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KASHMIR UNDER ATTACK



MOHIT KANDHARI 📕 JAMMU

n the second dastardly act of terror in the last two days, two non-local construction workers were killed and two others were injured by terrorists near Sonamarg in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir late Sunday evening. This is also the second major

incident of terrorist violence after the formation of the Abdullah-led Omar government in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to preliminary reports, the terrorists opened fire on the camp housing labourers of a private company working on the construction of a tunnel in the Gund area in the Ganderbal district. The identity of the deceased could not be ascertained immediately. Both the workers were shot

in the head. Their bodies were seen lying on the floor of the camp while panic- Minister Omar Abdullah

were seen taking videos. The (earlier Twitter), "Very sad news of a dastardly & cowardly attack on non-local workers who were targeted by the group of terrorists were part of the construction labourers at Gagangir in Sonamarg region. These people were working on a key infrastructure project in team working on the Z Morh tunnel, connecting Gaganeer to Sonamarg in Central the area. 2 have been killed & Kashmir's Ganderbal 2-3 more have been injured district. The 6.412 km long Z-Morh in this militant attack. I strongly condemn this attack

tunnel, a flagship project, aims to ensure all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Sonamarg and Kargil in Ladakh.

A migrant worker, hailing from the Banka district of Bihar, was mercilessly killed by terrorists in the Wachi area of Shopian on Friday. He worked in the corn fields to earn his livelihood. Official sources claimed two labourers died on the spot while two others sustained injuries, they said, adding further details are awaited.

Police and army have cordoned off the area to track down the footprints of the terrorists.

Reacting to the news Chief while 31 were killed in 2022, 41 in 2021, 38 in 2020, and stricken migrant workers posted a message on X 44 in 2019 across J&K.



Hoax threats to airlines continue on Sunday

RAJESH KUMAR - NEW DELHI

The menace of hoax bomb threat calls L to airlines continued on Sunday, with more than 24 flights of IndiGo, Air India, Akasa Air and Vistara flights receiving fresh bomb threats messages. This affected both domestic and international flights, scaring air passengers in the festive season. Six flights each of IndiGo, Vistara and Air India received the threats. So far this week, more than 90 flights have received bomb threats and most of them have turned out to be hoaxes. The overall impact of these hoax threats has resulted in financial losses of up to Rs 100 crore for various airlines.

IndiGo released a series of press statements sharing details of the bomb threat received by the flights. In its statement, IndiGo confirmed the airline is cognisant of a situation involving flight 6E 58 (Jeddah to Mumbai), 6E87 (Kozhikode to Dammam), 6E11 (Delhi to Istanbul), 6E17 (Mumbai to Istanbul), 6E133 (Pune to Jodhpur) and 6E112

operating (Goa to Ahmedabad). Security alerts were received for six Akasa Air flights - QP 1102 (Ahmedabad to Mumbai), QP 1378 (Delhi to Goa), QP 1385 (Mumbai to Bagdogra), QP 1406 (Delhi to Hyderabad), QP 1519 (Kochi to Mumbai) and QP 1526 (Lucknow to Mumbai).

Vistara said it got security threats for six flights - UK25 (Delhi to Frankfurt), UK106 (Singapore to Mumbai), UK146 (Bali to Delhi), UK116 (Singapore to Delhi), UK116 (Singapore to Pune) and UK107 (Mumbai to Singapore). "In line with the protocols, all relevant authorities were immediately notified, and security procedures, as directed by them, are being carried out," a Vistara spokesperson said in a statement.

Continued on page 8

Bomb blast shatters Delhi's Sunday slumber

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Signboards, frightened residents and heavy deployment of intradepartment security forces marked a high stress Sunday in the National Capital. Delhi woke up to the shocking news of a 'bomb blast' near the renowned Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) school in Rohini Sector-14 on Sunday morning, when many had woken up early to begin rituals for Karwachauth, a festival celebrated by married women. While the school was closed for the weekend, the markets were to open as usual, especially sweet shops as the festive season has begun in the city. A quiet Sunday morning turned into a nightmare for the residents when they heard a loud blast around 7:45 am. The sound they recalled could be heard up to a kilometer away. The Prashant Vihar area where the blast occurred is densely populated and has court and Delhi Development Authority (DDA) complex.

Pramod Chauhan, a security guard, who was on duty outside a jewelry shop right opposite of the school at the time of the blast, said that there was dense smoke for at least 10 minutes after a sudden loud noise was heard. "I was almost about to leave since my shift was over when the blast happened. I could not see anything for the next 10 minutes after the blast as there was thick white smoke all around. My heart started palpitating very fast. The glass panes of the shops around were shattered, and cars that were parked near the school were also damaged," 52-year-old Chauhan said. He added that there was a "chemicallike smell" from the site, and that the police arrived about 20 minutes after the incident. The owner of the shop Vinod Kumar said that he incurred losses worth Rs 2 lakhs because of the blast. Ankit, a 25-year-old who lives near the CRPF school said the sound was so loud that it was heard for at



National Security Guard (NSG) personnel conduct investigations at the site of the blast at Prashant Vihar, near the CRPF school in Rohini area of New Delhi on Sunday

least a kilometer away from the place. According to police sources, the investigation may be transferred to the National Investigative Agency (NIA) by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday, after it sought a report from the Delhi Police on the matter. The Delhi Police has already submitted a preliminary report to the MHA. Police officials added that it seems to be a crude bomb made of ammonium nitrate and ammonium chloride.

The usually bustling area which has markets and eateries was relatively quiet and many shops remained closed on Sunday. Residents also stayed in their homes. A frightened Kiran Sachdeva, a resident of the locality, described the blast as "an earthquake-like shock", that they felt in her house which was about 200-250 meters away from the site.

A senior police official said, "On Sunday, at 07:47 am, a PCR call was received in which the caller informed that a blast with a lot of noise took

place near CRPF school Sector 14, Rohini. Local police reached the spot, where the school wall was found damaged with a foul smell. The glasses of a nearby shop and a car parked near the shop were found to be damaged."

The place has been cordoned off and there is heavy deployment of officials from Crime team, Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team, bomb squad team, National Security Guard (NSG) team, National Investigative Agency (NIA) team, CRPF Team and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team visited the spot. "FSL and NSG teams conducted the inspection of spot and lifted samples.

A case under section 326(g) (Mischief by injury, inundation, fire or explosive substance, etc) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 4 Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and 3 Explosives Act has been registered at Prashant Vihar police station. Continued on page 8

Wayanad hills are alive, with the sound of politics



promised the electorate that a person who would be adored and admired by them would be fielded by the Congress and that is how

on unarmed innocent people

& send my condolences to

In February this year, two

migrant workers hailing

from Amritsar were targeted

from a close range by unidentified terrorists in the

Shaheed Gunj area of Srinagar. A sikh carpenter

identified as 31-year-old

Amritpal Singh was killed on the spot while another person identified as Rohit

Masih succumbed to his

critical injuries the next day.

In 2023, a total number of 14

civilians were killed in different incidents of

terrorist-related violence

their loved ones".



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and others during the inauguration of various projects at the newly-constructed stadium at Sigra, in Varanasi, Sunday PTI

BJP releases 99-strong Maharashtra list T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday retained 71 of its sitting MLAs, as it released its first list of 99 candidates for the Maharashtra Assembly polls that contained the names of its bigwigs like Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, state unit President Chandrashekhar Bawankule and as many as 13 women candidates. With the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) still to formalise its tie-up among its constituents and its own MahaYuti allies - the Shiv Sena Shinde) (Eknath and Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar) having not released their lists of candidates yet, the BJP became the first major political party in Maharashtra to get off the blocks for the November 20 Assembly polls. The BJP, which heads the grand ruling alliance MahaYuti, is likely to contest anywhere from 155 to 160 seats out of the total 288 seats in the 2024 Assembly polls, as against 164 seats it had contested in the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly polls. The BJP released its first list of





KUMAR CHELLAPPAN KOCHI

 $T^{he \ stage \ is \ set \ for \ a \ battle}_{royale \ from \ the \ Wayanad}$ Lok Sabha constituency that sits atop the Western Ghats in Kerala which goes to the polls for a by-election on November 13. With the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from the constituency late Saturday evening, the lineup of contestants is ready. Priyanka Gandhi, the super star of Indian National

Congress, is her making electoral

debut from Wayanad, which

fell vacant following the decision of her sibling Rahul Gandhi to retain the family fiefdom of Rae Bareli from where he won the 2024 election with a brute majority. Rahul had retained the Wayanad constituency with a mammoth margin of announcing its candidate 3,64,422 votes (59.69 per cent of total votes polled) and had literally decimated all his rival candidates.

Though the voters in Wayanad were disappointed by his decision to quit

constituency, the had

Priyanka entered the scene. The fact that Priyanka is making her electoral debut from the constituency has brought Wayanad to the global political map. On Sunday, the Kerala

Congress Pradesh

Committee announced that Sonia Gandhi will hold a road show in Wayanad on Tuesday along with Priyanka and Rahul, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha. Sathyan Mokeri of the Communist Party of India (CPI) is the Left Democratic Front (LDF) candidate from Wayanad. The BJP has fielded Navya Haridas, leader of the Mahila Morcha (the women's wing of the party) as its fighter. Haridas,

an articulate and suave politician is a councilor of Kozhikode Corporation.

Rahul

PM Modi gives Diwali gifts to BISWAJEET BANERJEE 📕

VARANAS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a sizable Diwali gift worth over Rs 6,100 Crore to the people of Varanasi. As a third-term Member of Parliament from the constituency, PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 23 development projects valued at Rs 6,611.18 crore.

The PM inaugurated a range of public facilities, including those related to healthcare, education, sports, religion, employment, tourism, housing, and aviation. This included laying the foundation Municipal stone for the expansion of Continued on page 8 Varanasi Airport and the

Varanasi, brickbats to Opposition construction of a new terminal.

Additionally, he inaugurated the RJ Shankara Eye Hospital. He also launched a scathing attack on the Opposition parties, including the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Congress, accusing them of stalling the nation's progress. The PM said that the BJP has been at the forefront of development, especially in honouring sportspersons. Addressing a large gathering at the Sigra Stadium, PM

Modi criticised the Opposition, stating, "These people have consistently hindered the country's development. Even today, they create obstacles in developmental work." Continued on page 8

Devendra Fadnavis and Chandrashekhar Bawankule File Photo

Speaker Rahul Narwekar, who candidates in New Delhi on has presided over hearings of Sunday, after its central disqualification petitions filed election committee cleared the names at a meeting held on in connection with the splits in October 16 in the presence of the Shiv Sena and NCP, will contest from Colaba. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers Among other things, the BJP has fielded former Chief

Rajnath Singh and Party president J P Nadda. Minister Ashok Chavan's As many as 71 sitting BJP MLAs out of the total 105 seats daughter Shreejaya Chavan from the family seat of the party won in the 2019 State Bhokar, former Union Assembly polls, figure in the first list of candidates The list Minister Raosaheb Danve's Santosh Raosaheb Danve also contains the names of from Bhokardan, Ratnagirisecond-generation and third-Sindhudurg MP and former generation leaders. Chief Minister Narayan A five-time MLA, Fadnavis

Rane's son Nitesh from will contest from Nagpur South West, while State BJP Kankavli and late Congress Chief Minister Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar's grandson Sambhaji Patil Nilangekar Chandrashekar president Bawankule, who is currently a MLC, would contest the from Nilanga. Kamtee seat.



Meri car, meri marzi ... vehicle owners cock a snook at the law High Security Registration Plates are mandatory since 2022, yet violations continue

BY SAUMYA SHUKLA

Even though High Security Registration Plates (HSRP) were made mandatory by the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) since 2022, a drive on the roads of the National Capital shows rampant violations of the same by many vehicles, be it cars, buses, auto-rickshaws or bikes, despite hefty challans of up to Rs 10,000 in force by the Delhi Police. A transport and traffic expert said that around 40 per cent of vehicles made prior to 2019, in Delhi, do not comply with the HSRP rule.

The MoRTH had notified the HSRP in December 2018. The unique HSRP is linked electronically to the vehicle after its affixation, and comes embedded with a chromiumbased Ashoka Chakra symbol in a blue-coloured hologram.

As per the guidelines of the Union Ministry, all motor vehicle owners must install an HSRP. All vehicles purchased after the year 2019 already have the HSRP installed.

Mahesh Malhotra, Secretary of the Association of Registration Plate Manufacturers of India (ARPMI) revealed while there are guidelines to implement the same, real action is missing on the ground.

"Under the Section 50 of CMVA (Central Motor Vehicles Act 1989), all vehicles after 1 April 2019 will be fitted with the HSRP at the time of the registration. With these provisions, all vehicles in Delhi after the said date have near 100 per cent compliance. However, vehicles prior to the date of order have not met with more than 40 per cent compliance," he stated, adding that although it is mandated by the law, the HSRP are also helpful



to the vehicle owners. One can easily distinguish between an ordinary number plate and an HSRP. Its distinctive design aids law enforcement in

tracking and identifying vehicles, reducing vehicle thefts and fraud. It is also impossible to make plates, authenticity which counterfeit enhances and

prevents fraudulent activities. Unlike conventional plates, the HSRPs are difficult to remove, alter, or tamper with. Their nonreusable and non-removable

locking system significantly reduces the risk of vehicle theft. However, due to the lack of strict implementation on the ground, many vehicles still have old number plates affixed. The Delhi Traffic Police

department stated, "As per order of MoRTH, HSRP plates are necessary for all vehicles-new and old-from 2022. Licence plates that are manufactured after April 2019 already have HSRP elements. After 2022, High Security Number Plates were compulsory to be obtained online or offline for cars that were bought before April 2019."

Continued on page 8

However, despite the hefty fine of up to Rs 10,000 for the non-adherence of the same, the situation on the ground remains as such that those vehicles roam freely on the roads of Delhi without any fear of any challans. A traffic police source said that they avoid penalising such vehicles because the issue of licensing falls with the Delhi transport government and they have to lay down the guidelines properly to ensure action.



city 02

Bizman alleges ₹82.66-lakh fraud by Guj firm officials

PNS LUCKNOW

A supplier of road construc-tion materials was allegedly duped of over Rs 82.66 lakh by a group of 14 individuals, including top-ranking officers from a Gujarat-based compa-

ny. The case was registered on the instruction of a court after the victim, Shailendra Singh of Vikas Khand, sought refuge there due to alleged police inaction and delaying tactics. In his complaint, Singh identified several individuals holding the positions of chairman, managing director, and direc-tors of the company. He stated that his firm spe-

cialises in supplying ballast, soil, gravel, sand, cement, and iron rods used in high-level construction projects. According to Singh, he met officials from the Gujarat-

based company, which has its regional office in Kakarabad, within the jurisdiction of the Mall police station.

The company had secured a contract with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for the construction of a four-lane road from Jehta Road to Sitapur Road in Lucknow, effective September 5,2018. Singh's firm supplied the nec-

essary road construction materials for this project. Following discussions with the company's directors, Singh received an order to provide all required materials-including soil, gravel, sand, cement, and iron rods—using his own transport. The agreement stipulated that payments for the supplied

Marine engineer duped of ₹84 lakh by cyber thugs

PNS LUCKNOW

Amarine engineer was allegedly defrauded of Rs 84 lakh by cyber thugs who threatened to implicate him in money laundering. The accused first coerced him into checking his bank accounts to prove his innocence and avoid arrest and then fraudulently withdrew Rs 84 lakh from 11 different accounts. The victim was so frightened that he did not inform his family about the

incident. As per reports, the victim, AK Singh, a resident of Hazratganj, travelled to Delhi on September 27 to attend a seminar. While staying at a hotel, he received a call that night from someone claiming to be an officer from TRAI. The caller informed Singh that

materials would be made in conjunction with payments from the NHAI.

Singh's firm delivered soil, gravel, sand, and iron rods to the project site at its own expense and at reasonable prices, with the appropriate GST paid.

However, the outstanding amount for the supplied mate-rials eventually exceeded Rs 3.02 crore. Due to delays in the project, the NHAI terminated the contract via notice on September 14, 2022.

controversial messages had officer, Rajesh Mishra. During been sent from his mobile number and it would be blocked as a result.

'If you want to prevent your number from being blocked, you need to speak with Sub-Inspector Pradeep Sawant at Andheri East police station," the caller told Singh.

When Singh called the provided number, he was told that his Aadhaar card had been misused. He then overheard background voices discussing the issuance of an arrest warrant against him. Terrified, Singh pleaded for mercy, expressing concern that a false accusation

would ruin his career and social standing. Taking advantage of his fear, the imposter posing as an inspector instructed him to

speak with a supposed CBI After negotiations, the NHAI

awarded the remaining work to another company, which is a subcontractor of the Gujaratbased firm but located in Harvana. "After extensive follow-up, my firm received only Rs 2.2 crore,

leaving an outstanding bal-ance of over Rs 82.66 lakh from the Gujarat-based company," Singh alleged. He also alleged that on May 28, 2024, the aforementioned indi-

viduals threatened him, stating that if he continued to demand

a video call, the fake officer claimed that Singh was implicated in a money laundering case involving Jet Airways owner Naresh Goyal, alleging that a fraudulent account had been opened using his Aadhaar card.

aged to transfer Rs 84 lakh to their accounts. Even after this, the fraudsters continued to demand more money. Throughout the ordeal, Singh did not discuss the incident with anyone. When his wife called, he told her he was on a secret mission. It wasn't until two days later, when he confided in a friend, that the extent of the fraud was revealed.

payment, they would frame him in a false case and ruin him financially.

Singh claimed he submitted an application to the Gomti Nagar police station in Lucknow on June 8, but no action was taken, and he was only given an

Asst prof robbed of **belongings**

PNS LUCKNOW

In a daring incident, an assis-tant professor returning home from a party was robbed in the PGI police station area around 10 pm on Saturday, police said.

The accused, including an auto driver and his friends, first forced the victim to inhale an intoxicating substance and then assaulted him before making off with his mobile phone, wallet, and bag. The victim filed a complaint at the PGI police sta-tion on Sunday morning. According to reports, Vijay Kumar Shukla, originally from Gonda, resides with his family in Chaturvedi Kunj on Maurava Road in Mohanlaĺganj. Vijay told the police that he had booked an auto from Vrindavan Gate to Mohanlalganj. The driver stopped the vehicle under the

Outer Ring Road near Kalli Paschim, where his four accomplices joined him. During this time, the auto driver forcibly made him smell

some substance. "I began to feel intoxicated. When I offered resistance, they assaulted me, and I eventually lost consciousness. When I

regained consciounsness, my mobile phone, purse, and bag had been stolen," he stated. After regaining consciousness on Sunday morning, Vijay managed to return home and informed his family about the incident. He later went to the PGI police station to file a complaint. Meanwhile, police investigated the scene and reviewed CCTV footage from nearby shops. The police are current-ly searching for the suspects.

moon in the evening after observing a fast since morning. Terraces across the city were illuminated as women performed puja, praying for the long lives of their husbands. Many societies and residential complexes saw groups of women coming together to celebrate and break their fasts collectively. Manini Shukla, a 39-year-old housewife, expressed her excitement for the festival.

PNS LUCKNOW

Karwa Chauth was celebrat-ed with traditional fervour

Women, dressed in their finest attire, offered 'arghya' to the

and enthusiasm on Sunday.

"It marks the beginning of the festive season, and I love wear-ing my bridal lehenga for the occasion. Dressing up adds colour to the celebration, and I always make my husband's favourite dishes. He participates in the puja, making it a memorable moment," she said. Twenty-five-year-old Nishita Pandey, a corporate executive, celebrated her first Karwa Chauth with excitement.

'This is the first time I am keeping such a long fast. My husband gifted me a special saree, and my in-laws are guid-ing me through the rituals. The first Karwa Chauth is celebrated at the maternal home, and my mother is already fussing over me. I admit I am inspired by Bollywood scenes and hope for a celebration just like that,"

she said. Kamta Tewari (name changed), an artist in an interfaith mar-riage, noted her husband's enthusiasm for the festival. "He takes special interest in the rituals, coming from a different faith. Both our families are



TERRACES ACROSS THE CITY WERE ILLUMINATED AS WOMEN PERFORMED PUJA, PRAYING FOR THE LONG LIVES OF THEIR HUSBANDS. MANY SOCIETIES AND RESIDENTIAL COMPLEXES SAW GROUPS OF WOMEN COMING TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE AND BREAK FASTS COLLECTIVELY

keen to participate, and I make traditional dishes like 'pharas' the gesture. "It touches me that she is fastand 'kachoris' for the occasion," ing for me. I believe it's my duty she explained. to reciprocate her love. I will break my fast when she does.

Neha Bhasin, a student recently engaged, fasted for her fiancé.

Women strenghten bond with

husbands on Karwa Chauth

together, and such small ges-There is so much buzz around tures deepen our love," he the festival that I could not wait remarked. to be part of it. I got engaged in June and will marry in Tripati Saxena, a teacher, celebrated Karwa Chauth online December, but the excitement with her husband, who is cur-rently in London. "We connectof keeping a Karwa Chauth fast has been overwhelming. My ed via WhatsApp, and I per-formed the rituals while he fiancé is also fasting to support me, which strengthens our bond," she said. watched. It was an interesting experience, as it was our first time doing puja this way," she

Her fiancé Siddharth Rai, a corporate executive, appreciated

Girls who escaped from shelter home rescued by police

PNS LUCKNOW

Allocated all nine minor girls within 48 hours after they escaped by cutting the iron grills of the bathroom windows at a shelter home in Aliganj on Friday. The team consisted of officers from both the Lucknow police's crime branch and the Aliganj police station.

he girls were

Priyanka attacks govt over killing of bullion trader

PNS LUCKNOW

¬ongress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, on Sunday attacked the Yogi Adityanath government on law and order, raising the issue of the sensational kidnapping and murder of a leading businessman in Rae Bareli.

the entire orphanage and relo-cated the girls to the Rajkiya Bal Griha in the Para area of the "The news of the kidnapping and murder of Shobhit, son of city. An FIR under BNS 264(A) bullion trader Rakesh Kaushal was filed later on a complaint of Rae Bareli, is extremely heartbreaking. May God grant peace to the departed soul. My by the orphanage administra-tion regarding the escape. The deepest condolences to the bereaved family. The courage of the miscreants in Uttar Pradesh is so high that Shobhit was kidnapped from his shop and murdered. There is tremendous anger among the people of Rae Bareli about this. There is no such thing as law and order left in Uttar Pradesh," Priyanka Gandhi Vadra posted on social media platform X. `My demand from the state government is that strict action should be taken in the case and justice should be done to the victim's family," she added. According to reports, Rakesh Kaushal, a bullion trader of Rae Bareli, is doing business along with his son Shobhit Kaushal. While his son used to sell gold and silver from the shop, Rakesh, himself went to supply the ornaments to other jewelers and also to customers. He usually returns to his shop by the evening. According to police, Shobhit was at the shop on Saturday when the accused reached his shop and lured him into buying gold and silver jewellery. The accused put a condition to the businessman that he should accompany them to show the designs of gold and



PNS LUCKNOW

A youth has been accused of abducting a 23-year-old girl from outside a Gurudwara in the Naka police station area. The girl's father filed a complaint regarding the incident, police said on Sunday. torical sites.

The complainant, a resident of Chheda Khwaspurwa Subhash Marg in Naka, stated that his daughter went to

QR-code-based audio tour portal to enrich tourists' experience

said.

PNS LUCKNOW

of Agra and Lucknow.

access immersive audio con-

tent by simply scanning

unique OR codes at over 100

key tourist locations, includ-

ing renowned sites like Kashi

nificance of each site.

both English and Hindi, with The Tourism department plans to expand into regional will soon launch a QR and international languages, code-based audio tour portal ensuring accessibility for a wide designed to enrich the travel audience. experience for visitors exploring the state's cultural and his- minutes, allowing tourists to

Content will vary from 1 to 15 explore at their own pace while This digital initiative is part of engaging with the narratives of

The audio will be available in

We are just starting our lives

UP Tourism's vision to make each location. the state's rich heritage more The selected service provider will collaborate close accessible, interactive, and engaging for tourists from Tourism to maintain high stan-India and around the world. dards of quality, accuracy, and With its diverse landscapes, user experience. The customvibrant cultural traditions, built web portal will be responand deep historical roots, Uttar Pradesh has long been sive and mobile-friendly, designed for easy integration a favoured destination for with QR codes and seamless travellers. The introduction of access to audio content on this QR code-based portal smartphones and tablets. "The QR code-based audio tour marks a significant step will significantly enhance the towards modernising how visitor experience in UP. By visitors experience attractions, from the ancient temblending our ancient heritage ples of Varanasi and Avodhva with modern technology, we to the architectural wonders aim to offer a richer, more immersive experience to tourists. The Tourism department has This initiative reflects our cominvited proposals from qualmitment to making Uttar ified firms to develop this Pradesh a leading destination for cultural tourism and providing "The QR code-based audio unique, memorable experiences tour will allow visitors to Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh

"I also approached the police commissioner on June 28, but there was no response," he added. Consequently, Singh moved court, which directed the police to register a case in this regard.

The impersonators demanded money to spare him from legal action. They obtained details of all his bank accounts and man-

from Siwan district in Bihar on Sunday, one from Ayodhya, and two were found near Purania crossing in Aliganj on the same morning they escaped," said Assistant Commissioner of Police, Aliganj, Braj Narayan Singh. SHO, Aliganj, VK Tiwari stated, "We scanned hundreds of CCTV camera footage to iden-tify their routes. Meanwhile, their family members were notified. Since most of the girls were from Bihar, we dispatched a police team there to trace them using surveillance." "The rescued girls are currently under police protection and will be relocated based on recommendations from the Child Welfare Committee (CWC)," he added.

On Friday, nine minors escaped the orphanage by cutting the bathroom window grills around 3 am, prompting a swift response from authorities. Two of the girls were brought back by the police the same morning while the search for the remaining seven continued. The incident came to light during a headcount that morning, when a broken bathroom window grill was discov-

superintendent of the shelter home noted that the facility, established in 1911, is over 100 years old. "There were 49 girls aged between 10 and 18 residing here," the official stated.

ered. The police were alerted,

and officials arrived on the

Later that evening, due to secu-

rity concerns, the police and

local administration evacuated

scene to initiate a search.

FRAUDSTER HELD

The Hazratganj police, on late Saturday night, nabbed an interstate fraudster who was at large after duping several big businessmen of crores of rupees on the pretext of facilitating government tenders for them in different departments. The man is also booked for dup-

ing a Ballia resident of Rs 19.99 lakh in the name of getting a smart meter contract for him. "Cops arrested the man from an apartment on Jopling road. His aides are being traced," the

police said in a press note. "Along with Lucknow and other districts of UP, the fraudster, identified as Kanhaiva Sharma, 45, of Lucknow, had conned people in Mumbai, Delhi and other states also? said Assistant Commissioner of Police (Hazratganj) Arvind Kumar Verma, adding that 11 cases of fraud are registered in his name in Lucknow and other states.



silver jewellery to their kin. On this, Shobhit closed the shop and went with one of the accused and was murdered. Since the accused already knew that the businessman's father would reach the shop around 5 pm, therefore, after the murder, the intention of the accused was to loot the gold and silver jewellery. The accused returned and when they were busy in lifting the ornaments from the shop, Rakesh returned and was shocked to find the miscreants looting his shop and his son missing. Rakesh managed to

nab one of the accused and called the police. The police subsequently grilled

the accused and found that the crime was executed as per the plan and that Shobhit was murdered.

According to police, apart from Dharmendra Saroj (nabbed from the shop), and other held accused Gulab, another youth from Nawabganj police station area of Pratapgarh district, identified as Arvind, is the mastermind. He along with Dharmendra, Gulab carried out the loot.

Initial investigation points to murder being committed over a love affair. Sources say that Arvind was having a love affair with a girl from Unchahar area. Shobhit was also talking

to this girl and this had upset Arvind. He had told Shobhit many times to stay away from the girl. Even after this, Shobhit was talking to the girl. Subsequently, Arvind along with his friends hatched a conspiracy to kill Shobhit. The vouth who is seen entering the shop on a bike in the CCTV camera footage is said to be Dharmendra.

CO Dalmau Arun Kumar Nauhwar said that the accused were being identified through

CCTV camera footage. The police are scrutinising the call details of Dharmendra Saroj and Gulab's mobile phones. The police are trying to find out who called these two accused before and after the incident and what was the conversation with them. Police sources say that the

number of accused involved in the incident can be more than three.

the Naka Hindola Gurudwara at around 7:30 pm on October 18.

'When she did not return home for a long time, I inquired with neighbours and people at the Gurudwara, but I couldn't find any information about her," he said.

Later that same night, the girl's mother called her friend and former acquaintance, Upkar Singh Chahal, at around 11 pm. Chahal informed her that their daughter was with him and that he was near the Agra Expresswav.

He said he would send their location and asked them to audio tour portal. come to meet him to pick up their daughter.

The girl's father went to the location provided by Chahal but found no one there. He attempted to call both Upkar Singh Chahal and his daugh-ter, but both the numbers were switched off.

The father expressed his fear that his daughter had been kidnapped by Chahal and that she could be in danger. "Therefore, I request immediate action to help recover my daughter," he pleaded.

भारतीय प्रबन्धन संस्थान, राँची Indian Institute of Management, Ranchi E-TENDER NOTICE

said.

Vishwanath Temple, Taj IIM Ranchi invites e-tender from Mahal, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi, and Fatehpur eligible bidders for 'Providing Integrated Education Software Solution for Academic Programme Offices'. Last date Sikri," a tourism official said. Each code will provide a taifor submission of the e-bids is lored audio tour with detailed 03:00 pm on 25.10.2024. No insights into the history, further extension will be given. architecture, and cultural sig-For More details, please refer to our website www.iimranchi.ac.in

Proposed textile park attracts investors

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh has netted an investment of over Rs 10,000 crore from domestic textile and garment manufacturers for the proposed mega textile park. Companies looking to set up units in the UP Textile Park spanning 1,162 acres include Reliance Industries, Arvind Mills, Vardhman and Ahuja Textile

Mills, among others. In all, about 400 big and small textile manufacturing and processing plants may come up in the textile park in Lucknow-Hardoi districts. Recently, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the textile hub was estimated to attract a total investment of Rs 15,000 crore. The textile park is likely to create three lakh direct and indirect job opportunities. "Marquee textile companies have evinced interest in setting

up plants in the UP Textile Park. About a dozen companies have sought details about land allocation," a state government official said.

Moreover, the textile park plans to capitalise upon the disruption in the textiles sector of Bangladesh, following a political upheaval. This reportedly led to the closure of 800-1,000 small and medium textile units in that country. With India targeting garment exports of \$100 billion in the next five years, the UP Textile Park will bolster domestic production to achieve the goal.

The textile park will firmly establish India as a global textile, garment and apparels major. To achieve the export target, we will formulate policies to promote apparel, garments, fibre, textiles and threads, among others,"

said UP MSME, Khadi and Textile Minister Rakesh Sachan. The textile park will not only comprise manufacturing and processing units, but encompass

an entire textiles value chain. The facility will provide training, marketing, designing, packag-ing, manpower, consultancy and

export services. Traditionally, UP boasts of major textile hubs of Varanasi, Lucknow, Bhadohi and Gorakhpur. Since, the textiles sector is among the largest employment generators, the government is propelling it. The state also tied up with

Raymond for skills training of youth in garmenting and tailoring. On his recent visit to Lucknow, Raymond chairman and managing director Gautam Singhania termed UP as an important textile market.

16-year-old girl raped Ballia (PTI): A 16-year-old girl

was allegedly raped by an acquaintance of her in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district, police said on Sunday. The incident took place in a village under Narhi police station on Saturday when the girl, a student of class 9, was returning from school, they said. The accused was later detained. An acquaintance of her, Arvind Rawat (21) took her to a hotel on the pretext of going for a walk and raped her. The girl told her mother about the incident after which she filed a complaint against the accused, SP Vikrant Vir said. A case has been registered against Rawat on late Saturday under sections of rape of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and POCSO, Vir said.

LDA offers up to ₹2.5 lakh concessions to homebuyers

Lucknow (PNS): The Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) has announced concessions ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh for homebuyers during the festival season and in celebration of its golden jubilee, Vice-Chairman Prathmesh Kumar said during a review meeting on Sunday.

This scheme will be in effect from October 21 (Monday) until October 31. The LDA VC stated that houses would be allotted on a 'first come, first served' basis.

The state government approved this proposal two weeks ago, and it will apply to all vacant properties within various LDA housing schemes. He added that homebuyers who deposit 80 per

cent of the total property amount within 45 days would receive an additional 6 per cent rebate. State government employees will benefit from a 25 per cent dis-count on unsold flats ranging from 500 to 1,900 square feet. In contrast, general buyers will receive a 35 per cent discount if they make a cash down payment at the time of purchase, with possession granted after signing a hire purchase agreement. The housing schemes eligible for these concessions include the Gomti Nagar scheme, Jankipuram Extension scheme, Privadarshi scheme (Sitapur Road), Aliganj, Aishbagh schemes, and the Kanpur housing scheme in Devapura, Para, and Sharda Nagar.

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city 03

Protests in Muzaffarnagar over 'objectionable' socia media post

Over 500 booked

PNS LUCKNOW

Close on the heels of com-munal violence in Bahraich which claimed one life, tension flared up in the communally sensitive Muzaffarnagar district after protests erupted in Budhana town over rumours that a youth arrested for allegedly making an "objectionable" social media post against Islam had been released by police. However, the promptness shown by the police officials averted the situation from deteriorating further.

Hundreds of people belonging to a particular community gathered in large numbers and staged a demonstration against the comment made against their community by one Nikhil Tyagi.

According to police, the pro-testers blocked the road and raised "objectionable slogans, spread rumours and pelted

spread rumours and pelted stones at Tyagi's shop. The police, along with senior officers, reached the spot with a heavy police force and find-ing the situation going out of control, arrested Tyagi on Saturday night over his alleged "chiectionable commente" "objectionable comments". Later, the protesters blocked



After this, in another post, the the Kandhla road in Budhana police said that the protest ended following ab appeal by when they heard that Tyagi was released by the police, offisenior officers to the people to cials said.

The senior officers later uploaded the development on social media platform X so that no one could spread any further rumour to create law and order problems.

The Muzaffarnagar police wrote in the post on X that on Saturday night, the accused who posted objectionable posts against a community on social media hails from Budhana police station area and he was arrested by the local police immediately.

have registered two cases against 500-700 protesters and have also lodged a report

against Tyagi, he said. Police conducted a flag march maintain peace. and currently, in Budhana and tightened the traffic was running security in the area. Additional Hundreds of people who had gathered for the protest were booked for allegedly violating the model code of conduct and police forces have been deployed in the town as a precautionary measure. Superintendent of Police

(Rural) Aditya Bansal told reporters in Muzaffarnagar on prohibitory orders enforced in Muzaffarnagar district in view of the by-elections in Meerapur assembly con-Sunday that police have registered a case against Tyagi and arrested him on the complaint filed by Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind Senior Superintendent of Police Abhishek Singh told reporters on Sunday that police city president Mufti Nazeer Ahmed.

UPPC gives dividend cheque of ₹54L to Yogi

PNS LUCKNOW

UP Projects Corporation (UPPC) on Sunday pre-sented a dividend cheque of Rs 54 lakh to the chief minister for the financial year 2023-24. The event was attended by Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh and other senior officials. Speaking on the occasion, Ial Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh said that under the Chief Singh said that under the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanayh's guidance, the UP Projects Corporation was consistently reaching new milestones. "The corporation achieved a record turnover of Rs 1,448.24

crore in the financial year 2023-24, with a profit before tax of Rs 87.80 crore — the highest since the corporation's inception. The turnover-toprofit ratio stood at 6.06 for the year. Additionally, the corporation paid Rs 30.65 crore in income tax and Rs 323 crore in GST (goods and services tax)," he said and added, "The corporation's interest income for the financial year amounted to Rs 78 crore?

The minister also shared the corporation's growth trajectory over recent years: a turnover of Rs 417.86 crore in 2019-20, Rs 478.69 crore in 2020-21, Rs 843.77 crore in 2021-22, and Rs 982.54 crore in 2022-23.

Similarly, the net profit figures have seen a significant rise, from Rs 7.69 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 13.52 crore in 2020-21, Rs 42.31 crore in 2021-22, and Rs 62.04 crore in 2022-23.

No devotee to go hungry during Kumbh Mela

PNS LUCKNOW/PRAYAGRAJ

No devotee or Kalpvasi attending Maha Kumbh 2025 in Prayagraj will go hun-gry, as the Yogi Adityanath government has made compre-hensive arrangements across the fairgrounds. Along with organized food distribution, devotees will benefit from a free ration facility.

Ration cards will be issued to Kalpvasis and devotees staying staying in large Akharas and for an extended period, and those who already possess ration cards will also receive free rations upon holders will receive 3 kg of wheat or flour and 2 kg of for-tified rice per person. Additionally, 2 kg of sugar per presentation.

The Food and Civil Services Department will establish 160 fair price shops across all sectors of the fair area, where free rations will be distributed connection will be provided, including one opportunity for twice, in January and February 2025. To ensure adequate supply, five warehouses will be set up for storage. The entire project will see an investment of

over Rs 43 crore. According to ADM Mela, Vivek Chaturvedi, many devofortable experience for devotees attending the Prayagraj Mahakumbh-2025. In additees, known as Kalpvasis, stay at the fair for several days and prepare their food. To cater to their needs, 160 ration shops will be operational in all sec-tors, providing new ration cards and ration supplies. Five warehouses will support these efforts to prevent any shortage

during the event. As part of the project, Kalpvasis and devotees will have access to essential supplies such as food grains, sugar,

and cooking gas. Separate out-lets will be established for the modation option during the sale of LPG cylinders.

months. The initiative will

also extend benefits to those

camps. Under the scheme, ration card

person, 2 liters of kerosene per

ration card, and a domestic gas

GOVT PLANS SLEEPING PODS FOR DEVOTEES

The Uttar Pradesh is taking sig-

nificant steps to ensure a com-

tion to the sprawling tent city

being set up for visitors, the government is considering

a gas refill.

grand religious gathering. Following the success of sleep-ing pod facilities at Prayagraj Junction Railway Station, devo-In addition to serving the 10 lakh permanent residents, daily tees and tourists visiting the ration distribution will be Kumbh area will soon be able organised for the temporary residents. Based on an estimate to enjoy these modern ameniof five people per ration card, around 2 lakh ration cards will ties there as well. Aparajita Singh, Regional be needed over the two

Tourism Officer at Prayagraj, shared that a traditional tent city is being set up at the Parade Ground, while two luxury tent cities are being built on a public-private partnership (PPP) model in Arail and Ìhunsi. The response from tourists and devotees has been positive, with 1,600 out of 2,000 tents already booked in Arail.

Plans for the second tent city in Ihunsi include setting up 400 sleeping pods. The tender process is currently underway, and the construction will be finalized once all safety standards are met.

These sleeping pods are cap-sule-shaped chambers equipped with modern amenities designed to meet the needs of travelers. Each air-conditioned pod will provide a comfortable sleeping space, charging ports, and access to drinking water.

introducing state-of-the-art sleeping pods for the first time. The Tourism department has already prepared a detailed road map for this initiative. If everything proceeds as planned, devotees will have Additional services like cloakrooms, reception booths, washrooms, and pantries will also be available. Both online and offline booking options are access to these innovative sleep-ing pods, offering them a modexpected to be offered for the pods, ensuring convenience for all visitors. ern and convenient accom-

CM sets guidelines for next year's flood protection plan

PNS LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Sunday, held a review meeting of the Irrigation department, expressing satisfaction with their progress while issuing key directives.

He emphasised the importance of ensuring time-ly execution of works, maintaining high quality standards, and enhancing employee training. Additionally, the chief minister instructed the department to draft a comprehensive action plan for next year's flood protection efforts.

The chief minister instructed the officials of the Irrigation department to ensure the timely completion of all projects, stressing that delays not only escalate costs but also hinder public access to benefits. He underscored the importance of prioritising deadlines while maintaining the highest quality standards, warning that negli-gence in development works will not be tolerated.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised the

Symposium to begin today Mathura (PTI): Experts from 18 coun-tries will gather in Vrindavan on Monday for a four-day symposium to discuss the identification and prevention of Johne's disease, which affects ruminants and could also pose a poten-tial health risk to humans as believed

International Paratuberculosis

smoothly.

stituency.

by some experts. The '16th by some experts. The '16th International Paratuberculosis Symposium' (ICP-2024) is being organised by the Department of Biotechnology, GLA University, Mathura, in collaboration with the US-based Paratuberculosis Association.

At the symposium, being held for the first time in Asia, scientists from India and abroad will present updates on the latest research on zoonotic diseases (those transmitted from animals to humans), the organisers said.

Professor Shoorveer Singh, the symposium's organising chairman and head of

Scientists from India and abroad will present updates on the latest research on zoonotic diseases (those transmitted from animals to humans)

sheep, goats, buffaloes and camels. The infection caused by 'mycobacteri-um paratuberculosis' also affects wild ruminant animals such as nilgai, wild buffalo and yak," Singh said.

According to Singh humans are also susceptible to the disease animal milk, making its prevention vital for public health Singh noted that previously i was believed that pasteurized milk was completely safe for humans consumption, but this assumption is now but this belief is being challenged by the detection of the bacterium in both open and packaged milk. Dr NK Ganguly, former Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research, will inaugurate the conference, he said. "This symposium provides an opportunity to young and emerging researchers to showcase their work and participate in discussions on the progress made in this field in the last two years," Singh added.

Govt to deploy snipers, NSG commandos for enhanced security at Maha Kumbh 2025

PNS LUCKNOW

In a bid to ensure robust security for devotees and guests at Maha Kumbh 2025, the Yogi government is implementing comprehensive safe-ty measures. Plans include deploying snipers, NSG commandos, commando squads, ATS, STF, BDDS teams, and trained sniffer dogs to provide foolproof security arrangements. Devotees from across the globe will converge in Prayagraj to take a holy dip during the Maha Kumbh, which begins with the Makar Sankranti festival in January. Alongside the devotees, numerous dignitaries and diplomats are expected to attend. In response, Chief

PNS PRAYAGRAJ

The Yogi Adityanath gov-ernment is making rapid preparations for the upcoming Maha Kumbh, leaving no stone unturned to transform Prayagraj into a vibrant and

welcoming city. As part of the beautification efforts, roads, intersections, and walls are being adorned with artwork inspired by the mythology of Kumbh, capturing the essence of the grand spiritual event.

With these public spaces already recei ing an artistic

Beautification of parks begins Maha Kumbh. The initiative 59.09 lakh for Khusro Bagh, aims to enhance the visitor Rs 44.18 lakh for the High Court Complex, Rs 37.58 lakh experience by offering beaufor Circuit House Park, Rs tifully landscaped areas where 33.13 lakh for the Revenue guests can relax and soak in the spiritual ambiance. Board Park, and Rs 30.34 Deputy Director of Garden, lakh for TB Sapru Hospital Krishna Mohan Chaudhary,

Park. shared that the Garden The beautification efforts will department is working on include the creation of rose beautifying six major parks in Prayagraj. The government has approved a budget of Rs 495.97 lakh for the project, gardens, taverns, and rockeries. To enhance the parks' appeal in the evening, modern lighting systems will be installed, including bollard and the tender process has been completed. The selected lights, LED sting lights, solar parks include Shahid Chandra decorative lights, and LED ekhar Azad Park, Khusro rope lights.

need for proper training to enhance the capacity of Irrigation department employees. He high-lighted that adopting new technologies can significantly improve the quality and efficiency of projects. The chief minister urged officials to familiarise employees with modern technologies through comprehensive training, ensuring more effective flood control and water management efforts. The chief minister emphasised the importance of proactive preparations to address potential flood threats in the coming year. He instructed that the action plan be developed in coordination with public representatives and district administrations to ensure effective flood prevention. The plan should focus on identifying flood-prone areas and completing the repair of embankments, drainage systems, and other essential preparations well in advance.

The meeting was also attended by the principal secretary (irrigation) and other senior officials, who briefed the chief minister on the progress of the department's ongoing projects.

GLA University's biotechnology department said that the department of Biotechnology, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Government of India, in collaboration with a private sector animal health care product manufacturing company developed a vaccine for the prevention of Para TB in 2015.

Currently, research is ongoing to pre-vent transmission of this bacterium from animals to humans, he said. Various topics like biotechnology, microbiology, molecular biology, immunology, morecular brong, public health, pathology, and disease control will be covered at the symposium, he added.

"Johne's disease or Paratuberculosis is a chronic, infectious, incurable bacterial disease that affects the productiv-ity of ruminant animals such as cattle,

Earlier, 15 ICPs were organised in coun-tries like America, England, Spain, France, Italy, Denmark, Japan, Australia, Mexico etc. and following this edition in India, it is proposed to be held in Germany next year. Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed robust security arrangements, ensuring water, land, and air safety throughout the event.

Maha Kumbh Mela SSP Rajesh Dwivedi emphasized the sig-nificance of Mahakumbh as

the world's largest gathering of faith, attracting 40 crore devotees and special guests. He stated: "Given this situation, the security infrastructure is being fortified, with special forces stationed throughout Prayagraj, the fair-grounds, key sites, temples, and the Sangam. Diplomats from various countries will participate, prompting the implementation of anti-drone systems and bulletproof out-

makeover, the focus is now shifting towards the city's major parks. These parks are being revitalized to provide serene recreational spaces for the millions of devotees and tourists expected to attend the

posts at entry and exit points, parking areas, major temples, and other strategic locations." He added, "Two NSG commando contingents and 26 Anti-Sabotage (AS) inspection teams will be deployed to thoroughly secure the city." The SSP also confirmed the presence of four ATS commandos, three STF teams, and six Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) units within the fairgrounds.

Bagh, Circuit House Park, Visitors to Maha Kumbh 2025 Board of Revenue Park, High will not only enjoy the spiri-Court Complex Park, and TB tual experience in the Kumbh Sapru Hospital Park. area but also explore the beau-Azad Park has received the tifully renovated parks in the highest allocation with Rs city, adding to their overall 276.89 lakh, followed by Rs

SSP Rajesh Dwivedi announced the deployment of 20 snipers, three sniffer dogs, and four swan teams to ensure the safety of special guests. Additionally, 30 spotters will be stationed throughout the city to monitor any suspicious or antisocial activities closely. A team of 9 commando squads will also be assigned to oversee every area meticulously. He added, "During the Maha

experience of Prayagraj. Kumbh, devotees will immerse themselves in the Sangam, where two contingents from the Uttarakhand PAC will be stationed. This contingent is well-versed in underwater operations and possesses significant expertise, making them ideal for deployment near the Sangam. The team will comprise one DSP, 4 inspectors, 20 sub-inspectors, 35 head constables, and 65 constables."

Father, four others get life term for murder of 19-yr-old daughter

PTI BAREILLY

A Special Judge Fast Track Court here sentenced five people, including A father and relatives, to life imprisonment for the murder of a 19year-old woman who resisted an arranged marriage, police said on Sunday.

According to police, Munni was forced into a marriage with Devendra on April 22, 2023, despite being in love with another man from her village. Additional District and Government Advocate (ADGC) Harendra Singh Rathore said that tensions escalated after Munni's marriage as it led to immediate conflicts with her in-laws. A day after her marriage, her

father, Totaram, along with his relatives, took her back from her in-laws' home and poured acid on her, Rathore said.

Munni succumbed to her injuries during treatment, he said. A case was registered against Totaram and his accomplices on April 25, 2023, at Fatehganj West Police Station under charges includ-

2 minor rape accused sent to reform home

two juveniles accused of raping a five-year-old girl here, to a children's reform home in Mau district, a police official said on Sunday.

The police produced the two boys, aged 13 and 16, in the Juvenile Court of Ballia on Saturday, Station House Officer (SHO) Yogendra Bahadur Singh said, and added that a six-year-old accused in the case was released. According to police the inci-

dent took place on Wednesday evening under Kotwali police station area.

ing murder and criminal con-spiracy of the Indian Penal Code, he added.

Rathore said that the prosecution presented 17 witnesses during the trial and the court found the accused guilty. "The court of Special Judge

the ADGC.

Ballia (PTI): A court here sent Superintendent of Police (SP) Vikrant Vir said the five-yearold girl was raped by the three boys on the roof of her house. The families of the accused lived as tenants in the girl's

house, he said. Station House Officer (SHO) Yogendra Bahadur Singh said that based on a complaint lodged by the girl's mother, a case was registered against the accused under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act on Friday night.

(Fast Track Court) Ashok Kumar Yadav sentenced the accused Totaram, Dinesh, Chhedalal, Pappu and Khubkaran alias Dodi to life imprisonment and

imposed a fine of Rs Rs 40,000 each on Saturday," said

'RSS always working to bring about changes in society'

PTI MATHURA

 $R^{ashtriya\ Swayamsevak}_{Sangh\ (RSS)\ functionary}$ Deepak Vispute on Sunday said the Sangh is continuously working to bring about changes in the society.

Addressing RSS volunteers at the Deendayal Gau Vigyan Research and Training Centre in Mathura, the Sangh's Akhil Bhartiya Sah Baudhik Pramukh said people should always keep in mind five ele-ments for the betterment of society. "First, all of us must include

'Swadeshi' elements in our lives. Secondly, the nation will prosper only when peo-ple follow the rule of law which is a civic duty. At the third level is social harmony. Ending caste discrimination, people must share their happiness and sorrow among themselves.

"Fourthly, we must worry about the environment as the effects of global warming are becoming a matter of great

concern. The world can be protected only when we make efforts tireless to save the environment," Vispute said.

Prabodhan' 'Kutumb (strengthening of families and tured as only then a family can be saved," he added. Emphasising civic discipline, the RSS functionary administered an oath to the volunteers to follow all the government rules in letter and spir-

He also said that India's free-dom struggle was fought on three ideas – 'Swaraj', 'Swadharma' and 'Swadeshi'. Therefore, we should always adopt Swadeshi products. Things which can be easily prepared at home should not be purchased from outside. It is important that the volunteers follow this principle because the society also learns by watching us," Vispute told the gathering.

Thakur asks JD (U) leaders, workers to strengthen party

PNS LUCKNOW

Union Minister of State for Agriculture Ramnath Thakur and senior leader of Janata Dal (United) called upon the party's Uttar Pradesh unit leaders and workers to interact with people and spread the party's ideology and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's achievements among them. Thakur was in the city on Sunday. On his arrival at Chaudhary Charan Singh Airport here, he was given a grand welcome by party workers and leaders.

ID (U) UP unit spokesman Diwakar Singh said JD (U) state president Prashant Singh Patel, state treasurer Amar Singh Katiyar, and party leaders Subhash Pathak, Mamta Singh, Jitendra Singh Sachan, Harishankar Patel, Shalini Patel, RK Singh Madhulika, Abhishek Chaudhary, Deepak, Omprakash Upadhyay, Manish Nandan, Nitesh Katiyar along with thousands of party workers were present at the airport to receive Thakur.

Diwakar Singh said Thakur had a brief interaction with



social and political personali-ties at VIP Guest House. He was also warmly welcomed at the state office of the party. While interacting with party leaders and workers, Thakur stressed on expansion of the party organisation in view of the assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, 2027. He also stressed

on launching an intensive membership drive across the state and asked leaders and workers to strengthen the

party. The minister will leave for Ayodhya on Monday for darshan of Ral Lalla after participating in a programme in Lucknow.

"Finally, we must focus on

family values). We must see to it that our children are cul-



state 04

New chapter added to Kashi's journey of service & development: CM



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Kanchi Kamakoti Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswati Swarnigal and others during the inauguration ceremony of the RJ Sankara Eye Hospital in Varanasi on Sunday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a new chapter has been added to Kashi's journev of service and development. "The inauguration of the second branch of Sankara Eye Hospital in Uttar Pradesh marks a significant milestone. The Sankara Eye Foundation, renowned for its efforts to restore vision and transform lives, has been leading this campaign since 1977, under the inspiration of revered Shankaracharya, bringing hope and sight to people across the country", he stated. The inaugu-

ration ceremony saw the presof Jagadguru ence Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha, Shankar Vijavendra Saraswati, and Prime Minister Modi. Chief Minister Yogi expressed his congratulations to Jagadguru Shankaracharya and the Sankara Eye Foundation for their remarkable journey from Kanchipuram to Kashi. He further remarked that under

the inspiration, guidance, and leadership of Prime Minister Modi, Kashi has undergone a transformative decade of development, setting new benchmarks in education and healthcare. He said, "The sacred land of Baba Vishwanath has wit-

nessed the launch of numerous development and service projects, with health sector investments amounting to ₹2,500 crores. Major initiatives include the construction of Pt Madan Mohan Malviya Cancer Hospital, Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital, a 430-bed super spe-ciality hospital in Kashi, a 100-bed MCH wing at Sir Sunder Lal Hospital in BHU, and a 150-bed super speciality block at ESIC

Hospital. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced the completion of significant healthcare projects in Kashi, including the upgrades of Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Government Hospital, Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital and

Shri Shiv Prasad Gupta Divisional Hospital, along with the construction of a 100-bed maternity wing at the District Women's Hospital in Kabirchaura. To further enhance healthcare services in the region, a new unit of RJ Shankar Eye Hospital is being inaugurated, which will serve as a major healthcare hub, meeting the needs of residents in Kashi, eastern Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. He highlighted that over the past decade, Uttar Pradesh has achieved remarkable progress in healthcare, mirroring the strides made in Kashi. This includes the establishment of medical colleges in every district, the availability of dialysis and CT scan

facilities and the provision of quality healthcare and traditional medicine at the grass-roots level through over 15,000 Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. This rapid advancement is tak-This rapid advancement is tak-ing place under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. CM Yogi also emphasised the cru-cial role of the government, pri-vate sector and charitable organisations in advancing healthcara in the atate healthcare in the state. Governor Anandi Ben Patel, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Dr SV Bala Subramaniam, Dr RV Ramani, Murali Krishnamurthy, Rekha Jhunjhunwala etc. associated with the organisation were present in the programme.

NDA is 'Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan': Shankaracharya

PTI 📕 VARANASI

Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kama Koti Peetha Sri Shankar Vijayendra Saraswati Swami on Sunday said that God has blessed Narendra Modi and his government is NDA', which means 'Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan".

Addressing a function after the inauguration of RJ Sankara Eye Hospital in Varanasi, Shankaracharya said, "God has blessed Narendra Damodar Das Modi and his government is 'NDA' Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan (discipline of Narendra Damodar Das)." He said that the government is doing beautiful work for the welfare of everyone as an ideal government in the world. The eye hospital was inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi, who was present at the function.

The Shankaracharya started his address in Sanskrit and said, "Today is an opportunity to see Netra Utsay and this is an important occasion of service. It started in Coimbatore and now the 17th hospital is starting. There are two hospitals in UP in Kanpur and Varanasi." ""We have got good leaders, the person and personality



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with Kanchi Kamakoti 'Matha' Shankaracharya Vijayendra Saraswati Swamigal during the inauguration PTI ceremony of RJ Sankara Eye Hospital in Varanasi on Sunday.

society, we need a virtuous leader, we need a leader who unites everyone," the Swami said. The Shankaracharya also

Spl care will be taken of health of devotees: CMO

praised the recent assembly are also important in the elections in Kashmir and said that he had a long acquain-tance with Modi. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that a new link has been added today to the development campaign of Kashi.

iscussion on assessing academic work technical sessions. In this techand cons of online examination

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Atwo-day national seminar on 'Indian Examination and Evaluation System: Present Scenario and Future Prospects' concluded at the Faculty of Education, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) on Saturday. Several technical sessions were held in this national event. Over 150 participants from various universities across the country participated and presented 115 research papers in the last two days. The seminar on second day started with

nical session Prof Surendra Ram, Head and Dean, Department of Education, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith, Prof Shailendra Verma (MGKVP). Prof Alok Gardia, Prof SC Agrawal of CSJM, Kanpur University and Prof PS Ram, Faculty of Education, BHU expressed

their views. The second session was the dialogue session based on innovative practices regarding examination and evaluation. Prof Vijay Jaiswal talked about pros

ing in educational institutions. Prof Ravikant, Head and Dean and evaluation system. Prof Prashant Kumar Astalin, of the Faculty of Education at Central University of South Director of the Education Bihar, Gaya, suggested relevant measures to effectively imple-Department at UPRTOU, Prayagraj, delivered a detailed lecture on open book examina-tions and open universities examination and evaluation systems. Prof Kaushal Kishore, ment the ABC and CBC systems. In his keynote address, Prof Sunil Kumar Singh

Head of Department of Educational Studies, Faculty emphasided the need to reconsider and redesign the current examination system to meet of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, led an insocietal contemporary demands. He also discussed the depth discussion on assessing academic work, parameters for role of the National Education quality improvement and grad-Policy (NEP) in solving prob-

lems with the current examination system, the significance of grading and continuous and comprehensive evaluation. This session was compared by Prof Nagendra Kumar. In the valedictory session Prof Anjali Bajpai, Head and Dean, Faculty of Education, BHU, welcomed the guests and delegates. IMS-BHU Director Prof SN Sankhwar was the chief guest and he discussed about innovative practices in Indian examination and evaluation system, including medical

examinations.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ Every possible effort is being made for the convenience of the devotees who will be congregating at the world's largest gathering Mahakumbh-2025 here. Special care will be taken of the health of the devo-tees coming from all over the tees coming from all over the country and the world. The Health department is engaged in preparations under the direction of the government and

Government health services are being strengthened but pri-

vate hospitals will also remain open for the treatment of devotees. Twenty-five per cent of the beds in private nursing homes and private hospitals will be reserved only for devotees during the entire Mela period. Along with this there is talk of keeping 50 per cent of the beds reserved on the day of major bathing festivals. A list of all such private hospitals is being prepared. CMO Dr Ashu Pandey said this while talking to mediapersons here on Sunday. He said a list of those big private hospitals of the city administration.

which are operating around the Mela area is being prepared. MOCK DRILL: In view of the safety of devotees in Maha Kumbh, NDRF teams have also intensified preparations. A mock drill was conducted at Sangam area on Sunday. Along with this, people were being made aware of safety precaution to be taken while taking bath. Information was given about what to do in case of an accident. Inspector Anil Kumar of NDRF 11-K team and his team conducted an awareness programme along with mock drill.

UCO Bank announces Q2 results PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI OF The quarter ended 30.09.2024 stood at 3.10 per boot for the quarter ended 30.09.2024 stood at 3.10 per boot for the quarter ended 30.09.2024 stood at 3.10 per boot for the quarter ended at 3.10 per boot for the quarter ended

Former Secretary of the Department of Agricultural Research and Education National Coordinator of the (DARE), ex-Director General of ICAR, and Chancellor of Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University (RLB-CAU), Jhansi, Prof Panjab Singh stressed the need for adopting water harvesting practices and modern technologies to ensure the long-term sustainability of agriculture. He encouraged continued dialogue between researchers and farmers for promoting the integration of research-backed solutions to improve the livelihoods of farming communities. He was presiding over the 8th Quinquennial Review Team (QRT) programme of the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA), All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture (AICRPDA) and All India Coordinated Research Project on Agrometeorology (AICR-PAM) commenced at the Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), here recently. This three-day event focused on reviewing the progress of AICRPDA and AICRPAM centres across Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The members of the

M^D & CEO, UCO Bank, Ashwani Kumar has announced the Q2 FY-25 results, the key highlights of which were:

Business Growth - Total business of the bank stood at ₹4,73,704 crore as on September 30, 2024, showing an increase of 13.56 per cent on y-o-y, wherein gross advances increased by 18 per cent to ₹1,97,927 crore on yo-y and total deposits grown-ing by 10.57% on y-o-y to ₹2,75,777 crore. Profitability and Return- Net profit for the quarter ending September 30, 2024, stood at ₹603 crore as against ₹402 crore for the same period of preceding year, registering a growth of 50 per cent v-o-y. Operating profit for the quarter ended September 30, 2024, stood at ₹1,432 crore

showing an increase of 45.82 per cent on y-o-y basis. Advances in Retail, Agriculture & MSME (RAM) sectors — RAM segment of the bank increased by 20.16 per cent to ₹1,08,200 crore on y-o-y backed by 29.36 per cent y-o-y growth in retail advances, 17.41 per cent y-oy growth in agriculture advances and 11.32 per cent y-



o-y growth in MSME advances. Reduction in NPA -Gross NPA reduced by 96 bps y-o-y to 3.18 per cent as on September 30, 2024, whereas Net NPA reduced by 38 bps y-o-y to 0.73 per cent as on September 30, 2024. Capital Adequacy Ratio - Capital Adequacy Ratio (CRAR) stood at 16.84 per cent as on September 30, 2024, with Tier I Capital Ratio of 14.59 per cent. Credit to Deposit Ratio stood at 71.77 per cent as on September 30, 2024. **BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS :**

Business per employee improved to ₹22.10 crore during Q2FY25 as against ₹19.06 crore for the same period of preceding year. Operating

September 30, 2024 stood at ₹1,432 crore registering a growth of 45.82 per cent on y-o-y basis as against ₹982 crore for the same period of preced-ing year. For the half year ing year. For the half year ended September 2024, oper-ating profit has grown by 26.05 per cent to ₹2,753 crore as against ₹2,184 crore for the half year ended September 2023. Net Profit for the quar-ter ended September 30, 2024 ter ended September 30, 2024, stood at ₹603 crore as against ₹402 crore for the same peri-

UCO Bank MD & CEO Ashwani Kumar

od in the preceding year, reg-istering a growth of 50 per cent y-o-y. Net profit stood at ₹1,154 crore for the half year ended September 2024 showing a growth of 84.64 per cent y-o-y as against ₹625 crore for the half year ended September 2023. Net Interest Income (NII) for the quarter ended September 30, 2024, stood at ₹2,301 crore registering a growth of 20.03 per cent on yo-y basis as against ₹1,917 crore for the same period of preceding year. For the half year ended September 2024, NII grew by 16.02 per cent on y-o-y basis to ₹4,555 crore as

against ₹3,926 crore for the half year ended September 2023. Net Interest Margin (NIM) for the quarter ended

cent as against 2.84 per cent-for the same period in the pre-ceding year. For the half year ended September 2024, the NIM stood at 3.09 per cent as against 2.92 per cent for the half year ended September 2023.

ASSET QUALITY : Gross NPA improved to 3.18 per cent as on 30.09.2024 as against 4.14 per cent as on September 30, 2023, registering an improvement of 96 bps y-o-y. Net NPA improved to 0.73 per cent as on September 30, 2024, as against 1.11 per cent as on September 30, 2023, registering an improve-ment of 38 bps y-o-y. Provision Coverage Ratio stood at 95.92 per cent as on September 30, 2024. BRANCH NETWORK

Bank has a network of 3,247 domestic branches and 2 overseas branches each at Hongkong and Singapore Centre and one representative office in Iran.

Out of the total branches, the Bank has 61.60 per cent i.e. 2,000 branches in rural and semi-urban areas. The bank has 2,472 ATMs and 10,203 BC points making the total number of 15,925 touch points as on September 30, 2024.

National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP), ICAR, Dr SN Pasupalak, former Vice-Chancellor of Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneswar, Dr VM Bhale, (OUAT), former Vice-Chancellor of Dr Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth (PDKV), Akola, Prof Indra Mani, Vice-Chancellor of Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth (VNMKV), Parbhani and Dr AK Singh, former Vice-Chancellor of Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (RVSKVV), Gwalior. QRT member secre-tary Dr GR Chary, Dr JVN Prasad PC, AICRPDA and Dr SK Bal, PC AICRPAM also attended the QRT programme The programme commenced with an inaugural session led by Prof SVS Raju, Director of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU, who warmly welcomed the attendees. He briefly introduced the contributions of BHU and its role in the AICRPDA and AICRPAM initiatives. Prof UP Singh, Dean of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences, BHU, highlighted the ongoing dryland research programmes at BHU emphasising

enhance crop yields through improved agronomic practices and resource management. The session concluded with the

vote of thanks by Prof AK Nema, Chief Scientist at the AICRPDA Centre, Varanasi, expressing gratitude to the dignitaries and participants for their valuable contributions. In response the QRT members appreciated the suggestions made by the farmers and emphasised the importance of strengthening cooperation between farmers and research institutions. The team collectively suggested the need for water harvesting to combat water scarcity and advocated for the application of modern techniques to enhance yield. They highlighted the significance of advanced mechanisation, including the use of drones and micro-irrigation, to boost productivity, particularly in dryland agriculture. The members stressed that these innovations, when implemented effectively, could lead to sustainable agricultural practices and improved crop production. Prof Panjab Singh concluded the programme by reiterating the necessity of adopting water harvesting practices and modern tech-nologies to ensure the long-term

between researchers and farmers, promoting the integration of research-backed solutions to improve the livelihoods of farming communities.

INITIATIVE: The Banaras Hindu University (BHU) advanced its commitment to empowering the skillset of Group A, B and C ministerial staff at Rajiv Gandhi South Campus (RGSC), Barkachha, (Mirzapur) by spearheading an introductory session on the iGOT Karmayogi platform. This initiative, in collaboration with the UGC and the Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT), underscores BHU's dedication to fostering professional growth through a mandatory training programme, marking a pivotal step towards institutional excellence. The session led by Raj Kumar Soni, Assistant Registrar and iGOT nodal officer for non-teaching employees, provided participants with an indepth understanding of the iGOT Karmayogi platform. It began with a clear, step-by-step guide to installing the app, followed by a comprehensive overview of its key features. A training on the 'Code of Conduct for Government Employees' was integrated into the session.

Vibrant display of cultural diversity and togetherness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Dr Gaur Hari Singhania Institute of Management and Research (GHS-IMR) celebrated the spirit of Diwali with its much-anticipated Diwali Fest and Dandiya Eve on Saturday. The festive event was a vibrant showcase of cultural diversity and togetherness among students, faculty and staff. The evening was marked by colourful decorations, dazzling lights and the energetic beats of traditional Dandiya music that filled the campus with excitement. The event kicked off with ceremonial lamp lighting by Dr Rahul Goyal, Director of GHS-IMR, faculty members and student's representatives, symbolising

the triumph of light over dark-ness. A major highlight of the evening was the inter-batch of dance styles, from classical



Dance Competition where stuto dents showcased their dance Bollywood-inspired routines, skills in an energetic and cre- leaving the audience

contemporary and

enthralled. The competition was fierce but friendly, reflect-ing the institute's commitment to fostering a sense of cama-raderie and creativity among students. Judges, comprising faculty and staff, evaluated the performances based on choreography, execution, creativity and overall energy. The winners of dance competition were Shweta and Komal from the PGDM Batch 2024-26 for their energetic fusion of classical dance and modern beats and the best dress male and female was awarded to Jai and Sunidhi respectively. In addition to the competition, students dressed in traditional attire took part in the Dandiya Raas, a traditional dance where everyone twirled to the rhythm of the music, adding

to the joyful celebrations. The Diwali Fest concluded with a spectacular display of fire-works, followed by a commu-nity dinner. The event was a grand success, bringing every-one together in celebration of the festival of lights and showcasing the institute's vibrant cultural spirit. Prof Anmol Chopra concluded the event by proposing the vote of thanks. **CONFERENCE:** A landmark National Conference on the National Education Policy (NEP) and Indian Languages in the Field of Law and Justice was held on Saturday with a focus on promoting the use of Indian languages in legal education and judiciary processes. The event, organised by Atal Bihari Vajpayee School of Legal

Studies, CSJM University in collaboration with Bhartiya Bhasha Abhiyan, saw participation from prominent academicians, legal professionals and government officials, who came together to discuss the impact and future trajectory of NEP's language provisions in the legal field. Chief guest GK Goswami, Director UPSIFS, in his keynote address, empha-sised the need for incorporating Hindi terminology in edu-cation and legal systems. He highlighted how children today primarily learn English through social media and mobile phones, urging the Government of India (GOI) to develop more accessible Hindi learning resources for the younger generation.

'Prabhat pheri' taken out

Prayagraj (PNS): The Central Organisation for Railway Electrification (CORE) here Campaign 4.0 of Swachhta Pakhwada", a grand 'prabhat pheri' was taken out by railway employees and their children related to cleanliness in the Triveni Vihar Railway Colony, Rambagh, under the chairmanship of RN Singh – Principal Chief Signal and Telecommunication Engineer and Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) here on Sunday. Thereafter, women and children of other officers and employees, including Deputy General Manager Kalyan Singh and Public Relations Officer Vimal Kumar planted saplings. In this programme, awareness



was created about cleanliness through children that people should not spread dirt, throw garbage only in the dustbin etc. Deputy GM Kalyan Singh said that children are the future of the country. If the foundation of cleanliness and environment is laid in children from the very beginning, then the dream of a clean India can be realised. ARRESTED: The Sarai Inayat police arrested three criminals, including the gang leader, along with more than half a dozen stolen bikes.

nation 05



I have been accused of many things, I know Health Minister Nadda defends AIIMS standards what my parents go through: Salman Khan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In what could be called his first public comments following the murder of his close friend and NCP leader Baba Siddique, Bollywood superstar Salman Khan said he has to handle quarrels between "Bigg Boss 18" contestants at a time when he is "going through" a certain phase in his life. Siddique, the former Maharashtra minister known for his starry iftar parties and Bollywood connections, was gunned down on October 12 outside his MLA son Zeeshan Siddique's Mumbai office.

According to police, Siddique may have been targeted by gangster Lawrence Bishnoi because of his proximity to Khan. On Saturday's Weekend ka Vaar episode of "Bigg Boss 18", on which the actor serves



wanted to give the popular reality series a miss.

"Yaar, qasam khuda ki what all I am going through in my life and I have to come and handle this (arguments between housemates) I feel that I shouldn't have come here today. But you have to do as the host, Khan said he what you have to do," Khan can

be seen saying as per several videos circulating on social media.

"Mere par bhi bahut saare laanchan lagaye gaye hain (I have been accused of many things). I know what my par-ents go through," he added in another clip. It could not be immediately

confirmed whether this episode was filmed before or after Siddique's killing. Though Khan didn't share a

post condoling Siddique's passing on social media, he visited the slain politician's Bandra residence last Sunday hours before his burial service. The Mumbai traffic police received a threat message demanding Rs 5 crore from the Bollywood actor, following which the Crime Branch began a probe an official said on Friday.

A case was registered at Worli police under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for threat and extortion after the city's traffic control room received the message on its WhatsApp helpline on Thursday afternoon, he said.

Khan had earlier received death threats from the Bishnoi gang whose members had also opened fire outside the actor's Bandra home in April.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A mid criticisms regarding staff shortages at the new AIIMS facilities in various States, Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Sunday said that he would not allow any dilution in the standards of teaching and faculty at the institutions and would protect the brand. Presently, 22 AIIMS across the country under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya SurakshaYojana have

been approved till date. Out of the 22 AIIMS, teaching and learning, research, and patient care services are being provid-ed in 16 AIIMS, of which six ed in 10 Anno, or uner are fully functional at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Patna, Raipur and Rishikesh. The others are at various stages of operationalisation. Addressing the BJMFCON

2024, a forum of doctors from Bihar and Jharkhand practising in Delhi and NCR, Nadda said that AIIMS-Delhi was set up in the 60s and it was only in the 80s that it became a brand name.



"It takes 10 to 20 years for any institution to grow and function in full swing. I will not allow the dilution of the standards of AIIMS and will protect the brand name," he said. To address staffing challenges, he highlighted the significant increase in the number of medical colleges over the past decade, which aims to boost the supply of trained healthcare professionals.

now the focus is on preventive, promotive, curative palliative and rehabilitative aspects -- a

holistic approach," he said. Nadda said that the facilities which were earlier called primary health care centres and sub-centres have been converted into Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. At present, there are 1.73 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and their quality assessment is being done digitally, he said.

Under the Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme, every district hospital offers free dialysis, he said and added that in the last 10 years, the number of medical colleges have been increased from 387 to 786 while 156 district hospitals have been converted into medical colleges.

groundbreaking ceremony for AIIMS-Darbhanga will soon be "Could you imagine a medical college in Purnia, Saharan, held, and the commissioning of AIIMS-Deoghar has been done Samastipur, Siwan, and Buxar with the recruitment of staff

"In the 2017 health policy, we tried to make it comprehensive and holistic. Earlier, the stress was on the curative aspect but

No compromise will be made

in the faculty recruitment, he

added. Nadda said that the

in Bihar and Dumka, Hazaribagh, Palamu, and Koderma in Jharkhand?" he said, adding that there is a plan to increase PG and MBBS seats by more than 75,000. Cyclonic storm expected in Bay of Bengal by October 23

NCC launches inaugural sailing expedition on Indian rivers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a maiden initiative, the National Cadet Corps (NCC) is set to embark on its first-ever special sailing expedition, a flagship event leading up to the Republic Day Camp 2025. The expedition will involve 528 Naval Wing cadets from across India, sailing approximately 1,200 kms along the Ganges and Hooghly rivers through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, defence ministry said here on Sunday.

Giving details, officials said the event, themed 'Bharatiya Nadiya – Sanskritiyon ki Janani,' will be flagged off from Kanpur on Monday and conclude in Kolkata on December



The aim of this pioneering expedition is to celebrate India's rich maritime traditions while inspiring the youth towards adventure and a life of service in uniform.

The cadets representing all State Directorates, will participate in this six-phase event. They will be accompanied by nearly 40 Associate NCC

The key phases of the expedi-tion include Phase I: Kanpur to Prayagraj (260 KM), Phase II: Prayagraj to Varanasi (205 KM),

Officers.

Phase III: Varanasi to Buxar (150 KM), Phase IV: Buxar to Patna (150 KM), Phase V: Patna to Farakka (230 KM)and Phase VI: Farakka to Kolkata (205 KM).

During the journey, cadets will engage with local NCC groups and contribute to the 'Swachh Bharat' initiative by cleaning riverbanks and reducing plastic waste.

They will also perform 'Nukkad Nataks' to promote India's rich cultural traditions and raise awareness about environmental conservation.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

A cyclonic storm is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal by October 23, affecting the coastal areas of Odisha and West Bengal, the IMD said on Sunday.

An upper air cyclonic circulation over the Andaman Sea is likely to intensify into a lowpressure area over the Bay of Bengal during the next 24 hours, a special weather bulletin said.

The weather system is expected to move west-northwestwards direction, and intensify into a depression by October 22 morning and into a cyclonic storm by October 23 over east-



central Bay of Bengal, it said. "Thereafter, it is very likely to move northwestwards and

reach the northwest Bay of Bengal off Odisha-West Bengal coasts by October 24 morning,"

it added.

underway.

Under its influence, the coastal region of Odisha and West Bengal is likely to receive heavy rainfall from October 23 to 25, the IMD said, advising fishermen to return to the shore by October 21.

IMD Director-General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the system is likely to take the shape of a severe cyclonic storm.

He said parts of Odisha are likely to experience heavy to very heavy rainfall from October 23 onwards.

Some places in the coastal region may experience 20 cm rainfall on October 24-25. The intensity of the spell may also increase to 20 to 30 cm, be rough.

TMC announces candidates for **Bengal Assembly By-elections**

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday announced its candidates' list for the November 13 Assembly by-elections to six seats in Bengal. Cooch Behar district, Jay Prakash Toppo has been given the party ticket from Madarihat in Alipurduar district. Down south Falguni Singhababu and Sujoy Hazra have been fielded from Taldangra, and Medinipur in Bankura and West Midnapore districts. While Sanat Dey will contest from Naihati, Śk Rabiul Islam will fight from Haroa. Both the seats are in North 24 Parganas. The bypolls were necessitated due to resignations of sitting MLAs of the six segments following their victory in this year's Lok Sabha elections. While former rulers CPI(M) or the Congress were still to Opposition BJP was first to



Saturday. The party has fielded Rahul Lohar and Dipak Kumar Roy While Sangita Roy Pradhan has been fielded from Sitai in respectively. Both these seats are in North Bengal. Subhojit Roy has been fielded from Medinipur whereas Ananya Roy Chakraborty will contest from Taldangra seat. Rupak Mitra have been fielded from Naihati, whereas Bimal Das will contest from Haroa. Out of the six seats the BJP had won only Madarihar seat during the 2021 Assembly elections. Earlier TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said that despite the "disinformation campaign resorted to by the Left and other opposition parties in the garb of the doctors' movement the TMC will win all the six out of six seats in the by-elections." He also said that "the Left which is announce their candidates' list the main conspirator behind the movement will end up in the declare its list of contestants on third place once again.

Indian Navy, Oman conduct | Court to resume witness successful naval exercise

Approaches (RASAPS). The integral helicopter operated from INS Trikand and undertook cross-deck landings and vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with RNOV Al Seeb. Additionally, the Indian Navy's Dornier aircraft provided Over-the-Hor





Singh.

claimed trial.

dation against Singh.

Vinod Tomar in the case.

and above 30 at some places," he said. The IMD has not made any

forecast on landfall location and intensity, he said. Light to moderate rainfall is

also likely in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, the bulletin said.

Squally wind with speed reaching 40-50 gusting to 60 kmph is very likely to commence from October 23 evening in Odisha-West Bengal coasts, and it would gradually increase to 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph from October 24 night to October 25 morning. The IMD said during that period, the sea conditions are likely to

Two arrested for duping investors in Gurugram

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE GURUGRAM

Dolice have arrested two people, including a bank employee, for allegedly duping people under the pretext of higher returns on investments the stock market officials said on Sunday. The accused were identified as Kanish Vijayvargiy and Ram Avtar, natives of Jaipur, police said. According to police, a man filed a complaint alleging that The court on May 21 framed on July 23, he was cheated on Rs 24.60 lakh under the pretext the charges of sexual harassment and using force to outrage of higher returns on investwomen's modesty against ments in the stock market. Following this, an FIR was registered and an investigation The Bharatiya Janata Party





PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Indian Navy ship INS Trikand and Dornier maritime patrol aircraft, participated in the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr with the Royal Navy of Oman Vessel Ál Seeb off Goa from October 13 to 18, navy said here on Sunday.

Giving details, officials said the exercise was conducted in two phases: with harbour phase from October13 to 15, followed by the sea phase. As part

"I want a clear response from

Rahul Gandhi on this. 'You are

roaming around the country

arrying the Constitution in

hand, spreading misinforma-

tion on the issue of reservation

and shedding tears for SC, ST and OBC, while your party's

government is turning

Telangana into a laboratory

for ending reservation," the BJP

leader, who is also a Rajya

Sabha MP, added.

of harbour activities, personnel from both Navies engaged in professional interactions, including Subject Matter Expert Exchanges and planning conferences.

In addition, sports fixtures and social engagements were also held.

During the sea phase of the exercise conducted from October16 to 18, both ships carried out various evolutions, including gun firings at surface inflatable targets, close-range anti-aircraft firings, manoeu-vres, and Replenishment at Sea

Targeting (OTHT) data with the participating ships. To further enhance interoper-ability, Indian Navy Sea Riders embarked on RNOV Al Seeb for a day. The exercise helped strength-

en interoperability and enhanced understanding of each other's best practices. The exercise was a resounding success, achieving its aims of enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding, and strengthening cohesion between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman. This exercise further reaffirms India's commitment to constructive collaboration and mutual growth with likeminded nations in the Indian Ocean Region.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE DELHI

A court here will resume on November 4 recording the statements of witnesses against former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in a criminal case filed against him by female wrestlers. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Priyanka Rajpoot posted the matter for further proceedings after recording the statement of one of the witnesses on October 19.

(BJP) leader had pleaded not was launched. guilty before the court and The police arrested Vijayvargiy and Avtra on Saturday from The Magistrate had also framed Gurugram.

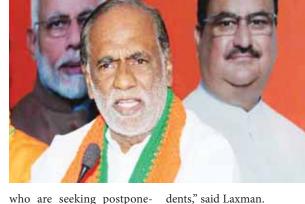
the charge of criminal intimi-"During police interrogation, the accused revealed that Ram The court had further framed Avtar works as Deputy Manager the charge of criminal intimiin UCO bank's Mansarovar dation against co-accused and branch in Jaipur. He helped former WFI assistant secretary open a bank account in the name of Kanishk Vijavvargiy.

BJP leader K Laxman accuses Telangana India seeks global expertise to modernise urban land records Government of ending reservation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Senior BJP leader K Laxman Son Sunday slammed the Congress Government in Telangana over certain amendments in the state public service examination rules, alleging that the move is a "conspiracy to end reservation" and demanding a rollback. The BJP OBC Morcha chairman also hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and demanded a response from him on the issue.

A section of students has been protesting against the amendments brought in by the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy government in the Telangana Štate Public Service Commission (TSPSC) examination rules notified earlier this year. Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar and BRS leaders on Saturday held protests in Hyderabad to express solidarity with aspirants



who are seeking postponement of the Mains exam, even as the Telangana chief minister urged the students to appear for the test without any misconceptions.

"Students are protesting against the conspiracy of the Chief Minister Reventh Reddy-led Congress government in Telangana to end reservation in the recruitment of Group-1 officers in the state. The BJP of the TSPSC Group 1 services extends its support to the stu-

Laxman demanded that the Telangana Government roll back the revised TSPSC examination rules and reschedule the recruitment test, which is slated to begin on Monday. Addressing an event in Telangana on Saturday evening, Revanth Reddy said Group service appointments have not been made since the formation of Telangana in 2014.

The Government released notification for the Group 1 exam in February this year by issuing GO 29 (which also deals with reservations) deciding to entertain 50 candidates for filling up each post, he noted. He found fault with the opposition parties for their demand to conduct the exam as per the 1:100 ratio even as the recruitment process was underway. Changing the rules halfway would lead to legal wrangles, the chief minister said as he asserted that his government is safeguarding the interests of SC, ST and BCs.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Atwo-day international workshop is being held here starting Monday, aiming

also be deliberated threadbare at the workshop to be attend-ed by experts from countries such as Singapore, South Korea, the UK, Spain, the Netherlands, the UAE, France, the USA,

Japan, and Germany. One of the main agenda of the workshop on "Modern Technologies in Survey-Resurvey for Urban Land Records" to be inaugurated by



Union Minister of Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be showcasing of the best global practices in digital land records.

Oragnised by the Department of Land Resources under the Ministry Rural of Development, the workshop aligns with Budget announce-ments for 2024-25, which call for an IT-based system to improve property record administration and tax management through digitization and GIS mapping, said the official.

This modernization is expected to enhance transparency, efficiency, and the financial

health of urban local bodies while reducing land-related disputes, he said talking about the need for adopting IT mechanism.

The workshop will be attended by various stakeholders, including government officials, urban development secretaries from all states and union territories, international experts, and technology providers. Besides showcasing global best practices, innovative technoogical solutions, and facilitate pilot project planning for selected urban areas will also be presented at the event.

Notable case studies will be drawn from various successful schemes, including AMRUT and SVAMITVA, Raipur Mapping, Guwahati Property Taxation, Jaipur Mapping, Haryana Space Applications Centre and Directorate General Defence Estates.

The Ministry has been taking steps to modernise land records in all the 28 States and 8 Union Territories of the country under

Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP), a Central Sector Scheme, since 2016, with 100 per cent funding by the Centre. With considerable experience in rural land records modernisation, the Department is now extending its focus to create and streamline urban land records. The initiative in respect of urban land records is based on the Budget Announcements 2024-25 in respect of establishment of an IT based system for property record administration, updating and tax administration by creating/streamlining urban land record by digitization and GIS mapping which will also facilitate improving the financial position of urban local bodies, said an official from the ministry. The IT based system for property record administration will enhance trans-parency and efficiency and support sustainable development and reduce land-related disputes, he added.

to outline strategies needed to modernize urban land records across India as authorities grapple with challenges, including a lack of standardization, data security concerns, and

the fragmented information across multiple agencies. Besides, issues like outdated infrastructure, resistance to change, and financial constraints which has further complicated the transition will

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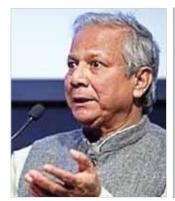
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A path to democracy

Amid Bangladesh's political turmoil, the possibility of general elections in 2025 presents an opportunity for renewal

fter a long wait, the possibility of general elections taking place in Bangladesh in 2025 is now on the horizon. Bangladesh's Law Adviser Asif Nazrul has said the \Box next election could be held in 2025 after completing the pre-election preparations, including the formation of a new Election Commission. Amid the escalating crisis in Bangladesh, there is growing pressure for a new general election to restore democratic order and bring stability. The possibility of holding general elections in 2025 has become a central topic of discussion in political circles. Many see the election as a necessary step to establish a legitimate government that can address the country's economic woes, restore law and order, and guide Bangladesh towards a more stable future. However, there are significant hurdles to overcome before an election can be held. The interim government, currently tasked with maintaining order, must establish a conducive environment for free and fair elections. This involves addressing concerns about electoral



fraud, ensuring the safety of voters and candidates, and reforming the Election Commission, which has been criticised for its partisanship in recent years. International pressure, especially from the United States, and the European Union, is likely to play a role in pushing for transparent and credible elections. The international community's involvement may be instrumental in mediating dialogue among political factions and overseeing electoral reforms.

While the potential for a general election in 2025 offers a glimmer of hope, it is by no means a guaranteed solution. The path to stability will require a series of complex and delicate steps, including effective power-

sharing arrangements, accountability for past political abuses, and economic policies aimed at alleviating the financial burden on citizens. The emergence of populist rhetoric and extremist groups could also pose threats to a peaceful electoral environment. Moreover, with Sheikh Hasina in exile and her Awami League party in disarray, a sizable section of Bangladesh's political milieu is likely to be away from the election process. Under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, the country experienced substantial economic growth. However, her tenure was also marred by accusations of authoritarianism, suppression of dissent, and manipulation of democratic institutions. The deterioration of democratic norms and crackdowns on opposition parties, including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), exacerbated political polarisation and unrest. As Bangladesh teeters on the edge of a political precipice, the possibility of holding general elections in 2025 brings a mixture of hope and apprehension. The nation's future will largely depend on how the interim government manages the political transition and whether it can pave the way for a truly democratic process. The coming months will be crucial in determining whether Bangladesh can emerge from this turmoil with renewed democratic vigour or if it will remain mired in chaos and instability.



India-Canada relations sink over Khalistan issue_



As both countries grapple with domestic politics and external pressures, the ties are now at its most fragile point, threatening trade, security and people-to-people connections

wo of the world's lead-Wo of the worlds and Canada, are currently engaged in a rather unseemly, explosive diplomatic row over Ottawa's refusal to rein in Khalistani elements thriving on Canadian soil. New Delhi believes these elements, all Canadian nationals, have been allowed unfettered freedom, imperilling India's security interests. With Ottawa paying no heed to New Delhi's concerns, a traditionally close relationship nurtured over a long period now lies torn into shreds

The spat with Canada could also impinge on India's geopolitical equations with members of the powerful intelligence-sharing Fives Eyes' alliance. The Justin Trudeau-led government has approached the alliance and got the backing of the other four members - the US, UK, Australia and New Zealand - on its allegations linking the Indian government's "agents" to "criminal activities" in Canada, including the killing of Khalistani separatist Kuldeep Singh Nijjar in June last year. All these alliance partners have their eyes firmly set on the crucial Indo-Pacific. So does India. Surely, none would want the imbroglio to adversely impact their geostrategic alignment to counter China's aggressive expansionism in the region. If Ottawa's charges on the Indian government's involvement do turn out to be correct, New Delhi would have an egg on its face.

While covert operations to carry out hit jobs in foreign lands to take out elements inimical to a country's interests are nothing new, being caught with proof of overt involvement can prove to be a major embarrassment. It's noteworthy that the US, unlike Canada, has been far more discreet in its approach while seeking India's cooperation in investigating a plot to kill Khalistani separatist leader and its national urpatwant Singh Pannun, who leads Sikhs for Justice. The US strategy is driven in no small measure by its desire to not cause any major rift in bilateral strategic ties with India, even though it continues to put pressure on New Delhi on the issue. Trudeau, on the



other hand, is driven by his desire to woo for his domestic political gains a section of the Sikh diaspora who support Khalistan.

Discretion in such a sensitive matter, therefore, has been thrown to the winds. The Trudeau government's sovereignty concerns over the Najjar killing, however, do not extend to alleged Chinese interference in Canadian federal elections both in 2019 and 2021. The eruption of the New Delhi-Ottawa diplomatic war was not unexpected, given the simmering tensions between the two for several years now over what the former believes is the Trudeau government's abject HAS BEEN FAR MORE failure to rein in Khalistani separatists in Canada who pose a security risk to India. For New Delhi, what broke the camel's back this time around was Canada's contention that six Indian diplomats, including the high commissioner, were "persons of interest" in the ongoing probe into Nijjar's killing and its demand that their diplomatic immunity be revoked. Nijjar had been des-SEPARATIST LEADER ignated a terrorist by India for his separatist activities. New Delhi has repeatedly raised the

Gandhi's assassination in processions to mark the 40th anniversary of 'Operation Bluestar, and recently even published posters issuing death threats to senior Indian diplomats, stoking New Delhi's

concerns. Trudeau's Liberal Party has thrived on support from the Sikh diaspora that exercises significant influence in some important parliamentary seats. A pro-Khalistan Canadian politician, Jagmeet Singh, who leads the New Democratic IT'S NOTEWORTHY Party, has played a crucial role in enabling Trudeau's THAT THE US, minority government to UNLIKE CANADA, remain in power by signing a deal supporting it in no-confidence votes. Singh called off this deal last month but elec-DISCREET IN ITS tions in Canada are slated to be APPROACH WHILE held next year anyway if Trudeau's government can SEEKING INDIA'S survive until then. New Delhi, in any case, will be happy to see the back of Trudeau. Now, **COOPERATION IN** INVESTIGATING A with his government even threatening "sanctions" against India, it's fairly evident that PLOT TO KILL KHALISTANI Ottawa is willing to jeopardise even vital trade and economic ties with India. It halted AND ITS NATIONAL

Comprehensive Economic need to pull back from the Partnership Agreement diplomatic war they are (CEPA) in September last year as bilateral relations soured. Canada's own Indo-Pacific strategy had earlier recognised India as a "critical partner", seeking deeper trade and economic ties.

Bilateral trade was pegged at \$9.36 billion in 2023. The turbulence in ties can have a deleterious impact on trade and economic links. What could also take a hit are people-topeople ties, especially with Canada being a favoured destination for Indian students for

higher education. An estimated 4.27 lakh Indian students are studying in Canada, helping its educational institutes earn muchneeded revenue. Canada is also home to a huge Indian diaspora of 1.8 million -Trudeau will only alienate himself from them while allowing Khalistani radicals to flourish. Trudeau would do well to remember that it was Khalistani separatist elements who carried out the bombing of AI Kanishka Flight 182 in June 1985, killing 329 persons of whom a majority were Canadian citizens of Indian origin. Allowing radical elements to thrive for the sake of political expediency has never done any nation good. As two mature democracies who have often cited this fact as one that underpins their bilateral negotiations for a ties, both India and Canada engaged in. A sour relationship can only cause further damage in the long run. (The writer is a senior New Delhi-based journalist who writes on foreign affairs; *views are personal)*

issue of Khalistani elements having a free run in Canada in recent years only to have "freedom of expression" being thrown back at it by the Trudeau government. These elements have had floats depicting former PM Indira

GURPATWANT SINGH PANNUN, WHO LEADS SIKHS FOR JUSTICE

Visitors at the Virasat Mahotsav 2024, an art and heritage festival, in Dehradu

The changing dynamics of Bihar politics



As Bihar prepares for the 2025 Assembly elections, Prashant Kishor launches his new party. The big question is, can it make a difference?

Prashant Kishor has entered Bihar politics with a clear message: his role is that of a guide, not a contender for power. "My work is like that of a potter who shapes the best with the right tools. We aim to bring forward the best people in society," he stat-ed, dismissing speculations about his ambitions for the Chief Minister's post. He reiterated that his newly launched party, 'Jansuraj,' will be run by its members, not him, and he would only contest elections if the party

deemed it necessary. Kishor's move has stirred the political waters in Bihar. His party's announcement to contest the upcoming Assembly elections has sparked debates on its potential impact on major alliances, the NDA, and the India Alliance. A former election strategist for both PM Narendra Modi and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, Kishor has not aligned with the Congress or the RJD. Some political analysts even suggest that his presence might benefit the BJP by weakening the RJD's support base, an idea that



gained traction following resilience despite various the rally and Muslim unity narratives circulating before meeting in Patna. the elections.

Ahead of the 2025 Despite his history with the BJP, Kishor has not Assembly elections, Kishor held back from criticising has strategically targeted the Muslim and backward Nitish Kumar's governance. The Janata Dal (United) caste communities, which (JDU), however, remains represent a significant portion of the electorate—17.7 firm on its stance, with leaders affirming that Nitish Kumar is still Bihar's per cent and 36.1per cent, respectively. He has true leader. In a recent announced plans to field meeting, JDU's acting more candidates from these national president Sanjay communities and has emphasised inclusivity by Jha dismissed any doubts about Kumar's relevance, appointing a Dalit as the pointing to the party's party's working president.

This move has been seen as a counter to JDU's longstanding Mahadalit outreach.

Kishor has been preparing the ground for his political venture for the past two years, conducting a 'pady-atra' across Bihar and engaging with the public through discussions in vil-lages and towns. Drawing on the philosophies of Gandhi and Tagore, he has sought to resonate with the masses, though his stance on lifting the liquor ban has invited criticism for contradicting Gandhian ideals. The launch of 'Jansuraj' represents Kishor's effort to offer a new political alternative in Bihar. However, significant questions remain: can he address Bihar's pressing issues such as unemployment and crime? Will his strategies translate into a

viable solution for the state's enduring challenges? As Bihar gears up for the next election, the answers to these questions will determine Kishor's political fate.

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

Ξ LETT

SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam.

The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported.

This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

NEW JUSTICE STATUE UNVEILED

Madam-In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of es, the positive effects of this change will



the decision of the Group of Ministers to reduce GST on insurance policies (health insurance and life insurance) is certainly beneficial to many citizens who intend to have insurance cover for them or their families for meeting unexpected expenses of hospitalisation or even deaths. At the same time, the decision to recommend

the ideals of fairness and justice that legal systems aspire to uphold) and sword with open eyes and the Indian Constitution, signifying an evolving justice system in India. Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud aims to reflect impartial justice and modernise the judiciary, moving away from colonial legacies towards constitutional values.

The note-worthy element of this design is the replacement of the sword with a copy of the Indian Constitution. Generally, the sword has been associated with violence and disciplinary action, whereas the Constitution is a symbol of rights, equality, and fairness. This change represents the shift towards more emphasis on core values in justice and highlights how a judiciary must act as a protector of constitutional rights rather than functioning as a law enforcer. From now onwards, justice will be served to the "right" persons. No longer will it be impartial nor will punishments be enforced. Yes, changing the attire to a saree is a welcome step. As time progress-

a total waiver of GST on health insurance policies for senior citizens is def-initely laudable. However, these recommendations will be put up in the GST Council meeting for a decision after October 30, which is too long a period. In fact, many of the health insurance policies involving senior citizens under group cover expire by 30th October itself, and they have to be renewed well in advance to continue the coverage. Therefore, the senior citizens, especially, are more concerned immediately and the waiver of GST as decided and recommended in the GOM meeting recently held, if implemented earlier, will certainly benefit the senior citizens who have to renew their policies by making premia payments.

K Durga Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

become more evident. Bidyut Kumar Chatterje | Faridabad

GATISHAKTI BOOTS CONNECTIVITY

Madam - PM Modi celebrates GatiShakti's success in streamlining India's infrastructure development for multimodal connectivity. PM Modi has praised the achievements of the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan for Multimodal Connectivity, which has significantly enhanced infrastructure efficiency over the past three years. Launched in October 2021, the initiative integrates various infrastructure schemes from different ministries and state governments, improving seamless movement of goods and addressing supply chain bottlenecks. The plan has identified numerous infrastructure gaps and aims to develop sustainable solutions, ultimatev fostering entrepreneurship and innovation across India.

Jayanthy Subramaniam | Mumbai

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SAYING NO

Setting boundaries allows employees to focus on high-value tasks and protects their well-being



SAKSHI SETHI

n the modern workplace, professionals are often expected to handle a variety of tasks and responsibilities, making it easy to become overwhelmed. While many employees adopt a yes-boss mentality to stay in good favour or advance their careers, the ability to say no can be just as important. Learning to decline certain requests, combined with the effective use of delegation, is the key to managing time, preserving mental well-being and ensuring tasks that are completed efficiently and effectively. Looking at today's fastpaced and highly competitive work environment, learning to say no can be one of the most valuable skills for any professional. While the workplace often rewards the individual with a can-do attitude but the ability to refuse certain tasks or requests is equally essential to maintain productivity, well-being and professional integrity. There is often an underlying fear of being seen as uncooperative, damaging relationships with colleagues, or missing out on future opportunities.

The result of this is an overloaded schedule, which can lead to decreased productivity, poor work quality and even burnout. It can negatively impact both the individual and the organisation, as overstretched employees may struggle to meet deadlines or produce substandard work. The ability to refuse is not just about rejecting requests rather it's about setting boundaries that protect one's time and energy, ensuring that the most important tasks get the attention they deserve. Saying no to unnecessary or low-priority tasks allows professionals to focus on higher-value work, leading to better outcomes, a stronger contribution to the organisation and helps prevent individuals to maintain focus on their core responsibilities.



Despite its clear benefits, saying a no is often easier said than done. Many employees find it difficult to refuse tasks due to cultural or organisational pressures that equate being helpful with taking on as much work as possible. Some even fear that saying no could label them as difficult or unwilling to be a team player, leading to

Indian immigrants to Canada bear brunt of diplomatic row



analys \$ 07

The fallout threatens to disrupt visa processes, immigration pathways, and opportunities for Indian workers and students in Canada



he fallout of the current diplomatic tensions between India and Canada, particularly in the wake of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusations and expulsions of diplomats by both countries, could have significant consequences for Indian citizens working, studying, or planning to immigrate to Canada.Trudeau's Liberal Party has been facing declining support, and his minor-ity government has been kept afloat by the New Democratic Party (NDP), led by EFFECTIVE WAY TO Jagmeet Singh, a prominent Sikh politician.

The NDP's support base includes a sig-nificant portion of Canada's Sikh population, and Trudeau may be attempting to retain their support by taking a tough stance against India, which is perceived by some Sikhs in Canada as being hostile to their interests. The deteriorating relations between the two countries may affect several key areas:

Impact on Indian Workers in Canada. Indian Workforce in Canada: Indians form a significant part of Canada's skilled workforce, especially in sectors like IT, healthcare, engineering and finance. Over the years, Canada has become a top destination for experienced professionals from India due to its immigration-friendly policies. Visa and Work Permit Issues: While the immediate impact on Indian workers in Canada has been limited, any prolonged diplomatic standoff could lead to delays in the processing of work permits, visa renewals and permanent residency (PR) applications. The processing times might increase, and stricter scruti-



THE MOST MITIGATE THE FALLOUT IS

THROUGH DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE. BOTH GOVERNMENTS

MUST FIND COMMON GROUND AND

work opportunities have made it attractive for Indian students. **Visa Delays:** The current diplomatic tension may lead to delays in student visa approvals or increased scrutiny of applicahold. tions. While there is no immediate indication that Indian students will face outright rejections, the uncertainty could cause stress and delays in admission procedures, particularly for new appli-cants. Post-Graduation Work Opportunities: Many Indian stu-dents stay in Canada after completing their studies under postgraduation work permits (PGWP) and eventually apply for

permanent residency. The growing tension could complicate this process, making it harder for students to transition smoothly from education to employment.

Impact on Immigration Pathways: Canada's Express and professionals might consid-Entry programme, which has er alternative countries such as Experts say that Trudeau may been highly favourable for Indian the UK, Australia, or Germany, also be positioning himself as a

post-graduation, and diverse cations, and consulting. Impact on New Immigration Streams: The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which India and Canada had been discussing, could be put on

> This would affect initiatives meant to streamline immigration for Indian professionals and create pathways for smoother trade and employment relations.

Solutions to Mitigate the Fallout Diplomatic Resolution: The most effective way to mitigate the fallout is through diplomatic dialogue. Both governments must find common ground and work de-escalation. towards Diplomatic channels should prioritise resolving misunderstandings while protecting the interests of citizens on both sides. Temporary Shift to Alternative Countries: While waiting for the situation to stabilise, students

Sikhs.

His recent diplomatic actions appear designed to shore up this support by aligning himself with issues important to these groups. The Sikh community has historically supported the Liberal Party, particularly under Trudeau. Many high-profile Sikh leaders, including ministers in his cabinet, are from this community.

Thus, maintaining their support is crucial for the Liberal Party's prospects in the next election. Khalistan Issue: While not all Sikhs in Canada support the Khalistan movement, those who do have formed influential advocacy groups that have pushed the issue into Canadian politics. Trudeau's overtures to this section of the electorate have been interpreted as efforts to protect his vote base, especially as his government faces increasing political pressure ahead of future elections.

defender of Canadian sovereignty by alleging foreign interference, a move that could resonate with voters concerned about national security. This fits with broader concerns in the West about foreign interference in domestic politics, even though India has categorically denied the allegations. India-Canada ties are indeed at their lowest ebb following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusation that Indian agents were involved in the killing of Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil. This extreme diplomatic move, which has severely strained relations between the two countries, is seen as a combination of vote bank politics and Trudeau's handling of domestic pressures, elections.

missed promotions or opportunities.

Moreover, individuals often grapple with personal barriers to saying no. Perfectionism, fear of conflict or a desire to please others can make it hard to set boundaries resulting in employees worrying that a simple refusal to additional tasks reflects their inabilities or lack of dedication towards the job. But in reality, saying no in the workplace brings several important benefits, both for the individual and the organisation.

Effective delegation can offer a constructive alternative when refusing a task outright is not an option for it allows work to be distributed across a team, which can increase overall productivity, help build confidence and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility within the team. It even helps concentrate on strategic tasks and high-priority responsibilities that require their attention and most importantly demonstrates trust in the abilities of individuals, which can improve team morale and encourage a more collaborative working environment.

While learning to say no and delegating effectively are two critical skills for success in the workplace. Saying no helps protect time and energy for the most important tasks, while delegation allows leaders to distribute work more effectively and empower others. By mastering the art of saving no and delegating, professionals can not only manage their workloads but also foster a more efficient and empowered team.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Uncertainty for Future Migrants: MISUNDERSTANDI Potential immigrants or those awaiting work permits may face hurdles in terms of visa approvals. If relations continue to sour, Canada might impose tighter immigration controls on Indian workers, which could hamper the flow of profes- CITIZENS ON BOTH sionals into the country.

Impact on Indian Students in Canada: There is large Indian Student Population in Canada as it has become a major destination for Indian students, with nearly 320,000 Indian students enrolled in Canadian universities as of 2023. The country's world-class education system, relatively easier immigration pathways

WORK TOWARDS professionals and students seeking permanent residency, might **DE-ESCALATION.** slow down or become more stringent if the diplomatic rift deep-DIPLOMATIC ens.

CHANNELS There could be longer processing times, more rigorous background SHOULD checks, and even potential policy changes affecting Indian appli-PRIORITISE cants

RESOLVING Family Reunification: Indian citizens who have family members in Canada and are in the NGS WHILE process of family reunification sponsorship programmes) could PROTECTING THE face delays in their applications due to the diplomatic standoff. INTERESTS OF Trade and Bilateral Agreements Professional Mobility: If diplomatic tensions continue, profes-SIDES sional exchanges, joint ventures, and corporate partnerships involving Indian and Canadian

companies might slow down. This could reduce job opportunities for Indian professionals working for Canadian companies in sectors like IT, telecommuni-

which offer similar educational and work opportunities for Indian nationals

Vote Bank Politics and the Sikh Community's Role in Canada: Canada has one of the largest Sikh populations outside of India, with an estimated 770,000 Sikhs, making up about 2 per cent of the total Canadian population.

Many of these Sikhs are concentrated in electoral districts in British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta. In some constituencies, Sikhs represent a significant voting bloc, which can influence election outcomes.

Upcoming Elections: With elections expected by 2025, Trudeau needs to consolidate his support among key communities. Given the current minority government status, he must rely on alliances, such as with the NDP, especially in light of upcoming and maintain his standing in immigrant-rich constituencies, including those dominated by

(Writer is a strategic columnist; views are personal)

India's strides towards the design and component ecosystem in telecom

The telecom sector is evolving from a service-led growth model to a robust manufacturing ecosystem

he telecommunications sector in India has grown to become the world's second-largest, con-tributing around 6.5 per cent to the nation's GDP and emerging as a key economic growth engine. While we take pride in this impressive growth, there is something even more exciting - the rise of the telecom manufacturing ecosystem. India's growth as a telecom equipment manufacturing destination can be attributed to the 'Make-in-India' and 'Atmanirbhar

Bharat' initiatives launched by the Government in recent vears.

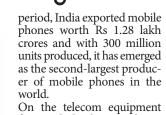
The Production Linked Incentives (PLI), launched in 2020, and its subsequent amendments in 2022 to facilitate design-led manu



S P KOCHHAR

facturing at an additional incentive rate with an allocated sum of Rs 4,000 crores also provided a major boost to telecom manufacturing in India. As per the latest update by the Ministry of Communications,

sales of telecom equipment have surpassed the Rs 50,000 crore milestone under the PLI scheme, with exports at about Rs 10,500 crore. During this



74,116.21 crore in FY 13-14 to

exporting equipment worth over Rs 1.49 lakh crore in FY

Though we are still importing

certain products, the gap

between imports and exports

has gone down significantly.

Apart from fostering self-

23-24.

reliance, indigenous manufacturing of telecom equipment also addresses the national security concerns associated with telecom imports. Manufacturing has emerged as

an important aspect of the telefront, India has become almost com sector's contribution to self-reliant in antennae, Gigabit the GDP through the cre-Passive Optical Network ation of substantial employ-(GPON) and Customer ment opportunities across the Premises Equipment (CPE). As a result, India's status has value chain, from manufacturing to research and developturned from importing telement. com equipment worth Rs

So far, telecom manufacturing has created more than 17,800 direct jobs and several indirect jobs. The Indian telecom industry is likely to attract investments in the areas of core competency and cutting-edge technologies; ensure efficiencies and create economies of scale, in turn, enhancing



exports and making India an integral part of the global value chain. Government's Push for 'Atmanirbhar' Under government's the 'Atmanirbharta Abhiyan', the Department of Telecom (DoT) aims to promote the ecosystem for research and development, transforming India into a glob-

al hub of technology development and telecom equipment manufacturing.

Minister Union The Jyotiraditya Scindia recently announced the Government's ambitions to set up telecommunication equipment man-ufacturing zones as the country expects more inflow of foreign direct investments (FDI). Prime Minister Narendra Modi too emphasised the need for "Design in India, Design for the World", calling for indigenous design capabilities and urging the citizens to create products that cater to both domestic and international markets. The Government has further established several task forces to ensure the smooth functioning of the telecom ecosystem. These include initiatives for

creating a component ecosystem, developing telecom chips

from design to production, training skilled workers and designers, aggregating the demand for manufacturing from different departments and allocating them to eligible manufacturers, and optimising the use of test beds for product testing and certification. Following the Government's decision to allow 100 per cent FDI in telecom, the sector has attracted USD 39 billion in FDI for manufacturing, further boosting the momentum and solidifying India's role as a global telecom manufacturing

hub. Thanks to these concerted efforts, India has been able to bring down the trade deficit in telecom from Rs 68,000 crores to Rs 4,000 crores, over the last

Focus on design and creation of IP is crucial to fulfilling India's ambitions as a product nation as design elements add substantial value to products. To build a strong ecosystem for 5G, DoT has sanctioned 17 companies under design-led manufacturing within the PLI scheme. Further, global telecom equip-

ment manufacturers like Cisco and Nokia have set up their manufacturing units in India, fostering world-class manufacturing prowess. These efforts, among others, emerge as a testament to the country's indigenous engineering and entrepreneurial capabilities, as well as manufacturing prowess.

(The writer is Director General, COAI; views are personal)

nation 08



Junior doctors continue protests amid talks with Mamata Banerjee

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

 $T_{\text{Bengal Chief Minister}}^{\text{wenty four hours after}}$ Mamata Banerjee offered a conditional offer for talks to the protesting junior doctors asking them to first withdraw the ongoing fast-unto-death before returning to the dialogue table medics on Sunday "decided to join the meeting but without ending the indefinite fast." "Responding to the honourable Chief Ministeric call for a talk

Chief Minister's call for a talk the junior doctors' front has decided to go to Nabanna (State secretariat) for talks but without withdrawing the indefinite fast we would expect the administration to be positive towards the ten-point demands the doctors have placed before the Government," and "address the issue from a humanitarian angle considering the health of the doctors who have been fasting for the past 16 days," Dr Aniket one off the doctors who too was on a fast but had to be hospitalized later on said.

Earlier the Chief Minister called up the doctors and asked t hem to withdraw the fast. "I am in favour of humanity. I also want justice. But at the same time the treatment of the common people will have to be ensured. So I am again requesting you to withdraw the hunger-strike and think it is very much within the



get back to work," she said adding "I can call you for a dialogue but only on Monday for 45 minutes but I will ask you to call off the fast and then join the meeting." Subsequently, State Chief Secretary Manoj Pant who visited the doctors' sit-in site along with Home Secretary Nandini Chakraborty wrote "the Hon'ble chief minister hopes that this message will be received with the understanding that the junior doctors will immediately end the hunger strike in the interest of public health and well-being."

Emerging from a long general body meeting the doctors on Sunday evening said, "There can be no condition for talks refers to the doctors and the patients they cater to the lifting of the fast would depend upon the out-come of the talks," adding "we



elements in the college administration via backdoor." The doctors' movement started after the tragic rape and murder of a 31-year-old postgraduate trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9 which sparked a nation-wide outrage. The doctors immediately resorted to a cease work demanding justice for the victim doctor and improved facilities and safety measures, inside the governMeanwhile, despite the Chief

Ministerial offer for talks the ruling Trinamool Congress continued to mount vehement attack on the junior doctors calling them "puppets in the hands of the CPI(M) and Maoists." TMC spokesperson Debangshu Bhattacharya attacked the doctors for allegedly impeding the health services. "These doctors are nothing but puppets in the hands of the CPI(M) or the Maoists because those who impede health services at the cost of common man's life are nothing but Maoists," he said. Another senior leader Kunal Ghosh said that he would ask the administration to "note down the names of the doctors who are not working and take care of them adequately after the

elections." The TMC leaders' attack on the doctors came on a day when two incidents of rapes were reported from East Midnapore and South 24 Parganas sources said. While in the first case an alleged teacher was arrested for raping two school students in the second case a 60-year-old man was arrested for raping a 6year-old minor, police said. While first incident took place at Bhupatinagar the second one happened at Basanti sources

said.

Omar Abdullah completes 21 km Kashmir Half Marathon

MOHIT KANDHARI 📕 JAMMU

A fter recording a historic victory in the recently concluded Assembly elections and taking the oath of office, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Sunday hit another milestone after crossing the finish line by completing the 21 km long Kashmir Half Marathon in just over two hours.

Around 1700 runners from across the country & 12 foreign nations participated in the Kashmir Marathon. The marathon runners were cheered by a large number of sports enthusiasts along the

route. The prevailing weather conditions in the valley also boosted morale and aided marathon runners.

Bollywood actor and fitness freak Sunil Shetty along with Omar Abdullah flagged off the marathon from the Polo Ground stadium in Srinagar. Sharing his personal experience of completing the first half marathon Omar posted a message on X, "I'm so damn pleased with myself today. completed the Kashmir Half Marathon - 21 KM at an average pace of 5 min 54 sec per KM. I've never run more than

13 KM in my life & that too only ever once. Today I just kept going, propelled by the enthusiasm of other amateur runners like myself".



Feeling elated Omar said, "The ever since he won an emphatbest part was running past my ic victory in the Assembly polls said he home with family & others out

to cheer me on". He said I had no proper training, no running plan, no nutrition.

Picked up a banana & a couple of 'khajoor' along the way. Abdullah also advised people to try running to beat stress. "You don't need drugs to feel good or beat stress.

A good run, whether a kilometer or a marathon, is forget the enterprising jour-nalists who tried to run alongenough to clear the cobwebs & achieve a natural feeling of euphoria & enthusiasm.

Try it, you won't regret it. Let's interview". Interacting with the media Sunil Shettey said, "People start running for a drug-free J&K," he posted. Omar, who has been on a roll want to come to Kashmir, and

an event like this gives a message to the entire world that people from all over the world are coming here to participate and it's a big thing. It's a par-adise for the world.

The event was organized by the Department of Tourism to show the world that the situation has improved in the vallev.

Commissioner Secretary Tourism Yasha Mudgal said the whole idea is to promote Kashmir as a popular sports tourism destination.

'We have attracted the best of the talent at the International and national level and professional athletes who actually run marathons across the country and the globe have participated in the event".

ieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the prize distribution ceremony after the run was completed by the athletes. Sinha congratulated all the winners & participants. This successful mega event has put J&K on the world marathon map. Very soon we'll organise the Jammu Marathon on a similar scale. These signature running events will bring together runners from across the globe & encourage tourism", he added. Manoj Sinha said I'm truly grateful to PM Narendra Modi for the absolute transformation of J&K, which has made hosting of such international events possible.

riding high on their success in

The BJP suffered a setback in

parliamentary elections in

Maharashtra as its tally came

down to nine from 23 it had

won in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls

in the state. Its ally Shiv Sena, led

by Chief Minister Eknath

the Lok Sabha polls this year.

prospects in Maharashtra RSS launches outreach programme to boost BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

With the assembly polls in Maharashtra just a month away, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has launched an extensive outreach programme to shape public opinion in favour of the BJP-led alliance in the state. The RSS, which is the ideological fountainhead of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has started the move in coordination with all of its affiliates, sources said. "Tolis (teams) have been formed

started reaching out to people in their respective localities taking

the message," a source told PTI. Each team is holding small group meetings with 5-10 people and also reaching out to families through their local network in 'mohallas' in their respective localities, the source

"In these meetings, they do not explicitly endorse the BJP but shape the people's opinion through intimate discussions around topics of national interest, Hindutva, good governance, development, public welfare

across the state and they have and various local issues concerning the society," the source added

ment medical colleges and hos-

Before the teams were formed, the office bearers of the RSS and its affiliates held coordination meetings across all levels in the state to devise the strategy, the source said. The move assumes significance

as it comes following the BJP's victory in the just concluded Haryana assembly polls.

Sources said the "drawing room meetings", held by the RSS in coordination with its affiliates across Haryana, were one of the key factors behind the BJP's electoral success in the state. Bucking anti-incumbency, the BJP secured its best-ever haul of 48 seats in the 90-member Haryana state assembly pulling off a hat-trick of wins in the state to retain power and halt the Congress' comeback attempt

in the elections. "Tolis of Sangh workers, formed in Haryana, held over 1.25 lakh small group meetings across the state," another source told PTI. These meetings helped shape public opinion in Haryana by highlighting various issues including the erstwhile Congress government's "Jat-

centric policies" under then Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh

Hooda, the source said. "They assuaged people's concerns over the Agnipath recruitment scheme. They also engaged with farmers and managed to sway their sentiments in favour of the BJP," the source said, adding "RSS stands out due to its embedded nature within the community, where its workers maintain long-term relationships and trust with people in their respective localities".

It is widely believed that a lack of enthusiasm among the RSS workers was one of the key factors behind the BJP's underwhelming performance in the Lok Sabha elections this year. BJP president JP Nadda's remarks during the parliamentary polls that his party needed RSS' support in the beginning but over the years it became capable of running itself, is understood to be one of the reasons that demotivated Sangh workers in various states. According to sources, the RSS

workers' "active participation" in shaping a favourable public opinion in the run-up to assembly polls has injected optimism in the BJP rank and file with

BJP releases 99-strong

Maharashtra list

many in the party hoping that replication of the Haryana strategy may yield favourable results in Maharashtra as well.

thoroughly enjoyed the marathon and clicked lots of

selfies and interacted with the

journos who wanted to record

a quick interview on the way.

'It was such fun running with

others. Lots of selfies & videos

I even had a few requests for

appointments and one or two

ob-related problems high-

lighted along the way. Let's not

side in the hope of grabbing an

along the way.

Although the RSS maintains that it does not directly engage in electoral politics, it has long been believed to be the BJP's hidden force in elections. Stakes are high for the BJP and its allies in Maharashtra assembly polls scheduled to be held in one phase on November 20 with the opposition Maha Vikas

Abhaysinh Raje Bhosale.

Sindhkheda seat.

Rajya

Pawar.

Shinde, won seven seats. Another ally, the Ajit Pawar-led NCP bagged just one seat. The Congress's tally went up to 13 from one seat in the 2019 Aghadi (MVA), comprising Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and Lok Sabha polls. Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena won NCP (SP), looking to wrest power from the ruling coalition, nine seats and Sharad Pawar-led NCP eight.

Five arrested for gunbattle in Delhi's Welcome area

Bomb blast shatters...

From page 1

who rushed there also felt Police is already on high investigating the entire officer said. Police said they are checking the CCTV footage of the spot. Another senior police officer added, "Our bomb disposal teams are checking the nearby area. We have also sounded an alert to nearby police stations to increase vigil and checking. Foot patrolling has also been intensified in different markets. We request everyone to inform the police immediately if they see any suspected item." This blast comes just four months after many schools across Delhi received hoax bomb threats back in the month of May, which later turned out to be hoax.

collecting mobile network data to find out who was bomb. Forensic experts inspecting the area outside the CRPF school, found a suspicious "white powder" from the spot and sent it to the laboratory for dug up a hole near the school's wall and taken soil samples with them.

"The white powder could be

Delhi Police said it is investigating the entire matter," a senior police officer said.

present nearby when the National Security Guard explosion happened, which officials have also sent some is suspected to be a crude material picked up from the spot for further investigation. "Whether it is further some kind of explosive or anything else can only be ascertained after thoroughly examine it. We examination. They have also are suspecting a crude bomb could be the reason for the blast," a senior official said. The NSG commandos have

deployed robots to scan the a mixture of ammonium entire area to know if there nitrate and chloride. There are any other explosive was a foul smell of chemicals materials. "NSG, NIA and after the blast. Local Delhi Police have cordoned residents and police officials off the entire area. Delhi

due to festiv said the official. Senior police officers, including

from the crime branch and the Special Cell, as well as the fire brigade reached the spot after it was reported. Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said they received a call regarding a blast "near the boundary wall" of the CRPF school. "We immediately rushed two fire engines to the spot. There was no fire and no one was injured due to the blast, so our vehicle returned," DFS officials said. A senior police officer said, 'Our forensic team and crime unit are at the spot to collect samples from the blast location. It could be a firecracker, but we are

temple in Ayodhya and

reservation in the legislative

In a key part of his speech,

PM Modi outlined his vision

for involving the youth in the

political landscape. "In the

future, one lakh youth will be

made a part of politics. I urge

the youth to come forward

and join the nation's progress," he said. He

emphasised the importance of

welcoming new leaders who

do not come from political

backgrounds, as a means to combat the "huge threat"

women's

implementing

bodies.

From page 1

Senior State ministers Sudhir Mungantiwar and Girish Mahajan have been renominated as candidates from Ballarpur and Jamner, respectively.

Three sitting MLAs who have been dropped are Ashwini Jagtap from Chinchwad, Ganpat Gaikwad from Kalyan East and Babanrao Pachpute from Shrigonda. brother-in-law Jagtap's

Shankar Jagtap has been given a ticket. Gaikwad, who is in jail in a firing case, has been replaced by his wife Sulabha Gaikwad. Pachpute's wife Pratibha Pachpute

would be contesting. The Shrimant BJP has re-fielded Mumbai President Ashish Shelar from Vandre West (as Bandra west is known) in Mumbai. Senior leader and minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha will contest the elite Malabar Hills where

the residences of the ministerial bungalows exist and where several prominent personalities live.

politician Veteran Vijaykumar Gavit has been fielded from the Nandurbar (ST) seat.

Chhatrapati Shivendra Raje Former minister and MLC Bhosale, a descendant of Maratha king Chhatrapati Prof Ram Shinde will contest from Karjat-Jamkhed, the Shivaji Maharaj will reseat that he lost last time to Rohit Pawar, the grandcontest from Satara. He is the cousin of Satara MP nephew of Sharad Pawar.

Chhatrapati STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI Udayan Raje Bhosale and

son of late MLA Chhatrapati $D_{men}^{elhi\ Police\ has\ arrested\ five}$ Another royal family member Jaykumar Rawal has involved in a gun battle in the Welcome area of northeast Delhi. been re-nominated from the A police officer on Sunday said that the accused were identified From the temple town seat of Tuljapur, Ranajagjitsinha as 28 year old Samad, 30 year old Patil has been renominated. Shanu, 23 year old Kasim, 22 year old Hasim, and 22 year old He is son of Padmasinh Patil, the brother of NCP Mohammad Noor.On Saturday, Sabha member around 17 rounds were fired in Sunetra Pawar, wife of Ajit a gun battle between two groups over money near the locality's

Raja Market. A 22-year-old woman named Ifra was shot in the chest during the firing and was rushed to a hospital where she is currently under treatment.

Hoax threats to...

From page 1

The sources also said there were threats for at least six flights of Air India flights. There was no comment from the airline.

On Saturday, more than 30 flights operated by various Indian airlines reportedly received bomb threats. The airlines that got the bomb threats include Air India, IndiGo, Akasa Air, Vistara, SpiceJet, Star Air, and Alliance Air. The latest series of hoax calls comes a day after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) met with airline CEOs on October 19 after multiple flights received at least 70 hoax bomb threats

in the past week. The ongoing investigation of hoax bomb threats to domestic and international flights has revealed that nearly 70 percent were from a single source: an anonymous and unverified account on X that posted threats to 46 domestic and international flights of Indian carriers in two days. Amid the wave of hoax bomb threats to Indian airlines, with as many General of Civil Aviation security scares.

(DGCA) Vikram Dev Dutt has From page 1

been transferred to the Ministry of Coal as Secretary. PM Modi contrasted BJP's Sources said the X handledevelopmental work with the @adamlanza1111 - made 12 alleged "familyism" of the Opposition parties, criticising threats on Friday night and 34 the Congress and SP for their on Saturday. The user also began posting threats to dynastic politics. He further international carriers such as highlighted that the BJP has a record of keeping its promises, such as the construction of the Ram American Airlines, Jet Blue, and Air New Zealand. The

posts had an identical message: "There are bombs onboard five of your planes... No one will make out alive. Hurry up and evacuate the plane." Some of the flights were airborne when the threats were posted, while others had already completed their

journey. The threats, which have caused widespread disruptions forced emergency and procedures, have mostly turned out to be false alarms. However, they have left airlines and scrambling to ensure scrambling to ensure resenger safety, while investigating the sources of the threats. Among the airlines most affected are Air India Express, Air India, Vistara, as 70 such posts made during IndiGo, and Akasa Air, with the past week, the Directorate each reporting multiple

youth into politics whose assemblies," the PM stated. families have nothing to do with politics," the PM asserted.

PM Modi gives Diwali gifts to...

He portrayed this initiative as a campaign to transform Indian politics and to eliminate corruption and dynastic practices. "This is a campaign to change the direction of Indian politics. It's time for a new, openminded approach to politics," he said, adding that as the MP of Kashi, he is committed to empowering the youth of the region.

Prime Minister Modi praised the recent development strides made by the BJP-led UP government, positioning Varanasi as a symbol of progress. "Kashi has once again become the starting point of new development records for the whole country," he remarked, extending congratulations to the states, governors, and chief ministers contributing

to the nation's growth. "The BJP has always posed by dynastic politics in India. "These complainants delivered on its promises, do the most harm to the youth. They don't believe in whether it is building the giving a chance to them. That Ram temple in Ayodhya or is why I have called upon the ensuring reservation for women in legislative people to bring one lakh such

He also underscored the BJP government's achievements in supporting Muslim women, particularly through

the abolition of triple talaq, which he described as ending years of suffering and empowering them to "walk with their heads held high." The PM pointed out the transformation of Uttar Pradesh from a state known

recognised for its expressways and international airports. He highlighted Ayodhya's rise as significant spiritual destination with a new grand international airport welcoming pilgrims daily. He also mentioned the upcoming grand international airport in Jewar, Noida, as part of the state's infrastructure growth. "Think back to when UP was mocked for its broken roads. Today, UP is known as a state with expressways and international airports," he

said, emphasising the changes brought about by his government. Reflecting on the BJP's achievements, Modi noted

the long-pending issue of women's reservation, stating, ensure a smooth dispersal. image.

"Our government has completed this historic work." He emphasised that the BJPled government granted constitutional status to the OBC Commission and implemented а 10% reservation for economically weaker sections without affecting existing reservations.

"We have worked with good intentions, aiming to transform the lives of every family in the country with honesty. That is why the country continues to bless us," he added, citing BJP's electoral successes, including record votes in states like Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir.

As PM Modi concluded his speech, the crowd erupted with chants of "Har Har Mahadev" and "Modi," expressing their enthusiasm. The atmosphere was vibrant, with women, children, and elders waving colourful paintings as they cheered on the Prime Minister. The audience began exiting the stadium rapidly after the address, with the police managing crowd control to

Wayanad hills are alive, with...

From page 1

Though she is a surprise choice as candidate despite a long list of seat seekers including K Surendran (the state BJP president) Shobha Surendran and V Muraleedharan, former Union Minister, Haridas is expected to put up a brilliant show in the by-poll. It is a foregone conclusion that Priyanka will win hands down from the constituency, what is being watched with keen interest is who would finish as runner-up in this

race. The ruling CPI(M) is not in the "best of health" as the CPI candidate would file his nomination from the constituency. The unnatural death of Naveen Baby, the additional district magistrate of neighboring Kannur district following the public humiliation meted out to him by the District Panchayath President P P Divya, popularly known as the Marxist belle, has caused a major dent in the CPI(M)'s

The constituency, since its inception in 2009, has sent only Congress candidates to the Lok Sabha. All Opposition parties in the State are aware of the ground realities.

Surendran, who has amassed material properties than the votes during his tenure as BJP state chief has accepted the Congress win by stating that the Hindutva party candidate is likely to make an upsurge in the poll.

Along with Wayanad, the Assembly constituencies of Chelakkara (Reserved) and Palakkad would go to the polls on November 13. The seats fell vacant as the sitting members K Radhakrishnan and Safi Parambil had to vacate the seats following their election in the Lok Sabha polls.

Both Chelakkara and Palakkad will see triangular fights featuring the CPI(M)led LDF, Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

for poor infrastructure to one



Israeli strikes on northern Gaza kill at least 87 people

AP DEIR-AL-BALAH

Tsraeli strikes on multiple homes in the northern Gaza I homes in the northern Gaza Strip overnight and into Sunday left at least 87 people dead or missing, the territory's Health Ministry said.It said another 40 people were wound-ed in the strikes on the town of Batt Liver which were wound-Beit Lahiya, which was among Beit Lahiya, which was among the first targets of Israel's ground invasion nearly a year ago. The Israeli military said it carried out a precise strike on a Hamas target.Israel has been carrying out a large-scale oper-ation in northern Gaza for the heat two works environ last two weeks, saying Hamas hast two weeks, saying Hamas has regrouped there. Palestinian officials say hun-dreds of people have been killed and that the health sec-tor in the north is on the verge of collapse. The United States is meanwhile investigating an unauthorised release of classified documents that assess Israel's plans to attack Iran, according to three US officials. A fourth US official said the documents appear to be legitimate.The documents, attrib-uted to the US Geospatial Intelligence Agency and

National Security Agency and marked top secret, indicate that Israel was moving military assets in place to conduct a military strike in response to Iran's ballistic missile attack on Oct

The US officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter

publicly. The US is urging Israel to press for a cease-fire in Gaza following the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week. But neither Israel nor Hamas has shown any renewed inter-est in such a deal, after months of negotiations sputtered to a

halt in August. Iran supports Hamas and the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, where a year of esca-lating tensions boiled over into all-out war last month. Israel sent ground troops into Lebanon at the start of October. The Lebanese army said three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on their vehicle in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on Sunday's strike. Lebanon's army has

largely kept to the sidelines in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah. The military is a respected institution in Lebanon but is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend the coun-

try from an Israeli invasion. On Saturday, a drone targeted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's house, causing no casualties. It wasn't clear if the house was hit. The military said Hezbollah fired

around 160 projectiles into Israel on Sunday. There were no immediate reports of casu-alties. Israel has meanwhile ramped up strikes on southern ramped up strikes on southern neighbourhoods of Beirut known as the Dahiyeh, a crowded residential area. Hezbollah has a strong pres-ence there, but it is also home

to large numbers of civilians and people unaffiliated with the militant group. US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, has called civilian casualties in Lebanon "far too high" in the Israel-Hezbollah war and urged Israel to scale back some strikes, especially in and around Beirut.Among the dead from the strikes in Beit Lahiya

were two parents and their four children, and a woman, her son and her daughter-law and their four children, according to Raheem Kheder, a medic. He said the strike flattened a multistory building and at least four

neighbouring houses. The Israeli military said it used precise munitary said it used Hamas target and rejected casualty figures published by the Hamas-run government's media office, which is separate from the Health Ministry. It said the area is an active war zone and that it is trying to avoid harming civilians. Mounir al-Bursh, director gen-

eral of the Health Ministry, said the flood of wounded from the strikes compounded "an already catastrophic situation for the health care system" in northern Gaza, in a post on X. Doctors Without Borders, the international charity known by its French acronym MSF, called on Israeli forces "to immediately stop their attacks on hospitals in North Gaza" after the Health Ministry said Israeli troops had fired on two hospitals over the weekend. The military said it was oper-

US investigating unauthorised release of classified documents on Israel attack plans

MSF.

Washington (AP): The US is investigating an unauthorised release of classified documents response to Iran's blistering ballistic missile attack on Oct. 1. They were sharable within that assess Israel's plans to attack Iran, three US officials the "Five Eyes," which are the US, Great Britain, Canada, told The Associated Press. A fourth US official said the New Zealand and Australia. The documents, which are fourth US official said the documents appear to be legit-imate. The documents are attributed to the US Geospatial Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency and note that Israel continues to marked top secret, were post-ed online to Telegram and first reported by CNN and Axios. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authomove military assets in place to conduct a military strike in rized to discuss the matter publicly.

ating near one of the hospitals but had not fired directly at it, and that it was looking into the

other incident. 'The ever-worsening escalation of violence and non-stop Israeli military operations that we have been witnessing over the past two weeks in northern Gaza have horrifying conse-quences," said Anna Halford,

difficult to gather information about the strikes and complicating rescue efforts.

Israel has been carrying out a major operation in Jabaliya, also in northern Gaza, for the last two weeks. The military savs it launched the operation against Hamas militants who

had regrouped there. Over the course of the war, Israeli forces have repeatedly returned to Jabaliya, a densely populated urban refugee camp dating back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. The north has already suf-fered the heaviest destruction of the war, and has been encircled by Israeli forces since late last year, following the deadly Hamas' attack on Israel. Israel ordered the entire pop-

ulation of the northern third of Gaza, including Gaza City, to evacuate to the south in the opening weeks of the war and an emergency coordinator for "When hospitals are attacked, their infrastructure destroyed, reiterated those instructions and the electricity cut off, the lives of patients and medical staff are under threat." Internet earlier this month. Most of the population fled last year, but around 400,000 people are connectivity went down in northern Gaza late Saturday believed to have remained in the north. Palestinians who and had not yet been restored by midday Sunday, making it fled the north at the start of the war have not been allowed to

return. On Oct 7, 2023, Hamas led militants blew holes in Israel's security fence and Israel's security fence and stormed in, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. Around 100 captives are still being held in Gaza, a third of whom are believed to be dead. Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not distinguish combatants from civilians. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its population of 2.3 million people. 3 soldiers killed

world 09

The Lebanese army says three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on their vehicle in southern Lebanon.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on Sunday's strike. Lebanon's army has largely kept the sidelines in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group. The military is a respected institution in Lebanon but is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend the country from an Israeli invasion.

Trump kicks off Pennsylvania rally

AP LATROBE

Donald Trump's campaign suggested he would begin previewing his closing argument Saturday night with Election Day barely two weeks away. But the former president kicked off his rally with a detailed story about Arnold Palmer, at one point even praising the late, leg-endary golfer's genitalia. Trump was campaigning in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, where

Palmer was born in 1929 and learned to golf from his father, who suffered from polio and

who suffered from polio and was head pro and greenskeep-er at the local country club. Politicians saluting Palmer in his hometown is nothing new. But Trump spent 12 full minutes doing so at the top of his speech and even suggested how much more fun the night would be if more fun the night would be if Palmer, who died in 2016, could

join him on stage. "Arnold Palmer was all man, and I say that in all due respect to women," Trump said. "This is a guy that was all man."

man.



Then he went even further. Miller told reporters before the speech that Trump planned to preview his closing argument against Vice President Kamala When he took the showers with other pros, they came out of there. They said, Oh my God. That's unbelievable," Trump Harris and "start to get into that framing." Candidates have tra-ditionally used their final days said with a laugh. "I had to say. We have women that are highly sophisticated here, but they on the campaign trail to sum up used to look at Arnold as a for the electorate why they deserve to win the White House. Trump senior adviser Jason Trump eventually hit many of his favorite campaign themes but didn't offer much in the way of new framing of the race or why he should win it. He instead boasted of creating strong tax policies and a strong military during his first term in office. He slammed Harris as "crazy" and added a profanity. "You have to tell Kamala Harris

that you've had enough, that you just can't take it anymore, we can't stand you anymore, you're a s—vice president," Trump said to roars of the crowd. "The worst. You're the worst vice president. Kamala, you're fired. Get the hell out of here." He also criticized Harris for suggesting during her unsuccessful run for president in 2020 that shed support a ban on hydraulic fracking, which is important to Pennsylvania's economy and a position Harris' campaign says she no longer supports.

Trump invited on stage mem-bers of a local steelworkers union that endorsed him. He donned a construction hat with his name on it.

He also said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called him amid Israeli's ongoing war with Hamas in Gaza. "He said, It's incredible what's happened," Trump said of the Netanyahu call before moving to a criticism of President Joe Biden, saying that the Israeli prime minister "wouldn't listen to Biden." Trump praised the raucous crowd, which was outside and at an airport, but also made a point of suggesting that there was more conspicuous security around him following security around him following two assassination attempts, say-ing, "They give you a little extra security nowadays, you notice?" "I got more machine guns than I've ever seen — look at these guys," he said referring to security. He was interrupted by crises from the crowd of by cries from the crowd of "USA! USA!" before continuing, "We've got more guys, and every one of them is like central casting too, holy s—." Then he tied it back to Latrobe's

native son, adding, "They look like Arnold.

No anti-China activities will be allowed on Nepal's territory: Oli

PTI KATHMANDU

Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli said on Sunday that no anti-China activities will be allowed in the country, reaffirming the Himalayan nation's commit-ment to the 'One China' poli-

cy. Oli made the remarks in a meeting with a high-level Chinese delegation led by Chen Jining, a member of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee. The meeting took place at his official residence in Baluwatar, Kathmandu.

Reaffirming Nepal's commit-ment to the One China policy, Oli told the visiting delegation that no anti-China activities would be allowed to operate within Nepal's territory. China claims that the break-

away nation of Taiwan is part of it and makes it mandatory for all the countries having

diplomatic ties with it to follow the 'One China' policy, which effectively states that Taiwan is unst effectively and driving holistic developthe 'One China' policy, which effectively states that Taiwan is part of China.

During the meeting, Oli also expressed hopes for continued support from China for Nepal's economic development. Talks were also held about strengthening bilateral rela-tions and enhancing collabora-

tion between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) parties, according to the PM's secretariat.

Oli is the Chairman of the CPN (UML) and is seen as a pro-China leader. He underlined the need to continue the exchange of highlevel visits between the two countries to enhance govern-

accused of misappropriating Rs 1.35 billion belonging to the

cooperatives. A parliamentary special probe committee was formed to inves-

ment-to-government, people-to-people and historical ties, as well as to promote trade. The Prime Minister underscored the role of the CPC and

from such advancements. He also informed the delegation about the coalition govern-ment formed by Nepal's two largest parties, the CPN (UML) and the Nepali Congress, aimed at bringing about polit-ical stability in the country. Chen, who is also the Secretary for the Shanghai Municipal Committee, reiterated China's support for Nepal's "happiness and prosperity" and said that Beijing will always respect deci-sions made by Nepal's political partice parties. Prime Minister's Chief Advisor

ment in China" and expressed Nepal's interest in benefiting

from such advancements. He

Bishnu Prasad Rimal, CPM (UML) Secretary and Foreign Department Chief of CPN (UML) Raghubir Mahaseth, and China's Ambassador to Nepal Chen Song were among those present on the occasion.

Pak reports

Moldovans cast votes to choose Prez

Nepal court remands Director explores vaccine hesitancy ex-home minister in

Moldovans have started cast-ing ballots in two key votes Sunday that could determine whether the European Union candidate country, which neighbours Ukraine, remains on a prowestern path amid ongoing allegations that Russia has tried to undermine the electoral process. Incumbent President Maia Sandu is the favourite to secure another term in office in a presidential race in which 11 candidates are running. Voters will also choose "yes" or "no" in a referendum on whether to enshrine in the country's constitution its path toward the 27-nation EU.

Polls by WatchDog, a Chisinaubased think-tank show a clear majority of more than 50 per cent support the EU path. The refer-endum needs a one-third turnout to be valid.

Polling stations opened at 7 am (0400 GMT) and are expected to close at 9 pm (1800 GMT).

If Sandu fails to win an outright majority on Sunday, a run-off will

amid ongoing claims by Moldovan authorities that Moscow has intensified an alleged "hybrid war" campaign to destabilise the country and derail its EU path. The allegations



Moldova's President Maia Sandu prepares to cast her vote, in Chisinau, Moldova, Sunday during a presidential election and a referendum on whether to enshrine in the Constitution the country's path to European Union membership. AP/PTI

be held on November 3 which could pit her against Alexandr Stoianoglo, a Russia-friendly former prosecutor general who is polling at around 10 per cent. The two pivotal ballots are held

opposition groups, spreading disinformation, meddling in local elections, and backing a major vote-buying scheme. US national security spokesman John Kirby echoed those concerns this week, saying in a statement that "Russia is working actively to undermine Moldova's election and its European integration". Moscow has repeatedly denied it is inter-fering in Moldova. "In the last several months, Moscow has dedicated millions of dollars to influencing Moldova's presiden-tial election," Kirby said. "We assess that this money has gone toward financing its preferred parties and spreading disinfor-mation on social media in favour of their campaigns." In early October, Moldovan law enforcement said it had uncovered a ment said it had uncovered a massive vote-buying scheme orchestrated by Ilan Shor, an exiled pro-Russia oligarch who currently resides in Russia, which paid 15 million euros (USD 16.2 million) undermine the two bal-

on London stage London (PTI): Award-winning India-born and London-based artist Amit

Sharma has chosen the complex subject of vaccine hesitancy and misinformation as the inaugural theatre produc-tion of his tenure as Artistic Director of London's Kiln Theatre.

Pins and Needles', which had its world premiere recently and is running until next weekend, is written by Rob Drummond and explores the politics around vaccines - the more recent COVID jabs and others associated with childhood immunisation the world over.

It stars British Indian actor Gavi Singh Chera as the cen-tral character Rob, who puts science and scepticism to the test with on-stage research into the pros and cons of the jabs which are ubiquitous in our lives today.

in cooperative scam

Kathmandu (PTI): A Nepal district court on Sunday remanded former deputy prime minis-ter Rabi Lamichhane in custody for six days in a misappropriation of funds case related to cooperatives.

A team of police from the Central Investigation Bureau arrested Lamichhane, 50, who is also the president of the Rastriya Swatantra Party, on Friday when

it raided his party's office at Banasthali on the outskirts of the capital. A singe bench of judge Navaraj Dahal of Kaski District Court permitted the police to keep Lamichhane in custody for investigation into his alleged involvement in the misappropri-ation of funds of Pokhara-based Suryadarshan Cooperatives. The former home minister will remain in police custody for three more days as he has already spent three days in custody. He is aging director of the now-dis-solved media company.



Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan has reported 39 polio cases this year, with two fresh cases of the crippling disease being detected in the Sindh province, authorities said on Sunday.

The latest cases were confirmed on Saturday in the Sanghar and Mirpurkhas dis-Sanghar and Mirpurknas dis-tricts of the province, the Dawn newspaper reported. These come after four cases were reported a day earlier, jolting the country's efforts to

radicate the poliovirus. According to the Regi-o-nal Reference Laboratory for tigate the crisis-ridden cooperatives. The committee's report alleged that Lamichhane was involved in misusing the funds of Eradication in Polio various cooperatives, including Islamabad, the newest victims Survadarshan and Gorkha Media are a girl and a boy. "These are the first polio Network, when he was the man-

cases from Mirpur-khas and Sanghar this year," the report quoted an official as saying. The prevalence of the virus had already been confirmed in the two neighbouring districts following multiple envi-ronmental samples testing positive for WPV1 since April, the official added.

In ten months of the year, Pakistan has reported 39 cases of poliovirus, of which 20 were reported from Bal-o-c-h-istan, 12 from Sindh, five from Khyber Pakhtun-khwa, and one each from Punjab and Islamabad. Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq acknowledged the spread of the virus across the spread of the virus across the country but noted that a strategy has been developed to eradicate the crippling dis-ease by June 2025. The Pakistan Polio Programme has planned a new nationwide has planned a new nationwide vaccination campaign from October 28 to immunise more than 45 million children under the age of five, the report said. Pakistan and Afghanistan are the only countries in the world where polio remains endemic, according to the World Health Organisation.

Children greet King Charles III, Queen Scottish Indian curator helps bring 1700s Camilla outside Sydney church

AP SYDNEY

King Charles III and Queen Camilla were greeted by children Sunday outside a Sydney church in their first pub-lic appearance of their Australian visit. Charles' arrival Friday marked the first reigning British monarch visit to Australia since his late mother Queen Elizabeth II made her 16th journey to the distant nation in 2011. Charles, 75, is being treated for cancer, which has led to a scaled-down itinerary. The couple spent a rest day on Saturday at Admiralty House, the official Sydney residence of the monarch's repre-sentative in Australia, Governor-General Sam Mostyn.The royals' first public engagement was at a service at St. Thomas' Anglican Church in North Sydney. As Charles and Camilla made their way to the



Britain's King Charles, right, and Ms Sam Mostyn, Governor-General of Australia meet at Admiralty House in Sydney, Australia, Sunday. AP/PTI

front of church, Sunday school children waving Australian flags cheered and shook hands with the couple. Inside, dozens of phones pointed in their direction, while excited whispers echoed through the room. After the service, the king and queen were greeted outside by hun-

dreds of cheering people hoping to catch a glimpse or snap a photo. Sunday's service was restricted to the local congregation, with only a few special guests allowed to attend, such as Mostyn and New South Wales state Governor Margaret Beazley

alive at King Charles III's Dumfries House

AP GLASGLOW

Dumfries House is one of the most majestic stately homes in Scotland, dating back to the 1700s and close to the heart of King Charles III – a regular vis-itor to oversee the work of his King's Foundation charity, head-quartered at this royal estate quartered at this royal estate near Glasgow. Satinder Kaur, Collections Manager at Dumfries House, is brimming with excitement as her research has helped curate a major new offering for visitors to Dumfries House - an authentic 18th-century dining experience in the historic home's Pink Dining Room, complete with a "Butler Service" associated with the era and served on rare ceramics and silverware of the time thanks to the Royal Collection. Starting this month, the Scottish Indian curator alongside Manager Evan Samson and Executive Chef

Tom Scoble has successfully injected this added regal touch into the regular tours of the estate that visitors from around the world can book. "As Collections Manager here at Dumfries House, it is a privilege to work with the fantastically to work with the fantastically varied collection of furniture, ceramics, glass and works of art that I'm looking after – dating from 1754 to 1759," Kaur told PTI during a tour of the estate located in the Scottish town of Cumnock, East Ayrshire. "I'm a second generation immigrant Cumnock, East Ayrshire. "I'm a second-generation immigrant and my parents are shopkeep-ers and post office owners. But they saw my passion and real-ly encouraged me to find my path into the heritage world and it ended up being here at Dumfries House, where I am incredibly lucky to see some-thing new every day that I find interesting or that I want to interesting or that I want to research and find out more

about," she said. Among the many highlights the curator loves pointing out to visitors is the Grand Orrery, a mechanical model of the solar system dating back to about 1750. It adorns the entrance of the grand home and even has a little touch of Indian history embedded within it. "I think that as an Indian person, I always look for little spots of my own culture, like a little piece of home, really. So, the first thing I spotted on the earth within the Grand Orrery was that the Indian subcontinent is there – interesting to note, when there's no East Coast of America, and there's no Coast of Australia, and there's no New Zealand, but India is there," said Kaur, who spends much of her time on the estate personally caring for many such precious items in the historic collection – from Murano glass chandeliers to

rare British Spode ceramics. rare British Spode ceramics. It is past the grand entrance that the Pink Dining Room, which often plays host to King Charles and his guests, will now open to visitors for a chance to dine like a king themselves – for a grand price of GBP 375 per person. "For a select number of guests the 18th Century Dining guests, the 18th Century Dining Experience will be authentic to the 1700s, with traditional Butler Service – including the meal being served 'family-style' – and a menu researched and prepared by our chefs that reflects the culinary fashions typical of country houses in that age," said Samson.Chef Scoble's age, said samson. Cher Scobles challenge has been to curate a menu that resonates with the times gone by but also fuses with modern-day tastes and, more importantly, stays true to the Kirk curate for Duration the King's vision for Dumfries House as a champion of British farming and rural skills.

money 10

R&D compared to developed

nations like the US and

China, which spend over 2

essential for India to realise its potential as a global biotech

'We are working on

programmes that encourage

industries to invest in R&D

alongside government funding. For instance, our

Biotech Industry Partnership

Program requires co-funding

from industry players," he

Kumar also acknowledged

regulatory challenges faced by

emphasised that BIRAC is

working to alleviate these issues through regulatory

advocacy and policy initiatives. "Many startups

face difficulties due to a lack

of understanding of regulatory processes. We have created a Regulatory and

Policy Advocacy Cell to guide startups and engage with regulatory bodies to ease these challenges," he noted.

Kumar said he is optimistic

about India's biotech future.

The government's commitment to increasing

R&D investment through

initiatives like the National

Research Foundation and its

startups

stressed

that

but

private-sector

in R&D is

per cent.

increasing

investment

Kumar

leader.

said.

biotech



CNG price may go up on input supply cut India's bioeconomy hits \$150billion, innovation key

PTI NEW DELHI

The government has slashed by up to 20 per cent the supplies of cheaper domestically produced natural gas to city retailers -- a move that may result in Rs 4-6 per kg hike in the price of CNG sold to automobiles, unless excise duty on the fuel is cut, sources said.

Natural gas pumped from below the ground and from under the seabed from sites ranging from the Arabian Sea to Bay of Bengal within India is the raw material that is turned into CNG for sale to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households. Production from legacy fields,

whose price is regulated by the government and which are used to feed city gas retailers, has been falling by up to 5 per cent annually due to natural decline that has set in. This has led to supply cuts to city gas retailers, four sources in know of the matter said.

While the input gas for piped cooking gas that households get is protected, the government has cut supply of raw material for CNG. Gas raw material for CNG. Gas from legacy fields used to meet 90 per cent of the demand for CNG in May 2023 and has progressively fallen. The supply was cut to just 50.75 per cent of the CNG demand to retailers will not have to pass on the increased cost to consumers, they said. demand beginning October 16 from 67.74 per cent last month, they said.

City gas retailers are forced to liquefied natural gas (LNG) to make up for the shortfall, which will lead to a hike in CNG prices that varies from

Rs 4-6/kg. The gas from legacy fields is priced at USD 6.50 per million British thermal unit (mmBtu) as against imported LNG that costs USD 11-12

per mmBtu. For now, the retailers have not raised CNG rates as they are engaged with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to find a solution, sources said. One of the options is for the

government to cut excise duty on CNG. Currently, the central government levies a 14 per cent excise duty on CNG, which translates into Rs

Maharashtra goes to the polls next month and elections are also due in Delhi soon. Delhi and Mumbai are among the buy imported and costlier biggest CNG markets in the country.

Sources said the gas supplies to city gas retailers had to be cut after the government decided to restore fuel to ONGC-promoted OPaL petrochemical plant in Dahej, Guiarat.

The plant was originally allocated 4.12 million



OPaL running into losses, sources said, adding that the sector.' To maintain contribution margins at existing levels, CNG prices will have to be government has now approved a package to revive the unit. This package includes promoter Oil and increased about Rs 5-5.5 per Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) infusing additional

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, which retails CNG in the national Rs 10,501 crore as equity and capital, and Mumbai-based Mahanagar Gas Ltd in the unit being made available regulatory filings stated that supplies of domestically produced The Union Cabinet approved the allocation of 3.44 produced gas, which was available at a capped rate half of the imported price, has mostly coming from new wells of ONGC. This led to been cut.

"The company gets domestic lesser gas being available for gas allocation for meeting the city gas retailers. Girish Kadam, Senior Vice requirement of CNG sales volumes at the pricing fixed President & Group Head -Corporate Ratings, Icra Ltd, by the government (presently at USD 6.5 per million British said, "The APM gas allocation thermal unit). Based on communication received by has been reduced for the CGD sector by 20 per cent of the company from GAIL

(India) Ltd (the nodal agency for domestic gas allocation), this is to inform that there has been a major reduction in domestic gas allocation to the company effective from October 16, 2024," IGL said in a filing.

The revised domestic gas allocation to IGL is about 21 per cent less than previous allocation, "which will have adverse impact on an rofitability of the company", it said, adding that it is in discussions with key stakeholders to minimise the impact.Separately, MGL said as per Policy Guideline dated August 10, 2022, issued by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, domestically produced Administrative Price Mechanisms (APM) natural gas is to be allocated to city gas distribution (CGD) companies for priority segments, specifically domestic piped natural gas

and CNG (transport). The policy states that the supply of domestic gas to CGD entities will be made only up to the quantity available and allocated to GAIL (India) limited for these

segments. ...The company is exploring options of sourcing gas through domestically tĥrough produced high pressure high temperature (HPHT) gas, new well/well intervention gas (NWG) from ONGC and benchmark-linked long-term gas contracts, so as to continue to provide gas to its customers with stability," MGL added. price Adani Total Gas Ltd -- the other significant city gas retailer -- in its filing said the

APM priced domestic gas allocation to the company has been reduced by about 16 per cent, effective October 16, 2024, compared to the earlier allocation.

PTI NEW DELHI

India's biotechnology sector is witnessing remarkable growth, with the country's bioeconomy now valued at USD 150 billion but there is still significant untapped potential in innovation and product development, which could further elevate India's global standing in the sector, Dr Jitendra Kumar, Managing Director of the government's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), said. BIRAC is a not-for-profit

public sector enterprise set up by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) under the government that supports and promotes innovation, entrepreneurship, research in the sector. and

In an interview with PTI, Kumar highlighted India's significant contributions to global healthcare, with 40 per cent of the world's generic medicines being supplied by Indian companies.

"We have enormous potential and capability, but when it comes to the value of our bioeconomy, we are ranked 14th globally. This is because much of the value stems from patented. innovative products' -- an area where India still needs to improve," Kumar said.

'So that emphasis effort from the government and BIRAC side is to actually promote that which is why we will now be promoting innovations... That is why the biotech industry is concentrating on promoting new innovations and promoting and nurturing them," he said.

To address this gap, BIRAC is emphasising innovation and nurturing startups through various programmes designed to convert academic



research into marketable products.

Our goal is to promote academic conversion into enterprise. Through initiatives like the Promoting Academic Conversion to Enterprise (PACE), we're helping scientists move their research out of labs and into

the market," he said. Since its formation in 2012, BIRAC has played a critical role in creating a biotech innovation ecosystem, he said.

Kumar shared that the number of biotech startups in India has grown exponentially from about 300 to over 8,000, with significant government support driving this expansion. Additionally, the bioeconomy has surged from USD 35 billion to USD 150 billion in just a decade. A key achievement of BIRAC, Kumar said, has been the creation of bio-incubation centres across India, providing crucial infrastructure for startups to develop proof-of-concept

products. face often Startups challenges in finding laboratory space. Our bioincubation centres offer 'plug and play' laboratories, which have made it easier for startups to carry out their research and development," he added.

However, despite these efforts to align regulatory frameworks with global standards will be key drivers advancements, India still lags in research and development (R&D) spending, investing of future growth.

Mansukh Mandaviya India's solar imports may hit \$30 Billion by 2030

PTI NEW DELHI

The country's target of installing 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030 may push solar equipment import bill to about USD 30 billion per year and increase dependence on Chinese goods, think tank GTRI said

reliance on imports, which could push solar imports, which USD 30 billion annually," it

said. In 2023-24, India imported USD 7 billion worth of solar

equipment, with China supplying 62.6 per cent. China controls 97 per cent of global polysilicon production and 80 per cent of solar

manufacturing,

Aiav

while

the



duty on solar cells. However, fostering an independent and imports from Vietnam, resilient solar industry," Malaysia, and Thailand are exempt from these tariffs under the India-Asean free agreement (FTA), trade provided they add at least 35 per cent value to the imported inputs used in their export products.

Srivastava said, adding that the country's current import duties on solar modules and cells should be reassessed to ensure they promote local manufacturing without raising costs for consumers. Further he said the global

The think tank has suggested shift from fossil fuels to seven steps to boost domestic manufacturing and cut imports and that includes US, EU, Japan, and India, hinges heavily on solar power, pushing investments in upstream solar production, which makes up 50-80 per cent of the renewable energy from raw materials like silica mix in most countries. sand to finished solar panels, China now dominates over 80 reducing dependency on imported wafers, polysilicon, per cent of global solar production and exports, controlling 97 per cent of the world's polysilicon supply. In and cells. There is also an urgent need to focus on building local production capacity for aluminum frames, glass, and 2023, China exported 227 GW of solar modules worth USD 39.5 billion and 38 GW other critical materials used of solar cells worth USD 4.2 billion, it said. in solar panel manufacturing. Producing solar panels involves six stages, from mining silica sand to It asked to expand the scope of initiatives like the PLI scheme to cover early-stage assembling the final panel. Most countries import fully solar manufacturing and provide targeted subsidies to attract private investment; assembled solar modules, and create a skilled workforce preferring this route over capable of managing large-scale solar installations and building domestic capacity. Due to this dependence, it

renewable energy, led by the

One Stop Solution

aims to integrate information of beneficiaries of all social Union Labour Minister Security and welfare schemes Mansukh Mandaviya will meant for unorganised launch 'eShram-One' Stop workers in an effective manner through a single

domestically

mmscmd of domestic gas --

natural gas.

a report on Sunday

Solution for unorganised workers on Monday, the labour ministry said in a statement.

PTI NEW DELHI

EShram-One Stop Solution will act as a mediator to ensure that unorganised schemes/programmes, it stated.

This initiative will help unorganised workers become aware of the schemes designed for them, it said. According to the statement, in keeping with the vision of recent Budget the Announcement on developing eShram as a onestop-solution for unorganised labour sector to have access to various social sector schemes, Union Minister of Labour & the 'eShram-One Stop Solution' on October 21.

platform.

solution will help facilitate in identification implementation of the social security & welfare schemes workers have easy access to a for the unorganised worker variety of government and to help saturation of the schemes in the fast and effective manner.

> different alreadv eShram.

Since the launch of the e-To meet the government's target of installing 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030, India needs to significantly ramp up installations to 65-70

achievement This Employment and Youth underscores the social impact Affairs and Sports will launch of the initiative and the EShram-One Stop Solution unorganised workers, it said.

EShram as a one-stopand production.

Consequently, 12 schemes of central ministries/departments have been integrated/mapped with the

Shram on August 26, 2021, over 30 crore unorganised workers have been enrolled and it has demonstrated widespread appeal among the unorganised labour.

government's commitment to support the nation's

It said developing a selfmodule making it difficult for India or reliant solar manufacturing industry in India will require any country to compete due to lower prices from China. significant investment to create an integrated supply

GTRI Founder chain, especially in areas like Srivastava said like polysilicon and wafer initiatives production-linked incentive Without this, India may (PLI) scheme aims to boost local manufacturing, impact continue to face high import is limited as it relies on large costs and struggle to meet its renewable energy goals. India installed 15 GW of solar scale use of imported inputs. The report said India's solar capacity in 2023-24, raising the total to 90.8 GW by manufacturing industry is in early stages, with most projects relying on imported September, compared to just 2.8 GW in 2014, it said.

ready-to-use modules. During the last fiscal year, ready-to-use solar modules' imports reached USD 4.4 billion. The country also imported solar cells worth GW each year, with over 80 per cent of this target USD 1.9 billion and USD 1 billion worth of other essential parts such as inverters, and cables, junction expected to come from solar power, according to the boxes, transformers, and Research other electrical components "This target seems ambitious, needed for solar installations.

"Local production is importdependent and mainly focuses on the final two stages. 90 per cent of solar manufacturing in India involves assembling solar modules from imported cells with 15 per cent local value addition,[†] it said.

It added that few Indian manufacture companies commercial scale solar cells from imported polysilicon or wafers that add 30-40 per cent value locally and no one produces solar cells from scratch-using silica sands. "To cut down on imports,

India needs to produce solar cells starting from silica refining, which involves costly and energy-intensive polysilicon production and advanced requires technology," Srivastava said.

He added that cheap imports disrupt local pricing and the country has to also locally produce aluminum frames, glass, and other materials, which will require strong R&D efforts and government support.

According to the report, China is India's largest supplier, providing USD 3.89 billion worth of solar cells and modules, which accounts for 62.6 per cent of total imports. It is followed by Vietnam (USD 1.02 billion -- 16.5 per cent), Malaysia (USD 549.8 million -- 8.9 per cent, and Thailand (USD 248.8 million -- 4 per cent).

To reduce dependency on Chinese imports, Índia imposed a 40 per cent customs duty on solar modules and a 25 per cent

climbed

17,804.61 crore to Rs 7,31,773.56 crore and that of

Bharti Airtel went up Rs

11,272.45 crore to Rs

On the other hand, the

market capitalisation (mcap)

The valuation of Reliance

16,645.39 crore to Rs

The mcap of Hindustan Unilever tumbled Rs

6,38,066.75 crore and that of TCS diminished by

LIC's valuation went lower by

Rs 8,760.12 crore to Rs

continued to remain the

Industries declined

15,248.85 crore to

10,402.01 crore to

14,91,321.40 crore.

5,91,418.91 crore.

Reliance

Rs

Rs

Rs

Rs

Rs

Industries

valuation

9,71,707.61 crore.

7,80,126.10 crore.

18,38,721.14 crore.

manufacturing processes. said the US, the EU, India, "India should partner with the and Japan can consider US, the EU, and Japan to establishing global-scale solar cell manufacturing facilities, establish large-scale solar starting from scratch. manufacturing facilities,

Mcap of most valued firms Automobile exports from India rise 14 per cent

PTI NEW DELHI

Automobile exports from India in the first six months of the current fiscal year rose 14 per cent year-on-year, led by gains in shipments of passenger vehicles and two-wheelers.

According to Siam data, the overall exports in the April-September period stood at 25,28,248 units, up 14 per cent as compared with 22,11,457 units in the year-

ago period. "Key markets like Latin America and Africa, which had slowed down for various reasons, have bounced back. This has been the main reason for exports coming back," Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (Siam) President Shailesh Chandra said.

He was replying to a query on the reasons for the bouncing back of vehicle exports in the April-September period.



Global

Initiative (GTRI).

The country's

carmaker Maruti Suzuki led

the vertical with shipments of

1,47,063 units, an increase of

largest

Trade

other regions faced challenges due to devaluation passenger vehicle of Total shipments rose 12 per cent currencies. This impacted the vehicle shipments as the year-on-year to 3,76,679 units nations focussed on import of in the first half of the current essential items. fiscal year as against 3,36,754 Automobile exports declined units in the September quarter of FY24.

5.5 per cent in FY24 due to the monetary crisis in various overseas markets. Overall exports stood at

45,00,492 units in the last Various African nations and fiscal year as compared with 12 per cent over 1,31,546

units in the year-ago period. Hyundai Motor India exported 84,900 units, a drop of 1 per cent, as against 86,105 units in April-September period of the previous fiscal vear.

Two-wheeler exports rose 16 per cent year-on-year to 19,59,145 units in the April-September period this fiscal year as compared with 16,85,907 units in the yearago period.

Scooter shipments increased 19 per cent to 3,14,533 units while motorcycle exports rose 16 per cent to 16,41,804 units during the period under review.

Commercial vehicle exports rose 12 per cent year-on-year to 35,731 units in the first six months of the fiscal year. Three-wheeler shipments, however, declined 1 per cent during the period to 1,53,199 units as compared with 1,55,154 units in the April-September period of the 2023-24 fiscal year.

PTI NEW DELHI

 $F_{valued}^{our of the top-10 most-}_{firms together} added Rs 81,151.31 crore in$ market valuation last week, with ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest gainers.Last week, the BSE

of Infosys slumped Rs 23,314.31 crore to Rs benchmark declined 156.61 points, or 0.19 per cent. While HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, and the State Bank of India were the gainers, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, and Life

Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) suffered a combined erosion of Rs 76,622.05 crore from their market valuation. ICICI Bank added Rs 28,495.14 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 8,90,191.38 crore.

jumped Rs 23,579.11 crore to Rs 12,82,848.30 crore. State Bank of India's market most-valued domestic firm.

INBRIEF

KHALSA COLLEGE & SHAHZADA NAND COLLEGE WON CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHIES

AMRITSAR: 'A' Zone Zonal Youth Festival of Amritsar district colleges affiliated to the Guru Nanak Dev University concluded in Dasmesh Auditorium of the University. In 'A' Division Khalsa College, Amritsar bagged the first position, Guru Nanak Dev University secured the second position



BHAIRABI – SAIRANG RAILWAY PROJECT PROGRESSING TOWARDS COMPLETION

MALIGAON: Indian Railways is significantly contributing towards transforming North-eastern states by executing several new railway line projects. The Bhairabi-Sairang New Line Railway Project to connect the capital of the North-eastern state of Mizoram to the rest of the country is one such project which is at an advance stage of completion.

FINANZA 2024 CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD INVESTOR WEEK

AMRITSAR: The Dinero Finance Club of University Business School of Guru Nanak Dev University organised FINANZA 2024, an inter-department Finance Fest in association with Career Launcher and Black Swan Stock Market Academy.



The mcap of ITC dipped Rs 2,251.37 crore to Rs The valuation of HDFC Bank 6,08,682.29 crore.





REVELATIONS **"THE LIVING PLANET REPORT 2024"**

With population as a threat in Asia including India and the Pacific, recorded 60% average decline in wildlife writes ABHI SINGHAL

orld Wide Fund's 15th biennial edition of the 'The Living Planet Report 2024' (LPR) has been a catastrophic 73% decline in the average size of wildlife birds, (mammals, amphibians, reptiles and fish)

populations over just 50 years (1970-2020). The Living Planet Report (LPR) is a study of trends in global biodiversity and the health of the planet.

There has been a strong decline seen, with the highest in the freshwater populations (85%), followed by terrestrial (69%) and marine (56%) populations. Declines in wildlife populations can act as

an early warning indicator of increasing extinction risk and the potential loss of healthy ecosystems. When ecosystems are damaged, they can become more vulnerable to tipping points being pushed beyond a critical threshold resulting substantial and potentially irreversible change. There have been

...India is home to the largest population of wild tigers globally and the All-India Tiger Estimation 2022 recorded a minimum of 3,682 tigers, a significant increase from the 2,967 estimated in 2018

> global potential tipping points, as the such dieback of the Amazon rainforest and the mass die-off of coral reefs, could create shockwaves far beyond the immediate area impacting food security and livelihoods.

Commenting on the effect of adverse climate, Kirsten Schuijt, Director General of WWF International said, "The linked crisis of nature loss and climate change are pushing wildlife and ecosystems beyond their limits, with dangerous global tipping points threatening to damage F arth's lifesupport systems and destabilize societies The catastrophic consequences of losing some of our most precious ecosystems, like the Amazon rainforest and coral reefs, would be felt by people and nature around the world." The report also shows the alarming decline of the three vulture species in India i.e. the white-rumped vulture (Gyps bengalensis), Indian vulture (Gyps indicus), and slender-billed vulture (Gyps tenuirostris) between 1992 and 2002.

The research tells that despite a decline in many wildlife populations in India, some populations have stabilised and shown recovery, largely due to proactive government initiatives, effective habitat management, and robust scientific monitoring, combined with community engagement and public support. It found that India is home to the largest population of wild tigers globally and the All-India Tiger Estimation 2022 recorded a minimum of 3,682 tigers, a significant increase from the 2,967 estimated in 2018. On being asked if with such circumstances, we still have a chance of conserving the endangered wildlife species, the LPR panel said that it depends a lot on the species and the status of the species. They have seen it with some species like with the rhinos, tigers and if the action comes on the right time, at the right scale, and if the species itself is a species which can biologically recover, then we will see that change. The efforts need to be increased, and also some bit of scientific monitoring of this population. Long term monitoring is required, because currently, most of the monitoring that is happening there, they're voluntary

or NGO actions. The LPR states that the only way to make progress on the global goals of halting and reversing nature loss by 2030 and addressing the drivers of climate change is by transforming our energy, food and finance systems. At the same time, we must scale-up effective and

DIABETIC RETINOPATHY: A SERIOUSLY OVERLOOKED DISEASE

Early screening can prevent vision loss in diabetic patients, says ABHI SINGHAL

here are over 101 million people

million people affected with diabetes in India and the number is expected to grow to 225 million by 2030. Studies also predict that one in five adults will be diagnosed with diabetes in their working age in coming years. This has resulted in the simultaneous and sharp rise in the prevalence of diabetes-related preventable vision loss. Diabetes-related elevated blood sugar is the cause of diabetic retinopathy. Over time, high blood sugar levels can harm your retina, which is the portion of your eye that senses light and uses the optic nerve (located in the back of the eye) to transmit signals to your brain. All over the body, blood vessels are harmed by diabetes. One might notice changes in their vision, like trouble reading or seeing faraway objects as a symptom. In the later stage blood vessels

in the retina begin to leak

into the vitreous, the gel-

like fluid that fills your eye,

To combat this issue the

Vitreo Retinal Society of India (VRSI) and Research

Society for the Study of

Diabetes in India (RSSDI)

These guidelines from VRSI and RSSDI will help

every physician and diabetologists in India to

The Diabetic retinopathy

screening guidelines for

physicians in India: position statement by the

Vitreoretinal Society of India (VRSI) and the

Research Society for the

Study of Diabetes in India

Screening

retinopathy.

(RSSDI).

Guidelines.

as the disease progresses.

initial eye examination recommended 5 years following diagnosis of type 1 diabetes mellitus. Type 2 diabetes mellitus should be recommended for initial eye examination at the time of diagnosis of type 2 diabetes mellitus. The patients with pregnancy with diabetes mellitus the eye examination prior to conception and early during 1st trimester is recommended and followup should be individualised based on severity and recent changes in recent retinopathy.

"It is important to realise that earlier, diabetes was considered a disease of the elite, but it is no longer like that. It is equally affecting all stratas of the society. We are having an equal prevalence of diabetes, both in rural and urban settings of our country." said Dr. Manisha Agarwal, General Secretary, Vitreoretinal Society of India. A diabetologist plays an have collaborated to important role in timely formulate first-of-its-kind screening for diabetic Diabetic Retinopathy retinopathy and referring to an ophthalmologist for its management.

With the increasing prevalence of diabetes and the associated risk of educate their patients diabetic retinopathy, early regarding diabetic screening and timely interventions for the same are crucial. It's essential for individuals with diabetes to schedule regular eye exams and for healthcare providers to follow the VRSI and RSSDI guidelines. Together, we can prevent vision loss and improve the quality of life The Type 1 diabetes for millions of people in mellitus should be given India.





inclusive conservation action, taking account of the rights, needs and values of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Ecosystem based adaptation (EbA) - approaches which benefit biodiversity, climate and human wellbeing at the same time - hold enormous potential.



WHY AVOCADOS Everything you need to know!

BY KAVITA DEVGAN

Tith the search for healthy foods picking up pace, it is no surprise that we are looking ever more intently at what we are eating. That search has taken us far and wide - and one of the emerging options is something that is quite flavourful as well! Some Indians are familiar with the trendy avocado toast and its nutty deliciousness, but the benefits of the avocado go well beyond.

There is no doubt about the fact that avocados are delicious. But how much do we know about this fruit? Avocado (Perseaamericana) a native of South America, also known as alligator pear or avocado pear, is actually a large berry with a rather oily exterior containing a single large stone. Domesticated and harvested locally in Latin America for thousands of years, it comes in a number of variants that range in size, colour, and texture. The trees are native to the tropics, and are today cultivated across continents. What has led to the popularity of the fruit is its soft buttery texture combined with their unusual alluring taste. However, it also packs

AVOCADOS ARE ALSO A SOURCE OF 'GOOD FATS', AND ITS REGULAR CONSUMPTION IS LINKED TO LOWER LEVELS OF BAD (LDL) CHOLESTEROL. IT ÀLSÓ CONTAINS A LOT OF FIBRE, WHICH IS GOOD FOR DIGESTIVE HEALTH. AVOCADOS ALSO CONTAIN MINERALS SUCH CALCIUM, MAGNESIUM, AND SODIUM, ALL ESSENTIAL FOR THE HUMAN BODY'S HEALTH

lot of benefits that complement its flavour. They deliver diseasemultiple fighting compounds such as lutein, betacarotene (precursor to vitamin A), and vitamin E. Results

avocado has 114 calories, and is a rich source of several B vitamins (such as pantothenic acid) and vitamin K, with moderate contents of vitamin C, vitamin E, and potassium.

Avocados are also a source of 'good fats', and its regular consumption is linked to lower levels of bad (LDL) cholesterol. It also contains a lot of fibre, which is good for digestive health. Avocados also contain minerals such calcium, magnesium, and sodium, all essential for the human body's health. It is also packed with antioxidants. The human heart needs special

attention, and avocados are fortunately a fabulous heart-friendly fruit. They are loaded with healthpromoting MUFA

have shown that 1 serving of (Monounsaturated fatty acids) that are great for our heart, and potassium, a mineral that helps regulate blood pressure, and even the elusive folate, which again is a wonderful heart health nutrient.

Nutrient-rich avocado oil has a multitude of uses for salads or cooking and is also being used increasingly in cosmetics and soap products. The most common way to have it however remains as a nutritious addition to a meal. So next time instead of just eyeing this perfect blend of taste and health on other people's Instagram feeds, or at the supermarket, get them home and cook with them. Go on and make the most of avocado's health.

The author is a leading dietitian and holistic health consultant.



Natasha Moor in collaboration with Nykaa at her masterclass in New Delhi.

sports 12



New Zealand win by eight wickets for first Test win in India in 36 years

PTI BENGALURU

w Zealand survived a hostile Jasprit Bumrah spell to foil India's attempt to add a final-day twist to an absorbing series-opener, slaying the cricketing giants at home by eight wickets and ending a 36-year long wait to taste Test success in the country here Sunday in the country, here Sunday This is Kiwis' first Test win on This is Kiwis first lest win on the Indian soil after the John Wright-led outfit towelled India by 136 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, way back in 1988. Even hunting a modest 107 on the fifth day account a world the fifth day against a world-class attack could be nervy, and New Zealand did that

after some initial scares. Will Young (48 not out) and Rachin Ravindra (39 not out) fuelled their chase with a 75run stand for the third wicket, handholding their side a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. However, the Indians will not be an entirely despondent lot despite the defeat as they showed admirable spunk to first over of the day itself for

claw back from the depths of getting bowled out for 46 in the first innings.

They will need to build on it and pretty quickly too as the second Test at Pune starts on October 24.

The Rohit Sharma-marshalled side will also have to think deeply about retaining Sarfaraz Khan, who made a 150 in the second dig, as Shubman Gill is poised to return after recovering from a stiff neck.

The other point they will moot long is whether to go back to the three-pacer strategy or continue three spinners, a move which backfired here spectacularly, in Pune.

New Zealand victory did not come without its share of drama once the day's play started at 10.15am, a wet outfield pushing back the

his overnight naught. Latham was behind the ball to proceedings by an hour. Bumrah (2/29), operating cover the in-dipper but it swung back further to thud on from the dressing room end, swung back rurther to thud on to his pads as umpire Michael Gough raised his finger after vociferous appeal from the found appreciable movement



bowler and the crowd.

The New Zealand captain reviewed the decision more in hope than in conviction and the DRS confirmed his worst fears as well, and he had to walk back.

India might just have felt the absence of a third pacer as both Bumrah and Siraj found movement and carry to trouble the Kiwi batters under a largely overcast skies. Kuldeep Yadav, who gave

couple of more strikes could away 26 runs in three overs, had replaced Akash Deep in the eleven for this Test after have left the cat among the pigeons. India went with a three-pronged pace attack against first-innings centurion, found some solidity to resist the Bangladesh recently. Devon Conway, the other

Indian charge.

overnight batter, was shaky throughout his stay and would consider himself Once the sun came out for a while, the ball-movement was fortunate to have found a last-minute edge on a Bumrah skidder that otherwise would have trapped him plumb in front. But as luck would have it, the

New Zealand were 35 for two

say the match in balance as a

But Young and Ravindra, the

much more predictable and the Kiwi batters used favourable conditions to rack in a few boundaries to ease the pressure. Ravindra Jadeja, who started

with a no-ball, too did not ball beat the gully fielder and raced to the fence. make much of an impression, conceding 14 runs in his first two overs.

However, the left-hander eventually reached the road's There was not much on the end when Bumrah, operating from around the stumps, Chinnaswamy pitch for him to exploit either as the 22caught him right in front of the wicket with another one that skidded and swung back yard track did not disintegrate on the final day, courtesy rain and cooler climes here.

With the margin getting reduced alongside each run, the New Zealand batters became more daring and brought out their shots from the shelf, such as a clean hoist over mid-wicket for a six off left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep.

The defining moment came when Will Young turned Jadeja for two to collect the winning runs as Kiwis dressing room turned into a hub of celebration.

India U17 squad picked That day belonged to Nadeem: Neeraj on Paris Olympics javelin final for Asian Cup Qualifiers

feel good."

PTI NEW DELHI

India U17 men's national team head coach Ishfaq Ahmed, on Sunday, named a 23-member squad for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers to be held in Thailand from October 23-72 Juli en enclosed in Com-27.India are placed in Group D, where they will meet Brunei Darussalam (October 23), Turkmenistan (October 25) and hosts Thailand

(October 27). There are 10 groups in the qualification phase, from which the group winners and five best second-placed teams will join hosts Saudi Arabia at the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025.

ndia's 23-member squad for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers:

Goalkeepers: Aheibam Suraj Singh, Rohit, Nandan Roy. Defenders: Karish Soram,

Mohamed Kaif, Chingtham Renin Singh Brahmacharimayum Sumit

Sheeraj Chopra says nothing went wrong in his silver-winning performance in the Paris Olympics final earlier this year and Pakistani Arshad Thoungamba Usham Singh, Yaipharemba Chingakham, Jodric

PTI LUCKNOW

to win two successive Olympic

Midfielders: Abdul Salha Sheergojri, Ahongshangbam Samson, Kh Azlaan Shah, Levis Zangminlun, Mahmad Manbhakupar Samı, Malınıakupat Malıngiang, Md Arbash, Ningthoukhongjam Rishi Sami, Vishal Yadav, Singh, Ngamgouhou Mate.

Sharma,

Abranches.

Forwards: Bharat Lairenjam, Hansdak, Prem Hemneichung Lunkim. Head coach: Ishfaq Ahmed; coach: Assistant Ramachandran Govindaraju

Mileswamy; Goalkeeper coach: Zakeer Hussain Mohammed Strength and conditioning coach: Chelston Pinto.

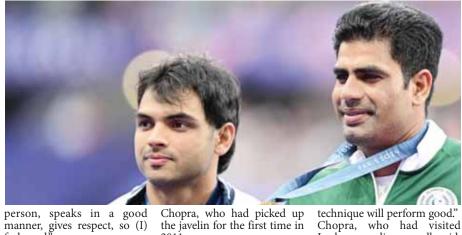
good, and it was tough," Chopra told PTI in an interview.

"The gold medal is won by the Ctar Indian javelin thrower person to whom the day belongs to. That day was (Arshad) Nadeem's day." Chopra was in Lucknow on

Saturday to inaugurate Under Nadeem emerged champion as the "day belonged to him". Chopra became the first Indian track-and-field athlete Armour's larger, new format brand house store at the Phoenix Palassio Mall.

He brushed aside any notion of India-Pakistan rivalry in javelin throw competition replacing the same seen in cricket and hockey.

medals by clinching a silver with a throw of 89.45m on August 8, but the day belonged to Nadeem, who destroyed the field with a new Olympic "In javelin, there are no two teams (playing against each other), but there are 12 athletes record effort of 92.97m for his country's maiden individual from different countries, who country's malden individual gold at the showpiece. "Nothing was wrong, everything was right. The throw was also good. Getting a silver (medal) in the Olympics are competing with each other. I have been competing with Nadeem since 2016, and it is for the first time that he has won," said the 26-year-old is also not a small thing. There athlete from Khandra village was disappointment. But, I feel that the competition was very in Haryana's Panipat district. "He (Nadeem) is a nice



2011.

Asked what is required the most by a javelin thrower ---strength, stamina, mental endurance --, he said, "It is the combination of all these Chopra said it was a sudden moment when he picked up the javelin for the first time in his life when he was boy. "It (taking up javelin throw) was a sudden moment. I did things, and one thing will not work. And, with all these not know anything about it. When I went to the ground, at that time, it was decided," said things combined, the person who will have the best

Chopra, who had picked up the javelin for the first time in

Lucknow earlier as well, said, "I had come to Lucknow earlier in 2012 to play, and after Tokyo Olympics, when I was asked to come by the Chief Minister. This is my third visit (to Lucknow). There is a lot of difference (between the earlier Lucknow

that time, I was quite young, and do not remember things much.

"At that time, I had come by train. Now, a good airport has been built. Good mall has been built. And, it is for the first time that I am able to see the city so much by travelling. I felt very nice," he said. Chopra also had tea at a

famous outlet ('Sharma kee Chaai') in Lucknow's Lalbagh area, and took selfies with people.

Giving a piece of advice to the youth, Chopra said, "To the youth vouth, I would say that they should not assume in the should not assume in the starting itself that they would be bagging medals. They should exercise patience because sports consume a lot of your time.

"Your body needs time to grow, your muscles become strong in a good manner. Have patience, and work on your techniques."

Juyal's unbeaten century, Rinku's fierv 89 keep UP in game vs Haryana

to 335 runs.

wickets fell.

Djokovic tops Nadal before Sinner beats Alcaraz for title at the Six Kings Slam exhibition

and the current Lucknow). At

PTI LUCKNOW

Young skipper Aryan Juyal continued his fine form to slam an unbeaten century, while Rinku Singh smashed a brisk fifty as Uttar Pradesh reached 267/6 in reply to Haryana's 453 in their Ranji Trophy Group C match here on Saturday. Rinku hit 89 off 110 balls

with 10 fours and three sixes, scoring 25 off 20 balls against Yuzvendra Chahal, who went wicket-less in 11 overs for 57 runs.

Juyal, who missed a century by eight runs in their last match against Bengal, got to his fourth first class hundred and was unbeaten on 118

from 196 balls (13x4, 1x6) as UP cut their deficit to 186 runs on the third day.

On a forgettable day for Aman Kumar, Chahal, Harshal Patel and Jayant Yadav bagged two wickets apiece for Harvana.

Earlier, Chahal added 10 runs to his overnight total before Hayana's innings ended at 453 with Shivam Sharma dismissing the India leg-spinner to return figures of 4/95.

At Mullanpur, opener Jaskaranvir Singh Paul shone with an unbeaten 117 on debut, leading Punjab to a commanding posit against Madhya Pradesh. position Building on their 70-run first

innings lead, Punjab posted 265/3 at stumps on day four, **Brief Scores**

In Lucknow: Haryana 453; extending their overall lead 191.2 overs (Himanshu Rana 114, Dheeru Singh 103, Jaskaranvir's patient 273-ball Ankit Kumar 77, Sumit Kumar 61, Yuzvendra knock, studded with nine Chahal 48; Shivam Sharma fours and one six, was 4/95, Vipraj Nigam 3/129, Yash Dayal 2/56). Uttar Pradesh 267/6; 70 overs instrumental in keeping MP's attack comprising Avesh Khan, Kumar Kartikeya, and (Arvan Juyal 118 batting, Kulwant Khejroliya at bay. He forged a solid 109-run Rinku Singh 89).

opening partnership with Abhay Choudhary (46 off In Mullanpur: Punjab 277 and 265/3; 90 overs 129 balls) before two quick (Jaskaranvir Singh Paul 115 batting, Anmolpreet Singh 72, Abhay Choudhary 46). Anmolpreet Singh then provided valuable support Madhva Pradesh 207.

In Alur: Kerala 161/3; 50 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 63, Sachin Baby 23 batting) vs Karnataka.

AP 📕 RIYADH (SAUDI ARABIA)

rannik Sinner beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-3 for the championship in the Six Slam exhibition Kings after Saturday Novak Djoković topped Rafael Nadal 6-2, 7-6 (5) in the third-place match.

While Sinner and Alcaraz probably have plenty of future matchups in store, Djokovic and Nadal may have been playing for the final time in one of tennis' great rivalries. Djokovic won the match between rivals who have combined for 46 Grand Slam singles titles. Nadal, who won 22 Slam titles, is planning to retire after playing for Spain next month in the Davis Cup.

They shared a warm embrace



at the net after Diokovic's Sinner then emerged with a victory. He also beat Nadal in the Olympics and had a 31-29 victory over Alcaraz in a lead in their head-to-head. matchup between the winners "The last dance was an epic of all four major titles this one," Djokovic wrote on social season. The top-ranked Sinner, who had lost all three media. "And of course emotional. I'll cherish our meetings this season, collected \$6 million for the rivalry forever, (at)rafaelnadal.

win. "Until now, every match was very, very good, but we will always hope this rivalry will last as long as possible," Sinner said.

Alcaraz beat the Italian on Oct. 2 to win the China Open in Beijing, along with semifinal victories at the French Open and Indian Wells. The Spaniard has a 6-4 lead in their head-to-head on Tour."I will try to do my best every day ... To hopefully make this rivalry better and better over the years," Alcaraz said.

Alcaraz defeated Nadal and Sinner topped Djokovic in the previous round of the exhibition event that awards money but not ATP ranking points in Saudi Arabia's latest forav into tennis.

Arsenal stunned by Bournemouth and Garnacho sparks Man United comeback

AP MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)

Arsenal blew the chance to go top of the English Premier League after a shock 2-0 loss to Bournemouth on Saturday.

In one of the biggest upsets of the burgeoning season, 10-man Arsenal lost for the time. Mikel Arteta's team finished runner-up in the last two years and could have leapfrogged leader Liverpool and defending champion City in second place with a win at Bournemouth.

off in the first half at Vitality Stadium. Bournemouth took full advantage with Ryan Christie scoring in the 70th minute and Justin Kluivert converting a penalty nine minutes later.

point behind Liverpool and level with City, having played a game more than its rivals,

who are both in action on Sunday. Meanwhile, Manchester United picked up only its third league win by beating Brentford 2-1.

Fourth-placed Aston Villa tightened up the top of the standings by moving to within a point of Liverpool and level with Arsenal after beating Fulham 3-1. Brighton was three points off the pace after winning at Newcastle 1-

But Arsenal's chances were hit Tottenham scored three times after William Saliba was sent in eight minutes in a 4-1 win over West Ham. Garnacho stunnerAlejandro Garnacho scored from a brilliant volley as United fought back to beat Brentford. The Argentina international fired home from a tight angle

Third-placed Arsenal is a when connecting with Marcus Rashford's cross just after halftime. It sparked a comeback that

with a brisk 72 off 108 balls

(7x4), helping Punjab

consolidate their position.

saw Rasmus Hojlund hit the winner and ease the pressure on manager Erik ten Hag. "In this team you see its

togetherness and there is a fighting spirit," Ten Hag said. "And today we add some determination to score goals and that is what we needed." United was reeling from its worst season start in the Premier League era heading into Saturday's game and it looked like being another disappointing day for Ten Hag, who was angered when Ethan Pinnock opened the scoring for Brentford in

contentious circumstances in first-half added time. United defender Matthijs de Ligt was ordered off for medical attention on his



collision. It left the home team down a man as Brentford prepared to take a corner and Pinnock headed over the line in the fifth

minute of added time. United responded quickly after the break thanks to Garnacho's goal in the 47th. flicked Hoilund past Brentford goalkeeper Mark Flekken for the winner in the 62nd.

"We don't score enough, we are not clinical enough. But today we scored two brilliant goals," Ten Hag said. "It's only one win, but it can help us." Villa risesVilla was up to fourth after coming back from going a goal down at Craven Cottage when Raul Jimenez fired Fulham in front in the fifth minute.

Morgan Rogers quickly leveled four minutes later and

bleeding head from a Ollie Watkins made it 2-1 in win at Newcastle. the 59th. An Issa Diop own Hurzeler, born in Texas, has goal in the 69th completed made his presence felt in the scoring. Southampton England's top flight following

his appointment in the collapsesLeading 2-0 after 28 minutes at St Mary's Stadium, offseason. Hurzeler is also working last-placed Southampton looked on course for its first wonders Welbeck, who scored in the 35th at St James' Park, his fifth league win. goal of the season.

Leicester had other ideas. Second-half goals from Facundo Buonanotte, Jamie Vardy from the penalty spot, and Jordan Ayew secured an unlikely comeback that left Southampton rooted to the bottom of the table and moved Leicester six points clear of the relegation zone. Also, Everton won at Ipswich 2-0 to move five points above the relegation zone.

flying Brighton highBrighton's impressive start under coach Fabian Hurzeler continued with the

52nd and Alphonse Areola scored an own goal three minutes later. Son Heung-min added a fourth on the hour mark.

with

Špurs comebackTottenham

trailed to Mohammed Kudus'

Tottenham Hotspur Stadium

but powered back with a

Dejan Kulusevski leveled in

the 36th and after the break

the home team took control.

Yves Bissouma struck in the

goal

second-half

18th-minute

performance.

brilliant

Danny

at

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