



OPINION 6 WHY TECHNOLOGY CAN'T EASE PEOPLE'S SUFFERING

WORLD 9 HURRICANE MILTON SLAMS FLORIDA, CAUSES DEATHS AND FLOODING

MONEY 10 UPI TRANSACTIONS SURGE IN FIRST HALF OF 2024

LUCKNOW, FRIDAY OCTOBER 11, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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FAREWELL BHARAT'S RATAN

the pioneer Tribute

Goodbye, Mr Tata

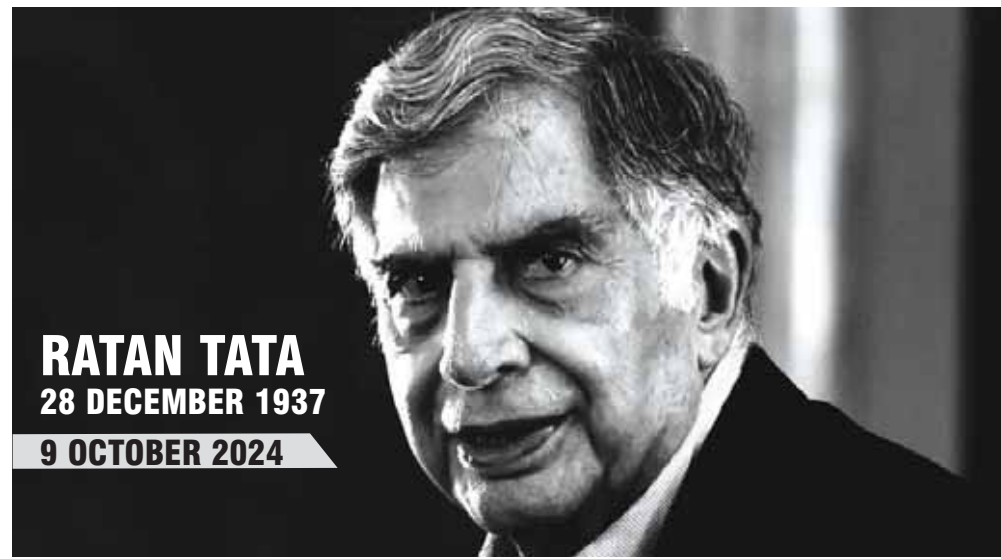
Ratan Naval Tata, the Rdoyen of Indian industry, inheritor of one of the greatest corporate names in India passed away peacefully on October 9, and was laid to rest on Thursday. Even though he was 86 years old and had been suffering health issues for the past few years, his passing has been mourned across the board. But it is surprising just how much the general public in India has mourned his passing, especially in a country where capitalists are still not celebrated. Ratan Tata's immense contributions to philanthropy, his love of dogs including strays, have endeared him to Indians like few others have managed, with the possible exception of his uncle, JRD Tata, whom he succeeded as Chairman of Tata Sons. Following the horrendous 26/11 attacks when the flagship Taj Mahal hotel was desecrated by terrorists, he not only ensured that all employees who had lost their lives or loved ones did not lose hope and he paid compensation to all and he was determined that the hotel rise again to the top, which it has. Ratan Tata is a poster child of post-liberalisation India. Under his leadership, the expansion of Tata group's ventures began aggressively. Whether it was the success of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) in the Information Technology space, the acquisition of Jaguar Land Rover and Tetley Tea, the global reach of Tata Steel as well as the growth of Tata Motors in the Indian passenger car space starting from the late-1990's with the Tata Indica. The fact that Indian Hotels, operators of the Taj Group is today India's largest hotel chain is in no small part thanks to his leadership and the fact that he surrounded himself with extremely capable managers. Continued on page 8

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As the nation mourned the passing away of the legendary industrialist Ratan Naval Tata, hundreds and thousands of Mumbaikars on Thursday bade an emotional goodbye to the former Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, as his mortal remains - wrapped in national tri-colours - were taken on a 12 km final journey from the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) to Worli crematorium for his last rites. After solemn prayers and rituals performed as per the Parsi traditions at a brief ceremony, Ratan Tata's body was consigned to a combustion chamber at the Worli electric crematorium, amid full-State honours and a fun salute accorded by the Maharashtra government. The funeral held at an electric crematorium reflected the changing traditions in the Parsi community members living in Mumbai who in the past would make it a point to consign the remains of their loved ones to the Tower of Silence, or Doongerwadi at Malabar Hill in south Mumbai. Ratan Tata breathed his last at the Breach Candy Hospital at around 11.30 pm on Wednesday night, following age-related health conditions, after a week of media speculation about his worsening medical condition. A bachelor all his life, Tata was 86 at the time of his death. Given that he had touched the people from all walks of life across the country, the news of Ratan Tata - who despite having built a Rs 3,800 crore Tata group's



business empire remained a humble man till the last day - plunged the nation into a state of mourning, with people grieving his demise and speaking in glorious terms about his contributions to Indian industry and also nation-building. While thousands of people turned out at the NCPA to pay their homage to the legendary industrialist, more than a couple of lakhs of people had either lined up along the 12 km funeral procession route from the NCPA to Worli crematorium or bade adieu from atop the buildings located along the route. Hours before his funeral, the Maharashtra Cabinet adopted a resolution at a special meeting, recommending to the Centre to confer Bharat Ratna, country's highest civilian award, posthumously to Ratan Tata, who was bestowed with Padma Vibhushan by the Indian government in 2008. As a sign of State mourning, the national Tricolour on government offices in Maharashtra were flown at half-mast on Thursday. Continued on page 8



Jamshedpur mourns its man of steel

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ JAMSHEDPUR

It was not only the more than one lakh workforce of Tata Group of companies, its subsidiaries and ancillaries which mourned Ratan Tata's passing, but a pall of gloom descended in each and every household of the Steel City of Jamshedpur which Tata was so fond of. From spending time on Shop Floor Management of the then TELCO, rechristened as Tata Motors by Ratan Tata himself, for a global



pursuit to make it a point to be part of the famous March 3 Foundation Day (anniversary of JN Tata) celebrations at Jubilee Park near Sakchi Market, Ratan frequented

the lovely city where the Tatas dreamt from making salt to software, tea to trucks and from car to business czar since early 1900s. The city of Jamshedpur is also known as 'Tatanagar', and the fondness of the Tatas for the city made the Jharkhand government declare a day of State Mourning as a mark of respect for industrialist Ratan Tata. As a young trainee, Tata resided in Room No. 11 of the Dealer's Apprentice Hostel at TELCO. Continued on page 8

Omar Abdullah elected legislative party leader



National Conference President Farooq Abdullah, Vice President Omar Abdullah and others during the party's Legislature Party Meeting after Jammu and Kashmir Assembly election result, at the headquarters Nawa e Subha in Srinagar, Thursday

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Thursday set into motion the process of government formation by 'unanimously' electing its Vice President Omar Abdullah as leader of the legislative party. The announcement was made by the senior Abdullah and party chief Dr. Farooq Abdullah. Addressing the media after the National Conference MLAs met at its

headquarters to elect the leader of the legislative party Dr Farooq Abdullah stated that the pre-poll alliance partners (National Conference, Congress, CPI-M, Panthers Party) will meet on Friday to take the government formation process forward. Omar Abdullah thanked the National Conference (NC) legislators for electing him their leader so that he could stake claim to form the government in Jammu and Kashmir. "You are aware of

the decision that was taken. A meeting of the NC legislature party took place, the legislature party has decided on its leader and I am thankful from the bottom of my heart to the NC legislators that they have reposed their faith in me and given me a chance to stake a claim for government formation," Abdullah told reporters after he was elected the leader of the legislature party here. On the question of the timing of the government formation, Omar said, "Talks are on with the Congress. They have been given a day to decide. Once they give us a letter of support, I will stake a claim for government formation."

In another significant development, four independents (all from the Jammu region) expressed their support to the National Conference on Thursday. Pyare Lal Sharma, Satish Sharma, Choudhary Mohammed Akram, and Dr Rameshwar Singh - who won the Inderwal, Chhamb, Surankote, and Bani seats - have backed the NC. Continued on page 8



Rafael Nadal bids adiós

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

Tennis Legend Rafael Nadal announced his retirement at the age of 38 after winning the 22 Grand Slam events in his career, the era where he competed with his big rivals Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. The Spanish legend broke the news via a heartfelt video on social media, expressing his gratitude for the support throughout his career he had. Nadal's Davis cup finals will be his last stint in tennis court in Malaga, this November. "Really, everything I have experienced has been a dream come true," Nadal stated on social media, adding "I leave with the absolute peace of mind of having given my best, of

having made an effort in every way. But in this life, everything has a beginning and an end, and I think it's the appropriate time to put an end to a career that has been long and much more successful than I could have ever imagined." Leaving the court and his decision to retire from the sport, due to injury problems which he was suffering from the first match of the Paris Olympics where he last featured at. The Davis Cup will be his first appearance after the Olympics. Spain will face the Netherlands in the quarter-finals between November 19 and 21, with Nadal added to the squad after recovering from an injury that kept him out of play in the group stage. Continued on page 8

No hike in power tariff for consumers in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

For the fifth consecutive year, the power consumers of Uttar Pradesh have been spared from hike in electricity tariff. Power regulator UP Electricity Regulatory Commission (UPERC), in tariff order for 2024-25 announced on Thursday, stated that there is no increase in power tariff for all categories of consumers. The tariff order also said that the consumers of Noida (Noida Power Company Limited) would continue to get a 10 per cent regulatory discount. The new tariff order will come into force after seven days from the date of publication by the licensee (UP Power Corporation Limited) in newspapers. The tariff order is as per expected lines that UPERC will not accept the plea of power utility UP-Power Corporation Limited and its five subsidiaries for tariff hike for the fifth consecutive year. The power regulator retained the old tariff for the fifth straight year, while making certain changes in existing tar-

State govt declares public holiday on Ram Navami

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government, on Thursday, declared a public holiday on the occasion of celebration of Ram Navami on October 11. According to an official communique, in view of the demand of various organisations, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ordered a public holiday in all government institutions, except those related to essential services, on Ram Navami on October 11. Navami is the last day of Navratri on which people end their fast with 'kanya bhoj', puja and havan. The offices will now remain closed on Ram Navami falling on October 11 and Dussehra on October 12 in Uttar Pradesh.

iff categories and bringing more clarity on certain issues. The last power tariff increase in Uttar Pradesh was made in 2019 when the UPERC announced an average hike of 11.69 per cent. The hike for domestic metered category consumers was within the range of 8 per cent to 12 per cent while for industrial (heavy) consumer category the tariff hike was within the range of 5 per cent to 10 per cent. For agricultural metered consumers, it was 9 per cent. Since 2019-20, the power regulator has not made any change in the tariff rate schedules. The UPERC was expected to announce the tariff order for the year 2024-25 before October 9. The power regulator is mandated to announce the tariff within 120 days of it Continued on page 8



Where time, and traffic stand still

Nothing posh about the massive jams of South Delhi

BY RAHUL DATTA

Press Enclave Marg connecting Sheikh Sarai at Lal Bahadur Shastri Marg with Sri Aurobindo Marg in South Delhi, has become a traffic nightmare. Flanked by Saket district courts, three shopping malls and two private hospitals besides Khirki and Hauz Rani villages, the nearly four km-long road tests the patience of all be it motorists, two-wheeler drivers or DTC buses. The situation takes a turn for the worse during festival season as it happened on Wednesday late evening when long queues were witnessed at about 8.30 pm. Police had to regulate the traffic by manually operating the traffic signals in order to ensure smooth flow. Similar scenes are seen from

December 25 to 31 each year, when huge crowds through the shopping malls and extra traffic deployment tries to manage the traffic. The jams on many days throughout the year are so bad that motorists wishing to join traffic from colonies like Press Enclave and two more adjoining residential complexes are not able to do so as it happened on Wednesday evening. Adding to the mess, the traffic junction at Malviya Nagar metro station has become a huge bottleneck. Erratic parking by auto-rickshaws on both sides of the station compounds the problem. Despite several drives by the police, no workable solution has emerged. Traffic snarls on Press Enclave Marg lead to spillovers into the connecting roads with Saket, the area is dotted with residential colonies. Given the sheer volume of



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

traffic, these roads are choked even during the so-called non-peak hours. A survey of the Press Enclave Marg indicates that the road sees a very high volume of peak-hour traffic, mainly due to unauthorised parking and encroachments. Peak-hour traffic on Press Enclave Marg is around 9,000 passenger car units (PCUs) in the morning and 10,000 PCUs in the evening, officials said. The Public Works Department (PWD) recently wrote to the traffic police and transport department and sought suggestions to decongest the perennially clogged Press Enclave Marg. Some solutions being considered include shifting the central verge at the Mandir Marg intersection in order to clear space for cars, and making the entire stretch signal-free, sources said.

One of the options proposed by PWD is to shift the central verge at the Mandir Marg intersection to allow more carriageway space for movement of vehicles. Another proposed solution includes removing all three traffic lights on the entire road to make it a signal-free stretch. The three traffic lights are at the intersection of Pramod Mahajan Marg, Mandir Marg and Shaheed Pankaj Bal Marg. However, the move requires approval from the traffic police and senior department officials. After the G20 Summit, the Delhi government in September last year decided to redesign and improve all major stretches across the city, starting with the Press Enclave Marg. Unlike other stretches, the traffic volume is high even during weekends due to the presence of malls, sources said.

Man dies as bus collides with autorickshaw

Lucknow (PNS): A 29-year-old man died after a speeding bus collided with the autorickshaw he was riding, in Vibhuti Khand on Thursday. The victim was identified as Satya Prakash from Gonda. Reports said that at around 6 am, Satya was travelling in an autorickshaw when a bus came up from behind near Cinopolis and struck the autorickshaw, causing it to overturn. Both Satya and the autorickshaw driver suffered injuries. Satya was pronounced dead at RML Hospital, while the auto driver is under treatment. Inspector Sunil Singh said that the family of the deceased had been informed. Earlier on Wednesday, a speeding car overturned on Shaheed Path in Lucknow on

Wednesday night after the driver lost control. Fortunately, there were no fatalities reported in the incident.

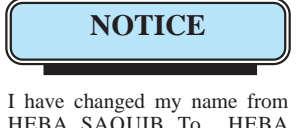
THREE ARRESTED FOR GANGRAPING MINOR

Three of the four men, accused of gangraping a minor girl and forcing her to get the foetus aborted, were arrested on Wednesday, police said. The victim, a resident of Rae Bareilly district, had filed a police complaint alleging that a youth named Nikhil Yadav alias Raja raped her by promising to marry her. As per the victim's complaint, Nikhil later handed her over to his cousin Nitin Yadav, who along with Vipin Pal and another man (now identified as Gaurav) took her to a rented room, where they gave her intoxicants and took turns raping her. The complainant also alleged that the accused also made a video and threatened to make it viral. The police registered a case based on the victim's complaint and booked the accused under POCSO Act and SC/ST Act. Police arrested Gaurav, Vipin Pal (of Baresilly Enclave and native of Sultanpur), and Nitin Yadav (a resident of Dhodhankheda intersection. The police said they were on the lookout for Nikhil Yadav.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from AZEEM MOHAMMAD TO MOHAMMAD AZEEM for all future purposes, MOHAMMAD AZEEM S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFIR/O 101/160 - K Gammu Khan Ka Hata, Colonel Ganj, Kanpur Nagar



NOTICE

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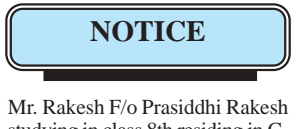
NOTICE

I, ARUN holding Indian Passport No. Z5345928 issued at GHAZIABAD on 25/02/2019, Permanent Resident of GAON LOHVAN LOHABAN MATHURA PIN 281204 UTTAR PRADESH INDIA, presently residing at JEBEL ALI INDS AREA-2 DUBAI UAE do hereby change my name from ARUN to ARUN(Given name) NAGAR(SURNAME) with immediate effect



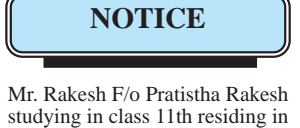
NOTICE

Pooja Ghosh Daughter of Army No. 14932524F HAV-Pralay Kanta Ghosh Posted At 5 MECH INF (14 KUMAON) C/o 56 APO R/o Vill. Ajjuni Post Salu Tehsil-Kandi Distt. Murshidabad State-W.B.-742401 hereby changed my daughter name is army records from Pooja Ghosh to Pooja Ghosh



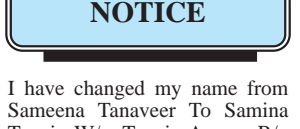
NOTICE

Mr. Rakesh F/o Prasadidhi Rakesh studying in class 8th residing in C-2718 Rajajipuram Sector-6 Lucknow in S.K.D Academy School, Jalsanstan, by mistake in her school records her name is wrongly mentioned as "Prasadidhi" but her correct name is "Prasadidhi Rakesh".



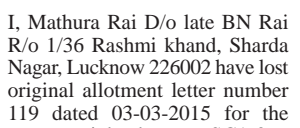
NOTICE

Mr. Rakesh F/o Pratistha Rakesh studying in class 11th residing in C-2718 Rajajipuram Sector-6 Lucknow in S.K.D Academy School, Jalsanstan, by mistake in her school records her name is wrongly mentioned as "Pratistha" but her correct name is "Pratistha Rakesh".



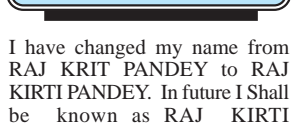
NOTICE

I have changed my name from Sameena Tanveer To Samina Tanvir W/o Tanvir Anwar R/o 141-D, Block - Defence colony Jajmau Kanpur for future purposes



NOTICE

I, Mathura Rai D/o late BN Rai R/o 1/36 Rashmi khand, Sharda Nagar, Lucknow 226002 have lost original allotment letter number 119 dated 03-03-2015 for the commercial plot no SCI-066 issued by DLF Ltd garden city Raebareilly Road Lucknow 226301, if someone finds this, please call-7905902196



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I have changed my name from RAJ KRIT PANDEY TO RAJ KRITI PANDEY. In future I shall be known as RAJ KRITI PANDEY. RAJ KRITI PANDEY, S/o Dashvendra Kumar Pandey, Mubarakpur, Katrauli, Phulpur, Prayagraj UP.

Gen Z finds 'positive vibes' at pandals

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The second day of the Durga Puja celebrations on Thursday saw a vibrant turnout of youth participating enthusiastically at various pandals throughout the city. Contrary to the common belief that young people are disconnected from their cultural roots, these celebrations showcase their deep love and respect for tradition. Dressed in their finest attire, young devotees gathered in the pandals, enjoying the soothing melodies of Hemant Kumar's songs before actively joining in the Dhanuchi dance, a popular tradition among Bengalis.



The Gen Z described the puja in their own words as an experience that brings "positive vibes." Emon Dutta, a mechanical engineering student, expressed her joy at the sense of community during Durga Puja. "In this fast-paced tech era, where everyone is focused on their careers and chasing success, this festival allows us to take a break, strengthen our bonds, and forge new connections," she said. Emon emphasised the celebration of femininity and womanhood during this time, highlighting the importance of recognising women as goddesses. She noted that many rituals were passed down from older generations, allowing the youth to blend the old with the new. "While some may think we are drifting away from our culture, it's actually the uniqueness of our traditions that brings us together," she pointed out. Pavitra Sardar, dressed in a vibrant kurta, added that Bengali boys embrace their cultural heritage through the Dhanuchi dance. "We usually have khichdi at

home, but this tastes different—probably because it's served as prasad," he noted. He also mentioned that the illumination of the pandals adds to their appeal, along with the cultural programmes. "I wait all year for these celebrations. I also help distribute prasad," he added. Anita Kumari, pursuing MA at Lucknow University, was seen enjoying a pandal hopping spree. Abhishek Gupta, a young business student, emphasised his regular attendance at the pandals. "The atmosphere is filled with positivity, and the large gatherings make the puja so unique and appealing," he said. Nancy, a young married woman, appreciated the festival's vibrant colours. "I am excited for all the dandiya nights during the celebrations," she added. Ishanwi, a Class VII student, expressed her enthusiasm for the festivities. "I love everything about Durga Puja. My favourite part is the Dhanuchi dance in the evening, but the bhog we have in the afternoon is the highlight," she said. Aditya Das Gupta, another young devotee, revealed that the bhog is his biggest draw during the celebrations. "We usually have khichdi at

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SAPTAMI PUJA

The 6-day Sri Sri Durga Puja at Ramakrishna Math, which commenced on October 8, is underway with grandeur and solemnity. All events are being live-streamed on the official YouTube channel. Saptami puja began at 6:15 am on Thursday with the sound of the shahnai, guided by Brahmachari Himadari of Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama. Swami Pratibhananda from Vrindavan recited the 'Chandi Path', followed by formal worship starting at 7 am. The deity, represented as a small stone image, was bathed using water and mud from nearly 50 sources, accompanied by sacred chants. Devotional songs were performed by Sri Asim Datta from Kolkata and Swami Paragananda, with tabla accompaniment by Sri Shubham Raj. An online Pushpanjali at 11 am allowed global participation, while many devotees gathered at the Math to offer flowers and other offerings. Evening rituals included Sandhya aarti and cultural performances.

Goods worth ₹1.5 cr damaged in third fire incident on trot

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A massive fire broke out in a three-storey building in the BBD police station area at around 6:15 am on Thursday. It marked the third consecutive day of fire incidents, leading to significant losses. The fire severely damaged businesses dealing in tyres, gym equipment, and automobile spare parts. Upon noticing smoke emanating from the building, near Indira canal on the Lucknow-Ayodhya highway, passersby alerted the police and fire brigade. Authorities arrived promptly, evacuating nearby shops and buildings to ensure the safety of residents. Eight fire engines and hydraulic machines were deployed to combat the blaze, and it took them approximately four hours to bring the blaze under control. The fire consumed the service centre, tyre showroom, and automobile parts stored in the building. The showroom manager estimated the damage at around Rs 1.5 crore. Reports indicate that the fire originated on the third floor, resulting in destruction at the gym located there. Vansh Aggarwal, the owner of the establishment, said that smoke was first spotted emanating from the second floor

around 6 am, as members arriving for the gym alerted authorities. As soon as the fire brigade broke the glass to extinguish the flames, the fire flared up, and intense flames erupted from the warehouse. "Fortunately, the basement, ground floor, and first floor of the building remained undamaged. However, goods worth approximately Rs 1.5 crore on the second floor were destroyed. Gym operator Vidya Bhushan said that upon arriving around 6 am, he saw smoke coming from the building. He confirmed that the gym sustained damage. The building belongs to Vishal Singh, with two floors rented by Vansh Aggarwal and one floor rented to Bhushan. CFO Mangesh Kumar confirmed that the fire was reported in a three-storey building. It was extinguished with the help of hydraulic machines and eight fire engines. He stated that the basement, ground floor, and first floor were completely safe, and the fire was likely caused by an electrical short-circuit. On October 9, a massive fire caused extensive damage to a warehouse in Madaion, while a similar incident occurred in the Sairpur police station area of Lucknow on October 8.

Indian Bank
Zonal Office Lucknow, New Building, 2nd Floor, Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001, Ph. 0522-2286272, 2287283, Fax: 0522-2288033, E-mail id: zolucknow@indianbank.co.in

Notice
All Public and General hereby informed that the following borrower has taken a gold loan from the Indian Bank's Ujjanya branch. Due to the failure to repay the loan within the stipulated time, the bank is obliged to auction the jewels mortgaged by the borrower to recover the outstanding dues, as the borrower has not made the payment despite receiving prior notice. Therefore, through this notice, the borrower is given a final notice that the total outstanding amount, along with interest, must be paid within 7 days of this publication. Otherwise, the bank will be compelled to auction the mortgaged jewels to recover the dues.
Details of the borrower, mortgaged jewels, and outstanding amount are as follows:
Borrower: Praveesh Kumar
Account Number: 726043123
Weight of Jewels: 16.37 grams
Outstanding Amount: Rs. 59,662/- along with interest and other charges.
Authorized Officer, Indian Bank

Durga idol desecrated

Lucknow (PNS): Tension gripped Neelmatha locality under the Cantonment police station after unidentified accused vandalised the idol of Goddess Durga. The incident, reported on Thursday, involved the severing of the goddess's hands with a grinder. Devotees expressed outrage over the desecration, demanding swift action against the perpetrators, with some even calling for poetic justice. Community members voiced their frustration over the ongoing attacks on places of worship. The police have registered a case against unidentified accused and are actively searching for the culprits. The vandalism was discovered when the temple priest arrived to perform puja on Thursday morning. Upon learning of the damage, he alerted the community, leading to a large crowd gathering at the scene. The police arrived promptly to manage the situation and reassured residents that efforts to apprehend the miscreants were underway. ADCP, East, Pankaj Kumar Singh confirmed that an investigation is in progress, and some suspects are being interrogated. "The miscreants have broken the idol's hand, and we will take action against them," he stated, emphasising that peace has been restored in the area.

Even the British enjoyed this 145-yr-old Ramlila!

Lucknow (PNS): Mausamganj Ramlila is one of the oldest Ramlilas in the city, running for over 145 years. Ashish Prakash, secretary of the organising committee and an actor playing the role of Ravana, noted that even the British used to attend the performances in the past. "We have a unique German harmonium, a gift from the British, that few can play—it's operated not by hands but by feet. There are only two of this type of harmonium in the city," he explained. Prakash emphasised that all artists perform for free and that the weapons used in the Ramlila are owned by the committee. "Currently underway, the Ramlila will conclude on October 13. Unlike other Ramlilas where lip-syncing is common, we learn and recite our dialogues authentically. Our performance is based on the Radhe Shyam Ramayana, and the dialogues are in Awadhi," he said. He noted that over a thousand people attend the Ramlila each year. "A unique aspect of our Ramlila is that it is staged on two platforms, with scenes occurring simultaneously on both. Our cast ranges in age from 10 to 60 years, and the conceptualised scenes are spectacular," he added. Having portrayed Ravana for the past 36 years, Prakash



reflected on his personal journey. "I used to stammer, but since I began playing Ravana, I have not stammered again," he shared. He explained that he prays to Lord Shiva and pays tribute to all previous actors who played Ravana as part of his preparation. "Initially, it was physically taxing, but I eventually adapted. Special care is required for my throat to avoid soreness during performances," he said. This year, the dialogue between Ravana and Meghnad (when Meghnad returns from battle and pleads with Ravana to return Sita to Lord Ram) is the highlight. The interaction between Vibhishan and Ravana, where Vibhishan urges Ravana to return Sita but is instead kicked out of the palace, will also be featured prominently. Prakash mentioned that they have applied for government aid to support their efforts.

LDA mulls hi-tech record room to keep files secure

Lucknow (PNS): The Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) has planned to develop a hi-tech record room to securely maintain files and documents related to properties. The initiative aims to protect both old and new documents from damage caused by termites and dampness. According to Vice-Chairman Prathmesh Kumar, the proposed record room will occupy 12,000 square metres on the fourth, fifth, and sixth floors of the new LDA building in Gomti Nagar, with an estimated cost of Rs 3 crore. The funding will come from internal sources, and the project is expected to be operational within three months. Each file and document will be assigned a unique code number, making it easier for staff to locate them. The setup includes devices that can detect fire immediately and raise alarms to alert staff. Additionally, the system can prevent the fire from spreading. Kumar said that the location of files and documents can be traced within seconds using their unique code numbers. This will benefit homebuyers and others who need to upgrade or mutate property documents, significantly speeding up the process.

Doctor loses ₹1 crore to fraudster pretending to be review officer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A doctor was allegedly defrauded of Rs 1 crore in Thakurganj after being promised the return of his plots from a land grabber and job placements for his nephews at the Kalyan Singh Cancer Institute and in a government department. As per reports, the accused approached the doctor, posing as a review officer, and extorted Rs 50 lakh to vacate one of his plots from the land grabber. He gained the victim's trust by boasting about his connections in influential circles. Subsequently, he demanded Rs 55 lakh for job placements for the doctor's family members. When the fraud was uncovered, he began threatening to implicate the doctor in a false rape and murder case. According to reports, the victim, Dr Narendra Verma, who runs a private clinic in Chanakypuri Baraura, Thakurganj, met a man named Maan Singh, an acquaintance of his former tenant, Shailendra.

Maan Singh introduced himself as a review officer and offered to help vacate two of the doctor's illegally occupied plots in Balaganj. He claimed he could facilitate this through a connection named Pradeep Dubey, a joint secretary to the chief minister, for a fee of Rs 50 lakh, which Narendra paid. Later, Maan Singh informed Narendra that the Kalyan Singh Cancer Institute was hiring for nursing positions and charged Rs 20 lakh for each recruitment. Narendra paid Rs 40 lakh for the appointments of his nephew Anuj Patel, and his wife, Puja. During this time, Maan Singh also extorted an additional Rs 15 lakh to secure a peon position for another nephew in a government department. After a prolonged wait with no jobs materialising, Narendra pressured Maan Singh for a refund. Maan Singh claimed that the call letters for the job would arrive at the applicants' addresses once they were uploaded online. Growing suspicious, Narendra checked the documents and

uncovered the fraud. When he demanded his money back, Maan Singh allegedly began threatening him through a woman, claiming he would falsely accuse Narendra of rape and have him jailed. Frustrated, the victim approached the police but initially found his case ignored. Eventually, a case was registered. Inspector Shrikant Rai said that an investigation was underway, and they were also gathering information about Maan Singh's claims of being a review officer.

conversing with Kusumavati, showing sympathy for her situation and increasing his familiarity with her through frequent visits to the hospital. During one of these conversations, when she expressed her struggle to afford the high medical costs, he lured her with the promise of reducing the bill by Rs 40,000. Kusumavati fell into his trap. He provided her with a Punjab National Bank account number, instructing her to deposit Rs 60,000 as part of the medical bill. She transferred the money. However, as soon as the transaction was confirmed on her mobile, the man vanished. Despite her efforts to find him, both she and others present at the hospital could not locate him. Unable to afford further treatment, Kusumavati returned to Gorakhpur Medical College with her son, who passed away during treatment. Later, she returned to Lucknow and filed a complaint about the fraud. Inspector, PGI, Brijesh Chandra Tiwari said that a case had been registered, and efforts were underway to locate the accused.

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL ALLAHABAD BENCH, PRAYAGRAJ
ORIGINAL COMPANY JURISDICTION
IN
COMPANY PETITION CP (CAA) NO. 15 / ALD / 2024 CONNECTED WITH
COMPANY APPLICATION CA (CAA) NO. 10 / ALD / 2024 [Under Section 230 and 232 of the Companies Act, 2013] IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND
IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF AMALGAMATION OF
OBETEET RETAIL PRIVATE LIMITED, a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 having its Registered Office at Bisunderpur, Civil Lines, Mirzapur - 231001 (U.P.) having Corporate Identification Number U52100UP2011PTC044361 within the jurisdiction of this Tribunal.
Petitioner Amalgamating Company 1 / Transferor Company 1 AND
MANOR & MEWS PRIVATE LIMITED, a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 having its Registered Office at Bisunderpur, Civil Lines, Mirzapur - 231001 (U.P.) having Corporate Identification Number U36990UP2017PTC090376 within the jurisdiction of this Tribunal.
Petitioner Amalgamating Company 2 / Transferor Company 2 AND
OBETEET HOME TEXTILES PRIVATE LIMITED, a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 having its Registered Office at Bisunderpur, Civil Lines, Mirzapur - 231001 (U.P.) having Corporate Identification Number U17299UP2022PTC166084 within the jurisdiction of this Tribunal.
Petitioner Amalgamating Company 3 / Transferor Company 3 AND
MANOR & MEWS FURNITURE PRIVATE LIMITED, a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 having its Registered Office at Bisunderpur, Civil Lines, Mirzapur - 231001 (U.P.) having Corporate Identification Number U36109UP2022PTC164895 within the jurisdiction of this Tribunal.
Petitioner Amalgamating Company 4 / Transferor Company 4 WITH
OBETEET PRIVATE LIMITED, a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1913 having its Registered Office at Bisunderpur, Civil Lines, Mirzapur - 231001 (U.P.) having Corporate Identification Number U17226UP1932PTC000475 within the jurisdiction of this Tribunal.
Petitioner Amalgamated Company / Transferee Company (For the sake of brevity, Petitioner Amalgamating Company 1 / Transferor Company 1, Petitioner Amalgamating Company 2 / Transferor Company 2, Petitioner Amalgamating Company 3 / Transferor Company 3, Petitioner Amalgamating Company 4 / Transferor Company 4 and Petitioner Amalgamated Company / Transferee Company are hereinafter referred to as 'Petitioner Companies')

NOTICE OF PETITION
A Company Petition CP (CAA) No. 15 / ALD / 2024 ("Petition") connected with Company Application CA (CAA) No. 10 / ALD / 2024 under Section 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 for sanctioning the Scheme of Amalgamation between Obeteet Retail Private Limited ("Petitioner Amalgamating Company 1 / Transferor Company 1"), Manor & Mews Private Limited ("Petitioner Amalgamating Company 2 / Transferor Company 2"), Obeteet Home Textiles Private Limited ("Petitioner Amalgamating Company 3 / Transferor Company 3") and Manor & Mews Furniture Private Limited ("Petitioner Amalgamating Company 4 / Transferor Company 4") with Obeteet Private Limited ("Petitioner Amalgamated Company / Transferee Company") (collectively referred to as 'Petitioner Companies') was presented jointly by the Petitioner Companies and heard on 27th September, 2024 by the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Allahabad Bench ("Tribunal"). The said Petition is fixed for hearing before the Hon'ble Tribunal on 21st November, 2024 vide Tribunal's Order dated 27th September, 2024.
Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said Petition should send to the concerned Petitioner Companies at their respective Registered offices, notice of his intention, signed by him or his counsel, with his name and address, so as to reach the Hon'ble Tribunal and the Petitioner Companies at their Registered Offices on or before the date of hearing fixed by the Hon'ble Tribunal i.e. the 21st November, 2024. Where such person seeks to oppose the Petition, the grounds of opposition supported by an affidavit shall be furnished with such notice.
A copy of the Petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges for the same.
(SANJIVA GUPTA)
Authorised Representative for the Petitioner Companies
Date: 10-10-2024
Place: Mirzapur

Knowledge, science & technology embedded in India's DNA: Yogi

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that knowledge, science and technology were embedded in India's DNA.

"The entire world is now looking to our youth with renewed hope. Without a doubt, the future belongs to India. Youth should navigate their way through challenges, and success will surely follow," he said.

The chief minister was addressing the newly-admitted students of the inaugural batch of Maharana Pratap Institute of Technology (MPIT), which is run by Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad in Gorakhpur.

Pointing out that the 'triveni' (confluence) of knowledge, science and labour flows continuously in India, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said, "Tradition, hard work and progress are integral to our nature. This quality makes us truly unique in the world." He emphasised the need to align with global standards, stating, "We must also meet the expectations of parents. For this, students and teachers should work together. Study national and international journals regularly and make use of e-libraries to advance yourselves."

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised the importance of embracing technology in order to simplify life and address real world challenges. He stressed the need for innovations that propel development while maintaining harmony with nature. Inspiring the students, the chief minister noted that Uttar Pradesh is rapidly emerging as a major employment hub. "The state is making significant strides toward becoming



a centre for semiconductors, a key component of today's technological era. Both direct and cyclical investments are pouring in. Therefore, it is the responsibility of technical institutions to step forward and provide skilled labour to meet this growing demand," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi remarked that India plays a dominant role in Silicon Valley's computer technology sector, with a significant contribution from the youth of Uttar Pradesh. "After Silicon Valley, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru, Uttar Pradesh must also progress rapidly in this field," he said.

To achieve this, the first state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence in eastern Uttar Pradesh is being established at the Maharana Pratap Institute of Technology (MPIT). "Aligned with world-class standards; this Centre of Excellence will also serve as a key resource for fifteen other technical educational institutions across eastern Uttar Pradesh," he added.

Chief Minister Yogi

announced that various integrated courses, including drone technology, 3D printing, artificial intelligence and space technology, will be offered at different Centres of Excellence within the MPIT campus. He highlighted that by adopting global standard curricula, the institute offers students an opportunity to prepare themselves for relevant industries and service sectors through professional certificate courses, minor degree programmes, and advanced courses.

During the interaction, Chief Minister Yogi urged the faculty to analyse global market demands and design courses accordingly. "Our focus should be on modern-age courses," he said, adding that the Tata Consultancy is making significant contributions in this area.

"By emphasising modern-age courses in the Centre of Excellence, we can ensure 100 per cent placement for students," the chief minister added.

Reflecting on the establishment of the first polytechnic

by the Maharana Pratap Education Council in 1956, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated, "Today, Maharana Pratap Polytechnic stands as one of the top polytechnics in the state. Inspired by this success, we must strive to make Maharana Pratap Institute of Technology (MPIT) the leading institute in Uttar Pradesh within the next five years. To achieve this, it is essential for the institution to be connected with industry and for the youth to continuously enhance their skills." During the dialogue with the inaugural batch of MPIT students, many posed questions to Chief Minister Yogi regarding topics such as knowledge, science, technology and employment. The Chief Minister provided guidance and insights in response to each question. Member of Parliament Ravi Kishan Shukla was also present at the event. The welcome address was delivered by MPIT Director Dr Sudhir Agarwal, while the vote of thanks was proposed by MP Polytechnic Principal Dr Anil Prakash Singh.

Hathras stampede: Self-styled godman Bhole Baba appears before judicial panel

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Self-styled godman Suraj Pal alias Bhole Baba on Thursday appeared before the judicial commission probing the July 2 stampede at his congregation in Hathras that claimed 121 lives.

Suraj Pal, also known as Narayan Sakar Hari, is not mentioned as an accused in the FIR that was lodged after the stampede at Fulrai village in Sikandra Rao area of Hathras district.

On July 3, the Uttar Pradesh government had formed a three-member judicial commission headed by a retired judge of the high court to probe the Hathras tragedy and to look into the possibility of a conspiracy behind the stampede. This was separate from the police investigation launched into the case. "The judicial commission's office is situated in Janpath Annexe in Lucknow and on Thursday Narayan Sakar Hari (Suraj Pal) was called for his

statement," Suraj Pal's lawyer AP Singh told reporters.

"We have full faith in the UP Police, the judiciary, the UP government and the Centre. Justice will be done with us," Singh said, adding, "We had promised that whenever any probe panel or investigation agency would call Narayan Sakar Hari, he would turn up," Singh added, "He (Suraj Pal) was summoned today (Thursday) so he has come here. Whatever he is asked about, he will give his statement."

He said the Uttar Pradesh government has provided Rs 2 lakh financial assistance to the bereaved kin of the stampede victims and the Samajwadi Party, the main opposition party in the state, had also extended a support of Rs 1 lakh to each of the victims' families. Meanwhile, sources said that the self-styled godman arrived in MLA Baburam Paswan's car, which had 'BJP MLA' written on it, amid heavy security and recorded his statement.

During this, tight security arrangements were made inside and outside the office of the judicial commission in Hazratganj. MLA Baburam Paswan was also with Bhole Baba during his appearance.

However, Bhole Baba was allowed to go alone in front of Judicial Commission Chairman Justice (Retired) Brijesh Kumar Srivastava where he recorded his statement and also answered the questions asked by the commission.

Bhole Baba was questioned for about 2 hours 15 minutes in a closed room in front of the judicial commission. During this time, the commission asked many questions about the stampede at the satsang venue. During this time, Bhole Baba also submitted affidavits of 1,100 people involved in the satsang to the commission. It is being said that Bhole Baba answered all the questions asked by the commission. During this interrogation, the police had sealed an area of

about one kilometre. Even the shops in Janpath market were closed.

Since a large number of followers of Bhole Baba had also reached Lucknow on getting news of his arrival, police and Rapid Action Force personnel were deployed at various places.

Originally a resident of Patiyali village in Kasganj, Bhole Baba's real name is Suraj Pal. He was recruited in the Uttar Pradesh Police and took voluntary retirement after 18 years of service. After returning home, he started living in a hut in his village and after a few days, claiming to have met god, he declared himself a self-proclaimed saint.

Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba has a huge following. He also has a long history of controversies. During his posting in Etawah, he was accused of sexual harassment. It is said that after this incident, he was dismissed from the police service. He also had to go to jail in this case.

Ayodhya to have state-of-art trauma centre by May '25

Ayodhya (PNS): In its ongoing drive to develop Ayodhya into a hub of health and wellness, the Uttar Pradesh government led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is building a state-of-art 110-bed trauma centre in the city. Being built at Rajarshi Dashrath Medical College, the centre will be completed by May, 2025, offering comprehensive modern healthcare services to the patients under one roof and reducing Ayodhya residents' dependence on Lucknow for treatment of emergency cases. The city, known for both spirituality and advanced healthcare, will soon have all the necessary facilities to treat even the most critical patients as the long-pending Rs 33-crore, 110-bed trauma centre project has already passed the halfway mark in construction.

The blueprint for Ayodhya's development began taking shape with the commencement of construction of Shri Ram temple. Concerned about the health needs of both residents and devotees, Chief Minister Yogi directed the expansion of facilities at the multi-specialty hospital and Rajarshi Dashrath Medical College in Darshan Nagar. Following government approval, the UP State Construction and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (UPSIDCO) initiated the project, and 50 per cent of the work on the three-storey building has already been completed. The facility will include a 50-bed trauma centre and a 60-bed emergency medicine department, providing comprehensive emergency medical services with a total capacity of 110 beds. Currently, patients face challenges at the existing trauma centre, as they must be transported to a separate building for X-rays and CT scans. Once the new trauma centre is completed, all diagnostic services, including X-ray and CT scan facilities, will be available under one roof. Principal Dr Gyanendra Kumar said, "The construction is progressing rapidly, and the centre will also feature a modern lift for added convenience. This trauma centre will be a major asset for critically ill patients, offering all necessary services in one place, eliminating the need for patients and their families to travel between facilities."



Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday while paying rich tributes to his father and the party's founder Mulayam Singh Yadav in Etawah said 'Netaji' showed the way to the country by connecting people with socialist ideology. Akhilesh Yadav paid floral tribute to his father's memorial on his second death anniversary in his native village Saifai on Thursday morning. Speaking to reporters later, he said the SP is taking forward the principles of Mulayam Singh Yadav, who was popularly known as 'Netaji'. PTI

CM: Complete construction of Maa Pateshwari University on time

PNS ■ BALRAMPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inspected the under-construction Maa Pateshwari University building on Wednesday during his two-day visit to Balrampur. He directed the administrative officials to expedite the work and complete it within a specified time frame.

The chief minister also emphasised the importance of maintaining high quality standards in construction. In addition to his visit to the university, the chief minister also inspected the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Medical College, where he assessed the current situation and gave necessary directives to start it soon. He also reviewed the conditions at the satellite centre associated with

Yogi offers prayers to goddess

PNS ■ BALRAMPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath offered prayers to Maa Pateshwari on Thursday morning. On the occasion of the ongoing Navratri celebrations, Chief Minister and Gorakshapethadhishwar Yogi Adityanath offered prayers to Jagatjanani Maa Bhagwati, seeking blessings for the well-being, health

and prosperity of Uttar Pradesh. The chief minister also inspected the cowshed located in the temple complex, feeding jaggery and fodder to the cows. When he called the cows by their names, they came running to him. He also took note of the gaushala's arrangements while serving the cows. As he walked through the temple premises, Chief

Minister Yogi waved to the visitors greeting him. He also distributed chocolates to the children visiting the temple and encouraged them to focus on their studies. Additionally, he met the children from the Tharu tribe hostel, enquiring about their education, as well as quality of food and accommodations. Temple's Mahant Mithilesh Nath Yogi accompanied him during the visit.

the college. During this, cabinet minister in-charge of the district, Rakesh Sachan, Balrampur Sadar MLA Palturam, MLA

Tulsipur Kailash Nath Shukla, MLA Uttaraula Ram Pratap Verma, MLC Awadhesh Kumar Singh 'Manju Singh', Zila

Panchayat Chairperson Aarti Tiwari and many public representatives and administrative officials were present.

Central govt's support to accelerate development, welfare initiatives: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Central government, on Thursday, disbursed Rs 1,78,173 crore in tax devolution to state governments. According to the list of funds released by the Union Finance Ministry, Uttar Pradesh has received the largest share, amounting to Rs 31,962 crore. The Central government's allocation is intended to bolster the economic stability of states ahead of the festive season. In response, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the timely support. Chief Minister Yogi wrote on his social media account X, "Heartfelt gratitude to Hon. PM Shri @narendramodi Ji and @FinMinIndia



for the timely release of Rs 31,962 crore to UP as part of tax devolution. This advance instalment will significantly boost our festive season preparations and accelerate development and welfare initiatives across the state. Together, we are building a stronger and more prosperous Uttar Pradesh!"

UP govt empowers 76,000 KGBV girls with guide training

Lucknow (PNS): In a significant step towards empowering girls from educationally backward regions, the Yogi Adityanath government has initiated guide training programmes under its flagship Mission Shakti. The initiative aims to secure the future of girls studying in Kasturba Gandhi Residential Girls' Schools by equipping them with essential skills through guide training.

More than 76,000 girls participated in the three-day residential training held from October 3 to 10. This initiative opens new doors for these girls, offering them an advantage in their pursuit of higher education and career opportunities. The training provides participants with additional weightage in programmes like BED and DEED, enhancing their chances of academic success. Furthermore, the training offers them preferential consideration in recruitment processes for Scout/Guide positions in the road transport and Railways sectors, creating pathways for future employment. Basic Education Minister Sandeep Singh announced that guide training programmes have been successfully conducted in 746 Kasturba Gandhi Balika

Vidyalayas (KGBVs) across Uttar Pradesh. A total of 2,238 guide units were set up in these schools, through which the Yogi government has completed guide training for 76,000 girls. This training will benefit the girls by not only giving them extra points in education, but also improving their chances of getting jobs. To ensure the girls received the training quickly, special efforts were made under the direction of the minister. Each KGBV registered three guide units, with 32 girls in each group. The aim was to make the girls confident, self-reliant and empowered by offering easy-to-understand training. During the programme, the girls learned about the rules, pledge and principles of scouting and guiding. They were also trained in useful skills like tying knots, using first aid boxes, and applying triangular bandages. At night, campfires were held where they learned outdoor cooking and survival skills for emergencies. This training will help in the physical, mental and intellectual growth of the girls, while also opening up new educational and job opportunities. These programmes will boost the confidence of the girls and empower them to make a positive impact in society.

6 hurt in clash over burning crackers

Gonda (PTI): Six people were injured in a clash between two communities over the burning of firecrackers near a Durga Puja pandal in the Chapiya area here, an official said on Thursday. An FIR has been registered in the matter and police have detained some people for questioning, he said. Local residents in Maskanwa town had set up a Durga Puja

pandal on Wednesday night and children were burning firecrackers, Chhapiya police station in-charge Krishna Gopal Rai said. Aslam, Sultana, and Munna, who live nearby, objected to the burning of firecrackers and three stones at the children, Rai said quoting the complaint filed by Dinesh Kumar, the father of one of the children.

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank			
Zonal Office Lucknow, New Building, 2nd Floor, Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001, Ph. 0522-2286272, 2287283, Fax: 0522-2288033, E-mail id: zolucknow@indianbank.co.in			
DEMAND NOTICE			
Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s			
This Demand Notice is hereby given under section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 hereinafter calling upon the under mentioned Borrowers/Guarantors to repay, the Amounts outstanding for the Credit Facilities granted to them/ on their Guarantee, within 60 days from the date of this Notice. If you fail to repay to the Bank the below mentioned amount with further interest and incidental expenses, costs etc. in terms of this notice u/s 13(2) of the Act, the Bank will exercise all or any of the rights detailed under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 and under other applicable provisions of the said Act. You are also put on notice that in terms of sub-section 4 of Section 13 you shall not transfer by sale, lease or otherwise the said secured assets detailed below of this notice without obtaining written consent of the Bank. The details of the account and Secured Assets along with Amount Outstanding is given below:-			
SCHEDULE OF MOVABLE PROPERTY & OTHER DETAILS			
Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount	Description of the Movable Property
Branch : Viraj Khand			
1.	Borrower: Vineet Pandey S/o Ashwani Kumar Pandey, Add: pure girdhar Mahulara Bara Banki Uttar, Pradesh, Bara Banki	Rs. 7,86,500/- as on 08.10.2024 + interest & other charges	NAME OF THE MANUFACTURER: HUNDAI MOTOR INDIA LIMITED TYPE OF VEHICLE: VENUE 1.2 KAPPAMTS REGISTRATION NO: UP32MV1458 ENGINE NO: G4L1AMM090372 CHASSIS NO: MALFC81BLN329698
2.	Mr. Vineet Pandey S/o Ashwani Kumar Pandey, 529/391 Rahum Nagar Lucknow-226005		
3.	Mr. Vineet Pandey S/o Ashwani Kumar Pandey, 48 Rajiv Nagar, Kalyanpur Lucknow-226022		
4.	Mr. Vineet Pandey S/o Ashwani Kumar Pandey, Pure Girdhar, H/o Bhanpur Mahulara PS-R. S Ghat Barabanki U.P. 225409.		
5.	Directorate of Basic Education, Vikas Bhawan Road, Awass Vikas Colony, UPS Kurauli Barabanki-225001 Uttar Pradesh		
Date of Demand Notice : 08.10.2024			
Date: 11.10.2024		Place: Lucknow	INDIAN BANK (erstwhile Allahabad Bank)

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India	
Regional Office : 117/H-1/240, Pandu Nagar, Kanpur Head Office : 239, Vidhan Bhawan Marg, Nariman Point Mumbai	
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES Date of e-Auction : 29-10-2024	
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable assets under the securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 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 authorized officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "As is Where is," "As is What is," and "Whatever there is" on the date mentioned below, for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union Bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price & the Earnest Money Deposit or also mentioned hereunder.	
Branch Name : Nagar Nigam Jhansi • Address : Nagar Nigam Premises, Jhansi, Branch Head : Shri Shivam Gupta • Mob. : 9935157041	
Borrower : Shri Shrif Bux S/o Mohd. Hanef & Smt. Nargis W/o Shri Sharif Bux and Mohd. Hanef S/o Shri Raheem Bux, All R/o : 111/1, Singara, Bhatta Gaon, Jhansi. Guarantor : Shri Suheb Khan S/o Shri Rasool Khan, R/o : 1/8, PWD Colony, Jhansi.	
Property : Residential house situated at Part of Arazi No. 6, Mauza Singara, Bhatta Gaon, Distt. Jhansi. Owner of Property : Smt. Nargis W/o Shri Sharif Bux. Area : 1344 Sq. Ft., Bounded : North-Road, 15 Ft., South : Land of Ajeet, East- Plot of Mohd. Sahfeeq, West : Plot of Seller. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 10,23,541.80 + Intt. + Other Charges.	
Date & Time of E-Auction : 29-10-2024 at 11.00 am to 4.00 pm.	
Reserve Price : Rs. 17,44,200/-, Earnest Money to be deposited Rs. 1,74,420/- For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/TendeViewAllAuction.aspx	
Borrower : Shri Preetwan Singh Yadav S/o Shri Khachore Lal and Smt. Ram Devi W/o Shri Preetwan Singh Yadav, Both R/o : Braham Nagar Colony, Lahargird, Jhansi. Guarantor : (1) Shri Hemant Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Chandra, R/o : Near Guru Hari Kishan Degree College, Lahargird, Jhansi. (2) Shri Gambheer Singh S/o Shri Preetwan Singh Yadav, R/o : Braham Nagar Colony, Lahargird, Jhansi.	
Property : Residential Building Situated at Arazi No. 1755, Lahargird, Braham Nagar Colony, Jhansi. Owner of Property : Shri Preetwan Singh Yadav S/o Shri Khachore Lal, Area : 83.64 Sq. Mtr., Bounded -North : 15 Ft. Way, South : Plot of Seller, East : Plot of Seller, West : Plot of Seller. O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 6,49,437.00 + Intt. + Other Charges.	
Date & Time of E-Auction : 29-10-2024 at 11.00 am to 4.00 pm.	
Reserve Price : Rs. 11,05,000/-, Earnest Money to be deposited Rs. 1,10,500/- For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/TendeViewAllAuction.aspx	
For Registration and Login and Bidding Rules visit https://ebkay.in	
Date : 10-10-2024	Place : Jhansi
Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India	

Shakti fervour grips Kashi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A huge crowd of people thronged the Durga Puja pandals in different parts of the city on the auspicious occasion of Ashtami here on Thursday. The city which is known as 'Mini Kolkata' for its grandeur of Durga Puja glittered with attractive lighting arrangements in most of its areas. Traditional gaiety and religious fervour prevailed as a good number of people thronged different areas of the city to see the idols of Goddess Durga. Due to heavy rush of the crowd, the entry of vehicles was stopped on the road from Lahurabir crossing to Nai Sadak. Barricading was done in the pandals to control the



Devotees flock to Annapurna temple on Ashtami

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

On the auspicious occasion of Shardiya Navratri here a huge crowd of devotees was seen at Maa Annapurna temple near Kashi Vishwanath Temple on Thursday. As the temple is located in the red zone area, tight security arrangements were made there. Besides, rush of devotees was also seen at several temples, including Mahagauri at Panchganga Ghat. Throughout the day heavy rush was also seen in Durgakund area as thousands of people thronged Durga Mandir. Right from early morning, the devotees started turning up at these temples to offer prayers and long queues were seen throughout the day. This religious city has separate temples of all the nine Devis and nine Gauris where the devotees offer prayers on different days of Shardiya and Vasantik Navratri respectively. Not only this, a good number of devotees also went to



Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district to offer prayers at Maa Vindhyavasi Devi. Rush of devotees was also seen at the old Durga Mandir (Ramnagar) and Sheela Mata temple (Adalpara). Meanwhile, after worshipping Mahagauri, the activists of Namami Ganga worshiped nine girls and gifted them Tulsi plants and cloth bags. These 'Durga Swaroopa' girls appealed to everyone not to use single-use plastic and to plant saplings for nature conservation. For the

conservation of nature and a healthy society, the Durga Swaroopa girls appealed to everyone not to litter, plant trees and conserve beneficial rivers like a mother. In front of the Maa Durga idol installed in the pandal of Amar Shaheed Santosh Kumar Kapuria Yuva Sanskritik Samiti located in Gadhvasi Tola, the girls requested not to use single-use polythene that pollutes the environment. Amidst the appeal for environmental protection, along with the girls, the Batukas (Sanskrit students), the symbol of Bhairav, were also honoured. They were offered halwa puri, vegetables, gram ghugri and sweets. Namami Ganga Kashi region coordinator Rajesh Shukla said during Navratri, Maa Durga also gives the message of cleanliness. "Single-use plastic is proving to be poisonous for the rivers", he said. Aarushi Pandey, Akshara, Mishri Kapuria, Vandana Goswami, Vijay Kapuria, Poonam Shukla, Suryanshu Shukla etc were also present.

swing in many pandals. The 'City of Lord Shiva' was gripped in fervour of Maa Shakti as there was an echo of mantras and 'bhajans' everywhere. Elaborate security and other arrangements have been made on the occasion. The pandals were also installed in various rural markets in the district. With the extension of the city, some big pandals were also seen in rural areas. The rush was mainly seen in Lahurabir, Sigra, Luxa, Godowlia, Sonarpur, Bhelupur, Maidagin and many areas in the trans-Varuna area including Shivpur, Pandeypur, Orderly Bazar, Pahadiya and some others. In many pandals, all the traditional rituals were performed by the puja samiti members. In Bengali-dominated areas, the people performed all their rituals with traditional gaiety. At many pandals, on the beat of nagaras, the people were seen dancing to please the Goddess of Shakti (strength). At several places, bhajans and other programmes were presented apart from offering 'prasad' to the people. Besides, Dandiya and other cultural programmes were also organised. Various religious and cultural programmes were organised at the pandals of Bharat Sevashram Sangh (Sigra), Ramkrishna Advait Ashram (Luxa), Golden Sporting Club (Devnathpura), Kashi Durgotsav Samiti (Shivala), Jig Sporting (Bhelupur), Eagle Club (Jangambadi), Har Sundari Dharmshala (Girjaghar), Premier Boys' Club (Hathua Market) and many others.

crowd. There was a festive atmosphere not only in the city but also in the rural areas as idols of Maa Durga were installed at 648 pandals of the district.

Machhodari, Mukimganj to Prahladhat and in many trans-Varuna areas. This time a pandal has been built on the lines of Prem Mandir of Vrindavan in the Mini Stadium located in Shivpur. Apart from this, the famous Premium Boys' Club pandal of Hathua Market has been given the form of Swarved temple. Jaipur's famous Sheesh Mahal has been

built in Sanatan Dharma Inter College located on Nai Sadak. Shows based on women empowerment and Baba Vishwanath are also being presented inside the pandal. In the evening, crowds started gathering in most of the areas to see the attractive idols of Maa Durga in the picturesque pandals. Cultural programmes were also going on in full

Tributes paid to Ratan Tata

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Cancer Centre and Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital (MPMMCC and HBCH) on Thursday paid a heartfelt tribute to the country's leading industrialist, social worker and philanthropist Padma Vibhushan Ratan Naval Tata. During this, the employees in both the hospitals observed two minutes of silence and prayed for the peace of the departed soul. Director Dr Satyajit Pradhan said we are all shocked to hear the news of Ratan Tata's demise. "Ratan Tata was not only a skilled industrialist but also a philanthropist who was always ready to serve humanity. The hospital administration will always be grateful to the Tata Trust for the help provided under CSR in the construction of Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Cancer Centre", he said, adding that the demise of Ratan Tata is an irreparable loss. Ratan Tata died at the age of 86 in a hospital in Mumbai.

Children's eyes tested

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The World Sight Day is a global health care programme, which is celebrated every year on the second Thursday of October. The main objective of celebrating World Sight Day is to make people aware of vision and eye problems. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said this year the theme of World Sight Day is 'Children, love your eyes' and this theme is on raising awareness about the protection of our eyes and vision, vision defects and blindness. "Eye health services are accessible and available for children in all government hospitals in the district", said the CMO. ACO and Nodal Officer (Blindness Prevention) Dr Sanjay Rai said on World Sight Day, eye test of children were conducted in various schools of all blocks of rural areas, including the district hospital.

4 die as speeding car rams into stationary dumper

PTI ■ VARANASI

Four people, including a couple and an elderly woman, were killed here when their speeding car rammed into a stationary dumper on Thursday, police said. The couple's 12-year-old son was severely injured in the accident and has been hospitalised for treatment, they said. According to police, the accident occurred near Bihda village of Mirzamurad are when

Deepak Kumar Pandey (35), a resident of Manduadih, was returning from a pilgrimage to Vindhyachal with his family. Their car collided with a parked dumper on the highway around 5 am. Locals informed the police who took the car occupants to the hospital, the police said. They said that Deepak Kumar Pandey (35), his wife Mala Pandey (32), his mother-in-law Phool Kesari Devi (55), and a family friend, Arpita Gupta

(28) from Chandpur, were declared dead, according to the police. "Three people died on the spot, while one injured woman succumbed to her injuries during treatment at the trauma center," Mirzamurad Station House Officer Ajay Raj Sharma said. "The injured child, Shivansh Pandey, has been admitted for medical care," he added. Further investigation is underway, the police said.

PhD student at IIT Kanpur ends life

PTI/PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A 28-year-old PhD student at the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT-K) ended her life by hanging herself from the ceiling hook here on Thursday, the fourth such case in the last one year, police said.

Pragati Kharya, a resident of Sanigawan in Kanpur who was pursuing a PhD in Earth Sciences, committed suicide inside her hostel room D-116 in hall number 4 during the intervening night, but the matter came to light on Thursday noon, they said. Her hostel mates informed the IIT-K authorities who in turn alerted the police.

In a statement, IIT Kanpur said with profound grief it mourns the tragic and untimely demise of Kharya. Kharya joined the PhD program in December 2021, it said. "A police forensic team has visited the campus to investigate the circumstances of the death. The Institute is awaiting the results of the police investigation to determine the cause. With Pragati Kharya's passing, the institute has lost a promising young researcher. The institute extends its deepest condolences and prays for strength and comfort to her family and friends in this time of great loss," the IIT said. "The police received information about a suicide by a PhD student at around 12 pm on Thursday," Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Rajesh Kumar Singh told PTI. Assistant CP (Kalyanpur) Abhishek Pandey

said, "After getting information about the suicide police rushed there and found the door of Pragati's room was locked from inside." "After breaking open the door, they found the woman's body hanging from the ceiling fan," he added. The police said a forensic team was called to collect the forensic evidences. The suicide note written in which she held no one responsible for her extreme step has been recovered from the room, the ACP added. A mobile phone was also recovered from the hostel room that might help police in solving the mystery behind the suicide, the ACP said, adding, possible reasons behind suicide will only be revealed after a preliminary probe and completing other formalities. The body was sent to the mortuary for post-mortem. The family members have also arrived at the IIT-K, according to the police.

On January 18, 29-year-old PhD student, Priyanka Jaiswal, who was pursuing a PhD in Chemical engineering had allegedly committed suicide inside her hostel room after being locked from inside. On January 11, MTEch second-year student Vikas Kumar Meena (31) allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling fan in his IIT, Kanpur hostel room, reportedly after he was "temporarily" barred from continuing with his course. On December 19, postdoctoral researcher Pallavi Chilka (34) hanged herself from the ceiling fan of her second-floor

hostel room on the campus. MISHPAP: A middle-aged cyclist was fatally knocked down by a speeding car in Unnatkhedha village under Maurawa police station area of Unnao late on Wednesday night. He was killed on the spot. Razzak, son of Ramzan of Maurawa was returning home on the bicycle on Wednesday night. At the same time, Pawan of Mohammadpur under Purwa police station, Unnao, was also passing in speed through the Gulaharia Road in his car. Due to high speed, Pawan lost control over his car which hit Razzak and killed him on the spot. Station House Officer (SHO) Chandra Kant Singh and his team rushed to the spot and pacified the agitating kin. Thereafter the body was sent for an autopsy. The car rider was also taken into custody. The SHO said on receipt of complaint, an FIR will be lodged and action taken against the guilty. However, a probe is on in the matter, he said. Meanwhile a motorcyclist was killed after being knocked by an unidentified vehicle on Godhrauli highway overbridge under Aung police station area of Fatehpur district around 3 am on Wednesday night. Police rushed to the spot had sent the injured to the community health centre (CHC), Gopalganj, by 108 ambulance from where the doctors referred him to Fatehpur Sadar hospital where he died. The body has been sent for autopsy. From the identity card recovered from his possession, police informed the kin of the deceased.

Ensure settlement of problems of entrepreneurs/investors: DM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A meeting of the District Level Udyog Bandhu Committee and law and security system of industrial units regarding MoU implementation was held in the Collectorate Auditorium here on Wednesday under the chairmanship of District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam. In the course of reviewing the implementation of investment proposals received by the district, the DM directed the departments concerned, including Public Works Department (PWD), Varanasi Development Authority (VDA), Ground Water Department, SDMs

Sadar and Rajatalab to ensure settlement of the problems of entrepreneurs / investors related to various departments as per the rules. Regarding stopping the operation of illegal brick kilns, the DM directed the Deputy Commissioner (Industries) to send a letter from his level to the SDMs Pindra and Sadar and the police department. Regarding the review of Nivesh Mitra portal, the Industry department officers informed that 11 cases are pending after the deadline and then the DM directed the concerned departments to dispose of the cases immediately. Apart from this, when national

secretary of IIA Rajesh Bhatia enquired about the construction of boundary wall of the park at industrial place Chandpur, the junior engineer (JE) of Uttar Pradesh Small Industries Corporation informed that the work order for this has been issued and the work will start in the coming week. SDM Rajatalab, Assistant Forest Conservator, officers of all departments concerned, investors, Deputy Commissioner (Industries), major officials of industrial organisations, Udyam Mitra, Assistant Commissioner Industries, Assistant Manager etc officers and entrepreneurs were prominently present in the meeting.

Minister, others mourn senior BJP leader's demise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, former head of the Department of Politics and former dean of Social Sciences faculty of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Prof Kaushal Kishore Mishra passed away on Thursday. He was 67. He is survived by his widow, a son and two daughters. His son Kritarth Mishra lit the funeral pyre. The intellectuals of the city, including Bharatiya Janata Party workers, participated in the last journey of Prof Mishra. Expressing condolences on the demise of Prof Mishra, Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' said Prof Mishra was a true Banarasi who lived a carefree temperament. His untimely demise has caused an irreparable loss to the Bharatiya Janata Party. Regional Bharatiya Janata Party president Dilip Patel said Kaushal Kishore, who was synonymous with Banaras, used to pierce the opposition with the arrows of his words. He said his untimely demise is a great loss for the party. Mayor Ashok Tiwari said we are all deeply saddened by the demise of Prof Mishra. MLA Dr Neelkanth Tiwari said there is deep sorrow among the party workers due to the demise of Prof Kaushal Mishra. MLA Saurabh Srivastava said we are all deeply saddened by the demise of Prof Mishra and our condolences are with his family members. Among those who also expressed condolences were MLC Dharmendra Rai, state Bharatiya Janata Party spokesperson Ashok Pandey, parliamentary office in-charge Shivsharan Pathak, former MLC Kedar Singh, regional media in charge Navratna Rath, Santosh Solapurkar, Jagdish Tripathi and many others.

Prayagraj division to launch MEMU service for Kumbh Mela devotees

PTI/PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Prayagraj Division of North Central Railway (NCR) will launch a fast ring MEMU service for devotees attending the Kumbh Mela, providing connectivity to Ayodhya's Ram Temple and Varanasi's Baha Vishwanath Temple, officials said. The service, starting from Prayagraj to Varanasi and Ayodhya, will operate daily except during the main bathing festivals, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Himanshu Badoni said. He said that two Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) services — one towards Varanasi and the other towards Ayodhya — will be available from Prayagraj every day. This is the first time such a service is being introduced for the Kumbh Mela, he added. During peak days of the Kumbh Mela, 825 trains will be operated for short-distance travel (up to 200 km), compared to 694 trains in the last Kumbh Mela (2019), Badoni said. For long distance travel, the NCR Railway has approved 400 trains, totalling 1,225 trains

during the fair, the officer said. He said the railway's special emphasis is on minimising the possibility of disaster, for which three zones of the railway - NCR, Northern Railway (NR) and Northeast Railway are being prepared on a war footing. Additionally, 21 railway overbridges or underbridges will be operational in Prayagraj before the Kumbh Mela to reduce congestion, Badoni said. An integrated mela control tower has also been set up at Prayagraj Junction for crowd control. A toll-free number, 1800-4199-139, will be available from November 1 to provide passengers with information in their mother tongue, Badoni said, adding that they will be able to avail information about all kinds of facilities on this number. Around 8,000 employees, including 2,200 Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel, will be deployed from other districts to ensure the convenience and safety of devotees, the officer said. KUMBH NAGAR: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is soon going to announce the temporary district of Kumbh

Nagar for Mahakumbh 2025 in Prayagraj. Preparations for this purpose are going on in full swing. On the orders of the government, a committee of a dozen high officials including the DM, SSP of Mahakumbh Nagar and DM and DCP City, ADM City of Prayagraj district was formed last month. The committee had fixed the area of police station and tehsil along with the border of both the districts. After the completion of the survey work, its report was also sent to the government. Mahakumbh 2025 Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand said in view of Mahakumbh 2025, a new district is to be declared for the stipulated time. All preparations have been completed for this purpose. In this, along with the DM, the entire administrative and police staff will be deployed for the notified area. Everything will be clear in the notification. There will be clarity on the roads regarding crowd management. TEMPORARY MELA OFFICE: The temporary works of Mahakumbh 2025 will now gain momentum. On Thursday the 'bhoomi puja' of the temporary Mela office to be

built on the Parade Ground was performed amid chanting of Vedic mantras. Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand performed the 'bhoomi puja' and laid the first brick. Now the camp will be constructed here. In the coming days, all the works of Mahakumbh will be completed from this office along with the distribution of land and facilities to more than 10 thousand organizations. The temporary office of the Mela Authority is built under the dam on the mela area at the Triveni Marg. On Thursday, Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand performed the 'bhoomi puja' of this office. It is being told that the construction work of this office will be completed within a month. After which all the officers and employees including the Mela Adhikari will complete the day-to-day work from this office. The Mela Adhikari said there will be seating arrangements for the people coming during the Mahakumbh. During the 'bhoomi puja', ADM Dayanand Prasad, ADM Dr. Vivek Chaturvedi, and others were present.

10 involved in begging rescued under drive

Varanasi (PNS): The district administration has been running Bhikshavriti Mukti Kashi Abhiyan for the last one year with the aim to make the city free from begging. Five teams have been formed at the district level to rescue the beggars. The Bhikshavriti Mukti Kashi Abhiyan is being conducted by Superintendent of Social

Welfare Anil Kumar Amedkar, District Probation Officer Shivendra Pratap Singh, Tax Inspector of Municipal Corporation Subhash Tiwari, Child Welfare Officer and police force of Adampur police station. District Social Welfare Officer Girish Chand Dubey said that a campaign was launched by the

teams to rescue the beggars at Raighat, Namoo Ghat, Bhausa Kund and other religious places under Adampur and Jaitpura police stations in which 10 persons involved in begging were rescued. They have been accommodated in the Apna Ghar Ashram at Samne Ghat where they are being provided with pure food, drinking water and health care.

Three houses burgled

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Three houses were burgled in Ram Nagar village under Maharajpur police station area on Wednesday night. Miscreants stole cash and jewellery worth lakhs of rupees from there. On Thursday morning, when the villagers went towards the field, they found some household goods scattered there. On getting information about the incident police rushed to the spot and carried out investigation. According to a report, Sonam of Ram Nagar, Maharajpur, said she along with family members had gone to attend a programme at her relative's house on Wednesday. On Thursday morning, neighbours

informed about the theft in her house. On reaching the house, she found broken lock of the room and open almirah and boxes. The entire household goods were found ransacked. She said jewellery worth lakh of rupees and Rs 10,000 cash were found missing. Meanwhile, Kaushal of same locality said after dinner on Wednesday he slept in the verandah. On waking up on Thursday morning, he found the locks of box containing Rs 20,000 broken and cash missing. Miscreants also committed theft in the house of Ram Khilawan in Ram Nagar. His wife Shanti said on Thursday morning, she found the locks of boxes broken and jewellery

and cash of Rs 5,000 missing from there. Sausaul outpost incharge Dharmendra Verma said a probe was on. Table Tennis Tournament: The 3rd Stag Global UP State Ranking Table Tennis Tournament jointly organised by The Sportz Hub and Kanpur Table Tennis Association will be held from October 14 to 16 at the TSH court, Arya Nagar. Addressing mediapersons, President of UPTTA Sanjay Pathak 'Bobby', secretary Sanjay Tandon and Director (Operations) PK Srivastava and RP Singh of TSH said around 600 players, including many of national and international repute, from all over the state will participate in the 3-day tournament.

38 persons book flats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

As many as 38 persons booked their flats in KDA Dreams multi-storied apartment in Shatabdi Nagar in a camp organised there on Wednesday. Earlier, Vice-Chairman Madan Singh Garbaly inaugurated the camp in the presence of senior officials and the prospective buyers. The camp was organised for the registration and sale of 100 flats only in KDA Dreams. Around 200-225 persons visited the camp and took a round of the flats and entire compound. They praised the quality of flats, greenery and open area in the compound. After inspecting the flats, total 89 persons bought the



brochure/registration booklet while 38 of them booked their flats on the spot. In the KDA Dreams multi-storied apartment, around 40 per cent area was left for the greenery and parking space. The apartment is also equipped with the lift, CCTV/Security, power back up and other amenities. All the flats are ready to live. The camp would continue till October 11 from 11 am to 5 pm. Initially, rates for first 100 flats were fixed at ₹34.17 lakh each which could also be increased in due course. Interested people can book flats against deposit of only 10 per cent cost and start living by depositing 50 per cent value and entering into a contract.

Mental health fair organised

Varanasi (PNS): A huge mental health fair was organised at the Primary Health Centre (PHC) Harhua on the occasion of World Mental Health Day on Thursday. It was inaugurated by gram pradhan Anwar Ali who in his address congratulated Harhua PHC on receiving the Kayakalp Award. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary by adopting a positive attitude towards mental health, we can move towards a healthy and happy society. PHC in-charge Dr Santosh Kumar said this year's theme of World Mental Health Day is 'Time to prioritise mental health at the workplace.'

BJP set for swearing-in Haryana post Dussehra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/ CHANDIGARH

The swearing-in of the new BJP government in Haryana is likely to take place after Dussehra and factors like caste and region equations may be considered while deciding the cabinet. A BJP leader from the state said the swearing-in ceremony of the new government is likely to take place after Dussehra festival, which falls on October 12. Haryana can have a maximum of 14 ministers, including the chief minister. BJP now has nine MLAs from the Dalit community, eight with Punjabi origins, seven Brahmins, and six each from the Jats and the Yadavs. The party now also has Gurjars, Rajputs, Vaishyas, and an OBC leader. Eight out of 10 ministers in the outgoing Saini cabinet faced defeat in the Haryana assembly polls. The two who won are Mahipal Dhand and Mool Chand Sharma from Panipat Rural and Ballabhgarh seats respectively. Both Dhand, who comes from the Jat community, and Sharma, a



senior leader and a Brahmin face, are among the ministerial probables in the new government, sources said. Nayab Singh Saini had met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior BJP leaders in Delhi on Wednesday ahead of his likely swearing-in as the head of the new dispensation in the state following the party's win in the assembly polls. On Thursday, Saini also met Union minister and the BJP's election in-charge for

Haryana, Dharmendra Pradhan, in the national capital. The BJP had indicated during the elections that Saini, who replaced Manohar Lal Khattar as chief minister in March and hails from the Other Backward Classes, will be its choice for the top post if it wins. The party ended up with its best-ever haul of 48 seats, 11 more than the Congress. The JJP and the AAP were decimated and the INLD managed to win just two

seats. The BJP, which pulled off a hat-trick of wins by bucking anti-incumbency, managed to make significant inroads into the Dalit seats and Jat strongholds and continued its dominance in the Ahirwal belt. Out of 17 Scheduled Caste (SC) seats in Haryana, the BJP won eight assembly constituencies. Among the leaders from the Dalit community who could be in reckoning for the ministerial berths include senior leader Krishan Lal Panwar, who won from Israna seat and Krishan Kumar Panwar, a Rajya Sabha member, had fought the assembly elections. Former MLA Krishan Kumar, who won from Narwana, could also be the ministerial choice. In the Ahirwal belt in south Haryana, the party won ten of the eleven seats. Most of the candidates in this belt are believed to be close to Union Minister and Gurgaon MP, Rao Inderjit Singh. Rao's daughter Arti Singh Rao, who won from Ateli seat, is also in reckoning for a ministerial berth. Om Prakash Yadav,

who won from Narnaul and senior leader Rao Narbir Singh, who won from Badshahpur, are also in the race, sources said. Among other women faces in addition to Arti, senior leader Kiran Choudhry's daughter Shruti, a former MP, who won from Tosham assembly seat, Shakti Rani Sharma, who won from Kalka, are also in the race. While all the three independents who won have declared that they will support the new government once it is formed, among them Hisar MLA Savitri Jindal's name has not been ruled out from the ministerial race, sources said. Among others in contention include BJP leaders Anil Vij (Ambala Cantt), Shyam Singh Rana (Radaur), Jagmohan Anand (Karnal), Harvinder Kalyan (Gharaunda), Krishan Lal Middha (Jind), Arvind Kumar Sharma (Gohana), Vipul Goel (Faridabad), Nikhil Madaan (Sonapat) and Ghanshyam Dass (Yamunanagar). Devender Attri, who won from Uchana Kalan, is also a probable.

Aviation pioneer Ratan Tata's legacy lives on

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI

An architect by qualification and an aviator by passion, Ratan Tata embarked on his heavenly journey more than two-and-a-half years after loss-making Air India fly back to the Tata hangar. Tata, 86, breathed his last on the night of October 9, little over a month before the completion of the Air India-Vistara merger that will also see Singapore Airlines snapping up 25.1 per cent stake in Air India. He flew planes and fighter aircraft but his longing for Tatas to pilot Air India again remained a dream till January 2022. For years, many headwinds came the way in the group's efforts to come back into the aviation space through Air India. Finally, the aviation efforts took wings, first with AirAsia India and the second with Vistara, a joint venture with Singapore Airlines. AirAsia India which changed its name to AIX Connect and got merged with Air India Express on October 1 this year first took to the skies in 2014

as a joint venture with Malaysia's AirAsia Berhad. The budget airline later was wholly-owned by the Tata Group. Vistara started flying in January 2015 as a full-service carrier. "The Tata Group welcomes Air India's new customers and is excited to work together to make Air India the airline of choice in terms of passenger comfort and service," Ratan Tata said in a message days after completing the acquisition of the airline on January 27, 2022. Set up by JRD Tata in 1932, Tata Airlines was later nationalised and the name was also changed to Air India. Over the years, Ratan Tata's longing to bring back Air India under the stewardship of Tata Group remained a dream. Back in 1994, Tata Group and Singapore Airlines made efforts to set up a joint venture airline in India. Six years later, they again tried to enter the country's aviation market, this time by teaming up to acquire stakes in Air India. However, the two attempts did not take-off. Finally, the

dream was realised as Vistara took to the Indian skies in January 2015. And in November 2022, Tata Group announced the merger of Vistara with Air India. Singapore Airlines CEO Goh Choon Phong, who described Tata as a cherished partner and a dear friend, said Tata played a pivotal role in setting up Vistara over a decade ago, laying the foundation for a strong and enduring relationship between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines. According to Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan, the aviation vertical was especially close to Tata's heart. In the words of Remi Maillard, President & Managing Director at Airbus India & South Asia, Tata's passion for aviation is well known and his zeal and vision for the revival of Air India as part of the Tata family will continue to inspire. While paying tributes to Tata, InterGlobe Enterprises Group Managing Director Rahul Bhatia on Thursday said IndiGo will, ever so modestly, walk alongside Air India to secure India's rightful seat at the centre stage of global aviation.

RSS to hold national executive meeting in Mathura

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Senior RSS functionaries will deliberate on a range of contemporary issues and chalk out future plans during a two-day national executive meeting of the organisation scheduled to begin in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura on October 25. The meeting in Parkham village near the temple town will also discuss the "organisational goals" that has to be achieved by next year when the RSS completes 100 years of its foundation, according to a statement uploaded by the organisation on its website on Thursday. "This year, the meeting of the Akhil Bharatiya Karyakari Mandal of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is going to be held on 25 and 26 October in Parkham village



near Mathura in Braj province of western Uttar Pradesh," RSS national media and communications in-charge Sunil Ambekar said in the statement. All the heads of the RSS' 46 provincial units, general secretaries and 'pracharak's' are expected to attend the meeting, he said.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, general secretary Dattatereya Hosabale, all joint general secretaries and other members of the national executive will be present at the meeting, he added. Ahead of the national executive meeting, Bhagwat will deliver his annual speech on the occasion of Vijayadashami at Reshimbaug ground in Nagpur on Saturday. "There will be a detailed discussion in the meeting on the plans for follow-up of the important issues (to be mentioned in the speech of the Sarsangchalak ji (RSS chief) on the occasion of Vijayadashami," Ambekar said. The national executive at its meeting will also discuss "contemporary issues" in the country, he added.

CJI advocates judicial independence and transparency at Bhutan forum

PTI ■ NEW DELHI,

Judges are supposed to act in a manner that is "unencumbered" by popular morality while deciding constitutional and legal questions, Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud has said. The CJI on Wednesday was speaking at the Bhutan Distinguished Speakers' Forum, a part of the Jigme Singye Wangchuck Lecture Series, on the subject of 'Judicial legitimacy through accessibility, transparency and technology: the Indian experience'. He also spoke on the credibility of judiciary and the "institutional trust" bestowed in courts. The 50th CJI said institutional trust in courts and their credibility was the very basis of a thriving constitutional order

and the courts did not directly hold resources as trustees of people. "Public trust is central to the credibility of the judicial branch which is otherwise insulated from public opinion in its operations as it must be. The Indian Supreme Court prides itself in being the people's court," the CJI said. Judiciary on several occasions questioned the distributional fairness of state largesse such as contracts and natural resources by other wings of the government, he added. He further opined that though as public functionaries, courts were vested with the responsibility to give effect to equity, these judicial bodies were not directly in charge of the manner in which resources were to be distributed. "It does, however, fall upon us

to adjudicate the fairness of that distribution, should it be questioned," added the CJI. Distinguishing between the role of the political executive and the judiciary, he emphasised that at the level of the trial courts, judicial officers were trained to apply the letter and the spirit of the law with clinical detachment from the popularity of their decisions. "Judges are supposed to act in a manner that is unencumbered by popular morality when deciding Constitutional or legal questions," he said. According to the CJI, it was in that sense that neither the appointment, nor the continuity of judges was determined by the popular mandate enjoyed by their decisions. "In fact populist

decision-making sits rather uncomfortably on the sinewy shoulders of judicial independence," he said. Highlighting the importance of transparency, CJI Chandrachud said sunlight was not only the best disinfectant but also begets public trust and helps keep the house in order and serves as an internal check on the functioning of the courts across the country. "It ensures that our institutions are better-managed and use their resources effectively," he said, adding that measures such as live-streaming of court proceedings have helped foster internal efficiency and institutional stability. He also referred to the concept of Public Interest

Litigation jurisdiction in India and said it became a unique part of the nation's constitutional order, which was co-opted by several other jurisdictions. "Substantive outcomes are only a part of the courts' accountability. Judicial institutions are assessed by the people based on substantive metrics such as consistency of outcomes and adherence to constitutional values of equity, fairness and justice," he said. Pointing out that not only judicial decisions but also the roads leading up to them, must be transparent, navigable by everyone with or without a legal education and must be broad enough to accommodate everyone, the CJI said India has been using technology to counter barriers to accessibility to the courts.

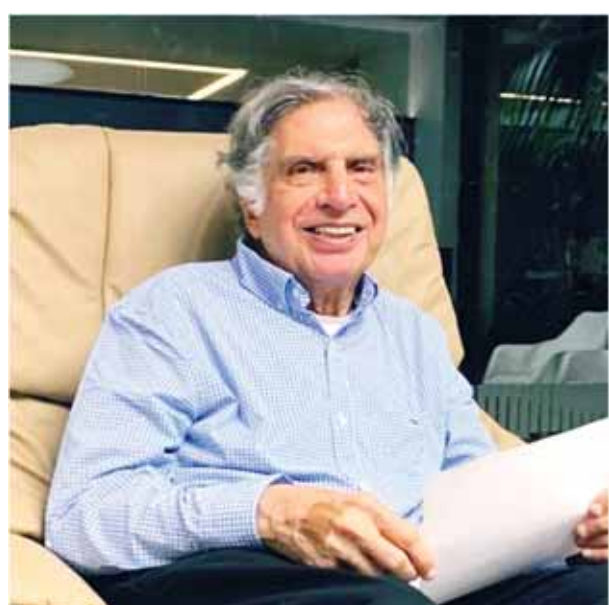
Bollywood mourns industrialist Ratan Tata's demise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/ HYDERABAD

Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, and SS Rajamouli were among the prominent cinema personalities who mourned the death of Tata Group's chairman emeritus and legendary industrialist Ratan Tata. Telugu film personalities, including Chiranjeevi, Mahesh Babu, Junior NTR and others on Thursday mourned the demise of veteran industrialist Ratan Tata, hailing his philanthropy and contributions to the country's industrial progress. Bachchan called Tata's death the end of an era. The megastar, who along with Bipasha Basu and John Abraham, had worked in the 2004 film 'Aetbaar' produced by Tata. "Just came to learn of the passing of Shri Ratan Tata .. Was working very late .. An era has ended .. A most respected, humble yet visionary leader of immense

foresight and resolve. Spent some wonderful moments with him, during several Campaigns we were involved in together. My prayers," Bachchan said in a social media post. Basu remembered the industrialist for his simplicity and empathy. In a social media post, Salman said he was "deeply saddened" by Tata's passing. "Goodbye to The Titan... Fly high like you loved... And oh how you taught us to love," Kareena Kapoor Khan wrote alongside a picture of a younger Tata, who held licenses to fly both jets and helicopters, sitting in a fighter plane. Ajay Devgn, who was one of the first film stars to pay condolence, said the world mourns the loss of a visionary. "Ratan Tata's legacy will forever inspire generations. His contributions to India and beyond are immeasurable. We are deeply grateful. Rest in peace, Sir," he wrote on the microblogging

site. Priyanka said Tata touched the lives of millions through his kindness. Alia Bhatt said Tata taught multiple generations "what it is to give". Diljit, who is currently on the European leg of his 'Dil-Luminati Tour', paid homage to the entrepreneur at his concert in Dusseldorf, Germany. "It was important to mention his name here because his life was all about hard work. I never read anywhere that he spoke ill of anyone. "He did hard work and charity, and that's what life is. To be helpful to people. He lived an unblemished life," said the singer-actor, in a video posted by his team on social media. Legends are born, and they live forever, said Rajamouli. "It's hard to imagine a day without using a TATA product. Ratan Tata's legacy is woven into everyday life. If anyone will stand the test of time alongside the



Panchabhootas, it's him," the filmmaker said. Akshay Kumar said he was "heartbroken" to hear about Tata's demise. "The world bids farewell to a man who built more than just an empire... His legacy of

kindness, innovation, and leadership will continue to inspire generations. Rest in peace, a true legend. Om Shanti," he wrote on X. Dharmendra said his dream of meeting Tata remained unfulfilled. "A humble king,

who after his workers like his own children. Sir, you will always be remembered with great love and respect," the veteran star said in a social media post. Actor-host Simi Garewal, who once hosted Tata on her popular talk show 'Rendezvous With Simi Garewal', penned a heartfelt note for him. "They say you have gone. It's too hard to bear your loss too hard Farewell my friend," she wrote. Veteran actor and TMC MP Shatrughan Sinha called Tata a 'Bharat Ratna' in true sense. "Finest human being, philanthropist business tycoon our very own #RatanTata is no more. His contributions to society/nation are enormous. Thoughts & prayers are with the family & friends in their hour of grief for their irreplaceable & irreparable loss. Rest in eternal peace (sic)," Sinha wrote. Ranveer Singh shared a black-and-white photo of Tata with an infinity emoticon. For

Kamal Haasan, he was a "personal hero". "A national treasure whose contributions in nation-building shall forever be etched in the story of modern India. His true richness lay not in material wealth but in his ethics, integrity, humility and patriotism," he wrote. The "Indian 2" star recalled meeting Tata in the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai attacks while he was staying at the iconic Taj Hotel. "In that moment of national crisis, the titan stood tall and became the embodiment of the Indian spirit, to rebuild and emerge stronger as a nation." Actor and fellow Parsi Boman Irani praised Tata for his contributions to the country, ranging from industry, philanthropy, elegance, humanity and his angel like devotion to animals. "What an honourable human being. Rest in peace Sir," said Sushmita Sen. "Deeply saddened by the tragic news of Shri Ratan Tata. He upheld the

values of integrity, grace, dignity through everything he did and was truly an icon and Taj of India. RIP Sir, you have touched so many lives," wrote actor Anushka Sharma. Telugu film personalities, including Chiranjeevi, Mahesh Babu, Junior NTR mourned the demise of veteran industrialist, hailing his philanthropy and contributions to the country's industrial progress. Ratan Tata's demise is a sad day for all Indians. For generations together, there is not a single Indian whose life has not been touched by his services one way or the other, Chiranjeevi said. "One of the greatest visionaries our country has ever seen, a truly legendary industrialist, a philanthropist extraordinaire and a human being par excellence, Shri Ratan Tata's contributions not only built the illustrious TATA brand into a global powerhouse but also stupendously contributed to our Nation building," he said.

CDSCO scrutinises social media influencers promoting misleading medical content

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Social media influencers and telehealth companies engaged in promoting false and misleading medical prescriptions or medicines on online platforms beware! They are under the scrutiny of India's top drug regulator, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) aiming to protect consumers from false claims that promise quick fixes, ensuring that accurate and safe medical information prevails. "We are taking appropriate actions against such deceptive medical contents" Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), CDSCO Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi said, though he did not share the



number of such cases in which action has been taken so far. The DCGI was talking to reporters on the sidelines of the CII Pharma and Life Sciences summit here recently. Consumer activists have been raising concerns about the potential risks posed by influencers and telehealth companies that disseminate deceptive medical content for

commercial gain on social media. This can place consumers at risk of severe and lasting side effects, underscoring the need for vigilance in monitoring such promotions, they say. To another query, Raghuvanshi said that manufacturers of around 45 medicines have been ordered to recall their products for not meeting quality norms, while action has been initiated to book the makers of five spurious drugs. Every month, he said the CDSCO samples and tests about more than 2,000 samples from the market, and out of that, "some 40-50, of them fail in one or the other parameter, which could be very minor parameters, also not of any health risk and we

put those details on our portal." The Drug and Cosmetics Act, has all the provisions to take care of the issue related to fake medicine and spurious drugs, he said. Last month, more than 50 drugs, including antacids and paracetamol, were listed in CDSCO's monthly list of substandard or fake medicines sold in India. Department of Pharmaceuticals, Secretary Arunish Chawla talked about the measures being taken for drug development in India and said that as many as 16 blockbuster molecules targeted for a wide range of therapeutic areas, including cancer, diabetes, HIV and tuberculosis, are in the pipeline to be produced in India.

NHRC seeks explanation from Delhi authorities over fatal drain incidents

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has raised concerns over five fatal incidents involving open drains in the national capital reported over the past four months, including the recent death of a five-year-old boy in Alipur. Other cases involved a 32-year-old man in Bhajanpura, a seven-year-old boy in Ashok Vihar, and fatalities in Ghazipur and Burari. Taking serious view in the matter highlighting gross negligence by civic authorities the Apex human rights body on Thursday said that it has issued notices to the Delhi Government, the city police chief, the DDA and the MCD over reports that a five-year-old boy died allegedly after falling into an open drain in Alipur area of northwest Delhi on October 7.



The NHRC has observed the contents of the news report about death of the boy last week and noted that the contractor, who worked there, had reportedly left the drain open at various places without placing any warning signs, the statement by the NHRC said. This case and similar incidents in the recent past, if true, raise a serious issue of violation of the human rights of the victims due to

apparent negligence of the civic authorities, said the rights body. It is indeed very concerning that such incidents indicating negligence by the public authorities continue to happen in the national capital. Many human lives were reported lost due to drowning and electrocution in Delhi of which it had taken suo motu cognisance and asked the authorities to be vigilant, the rights panel

said. Accordingly, "it has issued notices to the chief secretary, government of Delhi, the commissioner of Delhi Police, the vice-chairman of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the commissioner of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), seeking a detailed report within four weeks," the statement said. The report is expected to include the status of the FIRs in all such cases, action taken against officials responsible, and compensation, if any, paid to the next of kin of the deceased. The Commission would also like to know about the steps taken or proposed by the authorities to stop recurrence of such incidents, the statement said. The NHRC emphasised the need for accountability and improved safety measures to prevent such tragedies in the future.



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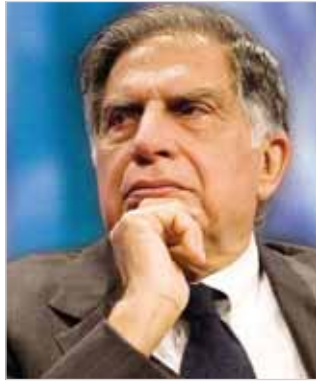
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PAPER WITH PASSION

India loses its 'Ratan'

Ratan Tata not only redefined Indian business practices but also set new standards for ethical leadership and corporate responsibility

The passing of Ratan Tata, one of India's most influential and revered business leaders, marks the end of an era for Indian industry and philanthropy. A visionary who transformed the Tata Group into a global powerhouse, Ratan Tata not only redefined Indian business practices but also set new standards for ethical leadership and corporate responsibility. His demise has left an indelible void in the Indian business landscape and his contributions will continue to shape India's socio-economic fabric for generations to come. Ratan Tata's leadership of the Tata Group from 1991 to 2012 is widely recognised as a period of extraordinary innovation and growth. He was instrumental in leading the conglomerate's diversification, moving it beyond its traditional industries like steel and textiles into sectors such as information technology, automotive, telecommunications and hospitality. Under his stewardship, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) became a global leader in IT services. Tata Motors expanded its reach with the acquisitions of British automotive giants Jaguar and Land Rover in 2008. Tata's vision of making India a global player was rooted in a deep sense of nationalism, combined with a keen awareness of global business trends. Ratan Tata's most cherished moment came when Tata Motors launched the Nano in 2008 despite all odds. Though the Nano did not achieve commercial success, the boldness of the vision highlighted Tata's commitment to solving Indian problems with innovative solutions and realising the aspirations of Indian middle class. Known for his humility and discretion, he always emphasised that businesses should serve society at large. "We have to touch the lives of people in ways



that matter," Tata often said. Nearly two-thirds of Tata Group's profits are directed to social work through Tata Trusts, a remarkable legacy in Indian philanthropy. The Tata Trusts, under his guidance, funded several initiatives in healthcare, education and rural development. Tata maintained a reputation for being soft-spoken and modest, rarely allowing his personal life to take centre stage in the public eye. His leadership during the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, where the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel was one of the primary targets, showed his resilience. Tata visited the families of affected staff members, providing support and ensuring that the hotel was rebuilt, symbolising the spirit of survival and recovery. Despite numerous achievements, Tata faced failures with grace. His decisions, such as the Nano, received criticism, but he handled setbacks with the dignity that defined him. His resilience and forward-thinking approach is his legacy that would inspire many. Ratan Tata's life was not just about business. His love for architecture, aviation and cars was well known. Despite his status as one of India's richest individuals, he led a simple life, often seen without an entourage, and known for driving himself. With Ratan Tata's passing, India has lost a visionary and a kind hearted leader who would be remembered for his achievements and resilience. Rest in peace!

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PICTALK



People purchase decorative items from a shop ahead of 'Ayudha Pooja' festival, in Bengaluru

Why technology can't ease people's suffering



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

While advancements in technology have improved lives in many areas, the failure to mitigate the destruction caused by recurring floods exposes a glaring disconnect

The rains were here. They were here for a long time—if one goes by the weeks and months, the news channels were reporting their havoc from one end of the country to the other. From streets in Surat to fields in Biraol of Darbhanga, water was found everywhere. From the hills of Himachal to the banks of Kavery, water was found in all the wrong places. Physical devastation and human tragedy were writ large. Rains are not new, and equally clearly, technology is progressing by leaps and bounds.

One wonders when 'the train shall meet'. One would have thought that repeated experiences, such as what Kosi has caused in north Bihar, would have changed the contours of its effects. It would not be the same in terms of embankments breaking in the same style, and it would not be the same manner of misery caused by the devastation of fragile huts and repeated breaking of embankments over and over again. Surely the country that boasts the landing on the moon and explorations of the planet can better respond to the devastations of nature.

There is a missing link somewhere which is so close to all that it's not even visible to the affected people. In some other countries, people are talking and doing as it were. They are changing the course of rivers and planning habitation in a manner that makes life less vulnerable and the potential for tragedy more manageable. To get back to the example of Bihar, whether it be the neighbourhood of the Budhi Gandak River or Kosi, habitations have been built to keep them away from the reach of floods.

However, the devastations have their ways of surprising. Consider the recent claim of the UGC Chairman in the printed world about the citations of Indian research in international forums. Consider the pronouncement of the political elite on the scientific breakthroughs of leading centres of science and



technology in the world of research.

All of them are legitimate claims duly annotated and evidence tested. The question remains how much of this technology has altered the quality of life of the people? It is not all a dreary story. Technology has changed the lives of several crores of people, especially in matters which have to do with the supply of clean water. This is as true as the story of the fury of floods.

However, somewhere the coexistence of such opposite experiences remains an enigma and difficult to explain. Science and technology cannot be bereft of responsibilities to society at large. Equally clear is the fact that death and destruction experiences would serve as the bottom line of the outcomes of devastation.

Somehow a bottom connection between technological progress and its tangible effects needs to be established. Somewhere the definition of progress and growth



THEY ARE CHANGING THE COURSE OF RIVERS AND PLANNING HABITATION IN A MANNER THAT MAKES LIFE LESS VULNERABLE AND THE POTENTIAL FOR TRAGEDY MORE MANAGEABLE

has to cover elimination of the same stories of destruction and death in the same regions over and over again. So long as the devastation of Kosi remains an annual affair with the same results most of the time, there is something in the developmental agenda that needs to be addressed. It is not an easy question to answer, especially after decades of application of the prescriptions whether it be a Planning Commission or the Niti Ayog. These questions need to be flagged and repeated till answers are found. In a country filled with bright people like India, there must be actionable solutions to mitigate human misery. Perhaps the part answer would lie in empowering local people with skills, resources, and more to handle local problems. Higher levels of administration, like the district at the state level, have to deal with issues of connectivity, coordination, mobilisation of resources, and using the skills of the people with commitment in

that part of the country to work for the welfare of the local context and the local circumstances. Far too much have rewards been focused on recognition gained abroad and talking of the big and the grand.

While there may be nothing wrong with that recognition and solutions to local problems should be picked up by the decision making system, the influential clientele, and the political elite. A culture has to be built to identify the local problems and use means of technology and resources to handle them at a local level. Interventions of this variety should recognise the same approval and celebration as an invitation from abroad or for that matter making of the great in a foreign institution. Somewhere a paradigm change would help the mitigation of local problems. It can be done and needs to be done.

(The writer is an internationally acclaimed management consultant; The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RATAN TATA IS NO MORE

Madam—A true gem can only be distinguished by its value and brightness. However, if a gem is hidden within a person, its value and sparkle are not visible to recognise it. Ratan Tata, India's famous industrialist, was another such figure whose contributions will be remembered for centuries to come. Everyone knows about his outstanding social efforts and affection for pets. Ratan Tata had a heart that beat for dogs till his last breath. Ratan Tata was nothing short of a deity to the stray dogs roaming the streets, which others looked down on or ignored. The doors of his Taj Hotel were always open to dogs. Ratan Tata asked for aid by posting a photo of a dog on his Instagram account on June 26, 2024.

He posted a lengthy post requesting a blood transfusion for the seven-month-old dog. After that, several people brought their dogs to give blood transfusions. Ratan Tata founded the Small Animal Hospital Mumbai (SAHM), the first of its kind in the country, equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for 24/7 care, inspired by his struggle to find advanced treatment for his dog abroad. He encouraged people to adopt stray dogs rather than buying pets, promoting animal welfare.

Amrapali Roy | Jamshedpur

KASHMIR REJECTS BJP

Madam—This is in response to the report titled 'Victory for Democracy'. It is strange why one and only the 'reverberations' of the Haryana mandate would travel 'far and wide,' but not that handed out by the Jammu and Kashmir electorate! Despite so zealous chest-thumping revolving around the 'peace' in Kashmir Valley following the "historic" saga of 5th August 2019, the BJP simply gets thwarted in the region. However, the result is far from surprising, as no self-respecting Kashmiri Muslim will ever vote for a party swearing in the name of Hindutva in this

Press freedom is sacrosanct



The Supreme Court's recent ruling affirming the right of journalists to criticise the government without retaliatory action comes as a breather for the media's honest warriors—journalists—who do not want to join the bandwagon in sucking up to those in power. However, doubts remain as to how far this momentous judgement will

hold water. The "one man show" that we have witnessed over the past decade offers very little hope that the SC's verdict will be honoured (remember how the SC's dictate that bail, not jail ought to be the rule is being flouted almost to the point of being ignored).

If the PM has a grudge against a "colonial mindset," ordinary Indians have a lot to complain about a "post-colonial mindset," as displayed by not only the present dispensation but the Congress before it. Even before Modi took over in the year 2014, the media was not as independent as expected in a nation that is supposedly rooted in democratic principles. Modi has only picked up from where the Congress left, as far as freedom of the press is concerned.

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

multi-religious secular nation and also would never forgive such elements who had made a mockery of federalism not only by unilaterally abrogating special provisions and rights guaranteed by the Constitution itself but also dividing the state and relegating it to a mere Union Territory. Kashmiri electorate have transmitted a clear message that communal forces should be thwarted not only by protesting against it but also through wise tactical voting so that secular votes get polled in favour of the strongest party/coalition by preventing division of votes. And surely if the victory of the BJP in Haryana is "Triumph of democracy," that of the National Conference-Congress alliance in Jammu and Kashmir also demands the same epithet! Let the mandate of the Union Territory (especially Kashmir Valley) reverberate and travel far and wide, giving the secular force renewed vigour and hope that the Idea of India can still be saved by standing in a united way.

Kajal Chatterjee | Chennai

EXIT POLLS FAIL

Madam—It is not for the first time that the exit polls have proven wrong and detailed methodologies for the recent election surveys were not used. In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, exit polls overestimated the BJP-led NDA performance, projecting over 400 seats when the alliance actually secured 293. A large number of pollsters in India now failed to accurately predict election outcomes in Haryana and J and K. In Haryana, most agencies had forecast fewer than 30 seats for the BJP, but official results showed the party winning 48 out of 90 seats. Pollsters had predicted 10-year anti-incumbency but proved altogether wrong.

Voters in J and K kept parties guessing till the very end. For all the speculative intrigue ahead of J and K's much awaited election, J and K (NC 42, BJP 29, Cong 6) spoke as one—no-hung verdict. Pollsters got it wrong.

SK Khosla | Chandigarh

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

MSMEs and food processing: A path to economic growth

Revitalising the MSME and food processing sectors in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, can boost economic growth, raise farmers' incomes and strengthen food security

Both Bihar and Andhra Pradesh have been advocating for special government packages, emphasising the importance of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) as a key driver for development. The governments of these states, as well as the central government, recognise the significant potential in the MSME sector, particularly in food processing, and have prioritised it accordingly. Chief Ministers N Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar share concerns over the stagnation of the MSME sector in recent years, and both are committed to reviving it through various initiatives.

In Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Naidu has acknowledged the struggles faced by MSMEs over the past five years, emphasising the need to revitalise the sector. He highlighted the slow progress of MSME parks and raised concerns over pending government incentives, which have hampered the sector's growth. His administration aims to address these challenges by ensuring the release of overdue incentives and enhancing the participation of



farmers in MSME parks. By linking farmers directly to these parks, Naidu envisions a system where agricultural stakeholders can benefit directly from business opportunities. Similarly, Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has voiced concerns about MSMEs and infrastructure development in his state. Kumar has aligned with Naidu in recognising the critical role of MSMEs in driving economic growth and ensuring regional prosperity. The coincidence of Bihar's representation in the central government, with ministers like Jitan Ram Manjhi and Chirag Paswan, has further fueled efforts to secure the necessary support for these initiatives. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi has encouraged these ministers to focus on fostering connections between DWCR groups and MSMEs to enhance economic opportunities for small enterprises. A significant allocation of Rs 100 crore as a credit guarantee for MSMEs has been announced, underscoring the importance of ensuring financial support for these small businesses. However, meaningful progress in the MSME sector is unlikely unless strong linkages are created between MSMEs and the food processing industry, as these sectors are highly interdependent.

The food processing industry, in particular, has been recognised as a powerful engine for economic growth. India is one of the largest producers of various food items, including milk, fruits, vegetables, millet, tea and fish. This creates a robust foundation for the growth of the food processing sector. India's position as one of the largest and fastest-growing economies in the world is bolstered by the significant role played by the food processing industry in ensuring food security and driving economic expansion.

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries reported that by the end of FY 2022-23, the sector contributed 7.66 per cent of the gross value added (GVA) in manufacturing and 8.45 per cent of the GVA in agriculture. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector has been strong, with Rs 5,290.27 crore in 2021-22 and Rs 2,934.12 crore in 2020-21. However, challenges remain, as processed food exports saw a 17 per cent decline in FY24, dropping from \$13,078.3 million in the previous fiscal to \$10,881.81 million.

To address these challenges and promote growth, the government has implemented several initiatives, including the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY), Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industries (PLISFPI), and Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME). By increasing processing levels and creating employment, these programs also aim to raise farmers' incomes.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH



FIRST COLUMN

SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS

We must focus on solving our own problems objectively without going into cyclic thinking



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

This is very wise to do. Because we must be the prime movers for this. But we are in denial or wish to make a good impression on others. Mostly, we don't. We go into cyclic thinking; and get obsessed with our problems. This is not solving our problems. On the contrary, we are making them worse. Surprisingly, we have solutions to the problems of others, societies, nations, etc. Some of them may be good because we are likely to be objective about them. This is great except that we are not being asked. Then, there are other limitations. When it is our problem, we see mostly the dark side and do not think about how solving it will benefit us.

Regarding issues of others, we are also not seeing the nature of the person. We assume that they will be perfect without any faults like being ignorant, egoist, etc. Their circumstances may be very different from ours. In short, it is a complete waste of time to think of the problems of others. I have realised this, and now I try to focus on my problems; I have plenty. Out of them, I have chosen the six most important ones. As in my habit, I seek solutions from the Bhagavad-Geeta – the book of eternal wisdom. I will begin with the most pressing, which is being fearful. What has Lord Krishna instructed about this fundamental matter? (Verse # 2.40) In simple language, it means that one should take shelter from God to reduce fears.

I have done this and my fearful tendencies have reduced appreciably. Whenever I become fearful, I pray for guidance and help from



my Lord. Believe it; He guides and helps. My next serious problem is getting sexual thoughts and feelings. Lord Krishna has given its solution too. (3.43) I have realised that I cannot reason my way out of it. For example, I use lots of internet for useful information. What does pop out in between? I am getting good practice to press the Back – button. For the younger lot, the Lord has a solution too. He has allowed 'kama' (passion) in beings according to 'dharma' (religious principles). The third problem I seriously face is not being sincere about taking shelter from God. The tapasya (austerity) required defeats me.

The reason of course is the nature of my body. The mind, the senses and the intelligence all are material, and the tapasya required is spiritual. What is the solution? Pray for help and keep praying. That itself is a spiritual act. You will succeed as I am getting better. The fourth problem, which is a serious challenge for me is my 'ahankar' (ego). With success comes Shankar, i.e. I am superior. What is the solution according to the Geeta? What did Lord Krishna tell Arjuna, "If you don't heed my instructions due to your ahankar, you will perish." (18.58) I try to remind myself whenever I get too puffed up; that I don't wish to perish. The fifth giver of trouble to me is my weakness to gain attention, fame, etc.

I have realised that whatever I have achieved is due to the 'kripa' (mercy) of my Lord. By myself, I am close to zero as a small soul. What did Lord Krishna tell Arjuna? (11.33) I give credit for my successes to my Lord. The last one is interpersonal relationships. I have tried to reform my near and dear ones and surely failed miserably. They will improve when they desire to. It is working especially with my grandchildren. So, I am trying to improve my behaviour. This fits with my original requirement of solving my problems.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Celebrating unity and reconciliation through art



RAJDEEP PATHAK

In a world fraught with divisions, art transcends barriers, builds bridges. "Weaving Life to Weave Peace," underscores this profound connection



In a world often marked by discord and division, art emerges as a powerful medium that transcends barriers and speaks to our shared humanity. It serves as a universal language that unites people in their collective longing for peace, healing, and reconciliation. Against this backdrop, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, in collaboration with the Embassy of Colombia in India, recently hosted a poignant exhibition titled "Weaving Life to Weave Peace," an initiative of 'Tejidos Chakana'. This significant event, held shortly after the celebrations of October 2nd – Gandhi Jayanti, and the International Day of Nonviolence – underscores the deep connection between art and the pursuit of harmony in our world. The exhibition vividly highlights the transformative power of creativity as it honours the countless lives lost to conflict in Colombia – and the world per se – a nation that has weathered its share of internal strife and lost countless innocent citizens.

The Colombian artisans, Mateo Perea Bernal and Nancy Gomez presented an extraordinary array of stunning creations crafted with fine stone beads. Each meticulously designed portrait serves as a heartfelt homage to politicians, journalists, humourists, social thinkers, and others whose lives were tragically cut short by violence. Another defining moment of the exhibition was the unveiling of a remarkable portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, crafted out of an astounding, over 1.4 million stone beads by Ambassador H.E. Mr. Victor Echeverri of Colombia in India, with flags of both the Nations imprinted through the beads.

This unique piece stands as a testament to the ideals of peace and reconciliation that Mahatma Gandhi tirelessly championed throughout his life. In a touching gesture, it was generously donated to the Gandhi Smriti, serving as a fitting tribute to the legacy of a leader who devoted himself to the principles of nonviolence, till the last breath of his life. 'Tejidos Chakana' is a transformative Colombian initiative rooted in ancestral traditions, using the art of weaving to promote peace and reconciliation. Founded by artisans, it honours indigenous techniques and



THE ARTISANS OF 'TEJIDOS CHAKANA' ARE NOT JUST CREATING OBJECTS OF BEAUTY; THEY ARE WEAVING THE VERY FABRIC OF A PEACEFUL AND UNITED FUTURE FOR THEIR NATION

local materials, preserving traditional craftsmanship while providing a platform for artisans to express their stories of struggle and resilience.

Each handcrafted piece reflects the creativity and strength of a nation recovering from conflict, weaving narratives of hope and unity for a brighter future. At the heart of 'Tejidos Chakana' is the belief that art can bridge divides and foster understanding. The initiative engages diverse communities through workshops and collaborative projects, empowering individuals to reclaim their voices and share their experiences. This cultural exchange promotes dialogue, enabling people to confront their past and imagine peaceful coexistence. Moreover, through vibrant exhibitions, 'Tejidos Chakana' celebrates the artistry and resilience of Colombian artisans, underscoring their vital role in the larger narrative of peace-building. The initiative is a testament to the power of creativity in healing communities and fostering social impact.

By promoting dialogue and cultural exchange, the aim is to foster an environment where healing can occur, allowing people to confront their past while envisioning a peaceful coexistence. The story of 'Tejidos Chakana' resonates deeply with Mahatma Gandhi's beliefs, particularly his emphasis on the use of hands, creativity, and self-reliance as essential elements of individual and societal transformation. Gandhi often spoke of the profound connection between manual labour and the soul, advocating for the dignity and significance of work that involves the hands.

He would say, "If I were a poet, I would write poetry on the possibilities of my five fingers". In his vision of education, known as 'Nai Talim' or "Basic Education," Mahatma Gandhi stressed the

importance of learning through productive activity, where creativity and craftsmanship were not merely tools for economic independence but essential means for cultivating inner peace, self-reliance, and a deeper connection with one's community. Much like 'Tejidos Chakana,' Mahatma Gandhi viewed the act of creating with one's hands as a form of empowerment, healing, and self-expression. For him, the spinning wheel, or 'charkha,' became a symbol of India's struggle for independence – more than just a tool for producing cloth, it represented self-sufficiency, unity, and the rejection of exploitative systems. By encouraging Indians to spin their yarn and weave their cloth, Gandhi ji promoted the idea that true freedom came from within, not only political or economic autonomy but also spiritual and cultural self-reliance. In both the Gandhian framework and the 'Tejidos Chakana' initiative, the act of weaving transcends its material purpose to become a metaphor for life itself. Just as threads are intricately woven to form a piece of fabric, so too are communities brought together by shared experiences, challenges, and hopes. Mahatma Gandhi believed that individual self-reliance was a precursor to true collective harmony – only when people could stand on their own feet would they be able to contribute meaningfully to the welfare of society.

Similarly, the artisans of 'Tejidos Chakana' are not just creating objects of beauty; they are weaving the very fabric of a peaceful and united future for their nation. Echoing Gandhi's ideas of community empowerment and education, as not merely a process of acquiring academic knowledge, but as a holistic development of the individual within a community setting, where the aim is to foster dialogue and cultural exchange, 'Tejidos Chakana' nur-

tures an environment of collective learning, where people confront their past traumas and work together towards reconciliation and in the process healing. This reflects Gandhi's belief in the power of community and the idea that true education is incomplete without the cultivation of moral and social values. Moreover, "Weaving Life to Weave Peace" also aligns with Gandhi's vision of nonviolence, or 'ahimsa,' as an active force for peace-building. Mahatma Gandhi believed that nonviolence was not just the absence of physical conflict but the presence of love, compassion, and understanding. In conclusion, it can be said without exaggeration that such powerful initiatives invite the world to witness the power of art as a catalyst for change, encouraging humankind to appreciate the beauty that arises from the collective journeys toward reconciliation and understanding. Moreover, through the lens of art, "Weaving Life to Weave Peace" commemorates the past and inspires hope for a future without conflicts, thereby promoting collective responsibility in weaving a tapestry of peace for generations to come.

As we engage with these artistic expressions, we are reminded that every bead, every creation, and every story contribute to a larger narrative of healing and unity in our world. In celebrating these artistic expressions, we honour the timeless message that true peace begins with the work we do ourselves – both in our hearts and with our hands. This is evident as Ambassador Victor points out that if one bead breaks, the entire frame collapses, signifying the unifying strength of community and peace-building. They are what can be called, "Peace Beads".

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

India's nutrition paradox: Tackling hidden hunger amid food sufficiency

The Global Hunger Index 2023 ranks India 111th out of 125 countries, highlighting that malnutrition, stunting and micronutrient deficiencies remain widespread

While India is not a country of widespread starvation, it does face significant challenges related to undernutrition and hidden hunger, particularly in rural areas. India has achieved self-sufficiency in food production and implemented programs to improve food access, such as the National Food Security Act and the National Nutrition Mission. However, issues like micronutrient deficiencies and income disparities exacerbate food insecurity in certain regions.

India's Nutrition Paradox: The Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2023 ranks India 111th out of 125 countries, highlighting significant challenges with undernutrition, particularly among children. Though India



SHRIRUPA SENGUPTA

produces enough food to meet caloric needs, ensuring nutritional adequacy remains a challenge. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-2021) shows that while caloric intake is generally adequate, undernutrition persists—35.5 per cent of children under five are stunted, and 19.3 per cent suffer from wasting. Micronutrient deficiencies, such as anaemia due to iron deficiency among women and

vitamin deficiencies among children, further contribute to hidden hunger. Economic disparities and social inequities, including gender inequality and limited healthcare access, play significant roles in perpetuating undernutrition. Poorer segments of the population often lack access to a diverse, nutritious diet and rely heavily on staples like rice and wheat, with inadequate consumption of fruits, vegetables, and proteins.

Community-Led Nutrition Hubs: A Promising Solution Community-led nutrition hubs provide a grassroots approach to addressing food insecurity. Unlike top-down methods, these hubs leverage local knowledge and leadership to create sustainable, con-

text-specific solutions. They focus on balanced, nutritious diets rather than just caloric intake, helping to build community resilience against undernutrition.

Promoting Dietary Diversity: Nutrition hubs encourage the consumption of diverse foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes, and animal products, essential for a balanced diet. By promoting dietary diversity, these hubs address micronutrient deficiencies and hidden hunger.

Supporting Vulnerable Groups: These hubs effectively reach vulnerable populations like children, pregnant women, and the elderly. They provide tailored nutritional support, fortified foods, supplements, and education on specific nutritional needs.



Leveraging Local Agriculture: Nutrition hubs support local food production and sustainable agricultural practices, increasing access to fresh, nutritious foods. This approach reduces dependence on external food supplies, which can be affected by price fluctuations and supply chain disruptions, particularly amid climate change.

Impact of Community-Led

Nutrition Hubs: Data from various studies highlight the effectiveness of community-led initiatives in improving nutritional outcomes and resilience. For example, a 2022 report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) noted a 20 per cent reduction in stunting rates among children under five in regions of Uttar Pradesh following the introduction of nutrition hubs.

The Global Nutrition Report 2023 showed that such hubs have improved micronutrient intake, with a 30 per cent increase in iron-rich food consumption among women in Maharashtra, significantly reducing anaemia. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) also found that communities practising

sustainable agriculture supported by nutrition hubs had a 20 per cent increase in crop yields during droughts compared to traditional methods.

A Whole-of-Society Approach: Achieving the vision of a "Viksit Bharat" hinges on ensuring food security and building resilience through community-led initiatives. However, these goals require a whole-of-society approach that involves all community members, not just women. Men as Partners: Encouraging men to participate in nutrition hubs, whether through farming, cooking, or community organising, helps distribute responsibility more equitably and promotes gender equity.

Youth Engagement: Involving young people in these efforts

ensures the continuation of community-led initiatives and brings fresh ideas and energy to the table.

Local Govt Support: Local governments can support and scale these initiatives by providing funding, policy support, and infrastructure, making nutrition hubs integral parts of community development.

Gender Equity and Shared Responsibility: While women are often on the frontlines of nutrition and food security, the burden should not fall solely on them. Engaging men, youth, and local governance helps create more equitable and sustainable solutions.

(The writer is Director - Centre for Strategic Communications for Public Health at Swasti; views are personal)

India-ASEAN relations important in times of conflicts: Modi

PTI ■ VIENTIANE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said India-ASEAN friendship was very important at a time when parts of the world were facing conflicts and tensions. Addressing the 21st India-ASEAN Summit here, Modi also said he had announced the Act East Policy 10 years ago and in the past decade it had given new energy, direction and momentum to the historic ties between India and ASEAN nations. The India-ASEAN Summit is taking place at a time when the region is witnessing tensions between the Philippines and China over maritime issues in the South China Sea and the crisis in Myanmar, where ethnic groups are battling the

military regime. The Prime Minister said he believed that the 21st century, also called the Asian century, is the century of India and ASEAN nations. "India-ASEAN friendship, coordination dialogue and cooperation is very important at a time when several parts of the world are facing conflicts and tensions," he said. Prime Minister Modi said India and the ASEAN nations were neighbours, partners in the Global South, and a region that was witnessing rapid growth. "We are peace-loving nations and respect each other's national integrity and sovereignty, and are committed to the bright future of the youth of the region," he said. Modi said keeping ASEAN



centrality in mind, India launched the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative in 2019, which complemented the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific. "Last year, maritime exercises were started for regional security and stability," Modi said, adding that India's trade with ASEAN nations has nearly doubled to more than USD 130 billion over the past decade. "India has direct flights to seven ASEAN countries and direct flights to Brunei will start soon," the Prime Minister said. Modi said India has launched Fintech connectivity with Singapore, the first nation in the ASEAN region. "This success was being replicated in other nations as well," he said. The Prime Minister said a people-centric approach was

the foundation of the development partnership between India and ASEAN. Modi said that more than 300 students from the ASEAN region have received scholarships from Nalanda University. The partnership has also worked to protect the shared inheritance and heritage of Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar and Indonesia. "Whether it is the Covid pandemic or natural disasters, we have helped each other fulfill our humanitarian responsibilities," Modi said. Modi said India and ASEAN have set up the Science and Technology Fund, Digital Fund and Green Fund for cooperation in different sectors and New Delhi has contributed more than USD 300 million to these initiatives.

"As a result, today our cooperation extends from underwater to space sectors and our partnership has become more comprehensive over the past decade," the Prime Minister said. Later, Modi said in a post on X that the India-ASEAN Summit was a productive one. "We discussed how to further strengthen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and ASEAN. We look forward to deepening trade ties, cultural linkages and cooperation in technology, connectivity and other such sectors," he said. Modi arrived here in Laos on a two-day visit to attend the ASEAN-India and East Asia summits and further deepen engagement with countries in the groupings.

Woman centric themes take centre stage in Bengal pujas

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Many Durga Puja organisers of Bengal seem to have given a tweak to the Puja Themes against the backdrop of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital rape and murder case --- with quite a few selecting "women empowerment" and the proverbial "Spine" in order to ideate a message of erectness to the Babus and the Police hammering home the message of constitutional obligations so to say. Take for instance 'Chakravayuh' a Theme created by Railpukur United Club, Baguiati, which portrays the lifelong struggles faced by women from the mythological past till the present days showing myriad stories of exploitation, humiliation, objectification. They have taken up Draupadi's humiliation in Mahabharat to hammer home their point. Though most organizers would evade posters on a link between their Theme and RGKMCH



some in private concede "it is for the public to decipher" the poetic gobbledegook. With their Theme Ritumati the organizers of Pathuria Ghata Pancher Palli Durga Puja Committee in North Kolkata have decided to sensitize the women --- nay the society --- at large about menstruation and associated restrictions in the forbidden realm of religion. Ritumati means a menstruating woman. "We have portrayed various stages of a woman's cycle... that

is a taboo ... but in reality it is not ... it is just a biological process," said Upasana the Theme artist while local Councilor Ellora said that they selected a woman artist and the woman centric Theme "with a view to empower women." She however iterated that there was no connection with RG Kar and their Theme. For the reference, at least 15 big community Pujas have employed women Theme artists this time round playing lead roles - from ideating

themes and idol-making to overall pandal execution. Cut to this all-women club of Malda in North Bengal where the entire Pujas are organized by women. "Pujas are just only one activity amongst many others that we perform throughout the year," Piyali one of the members say. "We started this Pujas consciously keeping men out of it because there are several things that men cannot do or you can say what men do women can do with better perfection ... there was no street light in our vicinity ... women were victims of eve-teasing and so many other things ... but everything has been corrected and the politicians have been forced to see reasons ... now it is Durga Puja that we have been doing with full marks We dress in Blue inspired by the Mother train our juniors in the art of self-defence ... they won't give up easily today ... Our Puja is an extension of our activity.

At Kashi Bose Lane Sarbojonin Durga Puja the organizers have portrayed Bengal's role in eradication of Sati Pratha or the system of burning the bride in funeral pyre of the husband. "Through worshipping our Mother who is our Daughter too we have remembered how Bengal played a pivotal role in fighting away Sati said an organizer. Back to "Spine" a symbolic replica of which the agitating junior doctors last month had presented to the 'removed' Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal for his deficient performance in the investigation of the rape and murder of the postgraduate lady doctor of the Government Hospital. At least three clubs of Kolkata and Howrah had created huge replicas of Spine to drive home a message to the powers that be before being allegedly arm-twisted by administration to deposit the fabricated spines in the dump yard of their Puja pandals.

Pets are our family, and their lives matter to every pet parent: Tata

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Many canines, both strays and pets, Mumbai, lost 'Their Master's Voice' in the death of veteran industrialist Ratan Naval Tata, a compassionate man who set up a Small Animal Hospital at Mahalaxmi in south-central Mumbai early this year. Businessman and columnist Suhel Seth, who had known Ratan Tata, recalled how the industrialist had declined an invitation by King Charles (then Prince Charles) to go to Buckingham Palace to receive a lifetime achievement award because one of his pet dogs was unwell. "Tata, whose love for dogs is well-known, Ratan Tata was to be felicitated at the Buckingham Palace for his unmatched philanthropy," Seth said. "However, at the very last



moment, his pet dog took ill. He immediately called Prince Charles and conveyed his regrets as he couldn't leave his ailing dog alone. This highlights what a remarkable human being he was," he said. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray, who had an excellent rapport with Ratan Tata, shared a common thread of their love for dogs with the latter, said "stray dogs were welcomed on all Tata Group premises -- be it the Taj Mahal Hotel or Bombay House, the headquarters of Tata Sons. In

fact, there is a kennel at the Bombay House to take care of Tata's canine friends." Mourning the death of Ratan Tata, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India Vice President Sachin Bangera said: "Ratan ji's love for animals and compassion was as famous as his business prowess and will always be remembered. His influence on the community, inspiring many to care for community dogs, and to open their hearts and homes to them, is a testament to his enduring legacy." Before he passed away, Ratan Tata realised his dream of building an animal hospital for pets in Mumbai. A first of its kind hospital spread over 98,000 sq ft, across 5 floors with a capacity of over 200 beds, the Small Animal Hospital at Mahalaxmi in the heart of Mumbai. The hospital was inaugurated in March 2024.

Omar Abdullah elected...

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"Now our number is 42 plus the four independent MLAs. After receiving the letter from the Congress, we will go to the Raj Bhavan to stake claim to form the government," Omar added. Inside reports suggested that the National Conference may go ahead and stake claim for government formation on Friday even in the absence of a letter of support from the Congress party. In a house of 90 members, NC along with independent candidates has magic numbers in its kitty. Political observers opined Congress has been relegated from a junior partner in the incoming Jammu and Kashmir government to a

relative non-entity after four independent MLAs extended support to the National Conference. Meanwhile, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Thursday accused the NC and CPI(M) of indulging in hooliganism after victory in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here, People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Iltija Mufti congratulated the NC on its victory and the party vice president Omar Abdullah on his election as the legislature party leader but questioned whether the huge majority was for hooliganism and destruction of properties. "The NC's elected MLA

from Srigufwara-Bijbehara (Bashir Veeri) is indulging in hooliganism. His workers destroyed the outer walls of the houses of PDP workers, and a cowshed belonging to a PDP worker was also burnt. I want to question Omar Abdullah whether the huge majority they got was for this," she said. Iltija Mufti lost the election seat to Veeri in the recently held J&K Assembly polls. She alleged the NC workers were harassing women workers of the PDP and using foul language against them. "I do not mind if they abuse me or Mehbooba Mufti, but do not touch our workers. Then we will take action," she added.

Jamshedpur mourns its man of steel

From page 1

In a social media post in July 2020, Tata recalled his first visit to Jamshedpur during a college holiday. "I remember the first time I ever visited Jamshedpur when I was on holiday from college. Mr. R. G. Da Costa and Mr. J. D. Chokshi invited me to visit the Telco plant and have a walk around. This trip was much before I started working on the Tata Steel floor, my first interaction with the legacy city of Jamshedpur," Tata posted. Ratan Tata's first visit to Jamshedpur was in 1963 to look into how Tata Steel,

TELCO worked and last was in 2021 after which he could not turn because of frail health reasons. Ever since the news broke people from different walks of life thronged Tata Centre to pay their homage to the legend who died at Mumbai. He also visited the city to attend various company events, including the inauguration of blast furnaces, and social gatherings. A retired Tata Motors employee, KC Johannan, who had several interactions with Ratan Tata and also his predecessor JRD Tata on the Shop Floor of TELCO said

that Ratan lived with a zeal to give the company and Jamshedpur global recognition. "This first things he (Ratan Tata) was that he worked on company's insignia which was changed from old model of writing 'T' within a circle to the present format of T which signifies opened line, highways, roads or you can mean that only moving ahead. As far as I remember Ratan Saab had shared to us that the new logo will compete with the Europeans, and it was being designed in the UK," remembered the retired Foreman of Tata Motors.

No hike in power tariff for consumers in UP

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accepting the annual revenue requirement proposal (ARR) from the UPPCL/discos. The 120 days' time limit ended on October 9. The UPPCL, in its ARR, has projected a revenue deficit of Rs 11,203 crore during the current financial year if no tariff revision is made. The UPPCL, however, proposed no direct tariff hike and left it to the power regulator to revise the rate schedule on its own to help it bridge the expected revenue gap. Broadly, there are two reasons for no hike in power tariff. First, the UPERC, in its order, stated that the power tariff in UP is already on a higher side and any increase might be counterproductive to the government's policy of affordable power to all. The regulator

asked the UPPCL to increase its income by plugging losses and increasing billing efficiency, among other things, rather than relying on tariff increase. Another important reason, as UP Rajya Vidyut Upphokta Parishad chairman Avdesh Kumar Verma pointed out, was the surplus revenue generated by the UPPCL by taking a greater tariff hike than what was required to meet its expenses in the previous years. "It is well known that the state's electricity companies have a surplus of about Rs 33,122 crore owed to consumers and the discos should adjust this amount in consumers' bills," Verma said. He urged the state government to direct the UPERC under Section 108 of the Electricity Act, 2003 to reduce the tariff.

TATA TO BHARAT'S RATAN

From page 1

Earlier, after his death on Wednesday night, the veteran industrialist's body was taken from the Breach Candy Hospital to his Colaba residence in south Mumbai. Later on Thursday morning, his mortal remains were taken from his house in a hearse, decked with white flowers, to the NCPA in south Mumbai, where it was kept between 10.30 am and 3.55 pm for letting people pay their last respects. Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde, deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis and Industrialist Mukesh Ambani were among those who rushed to the Breach Candy Hospital shortly after midnight after hearing about Ratan Tata's death. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday morning spoke with Ratan Tata's brother, Noel Tata, and offered condolences to the bereaved family members of Tata. Earlier, in a tweet mourning Tata's death, Modi wrote: Shri Ratan Tata Ji was a visionary business leader, a compassionate soul and an extraordinary human being. He provided stable leadership to one of India's oldest and most prestigious business houses. "At the same time, his contribution went far beyond the boardroom. He endeared himself to several people thanks to his humility,

kindness and an unwavering commitment to making our society better," the Prime Minister added. In her condolence message, President Droupadi Murmu said: "In the sad demise of Shri Ratan Tata, India has lost an icon who blended corporate growth with nation building, and excellence with ethics." "...he took forward the great Tata legacy and gave it a more impressive global presence. He inspired seasoned professionals and young students alike. His contribution to philanthropy and charity is invaluable," Murmu wrote on "X". Union Home Minister Amit Shah attended Ratan Tata's funeral on behalf of the Government of India. Industrialists Mukesh Ambani, who came along with his wife Nita, Anand Mahindra and Kumar Mangalam Birla were among the who is who of the India Inc -- that included heads of leading business families like the Piramals, Godrejs, Hinduja, Mahendras and Bajajs -- paid homage to the departed industrialists. Apart from Shinde and Fadnis, the prominent politicians who paid their last respects to Ratan Tata were NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray, Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari, Piyush Goyal, former chief minister Sushil Kumar

Shinde and Prithviraj Chavan and MNS chief Raj Thackeray. Cricketing icon Sachin Tendulkar who enjoyed a wonderful rapport with the former Tata group head, was among those who paid homage to the legendary industrialist. In a statement, the Congress said it "is deeply saddened by the passing of Padma Vibhushan Shri Ratan Tata, a titan of Indian industry and a philanthropist who shaped India's corporate landscape." Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul wrote on "X": "Ratan Tata was a man with a vision. He has left a lasting mark on both business and philanthropy. My condolences to his family and the Tata community". Describing Ratan Tata as India's one of most illustrious and kind-hearted sons, industrialist Mukesh Ambani said in his condolence message: "It is a very sad day for India and India Inc. Ratan Tata's passing away is a big loss, not just to the Tata Group, but to every Indian". Earlier in a late night statement announcing the death of Ratan Tata, N Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons, said: "For the Tata Group, Mr. Tata was more than a chairperson. To me, he was a mentor, guide and friend. He inspired by example. With an unwavering commitment to excellence, integrity, and innovation, the Tata Group under his

stewardship expanded its global footprint while always remaining true to its moral compass". Ratan Tata, who became chairman of the Tata conglomerate in 1991 and ran the group founded by his great-grandfather more than a hundred years ago until 2012. He was twice the Chairperson of the Tata Group conglomerate, from 1991 to 2012 and from 2016 to 2017. Among other things, Tata founded telecommunications company Tata Teleservices in 1996 and took IT company Tata Consultancy Services public in 2004. When he was at the helm of affairs, Tata Group acquired iconic British car brands - Jaguar and Land Rover and delivered on his promise of manufacturing the world's cheapest car which his group sold at an affordable Rs 1 lakh. "India has lost a giant, a visionary who redefined modern India's path. Ratan Tata wasn't just a business leader - he embodied the spirit of India with integrity, compassion and an unwavering commitment to the greater good. Legends like him never fade away. Om Shanti," industrialist Gautam Adani said, mourning Ratan Tata's death. Thousands of people from different walks of life, including politicians and corporate bigwigs, turned out at the NCPA to pay their last respects to the icon of the Indian Industry.

Rafael Nadal...

From page 1

One of his career highlights was 2004 Davis Cup where young Nadal helped the team to secure the title. Nadal also won four trophies in the U.S. Open and two apiece at Wimbledon and the Australian Open, giving him a career Grand Slam. His last pair arrived in 2022, at Melbourne in January and in Paris in June, pushing him ahead of Roger Federer for the men's record of 20 Grand Slam titles. Federer announced his retirement when he was 41 at the end of the 2022 season, shortly before bidding adieu by teaming with Nadal in a doubles match at the Laver Cup. Both have been surpassed by Novak Djokovic, who is up to 24. Nadal's court shattering records, and legacy will always remind tennis lovers of what a legend he was every time he stepped on the court and faced the best in the world.

marking a handsome rise from Rs 18.29 crore in 2019. Party-wise, 96 per cent BJP legislators, 95 per cent Congress MLAs, and 100 per cent of both INLD and Independent winners have declared assets exceeding Rs 1 crore. Independent MLA from Hissar Savitri Jindal tops the list with assets totalling over Rs 270 crore, followed by BJP's Shakti Rani Sharma and Shruti Choudhry at Rs 145 crore and Rs 134 crore, respectively. A total of 30 MLAs have been re-elected in 2024, whose average assets grew by 59 per cent since 2019, from Rs 9.08 crore to Rs 14.46 crore now, marking significant financial gains over the past five years. Meanwhile, of the winning candidates, 12 have disclosed crim-

Goodbye, Mr. Tata

From page 1

He fulfilled his long-time ambition of running an airline when he started Vistara along with Singapore Airlines and while he might have retired from day-to-day operations, there is little doubt that he played a role in Tata Sons acquiring Air India. It is only correct that Ratan Tata has been given a state funeral and his mortal remains were draped in the Tricolour because first and foremost, he was an extremely proud India. In the coming days, while India mourns his death, certain aspects of his business dealings which were less than ideal will again be brought to light. But his reputation remained unsullied, unlike many other large Indian industrialists. And the reason for that was his large heart.

candidates are graduates or hold higher degrees, while 29 per cent have educational backgrounds ranging from Class 8 to Class 12, as per the report. The new House has 14 per cent women legislators, an increase from 10 per cent in 2019, while 66 per cent of the MLAs are aged between 51 and 80 years. The poll results were announced Tuesday. Bucking anti-incumbency, the ruling BJP pulled off a hat-trick of wins in Haryana to retain power and halt Congress' comeback attempt. While the BJP ended up with its best-ever haul of 48 seats, 11 more than the Congress, parties like the JJP and the AAP were decimated and the INLD managed to win just two seats.

96 per cent MLAs crorepatitis, 12 have criminal cases in Haryana: ADR

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the newly-elected 90-member Haryana Assembly, 96 per cent MLAs (86) are crorepatitis, while 13 per cent (12) have criminal cases against them, according to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Haryana Election Watch. An analysis of the affidavits of all the 90 winning candidates by the ADR show a slight rise in the number of crorepati MLAs, from 93 per cent in 2019 to 96 per cent this time. Of the 90 MLAs, 44 per cent possess assets worth over Rs 10 crore, while only 2.2 per cent have assets below Rs 20 lakh, the data showed. The average assets per winning candidate stand at Rs 24.97 crore,

including six facing serious charges with one accused of attempt to murder, the data showed. In 2019, seven candidates had serious criminal cases against them. Party-wise, 19 per cent Congress MLAs, 6 per cent BJP legislators, and 67 per cent of the Independent winners have declared criminal cases against their names. The analysis also showed that 28 winning candidates have declared liabilities of Rs 1 crore or more, with Congress' Rajbir Fartia from Loharu topping the list at Rs 44 crore. Fartia also tops the list of highest income earners, declaring an earning of Rs 10.75 crore in his Income Tax Return for 2023-24. In terms of educational quali-

fication, 68 per cent winning candidates are graduates or hold higher degrees, while 29 per cent have educational backgrounds ranging from Class 8 to Class 12, as per the report. The new House has 14 per cent women legislators, an increase from 10 per cent in 2019, while 66 per cent of the MLAs are aged between 51 and 80 years. The poll results were announced Tuesday. Bucking anti-incumbency, the ruling BJP pulled off a hat-trick of wins in Haryana to retain power and halt Congress' comeback attempt. While the BJP ended up with its best-ever haul of 48 seats, 11 more than the Congress, parties like the JJP and the AAP were decimated and the INLD managed to win just two seats.

South Korean author Han Kang gets Nobel prize in literature

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

The Nobel Prize in literature was awarded Thursday to South Korean author Han Kang for what the Nobel committee called "her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life."

Mats Malm, permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy's Nobel Committee, announced the prize in Stockholm.

Han, 53, won the International Booker Prize in 2016 for "The Vegetarian," an unsettling novel in which a woman's decision to stop eating meat has devastating consequences.

Her novel "Human Acts" was an International Booker Prize finalist in 2018.

The literature prize has long faced criticism that it is too



focused on European and North American writers of style-heavy, story-light prose. It has also been male-dominated, with just 17 women among its

119 laureates so far. The last woman to win was Annie Ernaux of France, in 2022. Six days of Nobel announcements opened Monday with

Americans Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun winning the medicine prize. Two founding fathers of machine learning — John Hopfield and Geoffrey Hinton — won the physics prize on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, three scientists who discovered powerful techniques to decode and even design novel proteins were awarded the Nobel Prize in chemistry.

The Nobel Peace Prize will be announced Friday and the economics award on October 14. The prize carries a cash award of 11 million Swedish kronor (USD 1 million) from a bequest left by the award's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The laureates are invited to receive their awards at ceremonies on December 10, the anniversary of Nobel's death.

Hurricane Milton slams Florida, causes deaths and flooding

AP ■ TAMPA (US)

Hurricane Milton plowed into Florida as a Category 3 storm, bringing misery to a coast still ravaged by Helene, pounding cities with winds of over 100 mph (160 kph) after producing a barrage of tornadoes, but sparing Tampa a direct hit.

The storm tracked to the south in the final hours and made landfall Wednesday night in Siesta Key near Sarasota, about 70 miles (112 kilometers) south of Tampa. The situation in the Tampa area was still a major emergency as St. Petersburg recorded over 16 inches (41 centimeters) of rain, prompting the National Weather Service

reports.

Before Milton even made landfall, tornadoes were touching down across the state. The Spanish Lakes Country Club near Fort Pierce, on Florida's Atlantic Coast, was hit particularly hard, with homes destroyed and some residents killed.

"We have lost some life," St. Lucie County Sheriff Keith Pearson told WPBF News, though he wouldn't say how many people were killed.

About 125 homes were destroyed before the hurricane came ashore, many of them mobile homes in communities for senior citizens, said Kevin Guthrie, the director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

dispose of debris before Milton's winds and storm surge could toss it around and compound any damage.

Officials had issued dire warnings to flee or face grim odds of survival.

"This is it, folks," said Cathie Perkins, emergency management director in Pinellas County, which sits on the peninsula that forms Tampa Bay. "Those of you who were punched during Hurricane Helene, this is going to be a knockout. You need to get out, and you need to get out now."

By late afternoon, some officials said the time had passed for such efforts, suggesting that people who stayed behind hunker down instead. By the evening, some counties announced they had suspended emergency services.

Jackie Curnick said she wrestled with her decision to stay at home in Sarasota, just north of where the storm made landfall. But with a 2-year-old son and a baby girl due Oct. 29, Curnick and her husband thought it was for the best.

Curnick said they started packing Monday to evacuate, but they couldn't find any available hotel rooms, and the few they came by were too expensive.

She said there were too many unanswered questions if they got in the car and left: Where to sleep, if they'd be able to fill up their gas tank, and if they could even find a safe route out of the state.

"The thing is it's so difficult to evacuate in a peninsula," she said. "In most other states, you can go in any direction to get out. In Florida there are only so many roads that take you north or south."

At a news conference in Tallahassee, Gov. Ron DeSantis described deployment of a wide range of resources, including 9,000 National Guard members from Florida and other states; over 50,000 utility workers from as far as California; and highway patrol cars with sirens to escort gasoline tankers to replenish supplies so people could fill up their tanks before evacuating.

"Unfortunately, there will be fatalities. I don't think there's any way around that," DeSantis said.

Heavy rain and tornadoes lashed parts of southern Florida starting Wednesday morning, with conditions deteriorating throughout the day.



to warn of flash flooding there as well as other parts of western and central Florida. Tropicana Field, the home of the Tampa Bay Rays baseball team in St. Petersburg, appeared badly damaged. The fabric that serves as the stadium's roof was ripped to shreds by the fierce winds. It was not immediately clear if there was damage inside. Multiple cranes were also toppled in the storm, the weather service said.

St. Petersburg residents also could no longer get water from their household taps because a water main break led the city to shut down service.

The storm knocked out power across a large section of Florida, with more than 3 million homes and businesses without power as of early Thursday, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility

About 90 minutes after making landfall, Milton was downgraded to a Category 2 storm. By early Thursday, the hurricane was a Category 1 storm with maximum sustained winds of about 85 mph (135 kph) as it churned about 35 miles (55 kilometers) south of Orlando.

Heavy rains were also likely to cause flooding inland along rivers and lakes as Milton traverses the Florida Peninsula as a hurricane, eventually to emerge in the Atlantic Ocean on Thursday. It is expected to impact the heavily populated Orlando area. The storm slammed into a region still reeling two weeks after Hurricane Helene flooded streets and homes in western Florida and left at least 230 people dead across the South. In many places along the coast, municipalities raced to collect and

America mourns death of Ratan Tata, who 'drove India to prosperity'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US on Wednesday mourned the death of veteran industrialist and philanthropist Ratan Naval Tata, remembering him as someone who drove India to greater prosperity and development.

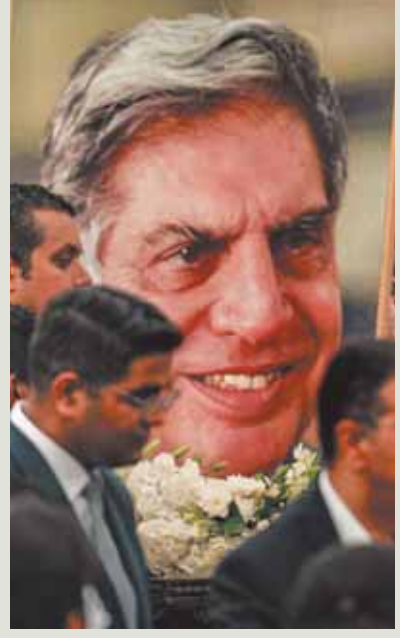
Tata, the former Tata Group chairman who transformed a staid group into India's largest and most influential conglomerate, breathed his last at south Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital at 11.30 pm on Wednesday. He was 86.

"My last meeting with Ratan Tata at Google, we talked about the progress of Waymo and his vision was inspiring to hear. He leaves an extraordinary business and philanthropic legacy and was instrumental in mentoring and developing modern business leadership in India. He deeply cared about making India better. Deep condolences to his loved ones and Rest in Peace Shri Ratan Tata Ji," wrote Google and Alphabet CEO Sunder Pichai on X.

Atul Keshap, the president of the US-India Business Council (USIBC), told PTI the Padma Vibhushan recipient was a "unique and noble son of India, a role model for the nobility and generosity."

"While some erroneously look down their noses at mere business, Ratan Tata reminded a global audience of the nobility of commerce even as he drove his companies and India to greater prosperity and development. He espoused values of humanity and compassion not only for his colleagues and business partners but also for the greater good," Keshap said.

"His devotion to his staff was never more visible than after the terrible terrorist attack in Mumbai on 26/11/2008, and his love for his country and humanity, and animal kind, was displayed in so many ways, including his establishment of



cancer hospitals and his legendary care for the dogs of Tata House," he said.

"It is with profound sadness that the Indiaspora community acknowledges the passing of Ratan Tata, a visionary leader, compassionate philanthropist, and one of India's most respected business icons," said MR Rangaswami, the founder of Indiaspora.

mer Cornell trustee who became the university's largest international donor, the university said on Wednesday.

"Ratan Tata has left an extraordinary legacy in India, across the world and at Cornell, which he cared about deeply," said interim President Michael I. Kotlikoff.

"Ratan's quiet demeanor and humility belied his international profile. His generosity and concern for others enabled research and scholarship that improved the education and health of millions of people in India and beyond, and extended Cornell's global impact," he said.

"When Ratan Tata graduated from Cornell with a degree in architecture, it would have been impossible to imagine the global impact his visionary leadership, philanthropy and commitment to humanity would go on to have in advancing education and research across many sectors," said J. Meejin Yoon, the Dean of Cornell University College of Architecture, Art, and Planning.

Ratan Tata served three terms as a Cornell trustee from 2006 to 2022. He was named Cornell's Entrepreneur of the Year in 2013 and served from 2014 on as a member of AAP's Advisory Council.

Ira Druker, an American philanthropist, said: "Looking back over Ratan's life and career, I am not only filled with gratitude for all he has given and accomplished but also with a deep respect for his kindness, generosity and eternal optimism that has improved lives in India and around the world."

"Ratan Tata, one of India's most powerful and admired magnates, who transformed his family's business conglomerate, the Tata Group, into a multinational corporation with globally recognisable brands, has died at 86," The New York Times wrote.

UK minister pays homage to 'titan' of business world

PTI ■ LONDON

Jonathan Reynolds paid homage to Ratan Tata as a "titan" of the business world who played a huge role in shaping British industry.

Soon after the news of the Tata Group chief's passing away hit the headlines on Wednesday night, the minister took to social media to offer his tributes to the man credited with much of the Mumbai-headquartered company's reputation as one of the largest employers in the UK.

It was during his tenure as chairman of the Tata Group that the multinational made several high-profile acquisitions in the UK — taking over Anglo-Dutch steelmaker Corus, luxury car brands Jaguar and Land Rover (JLR) and Tetley, the well-known global tea brand.

"Sad to hear about the passing of Ratan Tata. He was truly a titan of the business world and someone who played a huge role in shaping British industry," said Reynolds.

"My thoughts and prayers are with his friends, family and everyone in the Tata Group," he said.

The Tata Group's footprint in the UK includes its ownership of the country's largest steelworks at Port Talbot in south Wales, currently undergoing a mega green transformation towards electric arc furnace.

The steel giant is one of Europe's leading

steel producers, with steelmaking in the Netherlands and the UK, and manufacturing plants across Europe. The company's tube products are used across a broad range of industries, including construction, machinery fabrication, energy and automotive.

In July last year, the Tata Group is to invest over GBP 4 billion in setting up a new electric vehicle (EV) battery plant, or gigafactory, in Britain which will create thousands of jobs across the supply chain. With Tata Motors owned JLR as the anchor customer of the new gigafactory with an initial output of 40GWh, the venture is one of the largest in Europe.

While he had retired a few years ago, Ratan Tata is credited with setting the company on its growth trajectory in the UK and Europe.

Beginning with Tata Tea's acquisition of Tetley in 2000, Tata companies made several significant overseas acquisitions including Corus by Tata Steel, Jaguar and Land Rover by Tata Motors and Brunner Mond by Tata Chemicals.

In 2004, Ratan Tata, then Chairman of Tata Sons, summed up the Tata group's efforts to internationalise its operations thus: "I hope that a hundred years from now we will spread our wings far beyond India, that we become a global group, operating in many countries, an Indian business conglomerate that is at home in the world, carrying the same sense of trust that we do today."

High Commissioner leads minute's silence in memory of Tata

PTI ■ LONDON

Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami led a minute's silence in the memory of Ratan Tata as news of the passing away of the legendary businessman, aged 86, came in from Mumbai.

During a pre-scheduled Diwali reception co-hosted by the High Commission of India in London with the India All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) near the Houses of Parliament in London on Wednesday, Doraiswami paid tribute to the Tata Group chair as a great champion of the India-UK partnership.

"On a sombre note, I share the news with great sorrow of the passing of one of India's most celebrated businessmen Ratan Tata," said Doraiswami, addressing a cross-party gathering of parliamentarians, entrepreneurs and community leaders.

"No man has embodied the India-UK partnership quite as much as Ratan Tata did. This is a man for whom Mumbai/India and London/UK were both home. This is a man who created the sense of an India-UK partnership embodied in everything — from Air India, which is back as Tata airline, to Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) to Taj Hotel to Tata Steel to indeed everything, including industries of the future with his decision to invest in a battery factory in the UK," he said.

Lord Karan Bilimoria, founder of Cobra beer and co-chair of the India APPG, paid tribute to a "fellow Parsi" who worked hard to nurture the bonds between India and Britain.

China defiant over South China Sea skirmishes in ASEAN talks

AP ■ VIENTIANE (LAOS)

Southeast Asian leaders stepped up pressure on China to respect international law following clashes in the disputed South China Sea during annual summit talks on Thursday, but Chinese Premier Li Qiang was defiant as he blamed "external forces" for interfering in regional affairs.

The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations' meeting with Li followed recent violent confrontations at sea this year between China and ASEAN members Philippines and Vietnam that heightened unease over China's increasingly assertive actions in the contested waters.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who will take over the rotating ASEAN chair next year, said the bloc has called for an early conclusion to a code of conduct to govern the South China Sea. Talks on the code of conduct have been ongoing for years, hampered by sticky issues including disagreements over whether the pact should be binding.

ASEAN reiterated the need to maintain peace and security in the strategic waterway, he said, according to Malaysian national news agency Bernama.

But Li said meddling by foreign forces is creating conflicts with

in the region.

"We must realize that our development is also facing some unstable and uncertain factors. In particular, external forces frequently interfere and even try to introduce bloc confrontation and geopolitical conflicts into Asia," Li said during an ASEAN meeting with China, Japan and South Korea. He called for more dialogue between countries to ensure disputes are resolved amicably.

Li didn't name the foreign forces but China has previously warned the US not to meddle in the region's territorial disputes.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who arrived in Vientiane on Thursday for the meetings, is expected to raise the issue of China's aggression in the sea, officials said. The US has no claims but it has deployed Navy ships and fighter jets to patrol the waterway and promote freedom of navigation and overflight.

ASEAN members Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei along with Taiwan have overlapping claims with China, which claims sovereignty over virtually all of the South China Sea. Chinese and Philippine vessels have clashed repeatedly this year, and Vietnam said last week that Chinese forces assaulted its fishermen in the

disputed sea. China has also sent patrol vessels to areas that Indonesia and Malaysia claim as exclusive economic zones.

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr made clear to Li during talks Thursday that ASEAN-China cooperation cannot be separated from the sea dispute, according to an ASEAN official who declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the discussion.

Li responded by saying the South China Sea is "a shared home" and that China has an obligation to protect its sovereignty, the official said.

The Philippines, a longtime US ally, has been critical of other ASEAN countries for not doing more to get China to back away.

Aside from regional security issues, China's Li also emphasized Beijing and ASEAN's economic ties, saying intensifying trade relations and creating an "ultra large-scale market" are keys to economic prosperity amid rising trade protectionism.

ASEAN and China said they expect to conclude negotiations to upgrade their free trade pact next year. Since the two sides signed the pact covering a market of 2 billion people in 2010, ASEAN's trade with China has leaped from USD 235.5 billion to USD 696.7 bil-

lion last year.

China is ASEAN's number 1 trading partner and its third-largest source of foreign investment — a key reason why the bloc has been reluctant to criticize Chinese actions in the South China Sea.

ASEAN leaders, who held a summit among themselves on Wednesday, also separately met with new Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol.

ASEAN elevated its ties with South Korea to a "comprehensive strategic partnership." Yoon said the new designation will further help both sides to "create a new future together."

Ishiba also pledged to boost the Japan-ASEAN relationship by providing patrol vessels and training on maritime law enforcement, strengthening economic security through financial and other support and bolstering cyber-security.

"Japan shares principles such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law, and would like to create and protect the future together with ASEAN," he said.

The bloc is also holding individual talks with dialogue partners India, Australia, Canada, the US and the United Nations that will culminate in an East Asia

Summit of 18 nations including Russia and New Zealand on Friday.

Former ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong said that despite challenges in addressing disputes in the South China Sea and the Myanmar civil war, ASEAN's central role in the region is undisputable.

"ASEAN and its diplomatic maneuvers have sustained the relative peace and progress of Southeast Asia to date. ASEAN will continue to be useful in that regard. Big powers cannot do what they wish in the region," said Ong, who is now deputy chairman of the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

Nearly 6,000 people have been killed and over 3 million displaced in a civil war after the Myanmar army ousted an elected government in 2021. The military has backtracked on an ASEAN peace plan it agreed to in late 2021 and fighting has continued with pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic rebels.

Myanmar's top generals have been shut out of ASEAN summits since the military takeover. Thailand will host an informal ASEAN ministerial-level consultation on Myanmar in mid-December as frustration grows in the bloc over the prolonged conflict.

Turkiye's navy starts to evacuate its citizens from Beirut

AP ■ BEIRUT

Over 2,000 Turkish citizens and some foreign started boarding a Turkish military ship late Wednesday that brought in aid and will take them out of a country being hit by Israeli airstrikes targeting Hezbollah.

Zehra Cibbin, an ethnic Arab from the southeastern Turkish city of Mardin who lives in Beirut with her Lebanese husband, got off a bus packed with the other evacuees, her two children in tow and luggage in hand.

"It's indescribable. They bombed the street below our house. From that moment on, it was over for me. I said I didn't want to stay in Beirut anymore," said Cibbin, 46.

Cibbin said they decided to leave Beirut out of fear for their lives, putting no thought into what will happen when they arrive in Turkey.

She spoke to The Associated Press before getting in line to board the TCG Bayraktar amphibious landing vessel, which along with the TCG Sancaktar will take on evacuees.

They are part of a six-ship convoy including escorts that set sail from the southern Turkish port of Mersin early Wednesday, transported 300 tons of humanitarian supplies, including food, hygiene kits, kitchenware, tents, beds and blankets.

Besides the Turkish citizens, people from Bulgaria, Romania and Kazakhstan were among those who applied to evacuate on the ships. Officials did not provide numbers.

The Associated Press was the only non-government media invited aboard the ships to cover the evacuation operation.

"Israel's aggression has severely impacted Lebanon and our brothers here," said Turkish Ambassador to Lebanon Ali Baris Ulusoy, standing in front of the Bayraktar.

"We are carrying out an operation today with two aims: to provide humanitarian aid to our Lebanese brothers and to ensure the safe return of our citizens who are in a difficult situation," Ulusoy said.

Hundreds lined up before the Bayraktar as Turkish soldiers and sailors checked the evacuees' passports and their luggage was examined by metal detectors and drug-sniffing dogs before they were allowed to board.

Another Turkish citizen waiting with her family was Abir Gokcimen, who said she left her extended family and husband in Beirut and hopes the war that spread to Lebanon will end soon. She hopes to come back to Lebanon as soon as the danger passes.

The journey back to Mersin is

expected to take about 10 hours.

Turkiye's government plans to organise more sea evacuations if necessary and is contemplating charter flights to repatriate citizens.

Hezbollah began firing rockets into northern Israel on October 8, 2023, the day after Hamas' surprise attack into Israel ignited the war in Gaza. Hezbollah and Hamas are both allied with Iran, and Hezbollah says its attacks are aimed at aiding the Palestinians.

Israel has carried out airstrikes in response and the conflict steadily escalated, erupting into a full-fledged war last month.

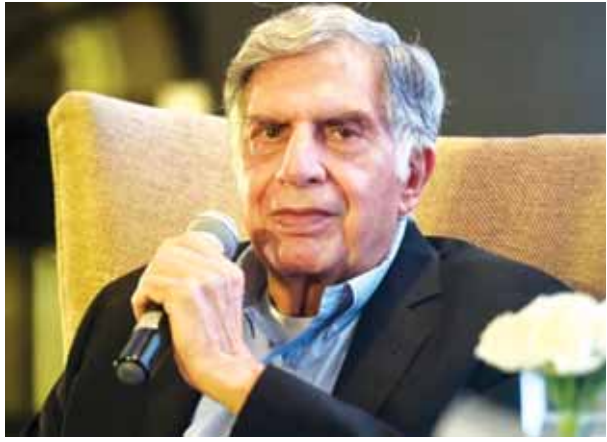
Israel has inflicted a punishing wave of blows against Hezbollah in recent weeks and says it will keep fighting until tens of thousands of displaced Israeli citizens can return to their homes in the north. More than 1,300 people have been killed in Lebanon and over a million displaced since the fighting escalated in mid-September.

Earlier on Wednesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan ramped up his rhetoric against Israel during his party's first meeting of the new legislative year, declaring that Turkiye "has more than enough power to thwart expansionist ambitions" of Israel and doubling down on his claims that Israel would target Turkiye after Gaza and Lebanon.

Auto industry mourns Ratan Tata's loss, stocks still soar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ratan Tata championed innovations that are helping build a better tomorrow, auto industry body SIAM said on Thursday while paying homage to the eminent industrialist who passed away on Wednesday night. "Indian automobile industry is deeply saddened with the passing away of Shri Ratan Tata, a towering figure, who has played a stellar role in bringing the Indian auto industry to the global stage," Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Shailesh Chandra said in a statement. A great humanist, visionary and leader, he championed innovations that are helping build a better tomorrow, he added. Hero MotoCorp Executive Chairman Pawan Munjal termed Tata as a visionary



leader and ethical statesman. "I am deeply saddened by the passing of Shri Ratan Tata. His unparalleled contributions as a visionary leader and ethical statesman have left an indelible mark on our nation," he stated. Munjal further said, "Tata's commitment to integrity and innovation not

only transformed industries but also uplifted communities, inspiring countless lives." A true hero, his legacy of compassion and service will resonate for generations, guiding the industry towards the greater good, he added. Toyota Kirloskar Motor Managing Director & Chief

Executive Officer Masakazu Yoshimura said that as a global corporate luminary, Ratan Tata will forever be remembered for his transformative contribution towards modernisation of the Indian business landscape and deep compassion towards the betterment of the society. His profound contribution and revolutionary thinking has inspired the automobile industry in India to think beyond conventional boundaries, he added. "Ratan Tata's legacy will continue to inspire and guide generations, reminding us that true leadership is defined not only by business acumen but by a selfless dedication to serve the betterment of humanity," Yoshimura stated. Tata, the former Tata Group chairman, breathed his last at Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital at 11.30 pm on Wednesday. He was 86.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Tata Group companies on Thursday rose up to 10 per cent, with Tata Chemicals and Tata Teleservices among the major gainers. Tata Sons Chairman Emeritus Ratan Tata, who played a key role in transforming the group into a global conglomerate, passed away late on Wednesday. He was 86. "Investors can pay tribute to Ratan Tata and the great corporate empire he built by buying stocks like TCS, Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Tata Consumer and Indian Hotels. "Ratan Tata, while pursuing the group's growth, contributed substantially to India's growth and millions of ordinary investors gained from the great man's vision," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at



Geojit Financial Services, said. The stock of Tata Investment Corporation soared 10.47 per cent to trade at Rs 7,235.80 apiece, Tata Chemicals climbed 6.26 per cent to Rs 1,174.85, Tata Teleservices Maharashtra jumped 5.84 per cent to Rs 83.77, Tata Elxsi rose 3.37 per cent to Rs 7,867.80, Tata Power went up 2.56 per cent to Rs 472.70 on the BSE. Also, shares of Tata Technologies, Rallis India, Nelco, Tejas Networks, TajGVK Hotels & Resorts, and Indian Hotels & Company also rose on the

bourse. In addition, the scrip of Tata Steel rose 0.91 per cent, Tata Communications (0.84 per cent), Tata Consultancy Services (0.21 per cent), Tata Consumer Products (0.17 per cent), Voltas (0.24 per cent) and Automotive Stampings & Assemblies (0.23 per cent) on the BSE. However, Tata Group's retail firm Trent slipped 0.90 per cent to trade at Rs 8,146.35 apiece, Titan fell 0.81 per cent to Rs 3,465.80 and Tata Motors was down 0.40 per cent to Rs 935.35 per scrip. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 198.28 points, or 0.24 per cent, to 81,665.38 in the mid-session trade on Thursday. Investors should learn from the growth of the Tata empire that a long-term investment horizon is required to really participate in the wealth creation that happens

through the capital market. In a bull market like the present one, there will always be valuation concerns, Vijayakumar added. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has cancelled a press conference scheduled on Thursday evening to announce its second quarter performance, company officials said. The press conference was originally scheduled at 1730 hours on Thursday. As originally scheduled, TCS will inform the exchanges about its July-September performance after the board meeting, the officials said. A scheduled call with analysts at 7 pm will be held as per schedule, they said. The last rites of Ratan Tata, who passed away late on Wednesday evening, are scheduled to take place after 4 pm at central Mumbai's Worli on Thursday.

Amazon focuses on customer experience, not competition in India

PTI ■ NASHVILLE

Amid the rise of quick commerce companies in India, Amazon said it is sharply focused on customers, not competition, and that the Prime proposition of offering users the largest selection at fastest speeds is a "winning" formula that "resonates" in India. The e-commerce giant is upbeat on India's prospects buoyed by the rapid pace of economic growth and digitisation, Amazon Prime Vice President, Jamil Ghani said, adding that the company is investing unprecedented amounts in making its Prime programme "even faster" and that the momentum will continue. India figures prominently as a hotbed of innovation for Amazon in every part of its business, he said. The company will continue to innovate in India for local markets, emerging markets and more and more for global markets. Amazon offers Prime - a

membership programme that promises savings, convenience and entertainment - across 24 countries and over 200 million households and "India figures prominently in that landscape for Amazon". Amazon says its breadth of selection in India covers 'needs' all the way to 'wants' and that it is focused on broadening the selection, with faster speed, more convenience and attractive prices. Asked about the challenges posed by the rise of quick commerce companies in India, Ghani said Amazon obsesses about customers, not competition. "Prime proposition is predicated on the largest selection at the fastest speeds. For instance, we have over a million items available the same day and four million items available, across India, the next day and so the breadth of selection we see in India covers the 'needs' all the way to 'wants'. And is delivered at ever faster



speeds. We're investing unprecedented amounts in making the programme even faster and we're going to continue to do that across the entire country," he told reporters on the sidelines of Amazon's flagship 'Delivering the Future' event here in Nashville. To a question of whether the

company would naturally progress towards quicker timelines in a select portfolio of product categories to take on competition from quick commerce firms, he said, "It's a very natural assumption that we're going to get faster on more selections every single day." "The reality is that not only

are there a lot of alternatives for our members, but our members' expectations keep going up," he said. The company is focused on broadening the selection, on faster speed, more convenience and attractive prices. "That combination that Prime delivers of the largest selection at the fastest speeds is a winning proposition. You see that in the continued growth of the Prime programme in India and also the increase in engagement from those members as well," he said. The marketplace offers many solutions tailored to consumer needs, he said, adding, "that's true around the globe, it's good for customers to have a lot of options." "And what we see with the growth of membership and the growth and engagement (is) that the prime proposition is resonating with our customers in India and we're going to keep on following that formula," Ghani said.

Amazon, he said, will continue inventing in India for the India market, for emerging countries and increasingly across the globe. "I am extremely excited about what is going on in the country in developing economically. There is fascinating and inspiring innovation going on in every sector of the economy, digitalisation of just about everything. We are not just going to continue inventing in India for India we are also inventing for emerging countries broadly, and increasingly for globe from India," he said. Amazon Store continues to get better every day with over a million items available for delivery the same day and four million items across India for delivery the next day, the senior executive said. "We are in the middle of the Great Indian festival and that is going exceptionally well with many members joining to avail the discount available across the entire store," Ghani said.



UPI transactions surge in first half of 2024

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian instant payment system Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transaction volumes recorded a 52 per cent year-on-year surge to 78.97 billion in the first six months of 2024, according to a report. In its India Digital Payments Report for the first half of 2024 (January to June), payment technology service provider Worldline said on Thursday that UPI continues to rule the payment market and is rapidly expanding its reach. "The number of UPI transactions rose significantly from 8.03 billion in January 2023 to 13.9 billion by June 2024. This growth in volume was matched by an increase in transaction value, which climbed from Rs 12.98 trillion in January 2023 to an impressive Rs 20.07 trillion in June 2024. "When comparing H1 2024 to the same period in 2023, UPI transaction volume saw a substantial increase of 52 per cent, rising from 51.9 billion to 78.97 billion," the report said. The value of transactions grew 40 per cent, increasing from Rs 83.16 trillion to Rs 116.63 trillion. In terms of volume and value contribution, PhonePe emerged as the top UPI app, followed by Google Pay and Paytm. However, average ticket size (ATS) of UPI transactions saw a decline of 8 per cent, the report noted. The average ticket size (ATS) of all UPI transactions in H1 2023 was Rs 1,603, while it

dropped to Rs 1,478 in H1 2024, it said. ATS consists of person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions. ATS in P2P transactions registered an almost flat year-on-year rise from Rs 2,812 to Rs 2,836. ATS for P2M transactions dropped from Rs 667 to Rs 643, representing a 4 per cent reduction. "This significant rise in UPI transactions, particularly in the person-to-merchant (P2M) segment, further cements its position as the preferred method for micro-transactions, demonstrating long-term sustainability and even movement to larger transactions in the coming years," Worldline India CEO Ramesh Narasimhan said. Grocery stores, restaurants, service stations, clothing stores, government services, pharmacies, and hospitals were the most visited in-store merchant categories in the first half of 2024. According to the research, they collectively accounted for almost 53 per cent of the overall transaction value and 68 per cent of the transaction volume. E-commerce, gaming, utilities, government services, and financial services made up around 81 per cent of the overall transaction volume and 74 per cent of the total transaction value in the online industry. Furthermore, the report revealed that between January 2023 and June 2024, the number of POS (point of sale) terminals increased 17 per cent, rising from 7.65 million to 8.96 million.

Sensex, Nifty close higher amid buying in heavyweight stocks

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty settled higher on Thursday due to gains in banking, power and industrial stocks amid a firm trend in global markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 144.31 points, or 0.18 per cent, to settle at 81,611.41. During the day, it soared 535.74 points, or 0.65 per cent, to hit an intra-day high of 82,002.84. The NSE Nifty increased 16.50 points, or 0.07 per cent, to close at 24,998.45. In the intra-day trade, it rose 152.1 points, or 0.60 per cent, to hit a high of 25,134.05. "The market traded on a range bound trend with a negative

bias ahead of the start of Q2 result. "The Asian market started well but could not hold on to the gains as European markets waded on a negative trend in anticipation of the key US inflation data, global bond yields are rising," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. From the 30 Sensex companies, Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, HDFC Bank, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, Maruti Suzuki India, NTPC,

Axis Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers. Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Infosys, Titan, Tata Motors, Larsen & Toubro and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards. Domestic broader market momentum was mixed with caution as the initial expectation of Q2FY25 results is subdued due to a subpar momentum in the global and rural demand, Nair added. Shares of Tata Group companies on Thursday rose up to 15 per cent, with Tata Investment Corporation, Tata Chemicals, and Tata Teleservices among the major gainers.

India plays crucial geopolitical role from American standpoint: USISPF

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India plays a pivotal role geopolitically from an American perspective and offers US companies the opportunity to de-risk from China in the manufacturing sector, the head of a top India-centric American business and strategic advocacy group has said. The economic growth story of India is tremendous. India is among very few large economies which are growing seven to eight per cent, Mukesh Aghi, the President and CEO of the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF), said on Wednesday. From an American

perspective, India plays a "pivotal role" geopolitically, he said. "India is one economy which is providing market opportunity, especially to US companies that come in and invest and gain market share. It is an economy which is providing de-risking from China itself in the manufacturing area," Aghi told PTI in an interview. "What we are seeing is the Indian economy is not just becoming a market opportunity, it's becoming an opportunity for manufacturing. But more important is we are seeing a growth of global capability centres in India," Aghi said. The Indian economy is

expected to gain momentum in 2025, he said. India is exporting roughly almost USD 125 billion of services. Aghi's remarks came ahead of the annual India Leadership Summit of the USISPF on October 14. Several top American business leaders, including CEOs of Fortune 100, are heading to New Delhi to attend the event. The summit will feature thought-provoking sessions and panel discussions to advance and strengthen the India-US partnership. "We have potential investors and also in startups and looking at technology companies.

IN BRIEF

NFR OPERATING 238 TRIPS OF SPECIAL TRAINS

MALIGAON: In anticipation of the increased passenger traffic during the upcoming festive season, Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) is all set to operate 13 pairs or 26 numbers of special trains. These trains will facilitate smooth travel experience during the forthcoming festive of Durga Puja, Diwali and Chhath Puja.

EDUCATION COLLEGES ZONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL

AMRITSAR: The Education Colleges Zonal Youth festival of Guru Nanak Dev University was inaugurated today in the Dashmesh Auditorium of the University. Students-artists from Education Colleges affiliated to the University are participating in this zone.



BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER VISITS GNDU

AMRITSAR: Her Excellency Ms. Lindy Cameron, British High Commissioner to India visited Guru Nanak Dev University. During her visit, Ms. Lindy Cameron met with officials of teaching, research & Innovation of the Guru Nanak Dev University.

NFR REVISES TIMINGS OF FEW IMPORTANT TRAINS

MALIGAON: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has decided to revise timings of ten (10) trains at few stations commencing its journeys from 12th October, 2024 onwards running across its network. The revisions have been made to enhance passenger convenience and improve punctuality.

IRFC to achieve Modi's Viksit Bharat goal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC), a Schedule A Miniratna public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Railways, announced on Thursday the appointment of Manoj Kumar Dubey, a 1993-batch Indian Railway Accounts Service (IRAS) officer, as its Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Dubey assumed office on Thursday. Dubey, who previously served as Director (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer of Container Corporation of India (CONCOR), expressed his honor at taking on the leadership of IRFC during what he sees as a defining moment for India's growth. "India is on the cusp of significant economic advancements, and leading one of the nation's iconic public sector enterprises is both a privilege and a responsibility. We want to be in the mainstream of the Viksit Bharat 2047 strategy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi,"



Dubey said. "India's rail infrastructure has flourished under the visionary guidance of Prime Minister and the dynamic leadership of Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. The swift launch of Vande Bharat Express, rapid expansion of railway routes, and enhanced capacity and speed of freight trains are clear markers of this success. In a decade, India has constructed 14,985 km of new railway tracks, surpassing the achievements of developed nations like France," added Dubey. To put it in perspective, between 2004 and 2014, the total track length was just 14,000 km; however, in the past decade alone, this figure has more than doubled, now exceeding 31,000 kilometers.

RBI urges banks to enhance risk assessment

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India on Thursday asked banks, NBFCs, and other entities regulated by it to use information obtained from all relevant internal and external sources for their risk assessment exercise. Reserve Bank's Regulated entities (REs) have to carry out 'Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment' exercise periodically to identify, assess and take effective measures to mitigate their Money Laundering (ML), Terrorist Financing (TF) and Proliferation Financing (PF) risks for clients, countries or geographic areas, products, services, and transactions or delivery channels. In this regard, the central bank has issued 'The Internal Risk Assessment Guidance for Money Laundering/Terrorist Financing' for the REs, particularly for the dealing staff and the Anti-Money Laundering (AML)/Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT) / Counter



Proliferation Financing (CPF) practitioners of the REs. It specifies key principles for an internal risk assessment (IRA) exercise. "The enterprise-level risk assessment forms the bedrock of RBA (Risk-Based Approach). It enables the REs to understand how and to what extent they are vulnerable to ML/TF/PF risks which help REs in determining the allocation of attention and AML/CFT resources necessary to mitigate that risk," the RBI

department, internal audit function, compliance function, etc," it said. The central bank also emphasised that a siloed approach wherein only the AML team is involved in the IRA exercise should be avoided. It further said REs may endeavor to adopt a data oriented objective approach to avert any kind of bias in the IRA exercise while quality of data inputs would need to be ensured so that the results are meaningful/useful. RBI said that in an ever changing business environment and the increasing level of complexities in the banking and other financial products offered by banks and other regulated entities, there is always a likely exposure to the elevated money laundering, terrorist financing, or proliferation financing risks. The risks are further multiplied as use of emergent technologies and newer methods of payments enter the scene, it added.



EMBRACING SELF-LOVE

In 'Time to Come Home', Damini Grover invites readers on a transformative journey of self-love, guiding them to rediscover their true selves and embrace their worth says, **SAKSHI PRIYA**

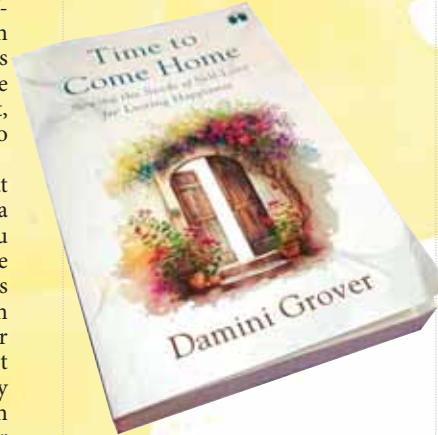
"YOU CANNOT LOVE YOURSELF WITHOUT ACCEPTING YOUR TRUE FORM." THIS SIMPLE YET PROFOUND CONCEPT INVITES READERS TO EMBRACE WHO THEY TRULY ARE, RATHER THAN CONSTANTLY SEEKING VALIDATION FROM OTHERS OR STRIVING FOR PERFECTION.

Time to Come Home by Damini Grover is an insightful and transformative guide that invites readers to embark on a personal journey of self-love and growth. From the very first chapter, Grover begins with the question, "What is self-love?" and encourages readers to dive into an activity that helps define its true meaning. This exercise serves as a powerful reminder that the love we show to others - support, encouragement, forgiveness, should be equally extended to ourselves.

One of the key ideas that Grover highlights is that self-love isn't selfish, it's essential for living a balanced and fulfilling life. As she points out, "You cannot love yourself without accepting your true form." This simple yet profound concept invites readers to embrace who they truly are, rather than constantly seeking validation from others or striving for perfection. The book's first chapter makes an impactful start by showing how we often think of love in terms of what we give to others, our time, attention and care. As I read through this list, I realised how rarely we apply the same level of care to ourselves. Grover encourages us to view self-love as nurturing and forgiving ourselves, just as we would those closest to us. This includes celebrating our successes, whether big or small, and giving ourselves the compassion we so often reserve for others.

Grover's experience as a psychologist shines through in her practical advice, which is grounded in both personal anecdotes and examples from her professional life. These real-life stories make the book relatable and offer readers concrete ways to overcome common barriers to self-love, such as societal pressures and internalised doubt. She provides practical exercises that help readers incorporate self-love into their daily routines, making this journey toward personal growth more accessible and achievable.

A particularly powerful moment in the book is when the author explains how we often forget to celebrate our own achievements.



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book : Time To Come Home - Sowing the Seeds of Self-Love for Lasting Happiness
by DAMINI GROVER
Publisher : Hay House
Number of Pages: 280
₹399.00
Availability: Amazon

Whether it's a small personal victory or a significant milestone, Grover reminds us that recognising our own efforts is a vital part of self-love. This isn't about pride, but about valuing ourselves and the work we put into our lives. It struck me how often we fail to give ourselves credit, constantly seeking praise from others, when, in reality, we should be the first to acknowledge our accomplishments.

What sets this book apart is its approachable tone and simplicity. Grover doesn't complicate her message with overwhelming ideas or heavy jargon. Instead, she offers practical guidance, allowing the reader to feel more connected to the process of self-love. Each chapter ends with exercises that encourage reflection and action, guiding readers toward building a stronger, more compassionate relationship with themselves.

One of the standout sections of *Time to Come Home* explores the concept of self-acceptance. Grover touches on how critical it is to stop battling with ourselves and to accept who we are in the present moment. She writes, "It is what it is," which resonates as a gentle yet powerful reminder that acceptance is the foundation for self-love. It's about acknowledging our imperfections without judgment, and choosing to embrace ourselves as we are.

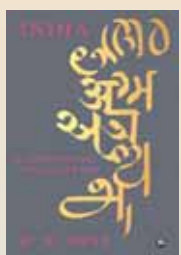
A theme that deeply resonated with me was the emphasis on forgiveness, not just of others, but of ourselves. The author beautifully explains how forgiving ourselves for past mistakes and shortcomings is essential to moving forward. This aspect of self-love, often overlooked, is crucial for personal growth and healing. She also emphasises that loving ourselves includes uplifting ourselves in moments of doubt and difficulty, just as we would for a friend.

Time to Come Home is a guide for anyone seeking to rediscover themselves and strengthen their foundation of self-love. Through relatable stories, practical exercises, and a compassionate tone, Damini Grover highlights the vital role self-love plays in our overall well-being. According to Grover, self-love is not a luxury but a necessity. Without it, we may feel disconnected and unfulfilled, constantly seeking validation from others. By embracing self-love, we improve our relationships, make better decisions and lead more authentic lives. This book is a must-read for anyone ready to embark on the journey of returning to themselves and embracing the power of self-love.

NEW ARRIVALS

OCTOBER NEW RELEASES BY ALEPH BOOK COMPANY

India: A Linguistic Civilisation
By GN DEVI
(PRICE: ₹599, PAGES: 200)



In *India: A Linguistic Civilisation*, by GN Devi examines the profound linguistic diversity of India and its role in shaping national identity and culture. This insightful book traces the evolution of languages, addressing the challenges of documenting their histories while highlighting the impact of migration, colonialism and cultural practices. Devi emphasises the importance of preserving endangered languages and the rich oral traditions that enrich Indian heritage, making a compelling case for collective responsibility in safeguarding linguistic diversity.

Become an Achiever Right Now
(Price: ₹299, Pages: 144)



In *Become an Achiever Right Now: A Masterclass from the SuperGurus*, a collection of insights from the world's leading self-help gurus, this book uncovers the common traits and strategies shared by great achievers. It explores how taking risks, learning from failures and possessing unique character attributes can propel individuals toward their dreams. With practical advice and inspirational stories, this masterclass equips readers with the tools they need to navigate life's challenges and achieve lasting success.

A Mother's Pain and Family Struggles

Lata Gwalani 'Not Before You' reveals the emotional depth and challenges of a family with a differently-abled child.



BY SANJAY CHANDRA

Not Before You by Lata Gwalani is a layered story that explores different facets of human emotions and accompanying family dynamics. It is the story of a mother's angst as she faces the reality that her first-born son is differently-abled and would not survive long. The story also explores the fragile balance of the family, as the other two members - the father and the second child, a normal daughter, deal with the situation in their own way, which does not include a caregiver role for the child. Jaya works in the media. A chance meeting with Suraj who runs his Yoga Ashram, culminates into romance, and marriage. Their joy soon turns into despair when they realise that the child, Nikhil, is different. The diagnosis after several visits to the doctors shatters them. In time, they have a daughter, Divya, who is normal. Jaya is determined to care for son till the end. Suraj takes refuge by escaping from reality. Divya is traumatised



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: Not Before You by LATA GWALANI
Publisher: Vishwakarma Publication
Paperback: 216 page
₹325

as she does not understand the reason for her mother spending more time with her brother to her exclusion. She also wants her mother to cuddle and care for her the way she sees her caring for Nikhil or the way the mothers of her friends care for their children. She continues to fight her demons even as an adult. She also blames her mother for the missing father. The mother bears it stoically. Years pass. Jaya retires from her professional responsibilities. She realises with dismay that she is not getting any younger. She is not invincible. She is worried about Nikhil if she passes away before her son. She is willing to go to the extremes to ensure that the young man, who has been bedridden since birth, does not suffer if she dies before him. She is a mother who wants her son to die first. She is not certain if the two other people who matter to her, Suraj and Divya, would support her. Almost 8 million children in India live with disabilities.

The first thought that runs through our minds is a silent prayer to the supreme being that our children lead a normal life, and then a sympathy towards the parents. We do not pause and reflect upon the sentiments of the affected parents. Lata shows us the mirror to do just that. It is a sensitive subject beautifully handled by her. There are short references to Yama, the God of death, looking down upon this unique mother and bowing to her wishes to not die before the child. These passages do not interrupt the flow of the story, but could have been avoided. This is a book that teaches us the meaning of empathy. Lata Gwalani has a career spanning three decades in journalism and behavioural training. She is a renowned speaker on Emotional Intelligence and Leadership. Lata uncovers captivating tales in the mundane and has published three works.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Sanjay Chandra is an author, speaker and strategy consultant who writes for The Pioneer and The Hindu. His novels include Behind Closed Doors (2023), The Gymnast (2022) and The Life and Times of a Common Man (2019). He lives in Gurugram and connects with readers through his website and social media. Sanjay loves to interact with readers through his email sanjaychandra59@gmail.com, his website www.authorsanjaychandra.com and various social media handles.

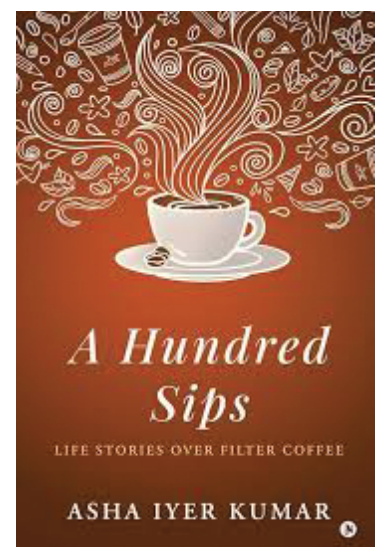


Finding joy: A hundred sips of life's simple moments

In 'A Hundred Sips: Life Stories over Filter Coffee,' Asha Iyer Kumar invites readers to explore the essence of happiness and the beauty found in life's everyday moments, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

What is happiness and how can we discover it in the simple moments of daily life? Is there a pattern to the challenges and hardships we face on this journey? In 'A Hundred Sips: Life Stories over Filter Coffee,' Asha Iyer Kumar presents a collection of uplifting stories that explore these questions and more. Rooted in her personal experiences, Kumar's narratives reveal how hope and joy can be found even amid life's struggles and tough decisions.

A Hundred Sips is a thought-provoking and beautifully crafted collection of stories that take the reader on a reflective journey through life's everyday moments. Each essay is like a sip from the cup of life, offering warmth, insight, and the subtle flavours of human experience. Kumar's writing is both intimate and relatable, drawing from her personal observations and universal truths. Her book explores themes of love, loss, joy and the simple pleasures that often go unnoticed in our fast-paced world. The strength of her prose lies in its simplicity; she conveys profound ideas in a conversational tone, making it feel like the reader is having a heartfelt discussion with an old friend. Her stories remind us that although life may not always be perfect, there are always glimmers of light, even in the darkest times. With her straightforward yet profound writing, Kumar encourages readers to recognise the happiness and contentment hidden in everyday



moments, celebrating the small pleasures often overlooked. Through this journey, Kumar invites readers to pause and reflect on their own lives, helping them uncover beauty in the ordinary and find the extraordinary within the mundane. Whether you're searching for comfort, inspiration or a fresh perspective, 'A Hundred Sips: Life Stories over Filter Coffee' is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the joy that can be discovered in the simplest of experiences. Her message is clear: Immerse yourself in these deep stories and let them guide you in savouring life, one sip at a time.

NITISH KUMAR REDDY CREDITS GAMBHIR FOR ALL-ROUND SHOW IN 2ND T20I

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy said the idea was to take on the Bangladeshi spinners and credited head coach Gautam Gambhir for boosting his confidence after his all-round effort powered the hosts to an 86-run win in the second T20I here.

India, who had lost to Bangladesh the last time these two teams clashed here, landed in trouble with their top order blown away inside the powerplay but Reddy and Rinku Singh joined forces to turn the tables on Bangladesh. The pair put on 108 runs for the fourth wicket from 49 balls to take the game away from Bangladesh, with Reddy clobbering seven sixes and four fours to make 74 from a mere 34 balls.

"The conversation that we were having (was) a smooth conversation, we were not taking any pressure. We did not plan anything about the score. We saw the spinner coming on to bowl, and we thought that this was the main over and we should take him on," he said in a video shared by BCCI.

"To be honest, I should thank Gautam sir for this. He gave a lot of confidence in me. He told me to believe in my bowling."

"(He said) 'when you are bowling, you should think like a bowler and not as a batsman who can bowl'. That is what he kept telling me and that somehow boosted me," he added.

Reddy said he was grateful for being adjudged the Player of



the Match. "Playing for India is in itself a proud moment and getting the man of the match (award), I feel so grateful for this and I just want to live in this moment," he said. "Once I got to know that from here you should take on. I just knew that I will take on the bowlers. I was backing myself saying 'you can do this,' added Reddy, who returned 4-0-23-2.

"The conversation between us was like, he was telling me that maybe it is God's plan. We were just believing (in) it and we were just hitting the balls," Reddy said in a video shared by BCCI. Rinku, who scored 53 off 29 balls with five fours and three sixes, said the pair decided to take the attack to the opposition.

"We were enjoying our batting. I just said it is God's plan, just keep hitting and leave it on the one above. Nitesh bhai also batted well," said Rinku. "It was only his second international match and it felt really good watching him," he added. Rinku looked at his record with pride saying he has won each series that he has played

for India and expressed his wish to continue doing that. "This was my third century in T20Is and all three have come in situations where India have lost early wickets have been lost and I got the chance to bat and I made a fifty," he said. "I have won all the series with the Indian team since I started playing, so I would want to

remain with the team and the key keep winning," added Rinku, who also has 'God' plan' tattooed on his arm. Rinku said India skipper Suryakumar Yadav urges his players to remain aggressive and play their natural game. "Surya bhai has asked us to be aggressive and play our natural game, just back our shots and show our energy," he said.



IAMGAME Conclave for the Future of Indian Sports

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

The IAMGAME Conclave took place on Wednesday to put together key leaders, athletes, and industry experts to share their valuable insights on the evolution and global potential of Indian sports.

The conclave addressed the most pressing challenges and opportunities within the Indian sports ecosystem, from infrastructure development and athlete nurturing to the growing influence of technology and the critical role of inclusivity and diversity.

The conclave was inaugurated by Mr Sudhanshu Mittal, President of Kho Kho federation. "This more than just an event; it is a call to action. By facilitating open dialogue and knowledge sharing, the conclave aims to empower participants to drive positive change in the sports sector. The conclave had prominent speakers such as Harmanpreet Singh, Ronjan Sodhi, Udith Sheth, Jaspal Rana, Nikhat Zareen, Namrata Parekh, Aparna Papat, and Rathindra Basu. Who shared their insights about how they can make the game better for athletes.

"The conclave was not just about conversations, but

about fostering collaboration and setting the foundation for action that will shape the future of sports in India," said Karan Chettri, IAMGAME Founder. IAMGAME inspired innovation, tackled inclusivity, and empowered the next generation of athletes by fostering a collaborative environment for meaningful discussions. The insights generated at the event will serve as a roadmap for India's continued progress as a global sports powerhouse.

Co-founder Mandeep Malhotra added, "Through IAMGAME, we have built a platform for collaboration and growth, positioning Indian sports for a brighter future."

The event concluded on a high note, with a renewed focus on empowering the next generation of athletes, promoting inclusivity, and fostering innovation. The insights and ideas generated at IAMGAME 2024 are expected to serve as a roadmap for India's continued progress as a global sports powerhouse. As the momentum from the conclave carries forward, it is expected to drive meaningful changes within the Indian sports ecosystem, pushing it to new heights.

Iyer-Kishan on a 'mission' as half of season to be held without top 60 players

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shreyas Iyer would like to sit back on a 'Time Machine' to revive his start-stop international career while Ishan Kishan would aim to clear the popular perception about his allegedly "misplaced priorities", when the 90th edition of Ranji Trophy starts across the country with hundreds of players ready to slog it out for different ambitions and varied goals.

The Indian cricket board's powerful rap on the knuckles to the 'IPL happy duo' was a message loud and clear to anyone who would care to listen - to earn mega bucks in IPL auction, learn to give respect to the foundation of country's cricket - India's very own national championship. Iyer wouldn't mind having a 1,321-run reason like he had in the 2015-16 Ranji edition which brought him into national reckoning. He is at the cross-roads where it may not take long to slip off the selector's radar as his favourite ODI format is slowly losing relevance.

Similarly, Kishan, who has fallen off the pecking order among national 'keepers, has accepted the responsibility to captain Jharkhand which



would also be a signal of his intent for Ajit Agarkar and his colleagues. Like every edition, Ranji Trophy will be devoid of star power with none of country's top 17-18 players likely to be available throughout the season due to eight Test matches scheduled between October 16 to January 7.

The next 18 will only be available for a single round before they embark on India 'A' tour to Australia while another 15 among the younger crop of top T20 stars also unavailable for a couple of weeks owing to a four-match T20I series in South Africa. If that is not enough, another 15 will be in Muscat for the Emerging Asia Cup tournament, where BCCI

wouldn't send its U-23 team like previous years as other Asian nations don't have robust age-group programme. Like every year, the national selectors would be out there to unearth hidden diamonds and give them wings to fly in coming years. The Indian Test team's philosophy has undergone sea-change over the years and it will no longer just be about volume of runs scored and quantum of wickets. "If runs and wickets alone would have been a marker then Miliind Kumar or Lalaj Saxena would have played for India," a former national selector, who has a deep understanding of the process said. "If a batter has scored only 500

runs in a season but there is hundred on a green-top against good domestic attack and 60-odd on a proverbial akhaada (rank turner), his name would find a place in selector's notebook for India A and pathways programme. "Similarly, if a fast bowler is running in and making things happen on a batting belter with sun beating down, he will automatically grab eyeballs. It is all about adaptability and challenging yourself to get out of your comfort zone. If its a flat deck, then show your stamina and score a triple even when you are suffering from cramps."

"To play for India, show that you are different. All selectors have specific names in mind when they go for an assignment. Yes, they look at all players but focus would be on what national team requirements are," the selector, a former India Test player said. Among the teams, Mumbai once again would be a team to beat with Ajinkya Rahane, Prithvi Shaw, Shreyas Iyer in its ranks although the Khan brothers — Sarfaraz and Musheer — will be missing; elder one due to national duty and younger one because of a recent road accident.

Not going in with pre-determined mindset has helped Smriti and me, says Shafali

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian batter Shafali Verma said she and her opening partner Smriti Mandhana have moved away from the mindset of entering matches with "pre-determined" ideas about targeting any particular type of bowling, which has helped them achieve greater success. The duo put up a 98-run opening stand to lay the foundation of India's emphatic 82-run win over Sri Lanka on Wednesday. In her 38-ball 50, Mandhana attacked the spinners, which is noteworthy since she typically relies on Shafali to handle tweakers. "Yes, we have a very good combination now, as you said. That's because now we don't go being pre-determined. Whoever



is connecting well with the bat and ball on that day, we try to give singles and let her play more balls," Shafali said at the post-match press conference.

"She's hitting the spinners very well. So, it's a good thing. And we both just try to give as good a start as we can then it'd be good for the team to build a good inning and hit a good target," she added. Under the pump after the heavy loss to New Zealand and an underwhelming win over Pakistan, India's hammering of Sri Lanka massively boosted their net run rate, elevating them to the second spot in Group A. The Indian women have, however, struggled to hit the maximums at the Dubai Cricket Stadium, where they have played all of their matches till now. Shafali and Mandhana also copped criticism for their running between the wickets, which improved drastically against Sri Lanka

India men's team settles for bronze in Asian Table Tennis C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian men's team bowed out in the semifinals and settled for the bronze medal following a 0-3 loss to Chinese Taipei in the semifinal of the Asian Table Tennis Championships in Kazakhstan's Astana, on Thursday. Indian women's team had also won the bronze medal in the competition on Wednesday, which is the country's first medal in the category since the beginning of the event in 1972.

The legendary Achanta Sharath Kamal, world No 42, found the going tough against his world No 7 opponent Lin Yun-Ju, whose reflexes and precision made the contest tougher for the Indian to settle into his own game. Sharath Kamal lost the contest 11-7, 12-10, 11-9. In the following contest, Manav Thakkar lost to world No 22 Kao Cheng-Jui in a hard-fought contest whose outcome was 11-9, 8-11, 11-3, 13-11 in the favour of the Chinese Taipei's player and a 2-0 lead. In the third game, Harmeet Desai also had

to deal with disappointment as the Indian paddler lost to Huang Yan-Cheng 6-11, 9-11, 7-11. "Despite the loss, the Indian men's team has much to be proud of. A bronze medal at the prestigious Asian Championships is no small feat, especially in the elite continental championships," said the Table Tennis Federation of India in a release. "The men's and women's squads showed incredible grit and determination, proving that India continues to rise in the ranks of international table tennis," it added.

Major Dhyan Chand Stadium gets a facelift to ahead of India-Germany hockey series

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Once it chronicled Mir Ranjan Negi's epic fall from grace, Dhanraj Pillay's artistic stick-work and Sandeep Singh's muscular drag-flicks but in the past decade or so, Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium seemed resigned to the fact that its glory days as epicentre of Indian hockey were a thing of past.

The two-match Test series against Germany on October 23 and 24 seems like the revival of Delhi's hockey spirit which has gone dormant in the past 10 years.

Odisha government's seminal decision to help Indian hockey find its home in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela was a major

factor in the shift of momentum, which can swing once again if the fans show up. Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey is hoping for a good turnout considering the growing popularity of hockey after two consecutive Olympic bronze medals. "Earlier domestic tournaments used to be held in Delhi in a very spectacular manner. I too made my international debut in Delhi through Indira Gandhi Gold Cup 1995. A large number of spectators used to come here and we also want that the glory of hockey to return to Delhi," Tirkey told PTI Bhasha.

"After the Tokyo and Paris Olympics, the popularity of hockey has increased manifold and now the stadium will be

waiting for the spectators," said the legendary former defender. The last international match played here was the 2014 Hero World League Final. Inter-departmental hockey of institutions has also been held here occasionally. "I was an official here during the 2010 World Cup and people from all over the country came here to watch the match. It was a different atmosphere," said Ajay Kumar Bansal, former coach of the Indian junior and women's hockey team and ex administrator of the National Stadium.

"Hockey was being played in Odisha for the last few years, due to which the graph of the game went up there and on the contrary, due to the absence of



hockey in Delhi, it went down. The youth did not see any big hockey tournament here, so automatically their interest decreased," he said. "Apart from this, due to lack of tournaments, the maintenance of the stadium is also affected. I want that from next time,

four or five more venues including Delhi, Punjab, Haryana should be included in the Hockey India League." India's World Cup winning former captain Ajitpal Singh believes that matches with big teams should be played in all the pockets of hockey in India.

"An international match is happening in Delhi after many years. Earlier, many 'Test' matches used to be held at the Shivaji Stadium. I think it is important to have matches and tournaments across the country, rather centralising them," the former skipper said. "There are many pockets of hockey in India, like many excellent players have emerged from Punjab, Haryana, UP, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu. Hockey is very popular in Odisha and Jharkhand, but it is important to organise big matches in other states as well," he added.

Giving details of the preparations, officials said the cleaning of astro turf on the main pitch and practice pitches was going on with

German machines for a week and the process has been completed. Every year Rs 30 lakh is spent on the maintenance of both turfs. They said that the spectator galleries, change rooms, dressing rooms, and the entire complex have been cleaned. They also said that there is no need for an upgrade because this is a world-class stadium in which World Cup and Commonwealth Games have been organised. The stadium also houses a Hockey Academy of the National Centre of Excellence of the Sports Authority of India in which regular practice takes place.

Apart from this, under the 'Come and Play' scheme of SAI, some children come and

play hockey, who are very excited about these matches. When India defeated arch-rivals Pakistan in the World Cup and the Commonwealth Games in 2010 year on this ground, a flood of emotions had overflowed in the packed stadium.

The National Stadium (formerly known as Irwin Amphitheatre), gifted to Delhi by the Maharaja of Bhavnagar, witnessed the first Asian Games in 1951 and the players shed tears after losing to Pakistan in the hockey final of the 1982 Asian Games. On this same ground, Australia hammered the host India in the final of the 2010 Commonwealth Games by 8-0, one of the worst ever defeats.

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