sixth medal of the competition, shooting a total of 548 over 60-shots. Azerbaijan's Imran Garayev won the gold with a score of

552. In the junior women's 50m pistol, Parisha Gupta won an individual silver with a score of 540. She could not get past Hungary's Miriam Jakos' effort

of 546, which was a junior world record. Sejal Kamble (529), Ketan (525) and Kanishka Dagar (513) also combined to win India a team silver in the event,

finishing behind Azerbaijan. Divanshi, the fifth Indian in fray, shot 523 to finish eighth. In the other event of the final day, Shardul Vihan and Sabeera Harris combined to give India a bronze in the junior mixed team trap competition, played over 75 targets each. Shardul (71) and Sabeera's (67) shot a total of 138, which was not enough to get past gold winners Czech Republic (141+8) and silver medallist Italy (141+7). Zuhair Khan and Bhavya Tripathi, the second Indian pair in the event, shot a total of 134 to finish joint sixth. The ISSF bandwagon will now move to New Delhi for the final stop of its 2024 calendar, the prestigious season-ending ISSF World Cup Final Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun.

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
UNDER SECTION 52(g) OF THE SARFAESI ACT 2002

Bank of India
Relationship beyond banking

Zonal Office
128/24 Om Laxmi Tower, H-Block, Kidwai Nagar, Kanpur-208011, Tel: 0512-2985004

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 rule proviso to 8 (6) of the security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of India, Secured Creditor will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on below mentioned date for recovery of mentioned amount in demand notice issued due to the Bank of India, secured creditor from below mentioned borrowers / guarantors. The details of the property as given below, reserve price and EMD amount are marked against all the properties.

Sl. No.	Name of Borrower /Guarantors, Demand Notice date, Amount & Possession Date/Type of Possession	Description of Mortgage Properties & Owner of Property	Reserve Price (in Lakh) Earnest Money Deposit (in Lakh)
Branch: Raniya Branch, Plot No.307 K Raniya Main Road, Distt- Kanpur Dehat - 209304			
1.	Borrower: Mr. Pappu S/o Baburam Co Borrower: Mrs. Sanno W/o Pappu Demand Notice Date: 12.01.2024 Amt.: Rs. 36,98,985.00 + Interest w.e.f. 12.01.2024 + other charges Possession Notice: 06.06.2024/Symbolic	EQM of all property situated at premises II, House No. 226 F Block Yojana LIG III Guljani (KUDP) Kanpur Nagar U.P 208022 Owner: Mr. Pappu & Mrs. Sanno W/o Mr. Pappu Built up Area: 57.27 Sq mtr Boundaries of Premises: East: House No.227, West: 7.50 Mtr wide Road, North: 4.50 Mtr wide Road, South: House no 225	Rs. 39.25 Rs. 4.00
Branch: TP Nagar (Kanpur) Branch, Plot no-127/W-2/5 Block -W, Plot 5, Scheme-II Jhul Kanan, Kanpur Nagar - 208027			
2.	Borrower: 1.) M/s MRS Industries 2.) Mr. Rajesh Kumar Saxena S/o Late Narayan Prakash Saxena 3.) Mr. Sunil Kumar Singh S/o Late Ram Pratap Singh Demand Notice Date: 01.04.2022 Amt.: Rs. 3,57,58,276.00 + Interest w.e.f. 01.04.2022 + other charges Possession Notice: 02.06.2022/Symbolic	1- EQM over lease hold land of UPSIDC and shed/building thereon situated at Plot No G-53 Industrial Area Kanpur Dehat admeasuring 4429 square meter in the name of firm M/s MRS Industries through its partners vide lease deed dated 17.01.2019. Unexpired period is 66 years Owner: Mr. Rajesh Kumar Saxena & Mr. Sunil Kumar Singh Area- 4429.00 Sq mtr. Bounded as under: East- Plot no. K-33, West- 18.00 Mtr. Wide Road no. 9, North- Plot no G-52, South- 18.00 Mtr. Wide Road no. 10 2- Hypothecation of Plant & Machinery and other fixed asset installed/laying at the above premises. Note: Bid can not placed alone on property. It can be placed with plant & Machinery along. Further, Bid on Plant and Machinery can be placed alone.	Rs. 260.45 Rs. 26.04 Rs. 38.05 Rs. 3.81

Last date for submission of tender for all the above properties is 11.11.2024 by 04.00 PM

E-Auction of above mentioned properties will be held on Date 11.11.2024 Time at Morning 11 AM to 5.00 PM (with unlimited extension of 5 min. interval)

Terms and Conditions of Sale :- 1. This e-Auction is being held on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER IT IS" basis. 2. The property being auctioned by the Authorized Officer is free of charge till the maximum information and belief, yet the intending tenderer should independently enquire all the encumbrances, title claim statutory dues (Customs and Excise Tax / Income Tax) before participating in the e-auction and or any other government agency etc. All assets are being sold with all current and future encumbrances known or unknown. The Authorized Officer will not be liable for any claim rights and liabilities of any third / third party. 3. It is the responsibility of the tenderers to inspect the property and satisfy its self completely before participating in the e-auction. You can contact the concerned branch of Bank of India for property inspection. 4. Interested tenderers will be able to get their User ID and Password free of cost by registering on the web portal <https://www.ebkray.in> and EMD can be deposited through this portal. 5. After registration in the web portal, the interested bidders should upload the following documents in the web portal before submitting the tender: 1. Copy of PAN Card 2. ID Proof (KYC) like Self Attested Aadhar Card (Voter ID - Card / Driving License / Passport etc. 6. Only tenderers having valid User ID, Password will be able to participate in the e-auction process. 7. Only those interested bidders who have made EMD payment by 11.11.2024 within the stipulated time will be able to participate in the e-auction process. 8. If the reserve price of the property is up to Rs. 50 lakh the incremental value bid will be in multiple of 25000 and if reserve price is above 50 lakh it will be Rs. 50000. 9. The highest bidder shall be declared the successful bidder with the permission of the authorized officer. The information of which will be given - to him by electric mode on his email address. 10. The Authorized Officer will not be bound to accept the highest bid and the Authorized Officer will have the right to accept/reject any bid. 11. EMD amount of successful bidder will remain in ebkray Wallet and all unsuccessful bidder's amount can be withdrawn from ebkray. No interest will be payable by ebkray on the EMD amount. 12. The successful bidder will have to deposit 25% (including EMD amount) of the selling price (i.e. maximum bid amount) immediately. He has to deposit the remaining balance amount within 15 days. In case successful bidder failed to deposit bid amount in prescribe time the amount deposited will be forfeited without any prior notice. 13. Bidders are advised to go through the detailed terms and condition at <https://www.bankofindia.in>, <https://www.ebkray.in> before submitting the tender. 14. TDS tax will be payable by the successful bidder on the maximum sale price under Income Tax Act 1941 (A), if the selling price exceeds Rs. 50 lakhs or more and additional GST will be payable (wherever applicable) on the sale price as per Government rules. 15. The intending tenderer should have proper resources related to the bid, no objection will be accepted in this regard. 16. Bids above reserve price will be accepted.

30 days sale notice to borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors

The above mentioned borrower / depositor / mortgagor is informed to pay the amount mentioned in section 13(2) before the date of auction. In case of failure to deposit the amount, the property will be auctioned and the balance amount along with interest and cost will be recovered from you or the borrower can also participate in the auction organized by the bank on the above date to recover the amount due in his account.

Date: 08.10.2024**Place : Kanpur****Authorised Officer: Bank of India**