



# the pioneer

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INSIDE

SPORTS 11 CARLSEN STAR ATTRACTION AT NEXT MONTH'S TATA STEEL CHESS INDIA



## INDIA AND CHINA TO THAW FROST ALONG LAC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Signalling a thaw in strained ties between the two countries for the last four years, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday announced that India and China have reached an agreement on patrolling arrangements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh. This leads to eventual disengagement of troops from both sides, Misri said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar later said, "...We can say that the disengagement process with China has been completed... We will be able to do the patrolling which we were doing in 2020. I think it's a good development..." This significant development came a day ahead of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) summit in Kazan, Russia. The two-day summit starts on Tuesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the meet, though there is, so far, no official word on it.

As regards the latest development, Misri said here both the countries have reached an agreement on patrolling arrangements along the LAC following recent negotiations between officials from both countries. "Over the last several weeks, Indian and Chinese diplomatic and military negotiators have been in close



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

contact with each other in a variety of forums. As a result of these discussions, agreement has been arrived at patrolling arrangements along the line of actual control in the India China border areas, leading to disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020. We will be taking the next steps on this," he said. The foreign secretary said the Indian and Chinese negotiators were in touch over the last few weeks to resolve the remaining issues. It is understood that the agreement pertains to patrolling in Depsang and Demchok areas.

It is not immediately clear whether the agreement facilitates the restoration of patrolling rights that were in place prior to the standoff. Tensions flared up at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh in May 2020 when China unilaterally tried to change the status quo on the border. It led to a major clash between the troops of the two armies on June 15 that

year in Galwan. Twenty Indian army personnel including the commanding officer died in the clash while more than 40 Chinese troops were also killed. Both the sides then amassed troops and weaponry on their respective sides of the LAC. In fact, India, not willing to take any chances, also deployed its troops even during the winter months at the LAC. Earlier, the troops used to withdraw to their bases during the winters. At one point of time, more than 50,000 troops from each side were facing each other on friction points at the LAC. Given the situation, India and China, since 2020, held several rounds of talks at the military and diplomatic levels. While Corps Commanders of the two sides held military level talks, the diplomatic level talks were held under the aegis of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination in India-China Border Affairs.

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NIA and Delhi Police officials investigate at the site where a blast occurred on Sunday, near a CRPF school at Prashant Vihar, in Rohini area of New Delhi Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

## Delhi bomb investigation exploring multiple angles

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

A Khalistani link, a male suspect wearing a white t-shirt and an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), are the angles that the multi-agency probe is focusing on a day after a 'bomb' blast near the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) public school sent shockwaves across the national Capital. According to police sources, it is suspected that an IED, wrapped in a plastic bag, was hidden in a one-foot-deep pit near the CRPF school wall. A CRPF team visited the spot on Monday morning while its officials from the Institute of IED Management conducted a ground assessment. The National Security Guard's (NSG) Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) is preparing to submit its final report to the Delhi Police.

The CRPF, with its expertise in ground assessment, and the Institute of IED Management's involvement, suggest a focus on understanding the blast's mechanics and origin. The Delhi Police, in turn, is

expected to submit its initial report to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Additionally, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) of the Delhi Police have been assisting in the investigation. Meanwhile, shops remained shut and a usually bustling market of the Prashant Vihar area remained deserted due to fear, with businessmen left in distress who are incurring losses ahead of the festival of Diwali, which is usually a peak time for sales of items including jewellery. Moreover, the two schools near the spot, including CRPF school and Lancer's Convent, saw a low turnout of students due to the parents who are concerned for their safety.

Linking the blast to a possible Khalistan angle, a purported Telegram post was being circulated on social media which claimed that the blast was carried out in retaliation to the "targeting" of pro-Khalistan separatists allegedly by Indian agents.

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## Hoax threat callers to have a rough landing ahead

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After unabated bomb threat messages to multiple Indian airlines in the past one week, lead to diversions, cancellations and passenger inconvenience, the Union government is planning to make hoax threat calls to Indian airlines a cognisable offence. The government is also planning to put hoax callers on a 'no fly list'.

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu announced this on Monday, in the National Capital. Currently, this stringent law is invoked against people who make hoax calls and endanger the safety of an aircraft when it is in the air, not on the ground. Meanwhile, two top aviation security officers met Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan and discussed the unabated incidents of bomb threats to Indian airlines, leading to diversions, cancellations and passenger inconvenience.

Naidu said amendments are being planned to aviation security rules as well as the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982. "We have come to the conclusion that there are two areas that we can explore - 1) Amendment in Aircraft Security Rules...one of the ideas that we want to propagate by changing these rules is that once we catch hold of the perpetrator who is behind this, we want to put them in the no-flying list... 2) Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act...", he said.



"While it (SUASCA) takes care of the offences when the aircraft is in travel, in flight, if we want to address these kinds of threats that have been happening. We want to take strict action against people who are behind this when there is a fake or hoax threat that they are trying to do, we have to cover the act on the ground and the airport also. So we are trying to make an amendment. Our legal team has worked very thoroughly on this and we are coming up with an amendment," Naidu said.

"We want to make it a cognisable offence. Even though these are hoax threats we cannot take it lightly. We have a set protocol," he said. The Union Minister said that the aviation ministry is in consultation with other ministries such as the Home Ministry. "We are trying to use intelligence, IB and all the other important people who are there in this, especially home affairs and all, everyone is cooperating together. We are taking it very seriously and we want to ensure that these kinds of incidents do not happen."

The minister said multiple meetings have been held with stakeholders since the spate of

calls began so that the people making such threats can be put on the no-fly list after they are identified. He added that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre would not compromise the safety and security of passengers. The minister added that around 10 per cent security has been enhanced at airports across the country in the wake of bomb threats.

In a related development, a key high-level meeting was also held in the Ministry of Home Affairs on Monday in which updates were taken from aviation security body Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and the Central Industrial Security Force, which is responsible for security at airports. Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) Director General (DG) Zulfikar Hasan and Director General of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Rajwinder Singh Bhatti met Mohan at the latter's office at North Block here.

The three officers remained closeted for about half an hour. However, details of the meeting are not known immediately. The CISF guards 68 civilian airports in the country.

## CM Yogi's Diwali gift to cops

70% hike in uniform, 25% in accommodation allowances

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

On the occasion of Police Smriti Diwas held at the Reserve Police Lines on Monday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made several major announcements aimed at improving the welfare of police personnel.

He announced a 70 per cent increase in the uniform allowance, a 25 per cent hike in the accommodation allowance for constables residing in barracks, and a Rs 10-crore boost in the next financial year's budget to enhance training, diet and other facilities for police officers participating in national and international sports competitions.

The state government will incur an expenditure of Rs 115 crore for these initiatives. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also announced a Rs 1,380-crore corpus fund for the upkeep of multi-storey police housing and administrative buildings.

Additionally, approval was granted to levy a proposed fee for expenses incurred by the police force during international events, which will be managed by the director general of police and governed under the proposed corpus fund rules. Earlier, Chief Minister



paid homage to the martyred police personnel by offering floral tributes at the Police Shaheed Smarak.

Chief Minister Yogi said that financial assistance amounting to Rs 36.2 crore had been provided to the families of 115

martyred police personnel from Uttar Pradesh serving in the Central Paramilitary Forces and Indian Police Services.

He further stated that Rs 3.5 crore was allocated for the welfare and comfort of police personnel posted in various

districts, and Rs 4 crore was earmarked for general welfare initiatives. Additionally, Rs 30.56 lakh was used to settle 2,66 medical reimbursement claims for active and retired police personnel and their dependents.

Chief Minister Yogi also highlighted that Rs 12.6 crore was approved for 312 medical reimbursement cases exceeding Rs 5 lakh, Rs 5.05 crore as advance loans for the treatment of serious illnesses affecting 135 police personnel and their families, and Rs 9.08 crore to support the dependents of 306 deceased police officers under the Jeevan Bima Yojana.

Furthermore, Rs 31.16 lakh was spent on cashless treatments for police personnel and their dependents, while Rs 53.3 lakh in scholarships was awarded to 205 meritorious students of police families through the Education Fund.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that on Republic Day and Independence Day, the President of India conferred four Police Medals for distinguished services and 110 police Medals for Long Commendable Services on various officers and employees.

Additionally, 1,013 police personnel received the Ati Utkrisht

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FILE PHOTO

## There is enough pollution, no firecrackers to be sold: Delhi HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court said on Monday that it cannot allow the sale of firecrackers when there is already "enough" pollution in the national capital.

The court's oral observation came while dealing with a petition by the Delhi Fireworks Shopkeepers Association, a group of traders with a "permanent" licence to possess and sell crackers.

The petitioner's counsel said the grievance of the traders was with respect to the ban on the storage of firecrackers as it was allegedly resulting in harassment.

During the hearing, the court said it would ask authorities to seal the traders' premises being used for storage of firecrackers to ensure that there is no pilferage.

"The State must be involved in the sealing process so that there is no pilferage," said Justice Sanjeev Narula. "We are not going to allow you to sell. There is enough pollution in this city,"

the judge orally added.

The petitioner's counsel said that even though no crackers were being sold by its members, soon after the ban order, the police started visiting the permanent licensees questioning why they were storing the firecrackers.

The court observed that in one of the instances cited by the petitioner, there was an allegation of someone selling the crackers and said whoever acted in contravention of the law would be prosecuted.

"We can't make an exception for you. If you store them, there is a possibility of (misuse). We will put a seal. It will be videographed," the court said orally.

The Delhi government on September 14 imposed an immediate ban on the production, storage, sale, and use of all kinds of firecrackers across the city, effective from January 1.

While making the announcement, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai urged the city residents to support the government's efforts to curb air pollution.

## New nuclear reactors coming up in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology said on Monday here that at least 10 nuclear reactors are being installed in the country while two reactors in Gujarat's Kakrapar have started generating power commercially.

According to sources, the new nuclear reactors coming up in states like Gujarat, Rajasthan and Haryana are of 700 MW capacity and will start operating in the next few years.

The details of the new nuclear reactors were provided to the members of the Standing Committee of Parliament on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change during a meeting here.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who is a member of the committee as well as its former chairman, said members of the panel were informed during the meeting that the Kakrapar-3 and Kakrapar-4 nuclear reactors in Gujarat have been fully synchronised with the grid and are generating power commercially.

"This is a major accomplishment since these are indigenously designed 700 MW reactors that were approved in 2007. Construction had begun in 2010. More such reactors are being installed at different locations," he said in a post on X.

"Another example of how much continuity there is in our development — which is never acknowledged by 'El Supremo' Ramesh said, stressing that it was during the Congress rule when the two nuclear reactors in Kakrapar were approved.



Representational Image



## Mask up! Traffic congestion jams your lungs with poison

Vehicles spew 18 per cent PM 2.5 in the peak evening hours

BY RAJESH KUMAR

Traffic congestion is the major contributor of air pollution in the National Capital. According to the Decision Support System (DSS) of Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, for Air Quality Management in Delhi, emission from transportation accounts contributed to around 11.2 per cent air pollution on Monday.

According to a study by IIT Kanpur, the contribution from the local on-road transport sector to diurnal mean PM 2.5 is largest (18%) during the evening traffic peak. It is dominated by

contributions from two- and three-wheelers (50%) followed by heavy-duty vehicles (30%), which also collectively represent 60-70% of the total on-road transport sector at any hour of the day.

Breakdown of vehicles and ongoing construction works by agencies like Delhi Metro, Delhi Jal Board and National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) added woes to the congestion, causing inconvenience to daily office goers in the morning and deteriorating air pollution. Mehrauli-Badarpur Road, Mehrauli-Gurugram Road, Netaji Subhash Marg, Wazirabad Road, Raja Garden Road, Kashmere

Gate ISBT, Sadar Bazar, Chirag Dilli, roads surrounding major markets including Sarojini Nagar, Chandni Chowk, Lajpat Nagar, Kamla Nagar were among those areas witnessed heavy traffic on Monday.

These stretches are the busiest roads known for heavy traffic flow during the week. Lakhs of people commute in and from Delhi to Gurugram, Noida, Faridabad and Ghaziabad daily. Neighbouring Noida has been consistently contributing between 10 and 11 per cent to Delhi's pollution, while Ghaziabad's share ranges from 5 to 10 per cent, as per the DSS -



Heavy evening traffic moves amidst a blanket of smog, in Gurugram, Monday PTI

IITM data. Bulandshahr, a district in Uttar Pradesh around 110 km from Delhi, adds a noteworthy six to nine percent. Meanwhile, Gurugram and Faridabad in Haryana contribute somewhere between 1.5 and 3 per cent and 3 and 5 per cent, respectively. DSS, which identifies and forecasts the sources of pollution for the national capital, now has an updated inventory that would help in improving the efficiency of its forecast.

As of March 31, 2023, Delhi had 79.5 lakh vehicles, including 20.7 lakh private cars. As per the Statistical Handbook 2023,

Delhi has 20,71,115 registered cars and jeeps; 52,94,900 motorcycles and scooters; 93,654 auto-rickshaws; and 1,18,506 e-rickshaws that provide last-mile connectivity. Data also shows that the number of taxis came down from 85,079 in 2021-22 to 83,278 in 2022-23.

The number of vehicles in Delhi has decreased due to the Delhi government's ban on diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol vehicles older than 15 years. The number of vehicles in Delhi has increased by about 21 times in the last three decades, while the road length has only doubled.



# Roadways to make Maha Kumbh-2025 clean and green

**Prayagraj (PNS):** Preparations are in full swing for the Maha Kumbh, scheduled to take place in January 2025 along the banks of Sangam in Prayagraj. Under the guidance of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, all departments of the Kumbh Mela administration are working together to create a divine, grand, clean, and green atmosphere for the event. The Uttar Pradesh Road Transport Department is operating a large fleet of buses to facilitate the journey of devotees while also promoting the Yogi government's commitment to making the Maha Kumbh an eco-friendly event. The UP Roadways is enthusiastically participating in these promotional efforts. UP Roadways Regional Manager in Prayagraj, MK Trivedi, stated that to communicate the government's vision for the Kumbh, 'Aao Chalen Maha Kumbh' stickers are being affixed to the roadways buses. Additionally, posters, slogans and scenes depicting the Kumbh Mela are being painted on the backs of the buses, transforming them into vibrant representations of the Maha Kumbh. This initiative aims to raise public awareness about the Maha Kumbh and highlight its

significance. Chief Minister Yogi has issued clear directives for Maha Kumbh 2025, emphasising that it should be free of banned polythene. "Every ward and locality in Prayagraj must be kept clean, and Mohalla Swachhta Samitis should be established to facilitate this initiative," the chief minister has directed officials. Public awareness is essential, and everyone must contribute to ensuring that the entire Prayagraj area, including the Meel grounds, becomes a model of cleanliness. In line with the chief minister's vision, UP Roadways has commenced efforts to support this initiative. Trivedi said, "The Roadways department is preparing to offer direct bus services from Prayagraj to all 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh as well as neighbouring states during the Maha Kumbh. Buses traveling to these locations will actively promote the Maha Kumbh, featuring vinyl wraps on the exterior that display messages and imagery related to the event." Trivedi mentioned that UP Roadways is advancing the government's campaign for environmental protection. Polythene-free Maha Kumbh stickers are being placed on the roadways buses.

# Fire erupts in battery warehouse

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

A fire broke out in a battery warehouse located in the Sanjay Gandhipuram area under Ghazipur police station on Monday. According to reports, a battery explosion caused a scooter and an adjacent vehicle to catch fire, prompting firefighters to evacuate nearby houses upon their arrival. No casualties were reported in the incident. "The control room at the Indiranagar Fire Station received information at around 4 pm, and two fire tenders were immediately dispatched

to the scene. The firefighters observed that the flames had engulfed the entire warehouse," Chief Fire Officer (CFO) of Lucknow Mangesh Kumar said. "Firefighters quickly extinguished the blaze with no loss of life," a statement from Lucknow Fire and Emergency Services confirmed. This marks the fifth fire outbreak in a warehouse within a month, prompting the Fire department to develop plans for conducting electrical safety audits across warehouses. "A fire safety audit is currently underway. Previously, we issued notices to hospitals and

hotels across the city after electrical audits. Now, the department plans to send notices to large warehouses and godowns," the CFO said. He added that electrical audits would be conducted at these locations to ensure compliance with safety standards and to verify that they possess the necessary 'No Objection Certificates' (NOCs). Notices will be served on those violating safety procedures, followed by appropriate action. In a separate incident in Thakurganj, a minor fire broke out following an LPG cylinder explosion at a house in the Chowk area on Monday after-

noon. "The house, owned by one Rehan, was damaged due to the sudden LPG cylinder explosion. Fortunately, no one was home at the time, so there were no casualties. The exact cause of the cylinder explosion is not yet known," an official from Chowk Fire Station said. "Two vehicles were dispatched from to the scene. While en route, the caller informed us that the fire had been extinguished and the vehicles were no longer needed. However, one vehicle was still sent to inspect the condition at the site, while the other was called back," the fire station officer added.

# Fake call centre: Probe reveals digital extortion tactics, cash transactions

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

Details from the mobile phone of the prime accused in the fake international call centre racket, Mohan Shyam Sharma of Rajasthan, have revealed several startling insights. Sources privy to the investigation disclosed that some associates of the fraudsters, who duped individuals in America and Canada, have established a base of operations in Delhi. These fraudsters had been encashing gift card codes obtained from foreigners, leading to numerous complaints. This information came to light during the interrogation of individuals arrested for running a fake call centre in a flat in Everest Apartments, located in Vrindavan Yojana under the jurisdiction of PGI police station. Cyber Crime police station in-charge Brajesh Yadav stated that the fraudsters in Delhi were not only cashing in gift cards but also engaging in further fraudulent activities. The miscreants not only redeemed the codes but also paid monthly salaries to the fraudsters arrested from the alleged fake call centre. Some of those apprehended were initially recruited as employees to handle computer data work, possessing diplomas

**The fraudsters had been encashing gift card codes obtained from foreigners, leading to numerous complaints**

or certificates in computer applications and software. It has also emerged that the fraudsters in Delhi conducted transactions in cash to evade police scrutiny. Investigators suspect that the accused in the Delhi operation may have fled following the public exposure of the racket in Lucknow. Police sources said that the arrested individuals also engaged in digital extortion. According to DCP (East) Shashank Singh, the investigation has revealed that those arrested were involved in digitally extorting foreign nationals, accusing them of child pornography and demanding large sums of money. Significant data has been recovered from Mohan Shyam Sharma's mobile phone, which is being examined by the police team. Investigators are also looking into his communications and are considering searching the bank accounts of all the arrested individuals.

# Ensure timely disposal of IGRS cases, says DC

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

A meeting regarding the Integrated Grievance Redressal System (IGRS) was held under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob on Monday. Additional Commissioner, Administration, Radheshyam and other departmental officers were also present in the meeting. The divisional commissioner reviewed the cases received online under the IGRS and chief minister's reference. She emphasised that all IGRS case disposals must meet high-quality standards. "Any form of laxity regarding IGRS cases will not be tolerated. If any irregularities are found, appropriate action will be taken. Additionally, timely and quality disposal of cases from Samadhan Diwas must be ensured. No case should exceed the designated time limit. After disposal, complainants should be contacted to gather their feedback," she stated.

# Constable saves life of road accident victim with CPR

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

A lesson on CPR learned during training came in handy for a constable who saved a victim of a road accident in Hazratganj. On Monday morning, a person fell after his bike slipped in the Hazratganj area. At that time, the assistant commissioner of police (ACP) for Hazratganj and Suraj Gupta (constable) were present at the scene. Following the incident, a crowd began to gather. Gupta noticed that the injured man, Ajay

Kumar (45), was struggling to breathe and his body was becoming stiff. The constable immediately began performing CPR, and the victim subsequently regained consciousness. The injured man was later admitted to Civil Hospital. Gupta, a constable posted at Hazratganj police station, was on duty near Moti Mahal. "After the accident, Ajay suffered a cardiac arrest and his body started convulsing. The constable began administering CPR as primary treatment on the spot, which improved the victim's condition. He was

later admitted to the Civil Hospital. After his admission, the constable informed the family of the victim. They arrived at the scene and took Ajay Kumar home once his condition improved. ACP (Hazratganj) Arvind Verma was also present at the time of the incident," a spokesman stated. Gupta told reporters that he learned this technique during police training and was proud to have saved a life using it. "Many like me are well-versed in CPR, and we are ready to save invaluable lives," he said.

**CLASSIFIEDS**

**NOTICE**

I have changed my name from Mohammad Kazim Khan To Kazim Ali for all future purpose, Kazim Ali S/o Naseer Ali R/o 105/130, Saeedabad Chamanganj, Kanpur.

**NOTICE**

Chaineded of my house No.C 5337, Rajajipuram, Lucknow, registered by Gauri Shanker has been lost somewhere on the way. Anyone who finds it can inform on 9335038482. Vishal Singhania.

**NOTICE**

I have changed my name from Mohammad Shazim Khan To Shazim Khan for all future purpose, Shazim Khan S/o Kazim Ali R/o 105/130, Saeedabad Chamanganj, Kanpur.

**सूचना**

सूचित हो मैं प्रवीन चंद ६/० राम संकर गुप्ता, मेरे मुंबई संख्या सी-२/५६८ विभवचंड गोमती नगर लखनऊ का मूल आवंटन पत्र खो गया है, इसका उपरोक्त किसी अन्य के द्वारा किया जाना अशुभ होगा। यदि किसी को मिले तो संपर्क करें 9450447501

**NOTICE**

I have changed my name from Madeena Bano To Madina Malik for all future purpose, Madina Malik W/o Abdul Malik R/o 101/314, Colonelganj Kanpur.

**NOTICE**

I Mayawati w/o late Radhey shyam 545 k/hK 482 Hans khera para manak Nagar declare that my son dheeraj singh and his wife chhaya Conduct behaviour is not good with me and my daughter. So I breakup my all relations. I hereby evict my Son and his wife from all my property. In future neither I nor my daughter will be responsible for any of their acts.

**NOTICE**

**सूचना**

सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेरे पुत्र का सही नाम तेजस प्रसाद पुत्र मनोज कुमार प्रसाद है जो उसके आधार कार्ड में अंकित है। उचित मेरे पुत्र के हाईस्कूल के अंक प्रमाण पत्र (अनुक्रमांक 23200350) में उसका नाम तेजस गुप्ता अंकित हो गया है जो कि गलत है। एतद्वारा यह भी प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि उपरोक्त के सम्बन्ध में समस्त विधिक औपचारिकताये स्वयं मेरे द्वारा पूर्ण की गई हैं। मनोज कुमार प्रसाद एम.आई.जी.62 बर्रा-6 कानपुर नगर।

**NOTICE**

I have changed My Name from Zakir Khan to MOHAMMAD ZAKIR KHAN in Futur I Shall be known as MOHAMMAD ZAKIR KHAN S/o Haji ZAFAR KHAN R/o 132/141 Babu Purwa Kanpur Nagar 208023 My D.O.B 01/03/1945.

**public information**

This is to inform the general public that in the year 2021 itself, fed up with the misbehavior of our elder son Aditya Shukla and his wife Sheela Shukla, with the consent of family members and relatives, we severed all ties with them and evicted them from all our movable and immovable properties. They live separately. I and my remaining sons Amit Shukla and Animesh Shukla will have nothing to do with any work, dispute, transaction done by them. Suresh Chandra Shukla s/o Shri Ramdas Shukla and Smt. Sudha Shukla w/o Suresh Chandra Shukla R/o Chitransh Nagar, City & District Fatehpur (U.P.).

**NOTICE**

My name is wrongly spelled as Suneet Katiyar in my daughter - Arushi Katiyar's Marketsheets and Pass Certificate. Whereas the correct spelling of my name is Suneet Kumar Katiyar, to be identified and known as such in all future reference. Suneet Kumar Katiyar S/o Shri Jagdish Narayan Katiyar.

**NOTICE**

**NOTICE**

Be it known to all that by mistake my daughter's name is wrongly written in her Aadhar card number 982363036197 as Yashi Singh. But her actual name is Aahana Singh. In future she will be known as Aahana Singh, D/o Yashpal Singh, Vill- Dhodhiyahi, P.O- korai, Dist- Fatehpur.

**NOTICE**

It is to inform general public that Original Sale Deed, executed by Jagdish Chandra Mehta in favour of Devendra Singh, in respect of Nagar Palika Plate House No. B-855, (New No. BL-0087), measuring 660 sq. ft., situated at Mohalla & Ward Lapat Nagar Pargana & Teshai Nawabganj, Distt. Sarabanki, U.P., registered in the office of Sub Registrar Nawabganj, Barabanki, in Bahi no. 1, Zild No. 676 on Pages 245-246 at Serial No. 2321 on 19.10.1984 and Last Page with Registration details of Sale Deed No. 4754 Dated 19.08.2008, now owned by Bajlert Singh, has been lost by him at Nawabganj, Market on 02.10.2024 at 5 PM-6 PM during getting its photocopy. Now, Bajlert Singh (Present Owner) is mortgaging said property with PNB Housing Finance Ltd.(Roshani) against loan. Use of this lost sale deed and Last Page of Sale Deed by any other person will be void. If any person or financial institution has find it kindly return or has any interest or objection in this regard, please contact to Advocate mentioned below with objection in writing and with relevant documents, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Mr. Amit Kumar Singh Rathaer Advocate, Chamber No.7, UGF, Krishna Tower, Chakbast Road, Quaiserbagh, Lucknow. Mobile No. 9559811119

**NOTICE**

In the Aadhaar card No. 694253862280, my daughter's name has wrongly been mentioned as Manya Tiwari D/o Ajay Kumar Tiwari. As in her highschool certificate, her name is mentioned as Manikarnika Tiwari, she will be known and identified by her correct name of Manikarnika Tiwari D/o Ajay Kumar Tiwari in future. Ajay Kumar Tiwari R/o 109/35, Nehru Nagar, Kanpur.

# Govt to host Vantangiya Mahotsav 2.0 as part of CM's Zero Poverty goal

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW/GONDA**

In a significant initiative aligned with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's 'Zero Poverty' vision, the Gonda district administration is set to present a special Diwali gift to the families of the Vantangiya community from Maheshpur and Ramgarh villages through the celebration of Vantangiya Mahotsav 2.0. Scheduled for October 27, this festival aims not only to spread festive joy among the Vantangiya community, but also to enhance their living standards and implement tangible measures for poverty alleviation. As part of Vantangiya Mahotsav 2.0, families in Maheshpur and Ramgarh will receive gifts that include daily essentials, clothing and other necessary items. Aligned with the chief minister's 'Zero Poverty' vision, this initiative aims to empower rural residents to become self-reliant and significantly contribute to

# Joint campaign by 5 depts to rid city of beggars

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

To assist families and children involved in begging in Lucknow district, a comprehensive campaign will be launched by five government departments. The initiative aims to identify, rehabilitate, and socially integrate these individuals. The campaign will be coordinated by Lucknow Municipal Corporation, police department, District Urban Development Agency, Social Welfare department, Women Welfare department, and district administration. It will feature two mobile monitoring teams and five static teams. A senior LMC official announced that the first phase began on Sunday and would last for 15 days. The campaign will target five hotspots in Lucknow, including Hazratganj, Lal Batti, Awadh, Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, and Chhabgh crossings, before expanding to other areas. Monitoring teams compris-

ing officers and staff from the departments concerned will patrol designated routes, while static teams will take necessary actions at the marked crossings. The monitoring teams will also support static teams and provide daily reports to the ADM, City (East), through the district probation officer. The additional district magistrate will review the campaign every evening. Static teams will collect detailed profiles of individuals involved in begging at the specified intersections and surrounding areas. Efforts will focus on counselling and connecting individuals with welfare schemes available through various departments. Special camps will be organised to assist those lacking required documentation for eligibility in these schemes. Rescue operations will be conducted on a case-by-case basis. Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Act will be ensured for minors, and measures will be taken to prevent re-entry into

begging. Regular follow-ups will be conducted for those rehabilitated. To facilitate the work of monitoring and static teams, two rescue vehicles will be provided by the district probation officer, with additional vehicles from the municipal corporation and police department available as needed.

# Joint campaign by 5 depts to rid city of beggars

ing officers and staff from the departments concerned will patrol designated routes, while static teams will take necessary actions at the marked crossings. The monitoring teams will also support static teams and provide daily reports to the ADM, City (East), through the district probation officer. The additional district magistrate will review the campaign every evening. Static teams will collect detailed profiles of individuals involved in begging at the specified intersections and surrounding areas. Efforts will focus on counselling and connecting individuals with welfare schemes available through various departments. Special camps will be organised to assist those lacking required documentation for eligibility in these schemes. Rescue operations will be conducted on a case-by-case basis. Compliance with the Juvenile Justice Act will be ensured for minors, and measures will be taken to prevent re-entry into

# GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR

**Tender Notice Reference No. GNDU/Gen/71-72/2024**  
The Department of G.N.D.U. Amritsar invites online bids for the following:  
**Sr. No.1**  
Item: Allotment of Canteens  
Quantity: 1  
**Sr. No.2**  
Item: Allotment of Shops  
Quantity: 1  
**Closing date & time:** 31-10-2024 at 5:00 p.m.  
For details log onto [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in)  
**Note:** Any corrigendum(s) to the tender notice shall be published on the above website only.  
NA/12/25923/2023/38459  
Dated CHD - 10/21/2024

# 'Allergies in children may lead to asthma, chronic lung diseases'

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**

With allergies in children on the rise in the city, doctors from Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences (RMLIMS) advise prompt treatment to prevent progression to asthma and chronic lung diseases. Dr Shrantanshu Srivastava from the paediatrics department, RMLIMS, provided details on the issue, noting that allergies in children often begin in infancy with dermatitis and dry skin, which frequently goes unnoticed. "This includes scabbing on the scalp and very dry skin, which tends to worsen during climate changes. This is actually the onset of atopic dermatitis, which is classified as allergic dermatitis if it is recurrent and persists for prolonged periods," she explained. Dr Srivastava stated that this onset of allergy starts in infancy and may progress to wheezing, with the child beginning to wheeze before the age of five, often without fever. "As the child grows, they may develop asthma. Thus, starting from skin manifestations, followed by wheezing, the condition can evolve into asthma and allergic rhinitis, which includes nasal blockage and discharge. This progression is referred to as an 'allergic march'," she said. She further explained the reasons behind the occurrence of the allergic march. "The dry skin that develops initially is sensitive to various allergens, which enter the body and affect

# CITYBRIEFS

## RAIL CHAUPAL

Under the 'Swachhta Abhiyan 4.0' initiative, Indian Railways organised a 'Rail Chaupal' at Lucknow Junction railway station on Monday. The event was led by DRM (NER), Lucknow division, Aditya Kumar. The DRM engaged directly with passengers, highlighting the railway's commitment to enhancing facilities. Passengers shared valuable suggestions for improving cleanliness, expressing appreciation for the efforts made by the railway administration. The DRM actively sought feedback on cleanliness in both stations and trains, addressing passenger concerns. The session was conducted by senior divisional mechanical engineer Rahul Pandey. Other key officials present included Additional Divisional Railway Manager Vikram Kumar and Senior Divisional Material Manager Ankit Sachan.

## WORKSHOP

The commerce department of Navyug Kanya Mahavidyalaya organised a workshop on digital marketing on October 19 and 21. Head of the department of digital marketing at Expert IT Academy, Shreya Khanna, imparted practical knowledge of digital marketing to students. They were trained to make business accounts, mail chimp, pay-per-click, traffic analytics, conversions and publishing of ads, and social media marketing.

Tapir Constructions Limited				
(CIN: U70200DL2014PLC267441)				
Extract of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and half year ended 30 September 2024 (₹ In Millions)				
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended 30 Sept. 2024 (Unaudited)	Corresponding Quarter ended 30 Sept. 2023 (Unaudited)	Previous year ended 31 March 2024 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	12.4	6.4	24.8
2	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(13.7)	(8.0)	(71.5)
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(13.7)	(8.0)	(71.5)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(13.7)	(8.0)	(71.5)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising (Loss) / Profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(13.7)	(8.0)	(72.0)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	0.5	0.5	0.5
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	(2,154.0)	(2,061.3)	(2,117.5)
8	Securities Premium Account	-	-	-
9	Net Worth	(2,153.5)	(2,060.8)	(2,117.0)
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt	3,785.2	3,374.1	3,540.5
11	Outstanding redemption preference share	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio	(1.78)	(1.64)	(1.70)
13	Earnings per Share (EPS) (Face value Per Share ₹10 each)			
	-Basic (Amount in ₹)	(273.20)	(160.00)	(1,430.52)
	-Diluted (Amount in ₹)	(273.20)	(160.00)	(1,430.52)
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-
15	Debtenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(0.21)	(0.14)	(0.06)
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.35)
18	Current ratio (In times)	0.92	0.79	0.92
19	Total debts to total assets	0.71	0.71	0.71
20	Long term debt to working capital (In times)	(3.57)	(0.69)	(3.79)
21	Bad debt to account receivable ratio (In %)	-	-	-
22	Current liability ratio (In times)	0.77	0.88	0.76
23	Debtor turnover ratio (In times)	-	-	-
24	Inventory turnover ratio (In times)	-	-	-
25	Operating margin (In %)	-	18.68	31.91
26	Net profit margin (In %)	(110.93)	(126.45)	(288.53)

**Notes:**  
1. The above results have been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors ('the Board') at its meeting held on 21 October 2024.  
2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 52(B), read with 52(A) of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the company's website (<https://equinoxindia.com/tcl/>) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

**Registered Office:**  
Office No. 202, 2nd Floor, A-18, Rama House, Middle Circle, Connaught Place, New Delhi- 110 001.

**Place:** Mumbai  
**Date:** 21 October 2024

**For and on behalf of the Board of Directors**  
**Abhishek Rajnainath Surve**  
Executive Director



# 104 held so far; demolition notice recipients pin hopes on HC

## BAHRAICH VIOLENCE

PTI ■ BAHRAICH

The number of arrests in connection with the Maharajganj communal violence here has risen to 104 even as residents of around two dozen houses who were served demolition notices thanked the high court on Monday for its 15-day relief and have pinned hopes on the judiciary to protect their homes.

After the killing of a youth during a Durga idol immersion procession and subsequent violence, notices were served to 23 establishments, including 20 belonging to Muslims, on the Kundsar-Maharajganj road in Bahraich by the Public Works Department (PWD) for alleged illegal constructions. The notices were served under the Road Control Act, 1964.

In a major relief to these people, the Allahabad High Court's Lucknow bench on Sunday extended the time to file their replies by 15 days and directed the state authorities to consider their replies and pass reasoned order. The bench has fixed October 23 as the next date of hearing in the matter.

"Now we are at peace. We are not worried about staying hungry. Our hopes now rest on the court order and we are hopeful that we will get relief from the court," said a Muslim woman.

A Hindu woman, reduced to tears, said, "All we want is our houses to be saved from being demolished. We are poor and without this house, we won't have a roof above our head." "Bahut khush hain, court pe poora bharosa hai (we are elated and have complete faith in the court)," she said, adding that it was a challenging situation for the family which somehow makes two ends meet.

# Govt issue guidelines to avoid criticism over 'encounters'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Following sharp criticism over recent encounters of criminals, particularly in Sultanpur and Bahraich, the Yogi Adityanath government on Monday issued some guidelines to counter the attacks. The guidelines have been issued by Director General of Police Prashant Kumar on Monday. Under this, it will be necessary to get the scene videographed in case of death or injury in the encounter. Also, if a criminal is killed in an encounter, the post-mortem and its videography will also be done by a panel of two doctors. Besides, the forensic team will inspect the scene of the encounter.

Not only this, the DGP has said that the cops of the police station of the area where the encounter takes place will not investigate. It will be investigated by the official of another police station or the crime branch. Officers of a higher level than the officers involved in the encounter will investigate

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it. These instructions have been issued by the DGP to the police chiefs of all the districts along with in-charges of police commissionerates. The guidelines say that if a criminal dies in an encounter, the family members should be informed immediately and the weapons recovered from the criminal will definitely be subjected to ballistic investigation. Not only this, separate copies of the videography of the scene are to be kept as a record. It is worth mentioning that after the encounter of Mangesh Yadav, who was carrying a bounty of Rs 1 lakh in the Sultanpur robbery case, questions were raised by the Samajwadi Party. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav had questioned the encounter, alleging that Mangesh Yadav was killed in a fake encounter. He also linked the encounters happening in UP to the PDA (Pichhada, Dalit and Alpsankhyak). He alleged that the UP Police were carrying out fake encounters of the PDA people.

My father lived here, now I have also lived more than half of my life. I would present the papers in the court and hope it would do justice to us," he added.

Ram Gopal Mishra, 22, had died of gunshot injuries during an inter-community ruckus in Maharajganj on October 13 allegedly over loud music being played during a Durga idol immersion procession. The incident triggered communal violence leading to arson and vandalism, prompting heavy security deployment

and internet suspension in the area for four days. The police also lodged at least 11 FIRs over the violence and booked hundreds of suspected rioters, most of them unidentified.

On Monday, the police said the total arrests in connection with last week's communal violence has reached 104. "On Sunday, 17 people from the Hindu side who were allegedly involved in the violence were arrested. Apart from these, challans have been issued to nine others in prevention action against them," a police official said. "A total of 104 arrests have been made from both sides in the 11 cases registered so far," the official added.

Apart from these, a person named Sarfuddin, who is a resident of Bijjapurva under Fakharpur police station, was arrested on Sunday on charges of posting objectionable posts against a community on social media, according to the police. Meanwhile, the market in Maharajganj was not fully open on Monday.

On different streets and roads, a few daily need grocery and utensils shops, paan shops, refreshment houses, fruit vendors as well as government bank branches were open but the movement of customers in them was negligible.

There are branches of Indian Bank and Aryavart Bank on the road where the incident took place, but there were very few customers there. A State Bank branch located a little away from the incident spot also had relatively more customers.

Earlier, the Uttar Pradesh police nabbed six accused in connection with the murder of Mishra. Five of them, including key accused Abdul Hameed, were held after an encounter while they were allegedly trying to flee to Nepal, officials said.

# College principal shot dead in Bhadohi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Yogendra Bahadur Singh, principal of National Inter College in Bhadohi district, was shot dead by motorcycle-borne unknown assailants. Singh was shot dead when he was going to college in his car on Monday morning. He was taken to the hospital in a critical condition where the doctors pronounced him dead.

The incident took place near Baswanpur in Bhadohi Kotwali area. The assailants stopped the principal by parking their motorcycle in front of his car. As soon as the car stopped, they started firing indiscriminately at him.

According to the police, investigation into the crime has been initiated and a search for the assailants is underway. The reasons for the killing are being investigated. Footage of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras installed in and around the area are being scanned to apprehend the accused, the police said.

Eyewitnesses said that the assailants on the motorcycle first stopped the car forcefully and then showed something to the principal on a mobile phone. Before he could understand anything, they opened fire on him. Yogendra Bahadur Singh was hit by the bullets in the chest and stomach.

After this, the assailants started running away. When the principal's driver chased them, they shot at the car's tyre and punctured it. Yogendra Bahadur Singh was the senior spokesperson of Shri Indra Bahadur Singh National Inter College. On July 3 earlier this year, he took over as the acting principal of National Inter College.

# Tej Pratap files papers from Karhal



Tej Pratap Yadav filed his nomination from Karhal assembly constituency as Samajwadi Party candidate on Monday. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav is also seen in the picture

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party candidate Tej Pratap Yadav, on Monday, filed his nomination from the Karhal assembly constituency, where bypoll is due on November 13. Accompanied by his uncle and party president Akhilesh Yadav, Mainpuri MP Dimple Yadav and others, Tej Pratap reached the collectorate and filed his nomination paper.

The Karhal assembly seat was vacated by Akhilesh Yadav after he was elected to Lok

Sabha from Kannauj in June last. Talking to reporters, Tej Pratap Yadav said the family had deep relations with the people of Karhal and they would ensure his victory and give him a chance to serve them.

"The Bharatiya Janata Party does not have any following or support among the people. It has only the power of being in the government," he said. Earlier in the day, Tej Pratap Yadav paid floral tributes to SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav at his memorial at Saifai in

Etawah. SP general secretary Ram Gopal Yadav exuded confidence that Tej Pratap Yadav would secure victory "with people's support". Karhal is just four kilometres from Akhilesh Yadav's native village Saifai in Etawah district. The constituency forms part of Dimple Yadav's Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat. The Karhal seat has been a stronghold of the SP since 1993. In the 2002 assembly election, the seat went to BJP's Sobaran Singh Yadav but he later joined the SP.

# Woman poisons husband on Karwa Chauth

Lucknow (PNS): Hours after ending the Karwa Chauth fast after praying for the long life of her husband, a woman allegedly killed him by poisoning him. Officials of Kada Dham police station in Kaushambi district said Shailesh Kumar, 32, was poisoned by his wife, Savita, because she suspected that he was having an affair with another woman. They said Savita had kept a fast on Karwa Chauth to pray for Shailesh's long life on Sunday and he had also been busy making arrangements for it since morning.

When Savita was breaking her fast in the evening, she had an argument with Shailesh but things seemed to return to normal soon after. The couple ate together, after which Savita asked Shailesh to go to a neighbour's house to get something and then fled. Shailesh's brother Akhilesh said Shailesh was rushed to a hospital, where he recorded a video declaration, stating that Savita had poisoned his food. He died during treatment. Savita has been arrested. Kaushambi's Superintendent of Police Brijesh Kumar Shrivastava said, "The crime was reported from Ismailpur village. The woman allegedly poisoned her husband after they had a fight. The man died during treatment. A case has been registered, the woman has been arrested and the body has been sent for a post-mortem." Meanwhile, a six-year-old boy was strangled to death, allegedly by his grandfather, in Lalitpur district as he was unhappy with his son's second marriage, police

said on Monday. SP Mohammad Mushtaq said that they received a report late on Sunday about the suspicious death of a child in Gidwar village of Pura Kala area. Upon reaching the spot, police found that the child had been strangled to death with a rope, he said. "Further investigation revealed that the accused, Pritam (56), was unhappy with his son's marriage to a woman who had a child from her previous relationship," Mushtaq said. The SP said the accused was unhappy with the child also and in a fit of anger, he strangled him to death on Sunday night. The accused was arrested and the rope used in the crime was recovered. The body was sent for post-mortem and further legal action was being taken.

# SP leader's son booked for electricity theft

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a major action against electricity theft in Sambhal district, FIRs have been lodged against the son of Samajwadi Party's senior leader and former minister Aqeelur Rahman Khan and former SP district president Firoz Khan.

During electricity checking in Sambhal, the vigilance team raided the residence of SP leader Aqeelur Rahman Khan's son Aamir Aqeel and an FIR was lodged in the vigilance police station against Aamir Aqeel who was caught pilfering electricity. A fine of about Rs 2 lakh was also imposed.

According to Executive Engineer Naveen Gautam, a drive is underway in Sadar tehsil of Sambhal district to detect power theft. On Saturday, on getting information about electricity theft in the Sarayatrin area of Sambhal, a raid was conducted at the house of SP leader Aqeelur Rahman Khan's son. During checking, the meter was found tampered. Two air-conditioners were being run by making cuts and connecting extra cables. After seizing the meter, an FIR was lodged against the former minister's son Aamir Aqeel for five kilowatt electricity theft with the local police

station in Sambhal. Similarly, power theft was detected in the district office of the SP in Sambhal and a case of power theft by laying underground cables for unauthorized use of electricity also came to light in two factories.

On Sunday, the vigilance team carried out door-to-door checking in Sarayatrin locality and detected power theft at many places. During the checking, it was found that there was no authorised electricity connection in the SP district office of Sambhal. During the inspection of the SP office premises of party's former district president Firoz Khan, direct electricity theft of 3,301 watts of combined load was found.

Similarly, direct electricity theft of 2,298 watts of connected load was detected at the premises of Mohd Salman, a resident of Peela Khadana near Bilal Mosque, and Mohd Iqbal, both engaged in making jewellery by grinding horns. The factory had laid underground cables from the premises of the SP office.

In these cases, the FIRs were lodged with the anti-electricity theft police station on Sunday against former district president of SP, Firoz Khan, factory operator Mohd Salman, and Mohd Ashad.

# 10 stages to recreate 'Treta Yuga' at Deepotsav

PNS ■ AYODHYA

The countdown to Deepotsav 2024 has begun, with preparations in full swing for the grand celebration in Ayodhya. This year marks the eighth edition of Deepotsav, and it is set to be more spectacular and unique than ever.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, efforts are underway to transform Ayodhya into a reflection of Treta Yuga, allowing visitors to experience the purity and spirituality of Lord Shri Ram's era. The expansion of Ram Ki Paadi is in progress, where millions of lamps will illuminate the banks, and the entire city is being adorned with decorations.

The Culture department is constructing 10 cultural platforms for the event, including three major and seven smaller stages. These platforms will showcase glimpses of Treta Yuga using modern technology. A grand exhibition in Ramkatha Park will bring various episodes of the Ramayana to life through advanced visual techniques, enabling devotees to closely experience significant moments from the

**The Culture department is constructing 10 cultural platforms for the event, including three major and seven smaller stages**

epic. The Ayodhya Municipal Corporation and the Culture Department are collaborating to ensure a grand spectacle. While the municipal corporation is focused on cleaning and beautifying the city, the Culture Department is decorating monasteries, temples and other religious sites. Special efforts are being made to create a spiritually uplifting and majestic atmosphere for all devotees.

This year, the Gorakhpur-Lucknow road connecting Ayodhya to the state capital is getting a special makeover for Deepotsav. The route will feature live depictions of key events from the Ramayana, with scenes to be displayed

along both sides, enhancing the sanctity and significance of the celebration. Deepotsav 2024 will take place from October 28 to 30, featuring a vibrant lineup of cultural programmes alongside the shimmering display of lamps throughout Ayodhya. The main venue, Ram Ki Paadi, will be magnificently decorated, with millions of lamps illuminating the site.

The cultural platforms will be built at Ram Katha Park where modern technology-based exhibition will be organised; Guptar Ghat, which will have a large cultural stage; Badi Devkali where a major stage will be built; Naya Ghat which will have the largest stage during Deepotsav; Ram Ghat where a variety of cultural programmes will be held.

Small stages will also be set up at Birla Dharamshala, Bharat Kund, Tulsi Udyan, Bhajan Sandhya Sthal, Naka Hanuman Garhi, Bus Adda Bypass and Dharma Path. Deepotsav 2024 marks the first celebration since the enthronement of Lord Shri Ram in the grand temple, adding even greater significance to the festival.

# Surge in demand promises prosperous Diwali for UP's terracotta artisans

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

The inclusion of terracotta in the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in 2018 has transformed the fortunes of artisans, while bringing a renewed vibrancy to the craft. Once struggling, the art of terracotta has now gained popularity across the country.

The artisans are overwhelmed with work, struggling to keep up with the rising demand for terracotta products, which grows each year. With festive orders pouring in, the Diwali business for these artisans saw a significant boost, even before the Navratri celebrations. Having dispatched approximately 30 truckloads of terracotta items to various states, the

artisans in Gorakhpur are now focused on preparing products for the local Diwali market. The demand for Gorakhpur's terracotta has doubled compared to last year's festive season, especially for Diwali. Renowned terracotta artisan and national award winner Rajan Prajapati shared that this year, he shipped 15 truckloads of products for Dussehra and Diwali to cities, including Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Lucknow and Rajasthan.

Last year, Rajan fulfilled orders for eight truckloads. Fellow artisans, such as Pannalal Prajapati, supplied eight truckloads, Hariom Azad two truckloads, Mohanlal and Sohanlal Prajapati two truckloads and Hiratal Prajapati one truckload

of terracotta items. All of these orders were completed ahead of Navratri and Dussehra. With out-of-state orders fulfilled, the artisans are now fully focused on preparing products for the local Diwali market. The inclusion of terracotta in ODOP has significantly increased demand in the local market as well, with sales more than doubling since recognition of terracotta under the ODOP scheme. The terracotta craftsmen attribute the remarkable transformation in the market to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's leadership. Rajan Prajapati notes that they no longer need advertisements to sell their products, as Chief Minister Yogi's extensive promotion of terracotta has generated a steady stream of work. The craft's recent display

at the UP International Trade Show in Greater Noida, held from September 25 to 29, attracted significant attention from both domestic and international visitors, resulting in numerous new orders for the participating artisans and businesses. The artisans recall that even before Yogi Adityanath became chief minister, talent and skills were present, but lack of government support and suitable platforms restricted the growth of terracotta. According to them, Chief Minister Yogi's designation of terracotta as an ODOP of Gorakhpur in 2018, proved to be a game-changer for the craft and the artisans involved, propelling the craft to new heights and bringing prosperity to the artisans.

# CM expresses grief over death of Kiranpal Singh

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Monday, expressed his condolences on the death of former Uttar Pradesh minister Kiranpal Singh. Kiranpal Singh served as the Basic Education minister in the UP government and was currently associated with the Rashtriya Lok Dal, holding the position of the party's national secretary. In a post on X, Chief Minister Yogi extended his sympathies to the grieving family and offered prayers for the peace of the departed soul. Kiranpal Singh of Dhameda Kirat village in Bulandshahr, had been unwell for an extended period. He passed away in a Meerut hospital on Monday. Kiranpal Singh served as a five-time MLA from the Agota seat in Bulandshahr.

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

**IDFC FIRST Bank**

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

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 17.06.2024 calling upon the borrower, co-borrowers and guarantors **1. BABA INDUSTRIES, 2. DEVIKA PRATIBHA INDUSTRIES, 3. PRIYANKA KANCHAN, 4. VINOD KUMAR KANCHAN to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.97,92,188.05/- (Rupees Ninety Seven Lac Ninety Two Thousand One Hundred Eighty Eight And Five Paise Only) as on 15.06.2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Demand notice.**

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this **18th day of OCT 2024.**

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **THE IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited) for an amount of Rs.97,92,188.05/- (Rupees Ninety Seven Lac Ninety Two Thousand One Hundred Eighty Eight And Five Paise Only) and interest thereon.**

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

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.	
ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF FLAT MEASURING 1680 SQ. FTS. IE. 156.133 SQ. MTS. ONLY ON THIRD FLOOR OF THE BUILDING BEARING MUNICIPAL NO. 62/3, CONSTRUCTED ON SOUTHERN PART OF PLOT NO. 4, SITUATED AT STATION ROAD, WARD-LAL KUAN, LUCKNOW, WITH UNDIVIDED PROPORTIONATE SHARE IN THE LAND, HUSSAIN GANJ, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH-226001, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: STATION ROAD, WEST: PROPERTY OF SRI PRIYANSHU AND OTHER, NORTH: PROPERTY OF MR. M. DINGRA, SOUTH: HOUSE OF CHUNNI LAL & FAMILY	
Date: 18-10-2024 Place: LUCKNOW Loan Account No: 31550726 & 34587118	Authorized Officer IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)

**इंडियन बैंक** **Indian Bank**

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

**DEMAND NOTICE**  
**NOTICE U/S 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002**

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Indian Bank (erstwhile Allahabad Bank) Issued Demand Notices under Section 13 (2) of SARFAESI ACT 2002 to the Borrower/s/Guarantor/s herein below mentioned. Consequently upon the dispatch of such Notices through Post And returned Bank undelivered from the Borrower/s/Guarantor/s addresses. Through this Publication they are hereby called upon to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of publication of said notice failing which the bank will take the possession of the immovable and movable property will sell it through the process in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 8 & 9 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/Date of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount/ Date of NPA	Description of the Property
<b>Branch : Alambagh</b>			
1.	1. M/S Bengal Sweets Prop Mr Arjun Sanyal S/O Bhaskar Sanyal, B-1/57, Sector D, LDA colony, Kanpur Road, Lucknow UP 226012	Rs. 24,77,267/- as on 14.10.2024 + interest + other charges	1. All that part and parcel of the property consisting of DS 1305 sector D LDA colony Kanpur road ward Hind Nagar Lucknow measuring 19.89 sqr mtr belonging to Bhaskar Sanyal (Asset id: 200049246164) The boundaries of the property are: North by: West 9 mtr wide, South: H. no.1319, East: H. no. 01, West: h. No.1307
2.	2. Mr Arjun Sanyal S/O Bhaskar Sanyal (Borrower & Proprietor), DS-1306, Sector D, LDA colony, Kanpur Road Lucknow UP 226012	Date of NPA: 13.10.2024	2. All that part and parcel of the property consisting of DS 39D on ground floor and DS 40D on first floor sector D LDA colony Kanpur Road Yojna Ward Vidayawati Devi Nagar Lucknow belonging to Bhaskar (CERSAI Asset ID 400071524149 & Security ID: 200072831766)
3.	3. Mr Bhaskar Sanyal S/O Sh Raja Gopal Sanyal (Guarantor & Mortgagee), DS-1306, Sector D, LDA colony, Kanpur Road Lucknow UP 226012		The boundaries of the property DS 39 D on ground floor sector D LDA colony Kanpur Road Yojna Ward Vidayawati Devi Nagar are: North: House no DS 9 D, South: Road, East: Road, West: House no DS 37D
4.	4. Mr Arjun Sanyal S/O Bhaskar Sanyal (Home Loan Borrower), DS-1306, Sector D, LDA colony, Kanpur Road Lucknow UP 226012		The boundaries of the property DS 40 D on first floor sector D LDA colony Kanpur Road Yojna Ward Vidayawati Devi Nagar are: North: House no DS 20 D, South: Road, East: Road, West: house no DS 38 D
5.	5. Mr Bhaskar Sanyal S/O Sh Raja Gopal Sanyal (Home Loan Borrower), DS-1306, Sector D, LDA colony, Kanpur Road Lucknow UP 226012		

Date: 22.10.2024 Place: Lucknow INDIAN BANK (erstwhile Allahabad Bank)



# SP protests renaming of Sigra Stadium

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Just a day after the inauguration of second and third phases of Sigra Stadium Redevelopment Project by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the workers of Samajwadi Party (SP) registered a strong protest against the district administration renaming Dr Sampurnanand Sports Stadium, Sigra, as Varanasi Sports Complex. They protested by raising slogans and staging a dharna at the main gate of Sigra Stadium here on Monday. They also handed over a memorandum addressed to the chief minister to the additional district magistrate (ADM). When the first phase was inaugurated by the PM, the matter of renaming did not come up. However when the plaque of Varanasi Sports Complex was displayed at the main gate before the inauguration, the matter stirred up a hornet's nest, especially on social media after the inauguration by the PM. Dr Sampurnanand was a Banarasi and second chief minister of Uttar Pradesh who

## Name not changed, says minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Taking cognizance of certain information about changing the name of Dr Sampurnanand Sports Stadium located at Sigra, Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Fee and Registration Ravindra Jaiswal said that the name of the stadium has not been changed. He informed that the complex built inside the stadium premises has been named Varanasi Sports

Complex. Jaiswal said that there is a process for changing the name of any big institution whereas there is nothing like this. "Neither the Government of India nor the Sports Ministry has any such proposal regarding the change of name", he said and added that Dr Sampurnanand is revered and ideal for all of us and such great personalities are always a source of inspiration for the society.

Sampurnanand Stadium as it is. MLC Ashutosh Sinha and former city SP president Vishnu Sharma said "the district administration has done a grave insult by handing over Sigra Stadium to a private company and changing the name of Dr Sampurnanand". "Kashi residents cannot tolerate this at all", the MLC said, adding that he was the pioneer of the renaissance of development of Kashi's ghats and Pakke Mahal (old city

areas). He said the administration's action of removing the name of such an inspirational writer and politician Dr Sampurnanand from the plaque of Sigra Stadium is highly condemnable and illogical. After the dharna and demonstration, Ashutosh Sinha along with SP workers garlanded the statue of Dr Sampurnanand. He said that the issue of changing the name of Sigra Stadium will be raised in the Legislative Council. SP leaders said if the administration does not instal the plaque of Dr Sampurnanand soon, then the SP will be forced to protest. Prominent among those who were also present were state president of Vypar Sabha Pradeep Jaiswal, spokesperson Santosh Yadav, Bablu, Harish Narayan Singh, corporator Haroon Ansari, Rahul Singh Yadav, Ishan Srivastava, Rahul Sonkar, Abhishek Mishra, Jitendra Patel, Vikas Srivastava, Rizwan Khan, Rahul Gupta, Ayush Yadav, Sandeep Mishra, Abdul Kalam, Sandeep Yadav, Sharad Sonkar, Virendra Pathak, Atul Srivastava, Arpit Srivastava, Brijesh Srivastava and Manish Srivastava.

# Mental health problem more common among kids & adolescents: Rai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Varanasi (PNS): The two-day mental health festival 'Balance within' was inaugurated on Monday under the aegis of Psychogenesis, the student forum of the Psychology Department of DAV PG College. On the first day, a symposium and rangoli competition were organised on the topic of 'Issues, challenges and solutions of mental health in children and adolescents'. The chief guest Dr Ashok Rai, Director of District Mental Hospital, Pandeypur, expressed his views on mental health. Dr Rai said today the problem of mental health is more common among children and adolescents. He said that the main reason for poor mental health in children is the expectation of the best from them by parents and society. "We have to take care that we do not put unnecessary pressure on children, and also respect their wishes", he said, adding that the government will have to pay special attention to health facilities, there are only three mental hospitals in the state right now which is a matter of concern. Manager of the college Ajit Kumar Singh Yadav said that family and environment can prove to be very helpful in maintaining better mental health. Presiding over the function, acting principal Prof Satyagopal Ji said mental health disease is not a curse, it can be cured through a process, with good behaviour. He said that in case of a problem, one should immediately contact a psychiatrist or psychologist without hesitation. Before this, the programme coordinator and head of the department Prof Richarani Yadav introduced the topic. Welcome address was given by Dr Kalpana Singh. The programme was conducted by Dr Rajesh Jha and vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Akhileendra Singh. Dr Anupriya Singh, Dr Anurag Chaurasia and a large number of students were present.

# Special programme held at BLW on Police Smriti Diwas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A special programme was organised on the occasion of Police Smriti Diwas under the aegis of Railway Protection Force (RPF) at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) here on Monday. The programme was led by Inspector General and Principal Chief Security Commissioner Nurul Hoda. On the occasion, tributes were paid to the brave personnel of 14 RPF who were martyred this year across India. In this programme organised in the RPF Barrack premises, a parade was organised by the RPF, in which hundreds of personnel, including Security Commissioner Manoj Kumar Gautam, inspectors KK Singh, Pramod Lakra, Ranjan Kumar, DK Rai and Chetram Meena, sub-inspector Anil Kumar participated. On Police Smriti Diwas, all the officers and personnel present paid homage to the supreme sacrifice made by the martyrs in the security of the country,



RPF IG/PCSC Nurul Hoda at Police Smriti Diwas programme at BLW in Varanasi on Monday.

railways and society. The salute parade organised on the occasion gave a special dignity to the entire programme and generated a feeling of patriotism and dedication among the people present. Recalling the bravery of the martyred RPF personnel, Nurul Hoda said their martyrdom will always give us the message of service to the country and dedication towards duty.

# Tableaux centre of attraction at Nakkataiya Mela

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Famous Nakkataiya Mela of Chetganj was held on Sunday midnight with all the traditional gaiety and religious fervour. Thousands of people reached Chetganj, Lahurabir and adjoining areas to see the famous procession and its grandeur. Around 50 tableaux attracted the attention of the people. Apart from the tableaux highlighting the scenes from the Ramayana, some also gave social and other messages. UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH, Food Security and Drug Administration Dr Dayashakar Mishra 'Dayalu' and other dignitaries joined the event. This 136-year-old festival is known as 'Lakha Mela', which attracts more than a lakh people. The festival was started in 1888 by Baba Fatehram to inspire the people against Britain and indirectly support the freedom struggle in the name of Lord Ram. As the procession started during midnight hours, the people



UP minister Dr Dayashakar Mishra Dayalu at Chetganj Mela in Varanasi

watched it till wee hours on Monday. The tableaux highlighting several political, social and current issues like the Israel-Iran/Hamas war attracted the attention of the people. The 'leela' started at Chetganj stage when the nose of Demon King Ravana's sister Sumerneka was cut by Laxman, younger brother of Lord Rama. Later, after 'aarti' and 'pujan' by president Ajay Gupta and office-bearers of Chetganj Shri Ramlila Samiti, the procession was

inaugurated. The Nakkataiya procession passed through its traditional route and on the occasion, elaborate security arrangements were made throughout the mela area. **SPECIAL LECTURE:** To commemorate the 100th anniversary of SN Bose's seminal paper published in 1924, which laid the foundation for Bose-Einstein Statistics, the Institute of Science, Banaras Hindu University (Isc-BHU) organised a special lecture at the Seminar Complex of Institute

of Science here on Monday. Two distinguished speakers, Prof Umakant Rapal from IISER, Pune, and Prof Partha Ghose, delivered insightful talks on the influence of Bose's work on modern science. Dean Faculty of Science, Prof SM Singh welcomed the guests. Prof Umakant Rapal while delivering a talk on the Impact of Bose-Einstein Statistics on present-day science told in detail about the Bose-Einstein Condensate (BEC), a state of matter predicted by SN Bose's work in collaboration with Albert Einstein. He highlighted how Bose-Einstein Statistics revolutionised our understanding of quantum systems and highlighted its applications in contemporary science. Prof Partha Ghose, the last PhD student of SN Bose and a prominent figure in science communication, while delivering talk on 'The Story of Bose, Photon Spin and Indistinguishability' shared his personal experiences with his mentor. He recalled Bose's life and contributions.

# Woman constable raped, accused arrested

PTI ■ KANPUR

A female police constable on her way home to celebrate 'Karwa Chauth' was allegedly raped here by her neighbour after being offered a lift, officials said on Monday. The accused was an acquaintance of the woman and has been arrested, they said. The incident took place on Saturday when the accused took the cop to an isolated area after giving her a lift on his motorcycle in the Sen-Paschim Para area, they said. "The woman head constable, attached to the Reserve Police Lines in Ayodhya, had come to Kanpur on Saturday night to celebrate the festival of 'Karwa Chauth'. She was on her way to her village when she accepted a lift from her neighbour, Dharmendra Paswan, on his bike," Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chander said. "Instead of dropping her at her destination, Paswan allegedly took the woman to an

isolated field and raped her," Chander added. Ghatampur Assistant Commissioner of Police Ranjeet Kumar said the woman raised an alarm when Paswan attempted to disrobe her, but there was no one around to help. "The victim bit a part of the accused's finger after the assault and somehow managed to flee," he said. The woman then approached a nearby police outpost and narrated the incident, leading to the prompt registration of an FIR, the officer said. "The police launched a search operation and arrested the accused within hours," ACP Kumar added. The case was registered at Sen-Paschim Para police station under Sections 64 (rape), 76 (criminal force to woman with intent to disrobe), 115 (2) (voluntarily causing hurt), 117 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt), and 351(2) (criminal intimidation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The accused was produced before a court here and sent to judicial custody for 14 days, the police said.

**FOUR COPS SUSPENDED:** Four cops, including a station house officer and a trainee sub-inspector, have been suspended for allegedly selling the looted gold seized from burglars after setting them free, officials said on Monday. The suspended police personnel include SHO Vijay Darshan Sharma, trainee S-I Naveen Srivastava, and head constables Subhash Tewari and Aamir Hafeez, all posted at the Rail Bazar police station in Kanpur, they added. Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chander said the thieves targeted the house of a teacher named Shalini Dubey, wife of a Border Security Force (BSF) officer, when she was away at her school in Fatehpur on October 1 and decamped with valuables including gold ornaments. The woman filed an FIR at the Barra police station following which the police nabbed several individuals in

connection with the case, the officer said. During interrogation, the burglars revealed that they were earlier detained by the Rail Bazar police before whom they confessed to their involvement in the crime. The burglars reportedly apprised the Rail Bazar police about the jeweller to whom they sold the looted gold. During a probe, it was found that some cops from the Rail Bazar police station summoned the jeweller who returned the gold worth about ₹25 lakh to the police, requesting them not to register a case against him. The accused policemen got the ornaments melted and sold the pure gold extracted from them to another jeweller, the officer said. A police team headed by a circle officer was formed to probe the matter and submit a fact-finding report to Commissioner Akhil Kumar. The four cops who were found guilty of selling the looted gold have now been suspended after being booked in a criminal case, the ACP said.

# Significance of cyber security stressed

KANPUR (PNS):

In today's digital era, cyber security has become an essential aspect of safeguarding personal and organisational data. Recognising the growing threats in cyberspace, the Department of Physics at Christ Church College, Kanpur, organised a cyber security awareness programme on the theme "Cybersecurity: Strengthening India's Digital Frontier in the Age of Global Threats". The event took place at Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan auditorium. The key topics covered during the event included: Understanding common cyber threats (phishing, malware, ransomware); Best practices for password management and data protection; Safe browsing habits and secure use of social media; Recognising the signs of a cyber-attack; Incident response and reporting procedures. The event commenced with a ceremonial lamp lighting, followed by a welcome address from Prof Satya Prakash Singh, in charge, Department of Physics. In his address, he emphasised the

importance of empowering individuals with knowledge to tackle evolving digital threats and highlighted that the programme aims to provide students with the skills necessary to safeguard digital assets. Principal, Prof Joseph Daniel, stressed the significance of cyber security in his speech, noting that collective knowledge sharing can enhance defences against cyber threats. He encouraged students to actively participate in discussions and engage with the speakers to expand their understanding of cyber security practices. The event saw enthusiastic participation from students and faculty, with attendees actively engaging in discussions and networking with the experts. The programme reinforced the message that cybersecurity is a collective responsibility, essential for protecting both individuals and institutions from the growing threats in the digital age. Dr. Ashutosh Kumar from the Department of Physics delivered the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the esteemed speakers, Principal,

and students for making the programme a success. **WORKSHOP:** Under the direction of the V-C Prof Vinay Kumar Pathak, the School of Basic Sciences in association with the International Relations and Academic Cooperation Cell, CSJM University, organised a one-day workshop. Two eminent speakers discussed their thoughts on the 2024 Nobel Prize in Physics and Chemistry at the event. **INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE FINANCIAL LITERACY:** The School of Business Management at CSJM University, marked World Investor Week with a highly insightful and engaging session led by Vinay Rai, Managing Director of Bliss Capital Services Pvt Ltd, Kanpur. With over 20 years of experience in the financial markets, Rai shared valuable insights and practical strategies that have defined his success in the field. The event, organised as part of the university's initiative to promote financial literacy and investor awareness, attracted students and faculty alike. The event was coordinated by Dr Pravin Agrawal and Dr Mohit.

# Effervescence from Oct 25

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Effervescence, the three day annual cultural fest of Indian Institute of Information Technology Allahabad (IIIT-A) will begin from October 25 on Jhalwa campus. Taking forward the stature and prestige that the magnanimous fest carries with it, Effervescence 24 takes both pride and joy in featuring the Sanam Puri Band performance in its most-awaited celebrity Night on October 27. The day 1 will kick off with singer Madhur Sharma, followed by a stellar lineup featuring the dynamic All India Permit on Day 2 and the grand finale on day 3 promises to be unforgettable, with SANAM taking the stage to deliver a breathtaking show. Meanwhile, preparations for Effervescence-2024, the annual cultural extravaganza hosted by the IIIT-A are in full swing. The fashion show, 'A la Mode' will be organised on October 26. **CHILD KILLED:** A three-month-old child was killed while three others sustained serious injuries when a motorcycle was hit by a Scorpio on Bandha Road under the new Yamuna Bridge of Naini Kotwali in Yamuna Nagar. The police have taken the body in custody and sent it to the post-mortem house. Reports said that the speeding Scorpio hit the bike rider from the front on Arail Bandh Road under the new Yamuna Bridge as a result of which Ravi Bhartiya (17), Nitin (25), his wife Mona (24) and three-month-old son Aarav were seriously injured. On getting information the police sent all the injured to the hospital where Aarav died during treatment. Naini Station House Officer (SHO) Vaibhav Singh said that this accident took place on Arail Bandh Road between the new and old Yamuna bridge. Meanwhile a youth troubled by unemployment tried to commit suicide in an area under Naini police station of Yamunanagar on Sunday.

# CMO: Iodine deficiency can cause mental depression

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said iodine deficiency can cause mental depression, adverse effect on the development of babies during pregnancy and goitre. "We need to be cautious because it is important to use the right amount of iodised salt while cooking", said the CMO while expressing his views on the occasion of World Iodine Deficiency Day here on Monday. He said a certain amount of iodine is needed to make a chemical called thyroid hormone in the body. "Thyroid hormone controls metabolism and other body functions. Its deficiency causes the thyroid gland to become unbalanced. This can lead to goitre, heart attack, mental depression, loss of memory, reduced fertility in women and problems in the reproductive system of men and women", he said adding that iodine is found in sufficient quantities in vegetables, curd, eggs, raw cheese and coconut water. The body does not produce iodine natural-

ly. An adult needs 150 micrograms of iodine per day whereas pregnant and lactating women need 200 micrograms of iodine every day. Deputy Chief Medical Officer and nodal officer Dr YB Pathak said on the occasion of Global Iodine Deficiency Prevention Day, a public awareness programme was successfully organised in the Ayushman Arogya Mandir work area in all the blocks of the district in which all CHOs, ANMs, Asha workers, Anganwadi workers, Ayushman brand ambassadors (school teachers) and representatives of Panchayat Raj institutions have played an important role. **THYROID SCREENING PROGRAMME:** On the occasion of World Iodine Deficiency Day, also known as Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, a health awareness and thyroid screening programme was organised at BLW Central Hospital here on Monday. Principal Chief Medical Officer (PCMO) Dr Devesh Kumar inaugurated the programme and highlighted the

importance of iodine. He informed that iodine is an essential element for mental and physical development, which plays an important role in the production of thyroid hormone. He also informed that at present one-third of the world's population is affected by iodine deficiency, but in India this problem has been overcome to a great extent by consuming iodised salt. Senior Divisional Medical Officer Dr SK Maurya, Assistant Nursing Officer Geeta Kumari Chaudhary, and chief nursing superintendents Anjana Tod, Sita Singh and Kamala Srinivasan actively participated in it. Therapy Business Manager Aditya Rai and DMLT Ritu Maurya also participated in this health programme. On the occasion, a special thyroid check-up camp was organised. Doctors discussed in detail the problems related to thyroid hormone deficiency such as weight gain, fatigue and diseases like goitre in some areas. They said through timely check-up these problems can be detected and treatment can be started at an early stage.

# Dr Sam Higginbottom's life, visionary work highlighted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

To mark the 150th birth anniversary of Dr Sam Higginbottom, the founder of SHUATS, a week-long Kritagyata Mahotsav kicked off with great pomp here on Monday. The ceremony began with a prayer by Dr Lalchun B. Gange. Additional Registrar Prof CJ Wasley highlighted Dr Sam Higginbottom's life and visionary work. He narrated how Dr Sam established the Allahabad Agriculture Institute, which is now known as SHUATS. Dr Bishwa Roop Mehra, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Administration, spoke about Dr Sam's generosity and contributions to agriculture. Dr Ashish Alexander, Chairman, Special Event Committee, remembered Dr Sam and stated that the week-long programmes at SHUATS are a tribute to his life and ideas. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr Hira Bose, who expressed gratitude to all dignitaries, students and organisers. It was followed by the inauguration of the three-day chess tournament, which was inaugurated by Director HRM Dr

Abhilasha J Lall, Dr Ashish Alexander, Puja Ashish Alexander. The tournament aims to promote intellectual development among students and will continue till October 23. The Kritagyata Mahotsav will continue throughout the week with various programmes organized by SHUATS students and faculty. The inauguration ceremony was held at the central auditorium of SHUATS, and was attended by prominent dignitaries including Pro-V-C (Academics) Prof Jonathan A Lal, Prof CJ Wasley, Dr Bishwarup Mehra and other guests. **SUICIDE:** Satish Kumar Tripathi (34), son of Rambodh Tripathi, an office superintendent in the railway office, jumped from the Curzon Bridge in Phaphamau. The police were taking him to the hospital but he died on the way. The family members are also shocked. It is learnt he left home on Monday morning for duty and parked his bike on the Curzon Bridge in Phaphamau and jumped down. On seeing this, people passing by the bridge started making noise. The police sent the body for post-mortem examination.

# Importance of collective action in addressing pressing environmental challenges stressed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The pioneering episode of the 'Jaipuria Sustainability Conclave-2024' was hosted by Seth Anandram Jaipuria School here. Centered around the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by the United Nations, this conclave aimed to harmonise economic, environmental and social imperatives, thereby paving the way for a secure and prosperous future for present and coming generations. The event was graced by the presence of the chief guest, Dr Sanjivani Sharma, an environmentalist and social activist. Other prominent guests were Vinod Malhotra, Adviser to Seth Anandram Jaipuria Group of Educational Institutions and Harish Sanduja, Director School & IT. In her keynote address, Dr. Sanjivani Sharma underscored the significance of environmental preservation and the global objectives encapsulated in the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. She emphasised the importance of collective action in addressing pressing environmental challenges. Complementing her insights, Vinod Malhotra — who has also penned a book on SDGs — spoke about the need for humans to live in harmony with nature and the universe. In his address, Harish Sanduja highlighted that the SDGs represent a set of 17 global goals intricately connected across the three pillars of sus-

tainable development: economic, social, and environmental. He urged students to be proactive and responsible custodians of sustainability, emphasising their vital role in driving positive change. The concept of the 'Jaipuria Sustainability Conclave-2024' was envisioned and inspired by the school Principal Shikha Banerjee. The event commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp. Vice-Principal Ganesh Tiwari warmly welcomed all the dignitaries. The highlight of the event was the heartwarming performances by differently-abled students from the Blind School of Kanpur, who delivered a soulful musical presentation, and students from the Deaf and Dumb School mesmerised the audience with a captivating dance performance. The conclave also featured a series of inter-school competitions, which saw enthusiastic participation from 15 schools across the state. The

junior category competitions included creative and engaging events like Winged Welcome Bird Feeder, Battle the Bite, Zero Flame Feast, Dig Gold from Garbage, Lyrical Enactment, and SDG Sound Check. Meanwhile, the senior category showcased D Graphic Grandeur, Innovators Arena, Solar Sustainability Studio, Trivia Titans, Theatre Roadshow and TED Talk. Each competition witnessed high levels of enthusiasm and creativity, making the conclave a resounding success. Among the notable attendees were school's Head Master MK Mishra, General Manager, Shailendra Agnihotri, and a dedicated team of teachers. Mamta Govil, Headmistress-Cambridge Wing, delivered a thought-provoking talk on 'New Age Education for a Sustainable Future', which was followed by declaration of results. The event culminated with a vote of thanks by Vice-Principal (Junior Section) Madhushree Bhaumik.

**WORKSHOP:** The departments of English and BCA, Vikramajit Singh Sanatan Dharma (VSSD) College successfully hosted an online workshop and interactive session on "Positive Thinking and Overcoming Failure for Mental Well-Being". The programme was inaugurated with a warm welcome by the principal followed by an insightful address by the patron, CA Neetu Singh, Joint Secretary, Board of Management, VSSD College. The event featured Dr Alok Bajpai, a renowned psychiatrist, as the keynote speaker. The session witnessed the presence of distinguished faculty members, including Prof Neeru Tandon, Head, Department of English, Dr RP Pradhan, Dr Pratyush, Dr Fatima Ashna, Dr Anshu Singh Sengar and Ajita Singh. The workshop provided practical strategies for mental well-being, engaging the audience in meaningful discussions on overcoming challenges.



The 'Jaipuria Sustainability Conclave-2024' being inaugurated at Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, Kanpur.



# SC grants two-week extension to expert panel of NEET-UG reforms

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday extended by two weeks the time granted to the Centre-appointed seven-member expert panel to file its report on exam reforms after reviewing the National Testing Agency's functioning in holding the NEET-UG. The SC on August 2 had passed its formal order and expanded the remit of the seven-member expert panel, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief K Radhakrishnan, to review the functioning of the National Testing Agency (NTA) and recommend exam reforms to make the controversy-ridden NEET-UG (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test Undergraduate), transparent and free from malpractices.



The NEET-UG is conducted by the NTA for admission in undergraduate medical programs. The top court had also refused to annul the NEET-UG of 2024, saying there was no sufficient material on record at present to indicate a systemic leak or malpractice compromising the integrity of the

examination. On Monday, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, told a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud that the deadline for filing the report of the expert committee was ending and sought two-week extension. The bench, also comprising

Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, took note of the fact that the report of the panel was almost complete and granted two more weeks for filing the same. While expanding the scope of the expert panel, the top court had flagged multiple lapses on the part of NTA like the security breach at an examination centre in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh where the rear door of the strongroom was opened and unauthorised people were permitted to access question papers, transportation of question papers by e-rickshaws and distribution of wrong set of question papers among the candidates. Besides Radhakrishnan, other members of the expert committee are Randeep Guleria, B J Rao, Ramamurthy K, Pankaj

Bansal, Aditya Mittal and Govind Jaiswal. The bench said the remit of the committee, in addition to the tasks that it has been entrusted with by the union government and the NTA, shall encompass examination security and administration, data security and technological enhancements. Its responsibilities will also include policy and stakeholder engagement, collaboration and international cooperation, and recommendations for providing mental health support to students and training of NTA staff, it had said. Over 23 lakh students took up the NEET-UG in 2024 for admissions to MBBS, BDS, AYUSH and other related courses, which marred series of controversies of question paper leaks.

# 'I am Congressman till my last breath': Ajay Singh Yadav

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Congress leader Captain (retired) Ajay Singh Yadav on Monday raised concerns about under-representation of OBCs in the party's Haryana unit and top bodies such as the CWC, while also lashing out at the AICC in-charge of state Deepak Babaria over the poor assembly poll showing. Yadav, who took a U-turn after resigning, stated he would remain a Congressman "till his last breath", said he had an "offer" from the BJP post-assembly polls but he did not take it as he his family has had a 70-years-old relationship with the Congress. "I am not going to the BJP while many have gone. I had an offer after polls but I did not go. I have spent my entire life here. My son is a secretary (in the AICC). We have 70 years of ties with the party. I have worked with Rajiv ji, Sonia ji and was given respect. She made me CLP minister. So, one has to respect that," he said told a press conference here.

He said his post of the chairman of the OBC department is an "ornamental" one. "Be it CWC, CEC, there is hardly representation from the OBC department, backward classes, there are just SCs and Jats for representation. I had raised the issue of caste census which was not being properly implemented in the Congress ruled states, there is also the issue of raising of creamy layer limit, proper representation in higher education," he said. "In Haryana, if you see OBCs have more representation in the BJP. Rao Inderjit Singh is an OBC, Bhopinder Yadav is an OBC, Krishan Pal Gurjar is an OBC, they are all Union ministers...They have Punjab in Manohar Lal Khattar. The social engineering has not been done in the Haryana Congress party where the OBCs are being under-represented," Yadav said.

AAP and the BJP were being encouraged in the Congress by some leaders. On Saturday, Yadav had said he was "prevailed upon" by his son and former MLA Chiranjeev Rao to "forget the past" and work for the party. Yadav quit the party on Thursday alleging shabby treatment after Sonia Gandhi left the post of party president. He also resigned as the chairman of the All India Congress Committee's Other Backward Classes (OBC) Department.

In a series of social media posts, the 65-year-old leader said he has served the Congress for 38 years and gave his best to the party. He said his family has had an "association of more than 70 years" with the Nehru-Gandhi clan. "I worked with my leader late Rajiv Gandhi ji and Sonia Gandhi and cannot forget their affection towards me... I am a Congressman since my birth and would remain a Congressman till my last breath," said Yadav. "I was upset that my hard work done for the OBC department was not being appreciated by the high command and some harsh words made me take this drastic step. But with a cool mind I have decided to strengthen the Congress party, especially my mentor and leader Sonia Gandhi ji," he said in another post.

Presently my resignation has not been accepted, if it is accepted or not is upto the party to decide, he said. Yadav said he has taken back his resignation and will now work accordingly. He also said leaders rejected by the

# India and Singapore to strengthen defence ties in sixth defence ministers' dialogue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Singapore will review the entire gamut of their bilateral defence ties here on Tuesday during the sixth India-Singapore Defence Ministers' Dialogue. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Ng Eng Hen will co-chair the dialogue.



The meeting aims to carry forward defence cooperation between the two countries. Both sides will also exchange views on regional and global issues of shared interest, defence ministry said here on Monday. The bilateral phase aims to enhance interoperability, sharpen combat readiness and promote the exchange of knowledge between the two Air Forces.

The RSAF is participating with its largest contingent till date, comprising of aircrew and support personnel from F-16, F-15 squadrons alongwith G-550 Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) and C-130 aircraft. The IAF will be participating with Rafale, Mirage 2000 ITI, Su-30 MKI, Tejas, MiG-29 and Jaguar aircraft.

Since its inception, JMT has been conducted under the ambit of a bilateral agreement signed between the two nations. JMT exercise comes right after RSAF's participation in one of the largest multinational aerial exercises, Ex-Tarang Shakti hosted by the IAF, which is reflective of a growing professional association between the two Air Forces. In addition to air operations, the personnel of the two air forces will exchange best practices, as they interact during a multitude of sports and cultural activities over the next seven weeks. JMT-2024 highlights the strong bilateral defence relationship built over years of collaboration and joint exercises, as well as the mutual respect between India and Singapore.

The Singaporean Defence Minister will be on a visit to India from October 21-23. The fifth edition of the Defence Ministers' Dialogue took place in January 2021 through virtual teleconference. Meanwhile, Indian Air Force (IAF) and Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) on Monday commenced the 12th edition of the Joint Military Training (JMT) exercise at Air Force Station Kalaikunda, West Bengal, IAF said here.

The bilateral phase of the exercise will be conducted from November 13 to 21 and is expected to generate

intense collaboration between the two forces, as they engage in advanced air combat simulations, joint mission planning and debriefing sessions. The bilateral phase aims to enhance interoperability, sharpen combat readiness and promote the exchange of knowledge between the two Air Forces. The RSAF is participating with its largest contingent till date, comprising of aircrew and support personnel from F-16, F-15 squadrons alongwith G-550 Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) and C-130 aircraft. The IAF will be participating with Rafale, Mirage 2000 ITI, Su-30 MKI, Tejas, MiG-29 and Jaguar aircraft. Since its inception, JMT has been conducted under the ambit of a bilateral agreement signed between the two nations. JMT exercise comes right after RSAF's participation in one of the largest multinational aerial exercises, Ex-Tarang Shakti hosted by the IAF, which is reflective of a growing professional association between the two Air Forces. In addition to air operations, the personnel of the two air forces will exchange best practices, as they interact during a multitude of sports and cultural activities over the next seven weeks. JMT-2024 highlights the strong bilateral defence relationship built over years of collaboration and joint exercises, as well as the mutual respect between India and Singapore.

# SC stays NCPDR directive against madrasahs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the operation of the communications issued by child rights body NCPDR urging States to shift students of unrecognised Madrasahs to Government schools. A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of senior advocate, appearing for Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, that the communications of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) and consequential actions of some of States needed to be stayed. The Muslim organisation



has challenged the action of Uttar Pradesh and Tripura governments directing that students of unrecognised madrasahs should be shifted to Government schools. The top court ordered the communications of the NCPDR issued on June 7 and June 25 this year should

not be acted upon. The Court also said the consequential orders of the states shall also remain stayed. It also permitted the Muslim body to make states, other than Uttar Pradesh and Tripura as parties to its petition. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) last week wrote to chief secretaries of all States and Union Territories, recommending that Madrasa boards be "closed down", State funding to Madrasas and Madrasa boards be stopped, and children attending Madrasas be enrolled in "formal schools." The Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind approached the Supreme Court against the directive of the NCPDR.

# President Murmu to present national water awards 2023

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu will present the National Water Awards 2023 on Tuesday, recognising outstanding contributions to water management and conservation across India. The awards, organised by the Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation under the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, honour efforts in nine categories, ranging from best state to best civil society, according to an official statement. In the category of Best State, the first prize has been conferred upon Odisha, with Uttar Pradesh securing the second position, and Gujarat and Puducherry jointly securing the third position. Each award winner will be conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prizes in certain categories. Odisha has been gaining recognition for its extensive water conservation initiatives such as establishment of approximately 53,000 water



conservation and rainwater harvesting structures, along with 10,800 reuse and recharge systems. Additionally, the renovation of 11,000 traditional water bodies, development of 68,700 watersheds, and completion of 21,000 wastewater treatment plants have been achieved. The renovation of around 1,800 km of drainage channels has reclaimed approximately 39,000 hectares of agricultural land previously affected by waterlogging. Also, over 90,900 hectares of irrigated land have transitioned from conventional irrigation methods to micro-irrigation

structures in industries and educational institutions, according to the ministry. Gujarat, sharing the third spot, was acknowledged for achieving 100 per cent tap water connections under the Jal Jeevan Mission, covering 25 lakh households. The state also expanded micro-irrigation coverage, benefitting over 14 lakh farmers. The Best District awards were presented across various zones, showcasing exceptional efforts in water management and conservation. The winners included Visakhapatnam from Andhra Pradesh in the South zone, Dhalai from Tripura in the North East zone, and Banda from Uttar Pradesh along with Ganderbal from Jammu and Kashmir as joint winners in the North region. The National Water Awards, initiated in 2018, aim to raise awareness about water conservation and management, aligning with the government's vision of a 'Jal Samridh Bharat' (water-sufficient India), the release said.

# INS Suvarna anti-piracy moves to Tanzania



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Navy ship INS Suvarna paid a port call at Dar Es Salam, Tanzania, from October 19 - 21 for operational turnaround, during its ongoing anti-piracy deployment in the Gulf of Aden and conducted drills with Tanzanian navy, navy said here. Commander Lalit Yadav, Commanding Officer, called on Rear Admiral A R Hassan, Commander of Tanzanian People's Defence Force (TPDF) Naval Forces, and Bishwadipt Dey, High Commissioner of India (HCI) to Tanzania. During the visit, operation team of both navies held professional interactions including joint training on

Visit Board Search Seizure, Damage Control and Fire Fighting drills, including sports engagement. The ship also handed over the Infantry Weapon Training Simulator to the TPDF side. INS Suvarna co-hosted a social interaction on board, along with HCI, for TPDF officials. Major General I M Mhona, Chief of Operations and Training, TPDF, was the Chief Guest, along with Rear Admiral A R Hassan. The ship later carried out a joint Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) surveillance with TPDF Navy. The visit aimed to enhance military and diplomatic ties between the two countries in line with Indian government's vision of SAGAR.

# Stevia can also have therapeutic potential: Research

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



A team of Indian researchers has highlighted the therapeutic properties of Candy Leaf, or Stevia rebaudiana, beyond its natural sweetness. The team led by Dr. Asis Bala and Prof. Ashis K Mukherjee from the Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST) in Guwahati explored Stevia's effects on cellular signalling mechanisms and found it may offer benefits for various diseases, including endocrine, metabolic, immune, and cardiovascular disorders. Published in "Food Bioscience" journal, the research identified that the active components in Stevia interact strongly with AMP-activated protein kinase (AMPK), indicating further research is necessary to fully

understand its benefits. The IASST in Guwahati is an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology. The team did the research on Stevia's medicinal properties and its effects on cellular signalling mechanisms to prove the Assam's Stevia's therapeutic qualities. Currently, Stevia rebaudiana Bertoni is widely grown and distributed across Assam in Northeast India, from where it is exported worldwide. The other researchers were Piyali Devroya and Suraj

Kumar Chatterjee from IASST, Rahul Singh, Satyabrata Mohapatra, and Sagnik Halder, all from Emami Limited, Kolkata). Their multimodal strategy integrated network pharmacology with in vitro and in vivo techniques, showing that the plant used phosphorylation of Protein Kinase C (PKC) to inhibit a crucial cellular signalling route, said the study. PKC is connected to inflammatory, autoimmune, endocrine, and cardiovascular illnesses. Stevia suppresses PKC phosphorylation, which alters downstream pathways that cause inflammation, a significant cause of endocrine metabolic and cardiovascular issues, as per the research. The study titled "Candy Leaf - Stevia rebaudiana (Bertoni) Bertoni Attenuates LPS-Induced Protein Kinase C

Phosphorylation in Mouse Macrophage Cells: Target Search by Network Pharmacology and Validation Using Ex Vivo and In Vivo Assays" shows Stevia's promise in this field for the first time. The research also found that active Stevia molecules strongly interact with AMPK, highlighting the need for further investigation. The study reveals an undiscovered facet of Stevia, underlining the necessity for creative strategies and scientific data to support traditional therapeutic practices, according to the researchers. The North Eastern Council under the Union Government has also highlighted the potential of Stevia cultivation to benefit the northeastern Indian economy due to high demand.

# Union Minister of Labour to launch 'eShram - one stop solution'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Union Minister of Labour and Employment Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday launched "eShram - One Stop Solution" here with an aim to provide seamless access of different Social Security Schemes to the unorganised workers registered on the portal launched in 2021. More than 30 crore workers have already registered themselves on eShram in a span of 3 years since its inception. Speaking at the launch event, Dr. Mandaviya emphasised the growing trust in the eShram portal, noting, "Every day, around 60,000 to 90,000 workers are joining the eShram platform, which demonstrates their confidence in this initiative." Dr. Mandaviya also highlighted that the main aim of the portal is to simplify the registration process for

unorganised workers and facilitate their access to government welfare schemes. "This platform will act as a bridge, connecting the workers to the numerous benefits offered by the government and making the registration process easier and more transparent," he said. 'eShram One Stop Solution' entails consolidating and integrating data from various Central Ministries/Departments into a single repository as per the recent budget announcement and 100 days agenda of the

Ministry. Key welfare schemes such as One Nation One Ration Card, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, National Social Assistance Programme, National Career Service, Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan etc. have been integrated with eShram, and onboarding of other welfare schemes is also in progress. Dr. Mandaviya urged all unorganised workers to register on the eShram portal and take advantage of the various welfare schemes

designed for their benefit. He emphasised that onboarding to the platform will enable workers to access a wide range of social security and welfare initiatives launched by the government, aimed at improving their livelihoods and ensuring their well-being. Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Shobha Karandlaje emphasised on the integration of State Governments portal with eShram in order to ensure last mile connectivity. "This initiative will also help in ensuring saturation of the schemes through identification of left-out potential beneficiaries, State/District-wise," she added. Sumita Dawra, Union Labour and Employment Secretary was of the opinion that 'eShram One Stop Solution' will serve as a facilitator to enable seamless access to various government schemes to the unorganised workers.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Dastardly strike

As terrorists kill seven people in Central Kashmir, concerns grow over the effectiveness of security measures

A disturbing pattern of targeted violence has resurfaced in Jammu and Kashmir, with seven killed in a cowardly terrorist attack. The people killed were part of the construction team working on the Z-Morh tunnel, which connects Gagangir to Sonamarg in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Yet another bomb blast occurred in the capital though no one was injured, which raises concerns about potential coordination between terrorist groups and the spread of violence beyond the Valley. While there is no direct evidence linking the incidents, the possibility of a broader security threat cannot be ignored. This latest attack is part of a troubling trend of escalating violence against migrant workers in the region, marking the fifth such incident this year. The recent killings underscore a persistent threat to life in Kashmir. This latest tragedy follows a series of deadly incidents in the Valley. The recent wave of terrorist attacks exposes critical vulnerability of security apparatus. While authorities, including J and K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah



and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, have condemned these acts and pledged to bring the perpetrators to justice, the recurrent nature of these attacks reveals deeper challenges in counter-terrorism measures and security protocols. The targeted nature of these attacks suggests a deliberate strategy to instill fear among migrant workers and disrupt ongoing development projects. By targeting migrant labourers involved in infrastructure work, terrorists aim to deter economic activities that could stabilise the region. These incidents not only hamper development but also erode the confidence of workers who play a crucial role in key infrastructure projects. Moreover, the attacks signify a broader

attempt to undermine the relative peace that has been maintained in recent years. Despite heightened security measures and the presence of the military in sensitive areas, the perpetrators have managed to carry out attacks on civilians, highlighting significant intelligence gaps and the ability of militants to exploit weaknesses in the security grid to target rather easy groups. A comprehensive review of security measures in Jammu and Kashmir is urgently needed. While military action remains essential, it needs to be complemented by robust intelligence gathering, better coordination between different security agencies and community-based approaches to countering extremist elements. The current situation also points to the need for upgrading the security apparatus around camps housing migrant workers and ensuring that projects with a high number of migrant labourers receive adequate protection. Another pressing issue is the socio-political narrative surrounding such incidents. There is a need for a unified political strategy that addresses not only the immediate security concerns but also the long-term socio-economic challenges that contribute to unrest. Investing in local economic opportunities, countering extremist ideologies through educational initiatives and strengthening intelligence network can make a lot of difference.

### PICTALK



A potter arranges freshly-made 'diyas' (earthen lamps) ahead of the Diwali festival, in Hyderabad

## Global Hunger Index: Misleading metrics

The accuracy and intent behind GHI rankings are suspect. Does the GHI truly reflect India's reality, or is it a motivated attempt to malign India's image?



SANTHOSH MATHEW

The recent Global Hunger Index (GHI) report, which places India at a dismal 105th position out of 127 countries, has raised eyebrows and sparked considerable debate. While hunger and malnutrition remain pressing global issues, the methodology and conclusions of the GHI, co-authored by two non-governmental organisations—Irish-based Concern Worldwide and German Welthungerhilfe—have drawn criticism, particularly from the Indian government and sections of society.

There is a growing concern that such reports may not just reflect statistics but also carry political and geopolitical undertones aimed at tarnishing India's image on the world stage. The GHI is based on four key indicators: the prevalence of undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality. The scores from these factors are compiled to place countries on a scale from zero (no hunger) to 100 (extreme hunger), with countries scoring closer to zero seen as having little or no hunger issues. India's score of 27.3 puts it in the "serious" hunger category, alongside 42 other countries. Critics of the GHI have raised several concerns about the methodology used in calculating India's score.

Firstly, the reliance on child mortality and child stunting indicators as primary components of the hunger index is problematic. India is a country with a large population, and while child malnutrition is a valid concern, this issue is not unique to India but rather shared by other developing countries. By focusing heavily on this aspect, the report seems to disproportionately penalise India. Additionally, the GHI report uses outdated data from global sources such as the World Health Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). India, like many countries, has been undergoing significant improvements in food security through government initiatives such as the National Food Security Act, the Midday Meal Scheme, and public distribution system reforms. However, these efforts do not



seem to be adequately represented in the data used for the GHI. Many believe that the Global Hunger Index is not just about numbers but also about shaping narratives. By positioning India in such a negative light, the report seems to overshadow the country's genuine achievements. India's economy is among the fastest-growing in the world, and its agricultural output has been consistently high. The country's food production is more than sufficient to meet the needs of its population. India has become a net exporter of food grains and has successfully launched programs to improve access to food for its vast population. Given this backdrop, how can India be ranked lower than countries facing severe internal strife, economic collapse and war, such as Afghanistan or even smaller nations like Bangladesh and Nepal?

It's essential to question the intentions behind these rankings. Are they an honest reflection of hunger, or do they serve other interests? Reports like the Global Hunger Index can have far-reaching consequences, not just for the countries they assess but also for global perceptions. The fact that the organisations behind the GHI—Concern Worldwide (Irish) and Welthungerhilfe (German)—hail from Western countries has not gone unnoticed. It raises the question of whether the



THE RELIANCE ON CHILD MORTALITY AND CHILD STUNTING INDICATORS AS PRIMARY COMPONENTS OF THE HUNGER INDEX IS PROBLEMATIC. INDIA IS A COUNTRY WITH A LARGE POPULATION, AND WHILE CHILD MALNUTRITION IS A VALID CONCERN, THIS ISSUE IS NOT UNIQUE TO INDIA

index is truly impartial or if it subtly reflects geopolitical biases. India has made significant strides in addressing hunger and malnutrition, but it seems that these efforts are often ignored or underplayed by such indices. For instance, the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, which provided free food grains to over 80 crore people during the COVID-19 pandemic, is one of the world's largest food security initiatives. The fact that India could provide this level of support during a global crisis contradicts the narrative of widespread hunger and undernourishment. To deny that hunger exists in India would be dishonest, but the situation is far more complex than a single ranking can capture. Hunger is not a static issue; it is deeply intertwined with poverty, access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure. The Indian government has been tackling these root causes of hunger through a multi-pronged approach that includes social welfare schemes, employment programmes like MGN-REGA, and nutrition programs targeted at women and children. Programmes such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) aim to provide supplementary nutrition to millions of pregnant and lactating women, along with children under six years of age.

Meanwhile, the Midday Meal Scheme, which serves nutritious meals to school children, has had a significant impact on reducing malnutrition. Despite these efforts, it is undeniable that India still faces challenges. The legacy of poverty, the vast size and population of the country, and regional disparities make it difficult to eliminate hunger overnight. The concerns raised by the Indian government about the Global Hunger Index are not without merit. The index, while claiming to provide an objective measure of hunger, fails to capture the ground realities of individual nations. India, being the second-most populous country in the world, is bound to face issues that smaller nations with more homogeneous populations do not. By painting India as a country where hunger is rampant, the GHI risks creating a false narrative that undermines the substantial progress made by the country. It also risks discouraging the efforts of those working tirelessly on the ground to ensure that no one goes to bed hungry.

What is needed is not biased rankings or politically motivated reports but genuine collaboration between nations to tackle the global hunger crisis. As we reflect on the GHI, one thing is clear: statistics alone do not tell the whole story. (The writer is an associate professor; views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### OMAR ADVOCATES STATEHOOD

Madam — Apropos of 'We will not give Kashmir' (October 20), the demand of the newly elected government of J and K under Omar Abdullah for full statehood is not at divergence with the vow of the Modi government on the floor of the Parliament for granting the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. The only difference is the time factor looking at the highly volatile and inflammable borders infested with Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and Pakistan's propaganda against India on all international platforms. Omar Abdullah government should not vie to show down with the Centre under the political pressure of those who lost elections and whom people rejected in Assembly elections. The National Conference, while keeping Congress at bay, has a better opportunity of coordination with the Modi government for betterment and all-round growth of the State as Congress has turned itself into a sworn enemy of PM Modi and is prone to confrontation with him. People have elected the National Conference for development, education, health, industry and job creation, not for confrontation with the Centre. Terrorism is the biggest threat to the State for destabilising it, and it comes from across the border. Since the Indian army and paramilitary forces are well equipped to combat terrorism and neutralise the terrorists, the State government should restrict itself to the state administration. Vinod Johri | Delhi

#### INDIA'S HUNGER CHALLENGE

Madam — The 2024 Global Hunger Index report, in which India ranks 105 among 127 countries, must not be ignored. The nutrition indicators for children under 5 years show that 1 out of 3 children (35.5 per cent) is a victim of stunting. Now, how can a country compete with others when the growth of more than one third of its future workforce has been stunted for not getting enough food to eat? A study says that

#### Mitigate climate Change



Climate change refers to a long-term shift in temperature and weather conditions. These shifts may be natural but since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change. Burning coal, oil and gas to generate electricity and heat or to make goods like cement, steel and electronics produces carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that pollute the air to

a large extent. As temperature rises, more moisture evaporates, which exacerbates extreme rainfall and flooding causes more destructive storms. Climate change also changes water availability, making it scarcer in more regions.

According to the Climate Change Act 2017, local bodies must consider climate change when preparing their municipal health and wellbeing plan. Local bodies must raise awareness about climate change and how to adopt and mitigate its effects. They must encourage electric vehicles within city limits. Establishing minimum energy for housing infrastructure and renewable energy by creating ordinances and bylaws to help the community adopt climate change is the urgent work of the urban local bodies. P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

many gig workers in India have to work for 10 to 14 hours daily for their employers to earn less than Rs 10,000 per month. While overwork damages their health, the poor wage makes their children and family members compromise on food intake.

This is nothing but exploitation. The Centre should allocate more funds for introducing breakfast in addition to the midday meal for all government and aided schools from the nursery level. It is highly commendable that some states and union territories provide additional items such as milk, eggs, and fruits to students from their own resources. But why should not the centre itself allocate the funds for the same for giving those nutritious food items to students all over the country? Otherwise, students of all the states in India will not get those additional, nutritious food items. Sujit De | Kolkata

#### KIWIS STUN INDIA

Madam — It's double the joy of winning overseas and certainly for New Zealand,

## The quiet struggles and shifting realities of ageing

Having left the traditional joint family behind, we now face loneliness and the stark realities of ageing in a world that moves rather fast

Recently, I sat sipping my cup of tea in quiet contemplation as life moved around me. Unbidden, a strange thought struck me. In my younger days, I often felt that the old were more rigid in their approach. I am in my mid-sixties. I still judge those older than me. In the olden days, at my age, I would have been expected to move out of the household to spend time in quiet meditation. Not any longer. We continue to enjoy the worldly pleasures of life, with the added baggage of rigidity in attitude. We are more self-centred. There are many like me in the age group that we call seniors. I did not have to look far to seek reasons for these changes. I was in the hospital a few months back attending to the admission and discharge formalities for my father. I was told it was essential for an attendant to be present to sign various documents at different stages of the hospitalisation. I do not know if these are mandated rules or if hospitals do this to comply with



medico-legal requirements. These have serious implications for many ailing single seniors with children in distant lands. We do not contemplate a life of dependence on others when we are young. Having led a life on our terms for decades, it is difficult to adjust to a life with rules not set by us. We belong to the generation that has moved out of the age-old joint family milieu to set up unit families. The interaction with even the immediate family is limited to meeting at festivals. One gets to meet the extended family only during family weddings, busy as they are in the daily grind of their units. It is not surprising that we now find ourselves at a crossroads. The young have their own lives and cannot be expect-

ed to be available for each ache and pain. A few years back I met a younger acquaintance over coffee. The seniors within his community encouraged young professionals to join the governing body of the community welfare association extending unconditional support. As things settled, the young lot no longer needed to consult the old for each decision. The seniors felt rebuffed, and relationships soured. I recently flew with a medical professional who established a thriving chain of pathology clinics. Approaching 60, he has sold his business. He is now working towards establishing old age homes for the seniors. I was apprehensive because of the stigma attached to these facilities. The old feel a sense of abandonment; the young feel guilty. To face these challenges, he is starting daycare centres for seniors, to spend a few hours engaged in activities of their choice, with adequate medical facilities available. As my medical friend expounded, the

major challenge for the old is loneliness resulting in inadequate communication, which in time may lead to dementia. I would have attributed obsession with self to insecurities over the advancing age, had I not witnessed the same even in the young. A feeling of inadequacy can strike anyone irrespective of age.

We are yet to evolve into a society that respects and cares for all. It is the responsibility of each member of the community to help others feel loved and cherished. American author and motivational speaker, Felice Buscaglia, known as 'Dr Love', said, "It is not enough to have lived. We should be determined to live for something. May I suggest that it be creating joy for others, sharing what we have for the betterment of personkind, bringing hope to the lost and love to the lonely."

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA





## FIRST COLUMN

## THE FEAR OF LOSS AND THE QUEST FOR INNER PEACE

Accepting life's impermanence may be the key to transcending fear



RAVI VALLURI

Humans are intrinsically fearful of loss. Misplacement can assume several dimensions. Say mislaying of property, wealth, recognition, position, power, pelf, health and most importantly, life. John's (name changed) steely voice suddenly trembled and quivered as he answered the pretentious cell phone. Rachel (name changed), his daughter had met with a grievous car crash and was wheeled into the ICU of an estimable hospital. Death is the action or fact of dying or being killed, the end of life of a person or an organism.

Several years ago, a Japanese warrior was captured by his adversaries and was confined to a dungeon. That fateful night he tossed and turned restlessly and was unable to sleep, fearing the following day when he would be interrogated, tortured and eventually executed. He was staring death in its face. Then suddenly he remembered the priceless words of his Zen Master. "Tomorrow is not real. It is an illusion. The only reality is now." Heeding these esoteric words, the warrior overcame the exacting condition he was encountering and soon his mind became tranquil and he fell asleep. Suffering and fear arise in our minds when humans confront ailment or impending death. No one wishes to pass from being to non-being.

The credo of the human mind is the desire to remain eternally immortal. Millions of cells in the human body perish and are regenerated. But we are not mindful or wakeful of this reality. Do humans compose dirges or elegies like Catullus or Propertius for the dead cells? Or do we carouse and indulge in delirium on the birth of new cells and recite 'Happy Birthday'



songs? "No one wants to die. Even the people who want to go to heaven do not want to die to get there! And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it." Be it Rachel or the Japanese warrior no one has ever attained perpetuity or everlastingness; however bare-knuckled a person may be, he remains a glass jaw to the reality.

Yet youngsters today cannonaded by gizmos and technology become weary and bored of life at the young ages of twenty, thirty and hotfoot to snuff out their lives. Life is indeed holy and hallowed, too valuable and will remain a mystery that should not be recklessly given up. Yet there is no covenant or magic potion which guarantees deathlessness. Identifying and unravelling this mystery has confronted the minds of spiritualists, religious congregations and those of scientists and technocrats alike. A Zen Master was unwell and desired to cast away his body. His pupils implored him that he ought to live longer and disseminate the profound knowledge. It so happened that one disciple remarked, "Whether it is life or death, let it be." The Master was ecstatic with the response and passed away. "Let it be" is much more than a mere aphorism, it is a state of mind.

Our shastras impress that the human mind is influenced by place, time, food, past impressions and associations and the actions of individuals. The footprints bear both efficacious and antipathetic impacts on the human mind. Humans are enslaved by the above-mentioned factors and habits and, as a result, involuntarily superintendents our perceptions, attitudes and behaviour.

And over a period if we are not aware of these negative emotions they compound into anxiety, anger, aggression, covetousness, low self-esteem, and fear. Knowledge about the impermanence of life and variegated dimensions can be gained only through regular practice of pranayama, Sudarshan Kriya, meditation, or mindful observation of breath. This is the secret and the only truth.

*(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)*

## Unlocking the full potential of GatiShakti



UTTAM GUPTA

The PM GatiShakti initiative is revolutionising India's infrastructure by integrating digital planning tools to expedite project completion and improve multimodal connectivity

According to the Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Amardeep Singh Bhatia, as many as 208 big-ticket infrastructure projects including roads (101), railways (73), urban development (12) and oil and gas (4) worth Rs 1539,000 crore have been recommended for approval under the PM GatiShakti initiative so far. These projects have been recommended by an inter-ministerial group known as the Network Planning Group (NPG) constituted under the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (NMP). Launched in October 2021, the PM Gati Shakti NMP is a transformative Rs 100 lakh crore initiative aimed at revolutionising the infrastructure in India over the next five years.

Its vision is to create a world-class integrated infrastructure that improves the ease of living, boosts economic growth and makes Indian businesses more competitive. It does so by expediting project completion, reducing timelines, enhancing multimodal connectivity, boosting efficiency across sectors, benefiting logistics (a jargon for handling, storage and transportation) creating jobs and fostering innovation. How does it work? The PM GatiShakti NMP has been developed as a Digital Master Planning tool. It works on a dynamic Geographic Information System (GIS) platform wherein data on specific action plans of all the 16 Ministries/Departments dealing with infrastructure sectors as well as of the States have been incorporated within a comprehensive database.

The NMP portal has over 1,600 layers of geospatial data, showing all physical and social infrastructure of an area viz land, ports, forests, and highways and so on. The NMP revolves around seven primary sectors that are fundamental to economic growth and ensuring seamless connectivity. These sectors are roads, railways, ports, airports, mass transport, waterways and logistics infrastructure.

These are further supported and complemented by sectors like energy (all fuels such as petrol, diesel, ATF, natural gas and power etc) transmission, IT communication, bulk water and sewerage, and social infrastructure. The inter-ministerial NPG has representations from the connectivity infrastructure ministries/departments, involving their heads of network planning division to ensure unified planning and integration of the proposals.

The NPG meets every fortnight and appraises infra projects to ensure multi-modality (a term used to connote several different modes of transportation to get cargo from the factory/port/warehouse to a client's front door), synchronisation of efforts, and comprehensive development in and around the project location. All logistics and connectivity infrastructure projects worth over Rs 500 crore are routed through the NPG. The NPG's approval is required even before making a DPR (Detailed Project Report) at the planning stage. Thereafter, the project follows the normal procedure of approval by the Public Investment Board (PIB) or Department of



AS MANY AS 156 GAPS IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO PORTS AND FOR MOVEMENT OF BULK COMMODITIES LIKE COAL, CEMENT, FERTILIZERS AND FOOD GRAINS, HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR INTERVENTION UNDER THE PM GATI SHAKTI INITIATIVE

Expenditure under the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Cabinet.

Put simply, NMP provides on a centralised portal, a 360-degree view of all the existing projects/initiatives, those under implementation as well as projects under planning stage across all ministries and departments and offers visibility into all critical data relevant to efficient planning and execution. It helps in the identification of critical gaps in infrastructure, helping to select the most efficient routes for transportation, reducing costs, and minimising delays.

As many as 156 gaps in infrastructure to ports and for movement of bulk commodities like coal, cement, fertilisers and food grains, have been identified for intervention under the PM GatiShakti initiative.

The plan also helps in prioritising projects more effectively by leveraging cross-sector interactions, ensuring that the ministries work in harmony to align the projects and allocate resources optimally - based on national priorities - avoiding duplication and redundancies.

The upfront approval by the NPG even before the ministry prepares the DPR can help it in making the RIGHT choices, prevent delays and avoid colossal wastage of resources that were germane to the earlier dispensations when the ministries and departments were working in silos - in an uncoordinated manner - unaware of the happenings and work in progress in other departments and bereft of the crucial data on KEY parameters. The PM GatiShakti is a robust system working on real time basis in a dynamic framework to guide project planning and execution (monitoring through satellite imagery ensures that the ministries can track progress and make necessary

adjustments to keep projects on schedule).

The phenomenal increase in the capacity in all crucial areas such as ports, airports, railways, highways, roads and so on is a testament to the success of efforts made under PM GatiShakti.

But, we have a long way to go. The target of Rs 100 lakh crore investment for building the infrastructure over five years was set by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her maiden Budget for 2019-20 (out of this, 39 per cent or Rs 3900,000 crore was to come from the Centre and an equal amount from States and the balance Rs 2200,000 crore from the private sector).

Against this, the investment covered under PM GatiShakti is Rs 1539,000 crore which is just about 15 percent. Even when we take this as a proportion of the investment commitment by the Centre (presumably all projects under PM GatiShakti are centrally sponsored), this works out to 40 per cent. As for the States, they are far behind in meeting their overall investment target of Rs 3900,000 crore.

And, very few of them such as Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat have boarded the PM GatiShakti platform.

The platform by ensuring visibility, identification of bottlenecks and better coordination can help expedite approvals but it can't be a substitute. The approvals have to be given by the concerned authorities at the central and State levels. Here, projects face long delays especially when it comes to getting environmental and land clearances.

Local protests exacerbate the delays. 'Working in silos' syndrome doesn't go away just because Modi has given a platform to the bureaucrats in various Ministries to sit together and thrash out issues.

Sticking to their stance, especial-

ly when it comes to staking their claim to resources (such conflicts are seen more in major projects like roads and railways) often leads to delays. Further, a lack of coordination with the states, as seen in the Sagarmala and Bharatmala projects, has led to slower progress.

Outdated or incomplete data is a major bottleneck. For instance, while land records are digitised in 13 states, the rest lag. This hampers the implementation of projects in states where land records are not digitised as well as roads/highways projects, power transmission lines, and oil and gas pipelines passing through these states.

Even as the PM GatiShakti platform allows for real-time tracking, the authorities don't always make project updates regular, which delays completion. This is particularly true of rural road projects in many districts leading to slow progress.

The investment by the private sector is nowhere near the target of Rs 2200,000 crore set by Sitharaman. In the roads/highways sector, even as the government has asked private players to come under public-private partnerships (PPPs) mode, the latter's response isn't encouraging leaving it to the former to take on the load.

The bottlenecks lead to continuing project delays and cost overruns which cause high tariff/service charges across all sectors highways, railways, ports, airports, power transmission, fuel transportation etc.

These come in the way of making Indian businesses more competitive and ease of living for the common man. All Stakeholders particularly the States should work to surmount the bottlenecks to enable PM GatiShakti to deliver its full potential.

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

## How India's workforce can benefit from the world's growing demand

Tapping into this opportunity requires a systematic approach to connect Indian talent with international employers

India's labour force is one of its greatest assets, with millions of skilled workers spread across various industries, including healthcare, construction, information technology and engineering. However, despite this abundance of talent, many of these workers struggle to find suitable employment within the country. The global labour market, on the other hand, is increasingly facing shortages in these same sectors. Bridging this gap has been a significant challenge.

Global Skill Shortage and Demand for Indian Talent over the past decade, countries across Europe, the Middle East, and parts of Asia have been facing critical shortages in skilled



ADITI BANERJEE

labour. Factors like ageing populations, changing work preferences, and evolving technological needs have driven these regions to seek out talent from countries like India. Healthcare, construction, IT, and logistics are some of the industries experiencing the most pressing shortages. We need to recognise this demand early on and respond by connecting skilled Indian

professionals with global employers. This will help in aligning the skill sets of Indian workers with international standards and job requirements, offering thousands secure employment overseas.

A Systematic Approach to Global Mobilisation. The workforce mobilization model should ensure that the process is smooth and transparent for both the workers and the employers. The organisation focuses on several key stages: **Talent and Skill Gaps:** We should conduct thorough assessments of candidates, ensuring they meet international job requirements. By collaborating with top training institutes, they also provide upskilling opportunities to candidates who need it.

**Job Matching:** With established relationships with employers in countries such as Germany, Canada, and the UAE, organisations can ensure that candidates are placed in roles that match their qualifications and aspirations.

**Navigating Complexities:** Overseas job placement is fraught with regulatory hurdles, but offering complete support with visas, documentation, and legal compliance, ensures candidates can focus on building their careers without administrative delays.

**Supporting Worker Welfare:** The organisation provides post-placement assistance, offering support with relocation and helping candidates adjust to new cultural environments. This ensures long-term success



for workers abroad. Shaping the Industry's Future Beyond individual placements, the organisation's work is in shaping the broader landscape of international labour migration. There has to be a system for fair recruitment practices and the protection of workers' rights. This is critical in an industry that is often plagued by stories of worker exploitation and unethical recruitment agencies.

A transparent process ensures that workers are fully informed of the terms of their contracts before they travel abroad. This approach not only safeguards the interests of Indian workers but also builds trust with global employers.

The global demand for skilled labour is at an all-time high, and India has the talent to meet this need. Many organisations have pitched in to fill this gap. 'Magic Billion' creates dignified, well-paying employment opportunities for Indian workers overseas. Since starting in 2018, it has facilitated over 4,000 Indian workers being placed in global roles. It is just not helping individuals find jobs; we're building sustainable careers that elevate both the worker and their families.

**Women Empowerment:** A particularly noteworthy aspect of such an organisation's work is its focus on women and young professionals. The global job market offers unique opportunities for these groups, particularly in industries like healthcare and hospitality. Targeted programs need to aim at empowering women to enter these fields and secure high-paying jobs abroad. This is especially significant in a country like India, where barriers to women's employment are still prevalent in many sectors. The organisation's efforts to provide training and certification for nursing professionals, for example, have opened up opportunities for hundreds of women to work in countries where there is a growing demand for healthcare work-

ers. This not only benefits the individual but also creates ripple effects for their families and communities.

**Economic Benefits:** India's skilled labour force is not only contributing to the economies of the countries where they work but also bringing significant benefits to India itself. Remittances sent home by overseas workers are a major source of foreign exchange and play a crucial role in the economic development. By placing workers in global jobs, we can help alleviate some of the domestic unemployment pressures. This is especially important for sectors like construction where there is a surplus of skilled labour in India.

*(The writer is CEO & Co-Founder of Magic Billion; views are personal)*



# Pakistani terrorist handlers target one of India's most strategic road projects in J and K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Terrorist handlers sitting across Pakistan have once again attempted to derail the peace process close on the heels of a successful Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Islamabad by targeting construction workers of India's one of the strategic road construction projects in Jammu and Kashmir. A doctor from the Nadigam area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district along with six employees of APCO Infratech, a private construction agency constructing the Z-Morh tunnel on the Srinagar-Sonamarg highway was killed in one of the most provocative strikes in recent years in the Kashmir valley. The Resistance Front (TRF), an affiliate of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), has claimed responsibility for the attack. Reacting strongly to the provocative terror strike, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the dastardly terror attack on civilians in Gagangir, J&K, is a despicable act of cowardice. Those involved in this heinous act will not be spared and will face the harshest response from our security forces. "At this moment of immense grief, I extend my sincerest condolences to the families of the deceased. Praying for the speedy recovery of those injured," Amit Shah said in a post on X (earlier Twitter). The gruesome terror strike inside the campsite has also exposed the vulnerability of migrant construction workers engaged by private agencies without caring for their adequate safety and security. The attack also signals a shift in the strategy of Pakistan-based terrorist handlers. After launching a series of strikes on the security forces convoys



in the Jammu region this time they targeted the civilians working on ground zero to earn their livelihood. Following the strike, several workers have decided to shift to safer locations in Ganderbal and Srinagar to prevent any fresh strikes. A large-scale search operation is also underway, with the Assam Rifles, CRPF, and the Jammu and Kashmir Police's Special Operations Group (SOG) involved. Senior police officers, including the Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat and the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir range VK Birdi are overseeing the efforts. A team from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) also visited the campsite ahead of launching detailed investigations into the case. Meanwhile, the mortal remains of victims of a gruesome terror attack near Sonamarg in the Ganderbal district were sent home for the last journey on a day when newly elected members of the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly were administered oath by the pro-term speaker Mubarak Gul in Srinagar. According to ground reports

around 8.00 p.m. on Sunday the heavily armed terrorists barged inside the campsite without facing any resistance and started indiscriminate firing on the construction workers. As chaos prevailed the terrorists also targeted some employees present inside the staff mess killing a local doctor, a Jammu-based designer Shashi Abrol, Safety Manager from Bihar Mohd Faheem Nasir and Mechanical Manager Anil Shukla from Madhya Pradesh. The other dead included Gurmeet Singh son of Dharm Singh of Gurdaspur Punjab; Mohammad Hanif and Kaleem from Bihar. At least five critically injured workers have been admitted to the Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) for advanced treatment. Before fleeing the terrorists also torched two vehicles stationed in the campsite. Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said security forces will avenge the construction workers' death in the brutal attack in Ganderbal, and "exact a price" that the terrorists will remember for the time to come. Sinha called for justice to the victims as he blamed Pakistan

family members of the victims, the spokesperson said. Under the security-related expenditure, Rs 6 lakh is to be given to the next of kin of each deceased civilian and Rs 15 lakh as an immediate measure to be provided by APCO Infratech. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh to be provided to all the injured. APCO Infratech will also provide financial assistance to the families of civilians on roll under Corporate Personal Accident Policy and five years of their gross CTC as compensation from insurance. Sinha said, "Though it is an irreparable loss and cannot be compensated monetarily, we are taking concrete measures for the families of the civilian victims so that they live a life of dignity." Hurriyat Conference leaders including Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Monday condemned the terrorist attack on a workers' camp in Ganderbal district. "Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and senior members of Hurriyat including Prof Ghani Bhat, Bilal Ghani Lone and Masroor Abbas Ansari expressed deep sorrow and grief over the dastardly killings in Gagangir," the Hurriyat said in a statement. PDP leader Iltija Mufti said elections or big-ticket events like international marathons "cannot hide the truth that there is a problem in Kashmir which needs genuine attempts to resolve it." "Elections, marathons, a new government being sworn in. None of these can conceal or brush under the carpet a truth most unpalatable. "There is a problem at hand in Kashmir which for decades has claimed innocent lives & will continue to rage. Unless we acknowledge it & make genuine attempts to resolve it," she posted on X.

## Wife of slain designer was observing Karva Chauth fast, entire family in shock

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The wife of Shashi Abrol, one of the Jammu-based employees of Apco Infratech, was observing fast on the occasion of Karva Chauth on Sunday when he was killed by terrorists inside the staff mess of a makeshift campsite in the Sonamarg area of Ganderbal district. The incident has left the entire family in a state of shock. Shashi, who has been working with Apco Infratech as a designer for over seven years now, leaves behind his wife and two kids. His elder son recently joined an engineering college in Bhopal and his daughter is currently studying in class 4. Shashi Abrol spoke to his wife for the last time via video call around 6.30 p.m. on Sunday. His sister, who was consoling her sister-in-law informed visiting media persons, "My bhabhi, dressed in her traditional attire and sporting 'Heena' on her palms, spoke to my brother on Sunday evening as she wanted to inform him that she was going to join special prayers on the occasion and would again call him past 8.00 p.m. at the time of breaking her fast. The couple agreed to close the call after seeing each other for the last time. On her return when she started contacting her husband she received no response. "We told her that he may be busy at work but when there was no response from his side till late night we were worried for his well-



being". "Till late at night no one from the Apco Infratech or the government informed us about the terror strike in their camp where he along with six others were killed. We came to know through the media in the morning when we read the newspapers that our loved one is one among those victims of the gruesome terror strike", Shashi Abrol's sister said. The family spent the whole day waiting to receive the mortal remains. LG Manoj Sinha met the family at their residence in Talab Tillo area. In Kashmir, the family of Dr Shahnawaz Ahmad Dar wept inconsolably after learning about his death in the terror strike. Dr Shahnawaz was killed by terrorists while he was having dinner with other colleagues. He solemnized the marriage of his elder daughter last Wednesday and had promised the family to return home to welcome his newly married daughter as per their rituals on Tuesday. Unfortunately, Dr Shahnawaz

returned home covered in a shroud early Monday morning. He leaves behind his son and two daughters. The entire village of Nadigam in central Kashmir's Budgam district mourned his death and assembled at his residence to join the funeral procession. Two cabinet ministers Javed Ahmad Dar and Sakina Itoo visited his residence to pay their last respects. A Jammu-based expert who often visited the Z-Morh tunnel site for technical audit remembered Safety Manager Mohd Faheem from Bihar and Anil Shukla from Madhya Pradesh as thorough professionals who were working round the clock at the location to ensure timely completion of the project. "They worked hard on the project site and when it was ready for the launch they wouldn't be present there. They sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. The Nation must pay rich homage to them and stand by their families", the expert said.

## CM Yogi's Diwali gift to cops

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Sewa Padak, while 729 were awarded the Utkrisht Sewa Padak by the union Home Affairs Ministry. Furthermore, three gazetted officers and employees were honored with the Mukhyamantri Utkrisht Sewa Padak. The DGP also recognised exceptional service by awarding the Utkrisht Sewa Samman Chinh to honorary and gazetted personnel, along with the Sarahniya Seva Samman Chinh to 455 police officers. To further motivate the police force, the DG Commendation Discs were awarded to the gazetted officers and non-gazetted personnel, including 29 Platinum, 51 Gold, and 783 Silver. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that since 2017, over 1,54,000 recruitments have been made across various positions in the state's police force, including more than 22,000 women personnel. Additionally, more than 1,41,000 personnel have been promoted to various gazetted posts, and the recruitment process is currently underway for over 60,000 positions, he added. The chief minister highlighted that in the past seven years, 17 police personnel have shown extraordinary bravery and made the ultimate sacrifice,

while 1,618 officers have been injured in the line of duty to uphold the rule of law in the state. To combat crime, action has been taken against 77,811 individuals under the Gangster's Act. Effective prosecution in 68 cases involving mafia and criminal gangs has led to life sentences for 31 mafia members and 66 of their associates, with two individuals receiving death sentences. Additionally, illegal assets worth Rs 4.57 crore amassed by mafia members and their gangs have been confiscated. The chief minister stated that from March 22, 2017 to October 2, 2024, the Anti-Romeo Squad conducted checks at over 1.02 crore locations, taking action against more than 3.68 crore individuals. During this period, 23,375 cases were registered, with legal action initiated against 31,517 individuals, while over 1.39 crore people were released with warnings. To enhance women's safety, dedicated women's beats and help desks have been set up in every police station across the state. A total of 10,378 women beats have been allocated, and 15,130 women police personnel have been appointed in all districts. Additionally, more than 11.71 lakh CCTV's have been installed as part of Operation Trinetra to bolster security. Chief Minister Yogi said that

under a campaign in the state, more than 1,08,037 loudspeakers were removed from religious places, or their sound was controlled, as per the guidelines of the Supreme Court. From May 31, 2017, to October 2, 2024, a better security environment was presented by the police through foot patrolling at more than 2.68 crore places. Chief Minister Yogi acknowledged that the government has received multiple complaints about compensation provided to the families of officers and personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty. Reports indicated that the families — especially the spouses and parents of the deceased — were not receiving the full amount stipulated in the official government order. In response, the government has decided to amend the existing order to ensure that the full ex-gratia amount — ranging from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 50 lakh, as applicable — is directly disbursed to the spouse, parents or legal heirs of the deceased personnel, he remarked. The event was attended by Minister Asim Arun, Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh, DGP Prashant Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Deepak Kumar, Additional Director General of Police Sujit Pandey, and Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob, among others.

## ED seizes more than 300 sales deeds of properties acquired by former YSRC MP Satyanarayana

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate Monday said it has seized more than 300 sale deeds of properties "acquired" by former YSRC MP M V V Satyanarayana and some others, apart from 'benami' land passbooks, following raids against them in an Andhra Pradesh government land grab case. The federal agency conducted searches against the former legislator and an auditor, Gannamaneni Venkateswara Rao, on October 19 at five locations in Visakhapatnam. Satyanarayana was a YSRC MP from 2019 to 2024. He unsuccessfully contested the Andhra Pradesh assembly polls earlier this year from the Visakhapatnam East seat. The case pertains to a 12.51-acre land (with a market value of more than Rs 200 crore) that was allotted by the state government to the promoters of a company for creating

housing projects for old-age people and orphans. The ED said in a statement that the Andhra Pradesh Police FIR file at the Arilova police station in Visakhapatnam charged Satyanarayana, Rao and a third person, Gadde Brahmaji, for "forging" signatures, "fabricating" sale documents and using "coercion" to "grab" the land. The land located in Yendana village of Visakhapatnam was allotted by the state government in 2008 to a company named Hayageeva Farms and Developers for the construction of cottages for the elderly and orphans. The land, according to the ED, was registered in the name of the company in 2010 on payment of Rs 5.63 crore. "However, as per records of Andhra Pradesh Registration and Stamps Department, the market value of the said property as on the date of conveyance deed was around Rs 30.25 crore," it said.

## Religious leaders will be allowed to construct permanent ashrams on lines of Haridwar: MP CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ UJJAIN



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday said saints, seers and other religious leaders will be permitted to construct permanent ashrams in Ujjain on the lines of Haridwar. The chief minister spoke at a press conference about preparations for the Simhastha Mela, slated to be held in the holy city in 2028. "Ujjain is known for saints. Simhastha Mela, held once in 12 years, will be organised in 2028. Sadhus and saints need a proper space for lodging and other activities in the city. Considering this, the state government has plans to build permanent ashrams by giving top priority to saints," Yadav said. He said like the facilities for saints and seers in Haridwar, permanent ashrams will be built in Ujjain, and the Ujjain Development Authority will implement the plan. Saints, seers, heads of Akharas and

other religious leaders can invite everyone and work towards building their ashram, he said. The chief minister said in view of the Simhastha mela, work will also be undertaken on basic facilities like roads, electricity, drinking water, etc. A plan has been prepared with the help of public representatives to develop Ujjain as a religious destination like Haridwar, he said. Yadav said permanent infrastructure works, including four-lane and six-lane bridges, will be built while working on basic facilities, and ashrams

will also come up simultaneously. Priority will also be given to set up Dharamshalas, medical centres, and ayurveda centres, among other establishments, through interested devotees, he said. Yadav said permission will be given to saints and sadhus for ashrams, with adequate space for parking. He further informed that the tender process for the Ujjain-Indore six-lane highway is over, and the foundation stone for the Ujjain-Jaora Green Field Four Lane Road will be laid soon. He further said that in-principle approval has also been given for the operation of the Indore-Ujjain Metro train, and a circle Vande Metro train will also be operated connecting Ujjain, Dewas, Fatehabad and Indore. All railway routes of Ujjain were being strengthened, the chief minister said, adding that the existing airstrip will also be upgraded to an airport.

## Complete recruitment of 78,000 police personnel ahead of Assembly polls: Nitish Kumar tells DGP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday directed DGP Alok Raj to complete the process for the recruitment of 78,000 police personnel ahead of the assembly elections in the state due next year. Speaking at a function where appointment letters were handed to 1,239 newly recruited sub-inspectors, Kumar said his government was planning to double the sanctioned strength of the police force to 2.29 lakh. While addressing the gathering, he turned towards the DGP with folded hands and said, "I am telling you, complete the process for the recruitment of 78,000 police personnel in the next six months. There is an assembly election in the state next year... Therefore, recruitment should be completed in six months." "The current strength of the Bihar Police is 1.10 lakh. We have to increase it and make it 2.29 lakh. The recruitment

process of 21,000 police personnel is going on. Formalities have also been completed for the recruitment of another 20,000 police personnel. The remaining 78,000 personnel should be recruited in the coming six months," he added. Kumar said it has to be ensured that 35 per cent of women are recruited into the force. Stating that the number of women in the police force has increased to about 30,000, he claimed that no other state has so many women personnel. "Appointment of woman police officers is making things easier for women com-

plaintains," the CM said, maintaining that the law and order situation has improved in the state. "The work of the police stations has been divided into two parts -- investigation and law and order, so that the work can be executed quickly and in a better manner. People know about the law and order situation in the state before 2005. It was not good. Now, people remain out of their homes till late at night and do their work fearlessly," he said. Kumar said he had promised 10 lakh jobs in 2020, and his government has so far given employment to 7.16 lakh people. He said the police force has an important role in making the state developed. "Bihar Police should continue to discharge its responsibilities in a better way. I once again congratulate all the newly appointed sub-inspectors of police and wish them all the best for the future and hope that they will perform their responsibilities well," he said.

## India and China...

From page 1

India has been maintaining that its ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas. In all negotiations since the standoff began, India has been pressing the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to disengage from the Depsang and Demchok areas. Last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said roughly 75 per cent of the "disengagement problems" with China are sorted out but the bigger issue has been the increasing militarisation of the frontier. "Now those negotiations are going on. We made some progress. I would say roughly you can say about 75 per cent of the disengagement problems are sorted out," he said at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. "We still have

some things to do," he said. As regards the upcoming summit in Kazan, themed "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security," will provide a platform for leaders to discuss key global issues. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the summit offers an opportunity to review progress on BRICS initiatives and explore new areas for cooperation. Prime Minister Modi is expected to hold bilateral meetings with leaders from BRICS nations and other invited participants in Kazan, Russia during the visit. The grouping, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, has expanded to include Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates.

## Delhi Bomb investigation...

From page 1

"If the Indian coward agency and their master think they can hire filthy goons to target our members to silence our voice then they live in a fool's world. They can't imagine how close we are to them and how capable we are to strike anytime #KhalistanZindabad #JLI," read a Telegram post by "Justice League India" handle which has less than 400 subscribers. The post surfaced on social media late on Sunday evening pointing to the possible involvement of pro-Khalistani separatists behind the blast. "The police have written to Telegram to the know details of the creator of the group - Justice League Indian - in which the CCTV of the blast was shared with a Khalistan Zindabad watermark on it," a police source said.

According to sources, the police have reviewed footage of over 100 CCTVs from around the crime scene, and on the routes leading to and from the location so far. "No concrete suspects have been identified in the CCTV footage during the investigation. Only blurry images of two individuals have been seen, but their faces are not clearly visible, including a suspect in a white T-shirt spotted at the blast site, a night before the explosion," the source stated. Teams of Delhi Police Special Cell, Crime Branch and local police are investigating the case. An FIR under Sections 326 (g) (mischievous with severe consequences to public safety) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and Explosives Act was registered at Prashant Vihar police station against

unknown persons. During the course of investigation, local inquiries revealed that there had been a loud noise accompanied by white fumes of smoke. The blast caused a hole in the boundary wall of the school. "Additionally, window panes and signboards of the shops opposite the CRPF school were damaged due to the blast's impact. Caller Akash S/o Ajay Singh R/o B-10, Prashant Vihar, Delhi has been interrogated and he revealed that he was sleeping at his home and he heard a voice of explosion, so he called the PCR. However, no eyewitness is found at the spot," the FIR stated. It added that during the inspection, white powder was found scattered near the site. The area was immediately cordoned off, and senior officers were informed about the situation.



# Lebanon assesses damage after wave of Israeli strikes on Hezbollah-run financial institution

AP ■ BEIRUT

Lebanese were surveying the damage on Monday after overnight Israeli strikes hit nearly a dozen branches of a Hezbollah-run financial institution that Israel says is used to fund attacks but where many ordinary people keep their savings. The strikes targeted Al-Qard Al-Hassan branches in the southern neighbourhoods of Beirut, across southern Lebanon and in the Bekaa, where Hezbollah has a strong presence. One strike flattened a nine-story building with a branch inside it. Smoke was still rising from several locations on Monday and bulldozers were removing the debris. The Israeli military had issued evacuation warnings ahead of

the strikes, and there were no reports of casualties. Israel invaded Lebanon earlier this month, saying it aims to push Hezbollah back from the border after more than a year of rocket, missile and drone attacks that began after Palestinian Hamas militants launched their surprise October 7, 2023, attack into Israel from the Gaza Strip. Israeli airstrikes have pounded large areas of Lebanon for weeks, forcing over a million people to flee their homes. Avichay Adrae, the Arabic language spokesman for the Israeli military, said warplanes targeted several locations "used to store money for the military arm of Hezbollah", including Al-Qard Al-Hassan, which he said finances arms purchases and is used to pay Hezbollah fighters.

He said Hezbollah stores hundreds of millions of dollars in the branches, without providing evidence, and that the strikes were aimed at preventing the group from rearming. In a series of tweets late Sunday, the Israeli military released maps noting the locations of the branches it planned to target, asking residents nearby to evacuate. Thousands of people fled, jamming streets in the capital. Local Lebanese TV networks sought to reassure the public that areas in central Beirut were not listed as targets after a map issued by the Israeli military indicated it would target an upscale mall that was incorrectly labelled as the location of a branch. The Israeli military did not target the site. The institution, which has more than 30 branches across Lebanon, tried to reassure cus-

tomers, saying it had evacuated all its branches and relocated gold and other deposits to safe areas. The registered non-profit, sanctioned by the United States and Saudi Arabia, has long served as an alternative to Lebanon's banks, which have imposed restrictions in the face of a severe financial crisis that began in 2019. Its name in Arabic means "the benevolent loan", and Hezbollah has used it to entrench its support among the Shiite population in a country where state and financial institutions have failed in recent years. Still, many of its customers are civilians unaffiliated with Hezbollah. The strikes came after US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin 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. In a separate development, the Israeli military apologised for a strike on Sunday in southern Lebanon that killed three Lebanese army soldiers. It said it targeted a vehicle in an area that Hezbollah had recently used for attacks without realising it belonged to the Lebanese military. The military said it is "not operating against the Lebanese Army and apologises for these unwanted circumstances". Lebanon's army is a respected institution within the country, but it is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend Lebanon from Israel's invasion. The army has largely kept to the sidelines as Israel and Hezbollah have traded blows over the past year.



Rescue workers use a bulldozer to remove rubble of destroyed buildings at the site of an Israeli airstrike on Sunday night that hit several branches of the Hezbollah-run Qard al-Hassan Association in Beirut's southern suburb, Lebanon, on Monday. AP/PTI

# BRICS remains a positive, stable force: China

PTI ■ BEIJING

Ahead of the BRICS summit in Russia, China on Monday said the bloc representing emerging economies has remained a positive and stable force committed to upholding multilateralism. The summit of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS), which now has expanded with five additional members Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, will be held in the Russian city of Kazan from October 22 to 24. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping along with other leaders are due to attend it. "Let me reaffirm that this year marks the beginning of greater BRICS cooperation," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a media briefing here, elaborating on China's view of the BRICS. This summit is the first one after the expansion of BRICS, which draws widespread attention from

the international community, he said. "Since its founding, BRICS has followed the spirit of openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, remained true to its founding purpose of seeking strength through solidarity, stayed committed to upholding multilateralism and become a positive and stable force for good in international affairs," he said. During this summit, President Xi Jinping will have in-depth exchanges of views with other leaders on the international landscape, the BRICS practical cooperation, the development of the BRICS mechanism and important issues of mutual interest, he said. "China stands ready to work with other parties to strive for the steady and sustained development of greater BRICS cooperation, open a new era for the Global South to seek strength through solidarity and jointly promote world peace and development," he said.

Meanwhile, China's Foreign Ministry on Monday parried questions on a possible meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia this week. "We will keep you posted if anything comes up," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian said while replying to a question at a media briefing here. Both Modi and Xi are attending the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, which begins Tuesday. The ties between India and China nosedived following the fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades. China last Friday announced that Xi will attend the BRICS Summit in Russia, where he will work with other parties to open a new era for the Global South to seek strength through solidarity. BRICS originally consisted of Brazil, Russia, India, China and

South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have been admitted as new members. The theme of this year's Summit is Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security. The spokesperson of the Ministry, Mao Ning, said that Xi will attend small-group and large-group meetings, BRICS Plus Dialogue and deliver important addresses. Xi will also have in-depth exchanges with other leaders on the international landscape, the BRICS practical cooperation, the development of the BRICS mechanism and important issues of mutual interest, she said. "China stands ready to work with other parties to strive for the steady and sustained development of greater BRICS cooperation, open a new era for the Global South to seek strength through solidarity and jointly promote world peace and development," she said.

# Pak limits Chief Justice's term to 3 years

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Following an overnight debate, Pakistan's National Assembly passed the controversial judicial amendment bill early on Monday, capping the chief justice's tenure to three years. The National Assembly passed the 26th Constitution Amendment Bill, which the opposition alleges is aimed at watering down the powers of the independent judiciary, at 5 am with 225 members in the 336-member house supporting the bill. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Sunni-Ittehad Council (SIC) opposed the amendment, but six independent members who held their seats with the support of the PTI supported the bill. The government needed 224 votes to pass the amendment. The Senate on Sunday night voted 65-4 to approve the amendment with the required two-thirds majority. The ruling coalition needed the support of 64 members in the upper house of the parliament. Following its passage in both Houses of Parliament, the

Constitution (Twenty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2024 will now be sent to the president for assent under Article 75 of Pakistan's Constitution and become law after his signatures. The bill, comprising a set of constitutional amendments, including a special commission to appoint a chief justice out of three senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, was approved by the cabinet on Sunday with a consensus among the ruling coalition partners. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar who presented the bill in the Senate said the 'new-face' commission would consist of the Chief Justice, four senior-most Supreme Court judges, two senators and two national assembly members — one of each from the opposition. He said the changes would help expedite the dispensation of justice by the apex court. The amendment blocked the automatic rise of the senior-most Supreme Court judge to the post of chief justice after the incumbent CJP retired. Speaker Ayaz Sadiq presided over the proceedings in the

National Assembly. According to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has signed the advice for President Asif Ali Zardari to ratify the 26th constitutional amendment. Following the bill's passage, Shehbaz said in the parliament: "Today's amendment, the 26th, is not just an amendment, but an example of national solidarity and consensus. A new sun will rise, emanating across the nation." The opposition alleged the entire exercise was aimed at blocking Justice Mansoor Ali Shah's appointment from becoming the chief justice on the retirement of current CJP Qazi Faez Isa on October 25. PTI leader Hammad Azhar termed the amendment "a death blow to the independence of the judiciary", and explained how giving the power to appoint judges to the apex court and high courts to the government would politicise the judiciary. Another PTI leader Salman Akram Raja called the moment the "bleakest in our parlia-

ment's history", terming it a handover of the control of the judiciary to the executive. PTI leader Ali Zafar, the first to speak in the Senate on the bill, said his party's lawmakers were being forced to vote in favour. He said his party senators were absent as they feared abduction. "It is against the law and morality that coercion is being applied to get the amendment approved," Zafar said, urging the Senate chairman not to count the vote of any PTI senator. Zafar came to the house to give his party's position despite his party saying in a statement that its political committee decided to boycott the voting process in both houses of Parliament. Pakistan People's Party chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, who made elaborate efforts for the passage, said the government would move forward with the amendment whether the PTI voted in favour or not. "We have waited for as long as we could, and today, under any circumstance, this work will be completed," Bilawal told the media.

# Seoul wants N Korean troops to leave Russia

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea on Monday demanded the immediate pullout of North Korean troops allegedly deployed in Russia as it summoned the Russian ambassador to protest deepening military cooperation between Pyongyang and Moscow. South Korea's spy agency said Friday it had confirmed that North Korea sent 1,500 special operation forces to Russia earlier this month to support Moscow's war against Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy earlier said his government had intelligence that 10,000 North Korea soldiers were being prepared to join invading Russian forces. During a meeting with Russian Ambassador Georgy Zinoviev, Vice South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Hong Kyun "condemned in the strongest terms" North Korea's troop dispatch that he said poses "a grave security

threat" to South Korea and the international community, the South Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Kim said that South Korea in collaboration with the international community will mobilise all available means to deal with an act that threatens its vital national security interests. Zinoviev replied he would relay South Korea's position to his home government, according to the South Korean statement. The Russian Embassy quote Zinoviev as saying that the Russian-North Korean cooperation is conducted in accordance with international laws and is not aimed against the security interests of South Korea. The US and NATO haven't confirmed that North Korea troops were sent to Russia. But the reports of their presence have already stoked concerns in South Korea that Russia might provide North Korea with sophisticated technologies that can sharply enhance its nuclear and missile

programs in return for the troops. North Korea's advancing nuclear arsenal is a major security threat to South Korea. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un recently took steps to permanently terminate all relations with South Korea and threatened to use nuclear weapons preemptively. Some observers say South Korea will likely consider supplying weapons to Ukraine if Russian transfers of high-tech nuclear and missile technologies to North Korea are verified. South Korea has joined US-led sanctions against Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. But it hasn't directly provided arms to Kyiv, citing a longstanding policy of not supplying weapons to countries actively engaged in conflicts. Russia has earlier denied using North Korean troops in its war with Ukraine. North Korea's state media hasn't commented on the matter.

# Temple being reconstructed after 64 years in Pak's Punjab

PTI ■ LAHORE

A budget of Pakistani Rs 10 million has been allocated to re-construct a Hindu temple in the Punjab province of Pakistan, marking the first phase of restoration 64 years after it was rendered dysfunctional, a media report said on Monday. The Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), the federal body overseeing minority worship places in Pakistan, has started the construction of the Baoli Sahib temple in Zafarwal town of Narowal, a city on the western bank of river Ravi in Punjab, after the place of worship was rendered dysfunctional in 1960, Dawn News reported. Currently, there is no Hindu temple in Narowal district, forcing the Hindu community to perform their religious rituals at home or travel to temples in Sialkot and Lahore. Ratan Lal Arya, former president of the Pak Dharamsthan Committee, said the ETPB's control over the Baoli Sahib temple rendered it non-functional

and the Hindu community, which numbers over 1,453 in Narowal, lacked a dedicated place for worship. After the establishment of Pakistan, the Narowal district had 45 Hindu temples but all of them have over time fallen into disrepair. For the past 20 years, the Pak Dharamsthan Committee has advocated for the restoration of Baoli Sahib temple, Arya said. The government has taken steps to restore the temple to address Hindu community demands, he said. The ETPB is overseeing the construction at the four kanals of land where the boundary wall is the priority. Once completed, the temple will be handed over to the Pak Dharamsthan Committee. Shoaib Siddal, chairman of the One Man Commission of the Supreme Court, and Manzoor Masih, member of the National Commission of Human Rights, have played pivotal roles in this restoration effort.

# President Muizzu introduces UPI payment service to boost economy

PTI ■ MALE

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has taken "necessary steps" to introduce India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the archipelago nation, slated to benefit the Maldivian economy substantially. Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), UPI is an instant real-time payment system for facilitating inter-bank transactions through mobile phones. Muizzu on Sunday set up a consortium to introduce UPI in the country and appointed TradeNet Maldives Corporation Limited as its leading agency, according to a press release by the President's Office. The president also suggested the participation of the country's banks, telecom companies, state-owned companies and fintech companies in the consortium. He "decided to take the necessary steps" on the recommen-

ation of the Cabinet, the press release said. "This move is expected to bring significant benefits to the Maldivian economy, including increased financial inclusion, improved efficiency in financial transactions, and enhanced digital infrastructure," it said. Muizzu also constituted an inter-agency coordination team comprising the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology and the country's Monetary Authority to lead the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in overseeing the establishment of the UPI in the Maldives. The agreement to introduce UPI in Maldives was signed during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's three-day official visit to the country in August. Earlier this month, dollar-starved Maldives floated a new foreign currency regulation,

limiting types of transactions allowed in foreign currency and imposing mandatory foreign currency exchange controls on tourism establishments and banks. The Maldivian economy appears to have taken a hit after calls to Indian tourists to avoid the picturesque island nation as a response to President Muizzu's 'India Out' campaign last year. Muizzu won the presidential election last year on an 'India out' campaign and asked New Delhi to withdraw its military personnel posted in the archipelago nation by May this year. However, Muizzu has since toned down his anti-India stance and visited India on his first state visit to the country earlier this month. Tourism is the main source of economic activity for the Maldives, contributing nearly 30 per cent of the GDP and generating more than 60 per cent of foreign exchange.

# Subianto swears in Indonesia's largest Cabinet since 1966, with 109 members

AP ■ JAKARTA

Newly inaugurated President Prabowo Subianto swore in Indonesia's largest Cabinet since 1966 on Monday, with 109 members representing his pledge for a strong government. He announced the lineup late Sunday and named his Cabinet of ministers, vice ministers and head of national agencies the "Red and White Cabinet," referring to the colours of Indonesia's flag. Subianto became the eighth president of Southeast Asia's largest economy on Sunday. The Cabinet of Subianto's predecessor, Joko Widodo, had 34 ministers and head of government agencies. Subianto's Cabinet is the largest since 1966 when Indonesia's first President Sukarno formed a lineup of 132 ministers in an extremely tense political situation after a failed 1965 coup.



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, front centre, and Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka, front row fourth from right, pose for a group photo with newly-appointed cabinet ministers after their swearing-in ceremony at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Monday. AP/PTI

The so-called Dwikora Cabinet 2 was dismissed a month later. Subianto has said earlier that he needs a strong administration, even though analysts said that his "fat" Cabinet would bloat the bureaucracy. "I want to create a strong government that would unite our multicultural society and diverse political interests," Subianto said before inviting more than 100 people for interviews at his residence last week. "It must be a big coalition, and some will say my Cabinet is fat." The Cabinet features politicians from a coalition of seven parties who supported his victory in the February election, and figures allied with Widodo's Cabinet, who were reappointed to continue their jobs under Subianto's presidency. Analysts said the move was a political reward to Widodo for the latter's tacit support in the election. Subianto was sworn in with his

new vice president, 37-year-old Surakarta ex-Mayor Gibran Rakabuming Raka. He chose Raka, who is Widodo's son, as his running mate, with Widodo favouring Subianto over the candidate of his own former party. The former rivals became tacit allies, even though Indonesian presidents don't typically endorse candidates. Subianto was a longtime rival of the Widodo, who ran against him for the presidency twice and refused to accept his defeat on both occasions, in 2014 and 2019. But Widodo appointed Subianto as defence chief after his reelection, paving the way for an alliance despite their rival political parties. During the campaign, Subianto ran as the popular outgoing president's heir, vowing to continue signature policies like the construction of a multibillion-dollar new capital city and limits on exporting raw materials intended to boost domestic

industry. Backed by Widodo, Subianto swept to a landslide victory in February's direct presidential election on promises of policy continuity. Subianto reappointed nearly half of Widodo's Cabinet members, including Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati, making her the first person to hold the ministry under three different presidents. Indrawati, 62, who has served as the executive director of the International Monetary Fund and managing director of the World Bank, is one of Indonesia's longest-serving finance ministers, having held the post for long stretches under Presidents Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Joko Widodo. She has earned considerable respect in international circles, particularly for her reforms of the chaotic Indonesian taxation system and her role in steering

Indonesia through the global financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. "We regularly consulted with each other to discuss strategies for strengthening the Finance Ministry and the state finances to support his programmes," Indrawati told reporters after meeting with Subianto last week. Other ministers from Widodo's Cabinet include Interior Minister Tito Karnavian, Trade Minister Zulkifli Hasan, Energy Minister Bahliil Lahadalia and State-Owned Enterprises Minister Erick Thohir. Subianto has announced an ambitious goal of increasing annual economic growth to 8% by the end of his five-year term, and embarking on an ambitious spending programme, including an increase in defence spending, hikes in civil servants' salaries, and a programme to give 83 million children free meals.



# PM MITRA, PLI schemes to attract investment

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's textiles sector is expected to attract investments to the tune of Rs 95,000 crore from the seven PM MITRA mega textile parks and the PLI scheme for man-made fabrics and technical textile products in the next 3-5 years, Textiles Secretary Rachna Shah said on Monday.

Apart from the two schemes, the textiles sector will also draw investments from several other channels like FDI (foreign direct investment), she shared, highlighting the government's focus on promoting "sunrise sectors" of man-made fabric, apparel and technical textile. The textiles secretary informed that "much more substantive outcomes" are being envisaged from the Bharat Tex 2025 mega textiles event to be held in February next year, in terms of not only MoUs but also investments and business generation. "We are having 7 textile parks so each of them is expected to generate something like Rs 10,000 crore of investment,



that's about Rs 70,000 crore and another Rs 25,000 crore under the PLI scheme for technical textiles and MMF fibre. "Some of the investment under PLI has already been grounded and in the next 3-5 years or so we should have these large investments coming under the schemes itself. Apart from the schemes, of course a lot of other investment will also be happening, of course there would be FDI and investment

and investments, etc. Happening," Shah said on Bharat Tex. The government approved the Rs 10,683 crore PLI scheme for the textiles sector in 2021, aiming to promote the production of man-made fabric and technical textile products over five years. "Bharat Tex 2025 to be held in February is expected to be even bigger than Bharat Tex 2024. We invite you to join Bharat Tex not only as attendees but also as partners and to explore joint ventures for investments and to explore sourcing opportunities. The event represents a chance to experience first-hand energy and creativity of Indian textiles while gaining access to Indian market and export channels world-wide," Special Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs P Kumaran said. He was addressing an interaction between the government and foreign missions in India to drive engagement on Bharat Tex 2025, slated to be held from February 14-17.

# Indian apparel exporters to post 9-11 per cent revenue growth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian apparel exporters are expected to register a 9-11 per cent revenue expansion in FY25 aided primarily by gradual liquidation of retail inventory in key end markets and a shift in global sourcing to India, ratings agency ICRA on Monday. The long-term prospects for Indian apparel exports are favourable, aided by enhanced product acceptance in end markets, evolving consumer trends and a boost from the government in the form of the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, export incentives, the proposed free trade agreement with the UK and the EU, among others, ICRA said in a statement. The expected growth this fiscal follows a tepid performance in FY24 when exports were affected because of high retail inventory, sluggish demand from the key end markets, supply chain issues, including the Red Sea crisis and heightened competition from neighbouring countries, it added.



With the revival in demand, ICRA said it expects the capex spending to increase in FY2025 and FY2026 and may stay in the range of 5-8 per cent of the turnover. "After a marginal decline (down 2 per cent) in FY24, Indian apparel exporters are estimated to report a 9-11 per cent revenue growth in FY25, benefitting from de-risking strategy adopted by various customers and replenishment of retail inventory in key end markets, especially the US and the EU regions," ICRA Senior Vice President & Co-

Group Head Corporate Ratings Srikumar Krishnamurthy said. Nevertheless, he said challenges around demand uncertainty persist in a few key markets amid a subdued macroeconomic environment and geopolitical issues. "Despite the revenue growth, associated operating leverage benefits and softer raw material prices, the industry's operating margins are expected to contract by 30-50 bps on a YoY basis in FY25 with increasing labour costs, freight costs and rise in other operating expenses," Krishnamurthy added. ICRA said the recent geopolitical tensions in Bangladesh could result in capacity additions outside the country, including India. Yet, availability of labour at competitive costs and preferential duty access, given its least developed country status for another two years on exports to the US and the EU help Bangladesh to remain competitive against most other developing countries, it added. "Apart from the benefits to be derived from the fresh capacity additions under the PLI scheme. PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel scheme is expected to strengthen India's presence in the global apparel trade by providing scale benefits and strengthening the country's presence in the man-made fibre value chain," Srikumar said. ICRA anticipates the culmination of these schemes to enable Indian apparel exporters to increase their share of the pie in the global apparel trade, he added.

# Data leaks: Irdai insurers to conduct IT systems audit

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Insurance regulator Irdai has directed two insurers to carry out audits of their IT systems following concerns over the recent instances of policyholders' data leaks. The regulator is also in touch with their management to address the vulnerabilities. Without naming the insurers, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) said it takes data breaches very seriously and asserted that it will continue to engage with the companies to ensure that the policyholders' interests are fully protected. Star Health Insurance had recently admitted data breach. The name of the second insurer could not be immediately ascertained. "There have been reports of data leaks from two insurers recently," the regulator said. In a release, the Irdai said it is closely monitoring the situation in the case of the concerned insurers and has been in touch with their management. Regular updates are being obtained to ensure that the policyholders' data and interests are fully protected and the company is taking all steps to arrest the threat posed by this breach, the regulator said. Irdai said it will continue to engage with the insurance companies to ensure that the policyholders' interests are fully protected.

"The concerned insurers have been instructed to appoint an independent auditor to undertake a comprehensive audit of the company's IT landscape with the aim that there are no vulnerabilities and the IT system are adequate to meet the scale and complexities of their operations," the release said. As part of the standard operating procedures of the concerned insurers, they reported the cyber incident to the government and Irdai, it added. It also said the concerned insurers have ring-fenced the impacted IT system by isolating it and at the same time, appointed an external IT security company to undertake root cause analysis. "The audit firm reported vulnerabilities in the company's IT system and the methodology used by the threat actor to exploit the same, which were acted upon by insurers. The Containment, Eradication and Recoverability plan as suggested by the audit firm is being implemented by the insurers," Irdai said. Further preventive steps outlined in the report are in the process of implementation to keep the policyholders' data safe and secure. System upgrades over immediate, short and medium periods, will be acted upon by the insurers, Irdai said. Also, the application programming interface (API)



vulnerabilities, gap assessment, vulnerabilities assessment and penetration testing issues are at an advanced stage of rectification. "The insurers have filed a criminal complaint with the law enforcement agencies against the threat actors. It served legal notice on the social media platform to prevent the threat actor from selling the policyholders' data," the regulator said. Further, Irdai has issued an advisory to all insurers to check their IT systems for vulnerabilities and take necessary steps to protect the policyholders' data. The regulator said it considers data security as very important and takes data breaches, cyber-attacks on IT systems of insurance companies, etc very seriously. Cyber security guidelines for insurance companies are in place, which require insurers to put in place robust IT and cyber security frameworks for carrying out their operations, it added.

# NCLAT upholds order to allow govt to takeover Delhi Gymkhana Club's management

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Appellate tribunal NCLAT has upheld an order to allow the central government to take over the management of the prestigious Delhi Gymkhana Club. The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) set aside the petition filed by the erstwhile management members against the order passed by the Principal Bench of the NCLT. On April 1, 2024, the NCLT allowed the plea filed by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for taking over the Delhi Gymkhana Club management citing "violations" of the Company Law and said there was "sufficient material" for holding that, as it is a case of mismanagement. In its 149-page order, the NCLT had also allowed the ministry to nominate 15 persons as directors on the club's general committee as well as manage the affairs of the club. The said order was challenged before the appellate tribunal, which has been now upheld on Monday by a two-member bench, comprising Chairperson Ashok Bhusan and Member Arun Baroka. However, the NCLAT bench also directed the government to carry out all remedial measures as mandated by the NCLT, by March 31, 2025.



The committee has further been directed to conduct an election at the club three months after March 31, 2025. The order was pronounced in the open court on Monday morning and a detailed order is still awaited. "The NCLAT upheld the NCLT's order holding that Union of India's intervention in the affairs of the Delhi Gymkhana Club was necessitated in view of the mismanagement by the erstwhile general committee. The current committee has been asked to take necessary remedial measures by 31st March and conduct elections thereafter," said Advocate Raunak Dhillon, who appeared for the Central government. In April 2020, the government through the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) moved the NCLT

under sections 241 and 242 of the Companies Act, 2013, seeking to supersede the club's general committee. Sections 241 and 242 of the Companies Act deal with oppression and mismanagement and give wide powers to the tribunal, which include removal of the managing director, manager or any of the directors of the company and recovery of undue gains. Delhi Gymkhana Club initially registered as a Section 8 company with specific objectives related to sports and pastimes, obtained land on lease from the government. The government alleged that over a period of time, it had slightly started drifting away from the permitted objectives, which may also impact the subsistence of the lease.

# Institutional investment in real estate went up 31 per cent



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Institutional investments in the Indian real estate sector increased 31 per cent year-on-year to USD 4.61 billion in January-September 2024 amid strong consumer demand, according to Vestian. Real estate consultant Vestian on Monday released its report on Investment in Indian Real Estate, observing that funds' inflow from institutional investors in the first nine months of 2024 has already surpassed the total for 2023. "Investors have shown confidence in India's growth story on the back of robust GDP growth. As a result, the real estate sector witnessed increased participation from foreign investors which led to institutional investments touching a billion mark in Q3 2024," Shrinivas Rao, CEO of Vestian said. He noted that domestic investors are also actively participating, supported by the rapid infrastructure development across the country.

During the latest July-September quarter, institutional investments in real estate rose 41 per cent to USD 960.8 million from USD 679.9 million in the year-ago period. The inflow however fell sharply from June quarter that saw an investment of USD 3,116.3 million. "Amid prevailing geopolitical challenges, India's robust economic growth continues to attract both foreign and domestic investors. Rising prominence of work-from-office policies and growing office markets are expected to boost investor confidence, setting a positive tone for coming quarters," Vestian said. Despite this significant quarterly decline of 69 per cent, the consultant said that the outlook remains positive. Chennai received the highest investments during Q3 2024 with 48 per cent share. Majority of investments in the city were concentrated in industrial & warehousing, commercial, and residential sectors, the report said.

# Aadhaar helped people avail government benefits: Nobel laureate Paul Romer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nobel laureate Paul Romer on Monday said Aadhaar is the most important technological system in the world right now and it has laid the foundation of a platform to enable people to avail government benefits, including direct benefit transfer. Speaking at the NDTV World Summit, Romer said that a similar platform could not be set up successfully in the US because they were monopolised by the private sector. "Aadhaar is the most important technological system in the world right now. Aadhaar solved only one problem. Present a person to me, and I will tell you what that person's number (is). "... But with that foundation, you can then build all of these fantastic services that you now enjoy," he said. The 2018 Nobel Prize for Economics recipient noted that the government in India



was not afraid to indicate how it would be used in something like Unified Payment Interface (UPI) and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). "What people in India saw is that they could build a platform of Aadhaar that was controlled by the government and could be used for the benefit of the people, not to generate wealth for just a...small subset of people," he said. Romer pointed out that despite many cases in the Supreme Court against the

Aadhaar scheme, the government in India pushed this idea forward and did not let the judges hamstring them, and they achieved this remarkable success. "In the West, we are too hamstrung by the judiciary," he said. Romer noted that urban centres are locations where GDP gets produced all over the world and India needs to take advantage of the potential there. "The challenge with urbanisation is land assembly.

If you can assemble a large enough parcel of land, you can take that land which is worth very little and turn it into land which is phenomenally valuable by creating a modern city there," he suggested. The former chief economist at the World Bank also said both China and Russia want to function as empires, in a bid to increase influence. "China and Russia both want to go back to a world of empires...They think of empires as having the ability to meddle and you know influence their whole sphere of influence, and the national border is not important," he said. According to Romer, India needs to decide. Does it want to be on the side of the empire or wants to stand up for the importance of the sovereign state as the organising principle going forward in the world. "India should be able to say we don't like empires. India's stand could decisively tip the balance," he said.

# Emaar India to invest ₹ 2,000 cr in Mumbai region

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

UAE-based realty developer Emaar is planning to invest up to Rs 2,000 crore in Mumbai and its surrounding areas in the next six-seven years, a top official said on Monday. The group, known for projects like Burj Khalifa, has stayed away from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) despite being present in India for nearly two decades. Emaar India's Chief Executive Kalyan Chakrabarti said there is no specific reason to stay away from Mumbai for so long. He added that the group is attracted to the megapolis because it considers it as the deepest and strongest realty market which will be vibrant for decades to come. The company is aware about the market realities in the space-crunched city, and is open for looking at both societies and slum redevelopments along with any fresh development proposals, he said. The company plans to invest

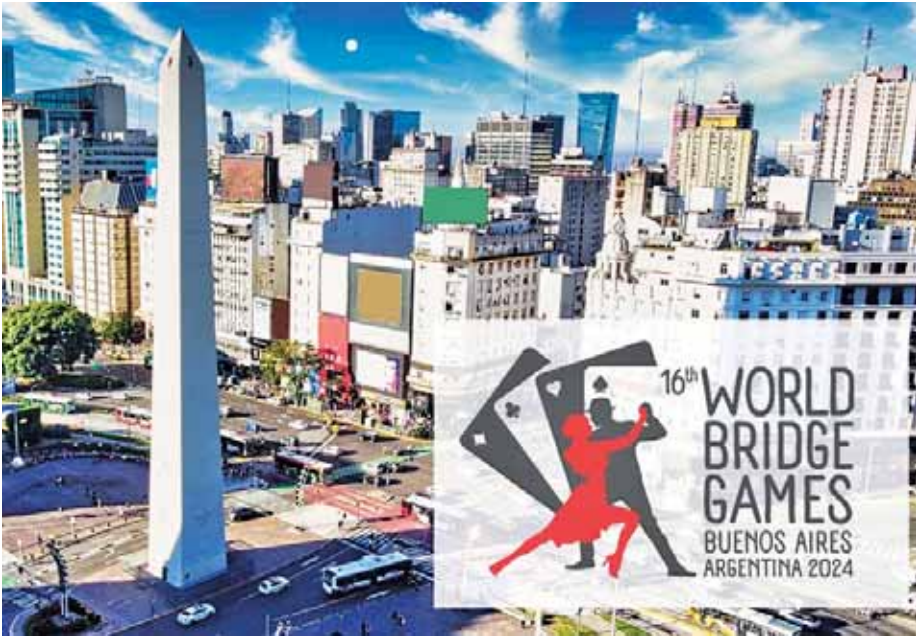


USD 1.85 billion (around Rs 15,500 crore) in realty developments across the country in the same time period, he said, adding that capital is not a constraint for it given the backing of a parent company willing to invest. Therefore, it is not keen to aggressively pursue opportunities on the capital markets, including an initial public offering or sponsoring a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT). Elaborating on strengths of Mumbai, Chakrabarti said Mumbai is home to one of the best talent bases in the country, neatly linked to the global trade and offers a great opportunity for realtors when

coupled with the massive infrastructure being created in the megapolis. The company will continue to serve the mid-market to luxury opportunity in the financial capital as well, wherein an apartment unit will typically cost upwards of over Rs 4 crore, he said. The Gurugram-headquartered company already has a presence across various other Indian cities including Hyderabad, Indore and Mohali. Around 85 per cent of its revenues come from the residential segment while the commercial segment accounts for the rest at present, he said, adding that

the company will have over 8 million square feet of space under construction by December, which will have to be delivered in four years. The company announced its maiden venture into the Mumbai market, with a 84-villa community in nearby Alibag, which is a weekend getaway for Mumbaiers. Chakrabarti said the company will be investing Rs 400 crore for constructing the villas, which will be spread over 25 acres of land. He, however, did not disclose the cost of buying the land. Over three-fourths of the land in the Alibag project christened 'Casa Venero' will be free of any structures, he said, adding that costs for a three-bedroom villa will go upwards of Rs 9 crore while a four-bed one will go up to Rs 16 crore. He said the company chose Alibag for its maiden project in the city due to the connectivity which it offers after the construction of the transharbour link and the new airport.





## STRONG INDIAN CONTINGENT FOR WORLD BRIDGE GAMES

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A strong Indian contingent, led by Vinay Desai, will compete in all four categories of the 16th World Bridge Games to be held in Buenos Aires from October 22 till November 3. The contingent comprises several stalwarts, including 2018 Asian Games gold medalist in men's pairs Pranab Bardhan (seniors), Raju Tolani and Jaggy Shivdasani (Open category), among others. A total of 34 countries are in the fray in the 'Open' section, while in the women's section, there are 24 nations. An all-play-all round-robin will take place in Stage 1 with the qualifying teams to play in the round-of-16 knockout round. The competitions will be held in 'Open', seniors, women's and mixed categories.

India will take on Canada in the Group B opener in the 'Open' category, while in the women's section, they will square off against Turkey. The Indian women will play Brazil in the opener, while in the mixed section, they will compete against Germany. The last time South America hosted the competition was in 2009 when it was organised in Sao Paulo. The tournament is held every four years and every country can enter their team, without any pre-qualification. "The WBF (World Bridge Federation) is introducing several new measures to ensure that our motto 'Zero Tolerance for Bad Behavior' is respected, for the enjoyment of all participants," said Jan Kamras, president, WBF in a statement. The qualification round will conclude on October 26, with the round of 16 scheduled on

October 28. The finals and playoffs will be held on November 2-3.

### INDIAN TEAMS:

**Open:** Sanjit Dey, Ajay Khare, Binod Kumar Shaw, Jaggy Shivdasani, Sandeep Thakral, Raju Tolani, Vinay Desai (captain).  
**Seniors:** Arun Bapat, Pranab Kumar Bardhan, Badal Chandra Das, Ravi Goenka, Kamal Krishna Mukherjee, Vibhas Todi, Girish Bijoor (captain).  
**Women:** Puja Batra, Devi Muthu Bhatnagar, Bharati Dey, Alka Jain, Alka Kshirsagar, Asha Sharma, Anal Shah (captain).  
**Mixed:** Himani Khandelwal, Rajeev Khandelwal, Bindiya Kohli, Kiran Nadar, Thondiculam Venkatraman Ramani, Bachiraju Satyanarayana, Vinay Desai (captain).

## India to host Special Olympics Asia Pacific Bocce & Bowling Competition next month

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Over 250 athletes from 15 countries will be vying for honours when India hosts the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Bocce & Bowling Competition for the first time here from November 18 to 23. In the lead-up to this prestigious event, Shivani, who clinched three gold medals at the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin last year, has been named the athlete ambassador. "I am proud to represent Special Olympics Bharat as the athlete ambassador. My journey in sports has transformed my life; it's truly a blessing," said Shivani. "I hope to inspire others with

intellectual disabilities to pursue their passions and never give up. Inclusion in sports can break down barriers and help us all reach our true potential." Athletes from regions including East Asia, Europe Eurasia, and Asia Pacific will participate, with countries like Australia, Bangladesh, Macau, Thailand, Hong Kong, Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, and Singapore. The competition will focus on older athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), aged 22 and above. While the women's team has been finalised, the men's team selection is still underway. Events will include singles, doubles, mixed, and team



formats. Dr Mallika Nadda, president of Special Olympics Bharat, unveiled the event jersey, emphasising the significance of inclusion in sports.

"Inclusion revolution is our moto and during this competition we will witness stories of courage, determination and triumph as athletes, their families and supporters come together in a powerful display of inclusion and friendship," she said. In the lead-up to the competition, a 'Run for Inclusion' event is scheduled for November 9, alongside a health summit on November 18 which will address issues faced by IDD athletes. A carnival featuring exhibitions will also take place. Last year, 198 Indian athletes participated in the World Summer Games, returning with an impressive 202 medals, including 76 gold, 75 silver, and 51 bronze.

## Carlsen star attraction at next month's Tata Steel Chess India

PTI ■ KOLKATA

World No. 1 Norwegian Grandmaster Magnus Carlsen will be the star attraction in the sixth edition of Tata Steel Chess India to be held here from November 13 to 17. It will be Carlsen's second appearance in the tournament. He had earlier participated in 2019 and had gone on to clinch the title. A strong Indian contingent, following its golden performance at the Chess Olympiad in Budapest recently, will see the likes of Arjun Erigaisi, R Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi among others competing in the prestigious event. Nihal Sarin and S L Narayanan are the other Indian players who will be in action in the 'Open' category. Like previous editions, the tournament will have the 'Open' and women's categories with same the format — rapid and blitz — and will have equal prize money for both sections. India will be represented by Koneru Humpy, R Vaishali, D. Harika, Divya



Deshmukh and Vantika Agrawal in the women's category. Chess legend Viswanathan Anand will continue his association with the tournament as its ambassador.

"Looking forward to being back at Tata Steel Chess India. It has become the marquee event in India. This year brings the best of the world headed by Magnus Carlsen," said Anand.

"I am particularly excited that the women's event will have the best of Indian chess. This year has been a celebration of Indian chess and this event will be a fitting tribute." Chanakya Chaudhary, vice-president, corporate services, Tata Steel said, "We are excited to host the sixth edition of Tata Steel Chess India, which marks the return of world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen. Members of the Indian men's and women's squads, following their gold medal wins at the Chess Olympiad, will also join the tournament alongside top global players." **The line up for this year's tournament is as below:** **Open:** Magnus Carlsen, Nodirbek Abdusattorov, Wesley So, Vincent Keymer, Daniil Dubov, Arjun Erigaisi, R Praggnanandhaa, Vidit Gujrathi, Nihal Sarin, S L Narayanan. **Women:** Aleksandra Goryachkina, Kateryna Lagno, Alexandra Kosteniuk, Nana Dzagnidze, Valentina Gunina, Koneru Humpy, R. Vaishali, D. Harika, Divya Deshmukh, Vantika Agrawal.

## Time running out for Norris to catch Verstappen in F1 title chase as series heads to Mexico City

AP ■ AUSTIN (TEXAS)

Time is running out on Lando Norris' Formula 1 title chase of Max Verstappen. Norris and McLaren leave Texas for the Mexico City Grand Prix further adrift from Verstappen after a disappointing United States Grand Prix weekend. The Red Bull driver won the sprint race, then took the final podium spot in the Sunday main event when Norris was penalized for leaving the track to pass him in the final laps. The penalty will be debated in the garages and paddock until next season. That won't help Norris in the standings now. Verstappen is chasing a fourth consecutive season championship. Norris is trying to win his first, and Texas gave him another taste of just how hard, if not impossible, it can be to take the title from the Dutch driver. Norris had the faster car in the late stages Sunday. He got stuck behind a stubborn Verstappen who refused to yield the place as the drivers battled over every inch of the track. When Norris finally made his move to third with about four laps to go, race stewards determined he improperly left the track to gain the position. He was given a five-second penalty. Norris crossed the finish line in third. Officially, he was fourth and Verstappen took the final podium spot. The penalty and the head-to-head battle with Verstappen, left Norris clearly frustrated. "He defends by going off-track, he overtakes by going off-track. But I'm not going to complain. Max drove well



and he defended well, we had a good race together. But the rules are the rules," Norris said. At least he finished the race this time. When those two tangled in Austria, a late-race collision knocked Norris out of the race and dropped Verstappen from first to fifth. That tussle proved to be a taste of things to come. Norris has been in a months-long charge after Verstappen, who hasn't won a grand prix since June after a dominant start to the season. Norris and Verstappen finished 1-2 in Singapore, but Norris won the race by 21 seconds just before the four-week autumn break. Red Bull and Verstappen appear to have at least closed that gap.

Verstappen won the Texas sprint race for his first victory of any kind since the sprint race in Austria. And even if Sunday's finish had been reversed, Norris would have come out of the weekend just a single point closer in the championship. Yet Verstappen's weekend wasn't as good as he had hoped it would be. Red Bull brought a trove of upgrades to a car that Verstappen has alternately called "undrivable" and "a monster" this season. The car looked good in the sprint and again in qualifying when Verstappen barely missed out on pole position, which Norris won. But the sprint race victory proved a bit of a mirage. The Red Bull had nowhere near the pace of the Ferraris over a

regular race distance, and was passed by Norris at the end. It was still good enough to squeeze the title chase just a bit tighter. And Verstappen had no sympathy for McLaren's complaints Sunday about losing the podium. "They complain about a lot recently," Verstappen said. "The battle with Lando at the end was cool as we were racing hard and it was actually a lot of fun. You cannot overtake outside the white line and I have lost a podium here for overtaking outside the track." And he'll take any result that stretches his lead in the championship. "We are going in the right direction. It is still not enough," Verstappen said. "Ultimately the fact that we have extended the gap is the biggest thing for us.

## Inter beats Roma but loses two key players to injuries

AP ■ MILAN

Shortly after Inter Milan president Giuseppe Marotta lamented that the fixture list needed to be cut in order to safeguard the players, the Nerazzurri lost two key members of its team to injury. Hakan Calhanoglu and Francesco Acerbi were both forced off with muscular issues in the first half of Inter's match at Roma. Inter went on to win 1-0, thanks to a 60th-minute strike by Lautaro Martinez, to move back to within two points of Serie A leader Napoli, which had earlier beaten Empoli 1-0. The match was the first of seven in 21 days in an intense period for Inter, which will also play more games than almost any other club this season. As well as the Italian league, Inter is involved in the Champions League, the Italian Cup and Italian Super Cup, and has qualified for the newly expanded Club World Cup. "We have to live with the constant stress of so many games that the players are struggling to handle ... we need to safeguard their health," Marotta said before Sunday's match. "It is not an easy situation ... but we need to sit around a table and recognize that the fixture list has to be cut back." Less than 12 minutes into the match, Calhanoglu asked to come off after experiencing discomfort in his left thigh and he was followed 15 minutes later by Acerbi who also appeared to have an injury to a muscle in the same place. Both sides hit the woodwork in the first half. A cross from Lorenzo Pellegrini bounced out of the arms of Yann Sommer and onto the post but the Inter goalkeeper managed to catch the rebound. Former Roma midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan sent a powerful effort off the crossbar shortly afterward.



Inter broke the deadlock when Davide Frattesi raced down the right flank on the counterattack and his low cross was deflected to Lautaro to thump into the back of the net. **CONTE INSPIRES NAPOLI:** Whatever Antonio Conte told his players at halftime must have worked as Napoli was much improved after the break. Empoli was far the better team in the first period but it was to regret its missed opportunities as it was Napoli that took the lead in the 63rd minute after Tino Anjorin fouled Matteo Politano in the area. Khvicha Kvaratskhelia kept his cool and took a stuttering run-up, waiting for the goalkeeper to make his move before rolling the ball into the middle of the net. That was the first goal the Empoli home fans had seen this season as all three previous league matches at the Stadio Carlo Castellani had ended 0-0. Napoli has won six of its past seven Serie A matches since an opening day loss to Hellas Verona in Conte's debut. The other match was a 0-0 draw at Juventus. It was a second straight loss for Empoli, which had been unbeaten until it lost at Lazio before the international break. **MORE INJURIES:** Albert Gudmundsson and Moise Kean also had to come off injured as Fiorentina romped to a 6-0 win at Lecce. Danilo Cataldi and Andrea Colpani both scored twice before Lucas Beltran and Fabio Parisi completed the rout. It was the first time Fiorentina had scored six goals away from home in Serie A since 1966. Despite an increasingly longer injury list, Atalanta eased to a 2-0 win at bottom club Venezia.

## Lewandowski extends scoring streak as Barcelona routs Sevilla

AP ■ MADRID

Robert Lewandowski scored two more goals to extend his league-leading tally to 12 and Barcelona routed Sevilla 5-1 to open a three-point gap on Real Madrid ahead of next weekend's "clasico." Pedri and Pablo Torre also scored Sunday for the Catalan club, which restored its lead of La Liga a day after second-place Madrid won 2-1 at Celta Vigo. Barcelona midfielder Gavi came off the bench to replace Pedri in the 83rd minute, making his return to action nearly a year after a serious knee injury. "I had been dreaming about this moment for several months," Gavi said. "It's tough to watch from the outside. I have to enjoy every moment. I feel very lucky to be here

today." Barcelona will play Madrid on Saturday at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. Both teams have Champions League matches midweek - Madrid hosts Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday and Barcelona hosts Bayern Munich on Wednesday. "This was an important win considering the matches that we have ahead," Pedri said. "We had to leave with a good feeling and the three points." Lewandowski scored twice in the first half against the visitors, first by converting a 24th-minute penalty kick and then by finding the net from close range in the 39th. The Poland striker was coming off a hat trick at Alaves in the previous league round, and had scored twice in the team's win over Young Boys in the Champions League. He has 14

goals in 11 matches in all competitions this season. Lewandowski, who received a standing ovation when he was substituted in the 65th, nearly got his hat trick against Sevilla in a one-on-one situation in the first half. Pedri scored with a curling shot from outside the area in the 28th and Torre added to the lead from inside the area in the 82nd and with a free kick in the 88th. Raphinha had a 49th-minute goal disallowed for offside. Barcelona has outscored its league opponents 33-10 this season. Sevilla, which had no attempts on target in the first half, scored its lone goal in the 87th with 19-year-old substitute Stanislav Dubov. Barcelona also saw Lamine Yamal return from a muscle strain that saw him leave



Spain's squad during the international break. Barcelona defender Eric Garcia hurt a muscle in the team's

warmup and did not play. **ATLETICO'S STADIUM PARTIALLY CLOSED:** Fewer fans than normal watched

Atletico Madrid beat Leganes 3-1 in a match played in a partially closed stadium because of recent fan trouble.

Alexander Sorloth scored twice and Antoine Griezmann once after the visitors took the lead in the first half at the Metropolitan stadium, which had an empty fan section behind one of the goals as punishment after Atletico fans threw objects on the field during a city derby against Real Madrid last month. The section is where the club's more radical supporters usually gather. Atletico had been originally ordered to close the section for three matches but appealed the decision and the punishment was reduced to a single match. The derby was interrupted for more than 15 minutes after fans threw the objects near Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois in a game that ended 1-1. Sunday's victory, which ended Atletico's three match winless

streak in all competitions, moved Diego Simeone's team to third place in the league. It trails Barcelona by seven points. Atletico midfielder Pablo Barrios and defender Clement Lenglet both got injured. Griezmann was sent off late in the game after he slid into an opponent, but the red card was changed to a yellow after video review. **OTHER RESULTS:** Villarreal is in fourth place after conceding an 87th-minute equalizer in a 1-1 draw against Getafe. Santiago Comesaña had put the hosts ahead in the 44th. Mallorca defeated visiting Rayo Vallecano 1-0 with a goal by Vedat Muriqi in the 75th. It was the fourth win in five matches for Mallorca, which moved to sixth place in the standings.



# NEW ZEALAND WHITE FERNS SPLIT \$ 2.3 MILLION AFTER WINNING T20 WORLD CUP

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Members of the New Zealand White Ferns cricket team which beat South Africa by 32 runs in the final of the women's Twenty20 World Cup in Dubai on Sunday will split prize money of around USD 2.3 million. That works out at around USD 155,000 or NZD 256,000 per team member, a life-changing windfall for players who for years have struggled for years to achieve financial parity with their male counterparts. New Zealand's first-ever victory in the World Cup of cricket's shortest format was a massive surprise. The White Ferns had lost 10 consecutive T20 matches before beating South Africa in a warm-up match. That pre-tournament success proved a turning point for New Zealand who beat India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, losing only to Australia on the way to the semifinals. South Africa ousted six-time champion Australia in a massive upset in the semi in which New Zealand beat the West Indies. New Zealand made 158-5, batting first in the final, helped by Suzy Bates who made 32, Amelia Kerr who made 43 and Brooke Halliday who made 38. Kerr then took 3-24 and Rosemary Mair 3-25 as New Zealand restricted



South Africa to 126-9. "Pretty unbelievable to be honest," Mair said. "Coming into the tournament all the odds were against us so for the group to bounce back like they have is unbelievable. "We just care so much about each

other. We've been through a lot of lows in the last 18 months, and we've just stuck by each other and kept working hard for each other." Captain Sophie Devine was leading the New Zealand team for the last time. She and Bates have played in all

nine T20 World Cups since the first in 2009. New Zealand reached the final of the first two tournaments in 2009 and 2010, losing to Australia on both occasions. "This means everything to us," Bates said. "When you play team sport, you

want to be a world champion. "We've fought our way back to the top. (Devine) has been so outstanding leading this team... So calm and believing in us. We'll probably have a cuddle for even longer later because there's been some dark times that only the people in the (locker room) understand." New Zealand was coached to victory by Australian Ben Sawyer and former Black Caps batters Dean Brownlie and Craig McMillan. The White Ferns' success was praised Monday by New Zealand Sports Minister Chris Bishop. It came at the end of a weekend in which New Zealand also retained sailing's America's Cup and in which the New Zealand men's cricket team beat India in a test in India for the first time in 36 years. "And then to round out a truly amazing sporting weekend, at 3am Monday morning (NZT) the White Ferns, led by Sophie Devine, stepped up to face South Africa in the women's T20 World Cup final in Dubai and absolutely smashed it, bringing home their first World Cup since the One Day International in 2000," Bishop said. "Amelia Kerr's 43 runs off 38 balls and then taking 3 wickets for 24 set our team up for their magnificent performance."



## I am pain-free, need to play domestic cricket to make strong case for Australia tour: Mohammed Shami

PTI ■ GURUGRAM

Seasoned India pacer Mohammed Shami on Monday declared himself pain-free but insisted on proving his fitness in domestic cricket by playing at least "one or two" games to make a strong case for selection for the marquee tour of Australia starting next month. Shami, who has not played since the ODI World Cup final last November, bowled full tilt in the nets after India's opening Test against New Zealand in Bengaluru on Sunday. This was a few days after skipper Rohit Sharma revealed that he had swelling in his knees which has affected his rehabilitation from an ankle injury sustained last year. "I am very happy with how I bowled yesterday. I was bowling from half run-up before that because I didn't want to take too much load. But yesterday, I decided to go full tilt, and I bowled at a 100 per cent," the 34-year-old told reporters on the sidelines of an event organised by Eugenix Hair Sciences. "The result was good. I am 100 per cent pain-free. Everyone has been wondering for a long time about whether I will make it for the Australia series but it is still some time away." India are expected to leave for Australia two weeks before the series opener in Perth beginning November 22, leaving Shami just about enough time to feature in two Ranji games for Bengal. Bengal take on Kerala at home from October 26 before travelling to Bengaluru to face Karnataka from November 6. Is he ready for Bengal's next game?

"The only thing on my mind is to ensure that I am fit and how strong I can be for the Australia series. I can see what kind of attack we need in Australia." **INJURIES TEACH YOU PATIENCE:** Shami was forced out of action for more than a year after suffering a knee injury during the 2015 ODI World Cup. The 34-year-old is now in a similar phase and he feels injuries only make you stronger. "2015 also I was away for that long. Injury teaches you to fight against yourself, you have to keep frustration at bay, focus on fitness and game. It is difficult to get back on track after an injury. "Injuries teach you patience and add purity to your game. After your comeback the main thing is if you can maintain your fitness. Yes rhythm is important but your skills won't leave you. "You need to fight for regaining fitness," said Shami, who has taken 229 wickets in 64 Tests and 195 wickets in 101 ODIs. While he was recovering from his ankle injury, India were able to end their ICC trophy drought in the Caribbean. Did Shami, who was the standout bowler for India in the ODI World Cup at home last year, miss being part of the triumphant T20 World Cup squad? "It depends on luck as well. I feel one should not be disappointed as you gave your best for the country. You can't fight your luck. If you get injured there is nothing you can do about it," he said. India have already started preparing the next line of pacers though the likes of Shami, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj still have a lot of cricket left in them. Asked about his thoughts on the transition, Shami had only one advice for the next generation of fast bowlers. "It is a circle and will keep going on. Whether it is Mayank Yadav, Akash Deep Mukesh Kumar, Harshit Rana, I would only advise them to talk at length with the seniors in the nets, that teaches you a lot. "Last 8 to 10 years, we have bowled as a unit. Before that, we never had 140 plus pacers playing at the same time. "From those to the ones on the bench also bowl at 145kmph. So opponents don't get to relax and that creates fear. We all have different skills and that is what we have shown at home and overseas conditions." Can India win their third series in a row in Australia? "The conditions suit us. All our fast bowlers are different type and if we get bounce it only makes us better. Batters need to score a bit, rest we will manage (laughs)," Shami added.

## Mumbai cruise to nine-wicket win over Maharashtra to earn full points

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Defending champions Mumbai got their Ranji Trophy campaign back on track with an emphatic nine-wicket win over Maharashtra in their second group A league game here on Monday, offsetting the heavy loss to Baroda in the opening game. Needing 74 to win, Mumbai went into the final day at 13 for no loss. While Ayush Mhatre's (15) dismissal robbed them off a bonus point, Prithvi Shaw (39 not out off 36 balls) and Hardik Tamore (21 not out off 26 balls) earned six points for the team in just 13.3 overs. This was after the 42-time champions lost to Baroda by 84 runs in the opening Ranji Trophy fixture but in the second match at the BKC ground, Mumbai excelled in all departments of the game. The match was won and lost on the first day itself when Mumbai bowled out Maharashtra for 126 in their first innings and then rode on 17-year-old Mhatre's smashing 176 and Shreyas Iyer's belligerent 142 to score 441. While Maharashtra fared much better in the second innings with centuries from Ruturaj Gaikwad and veteran Ankit Bawne, apart from a 98 from former India U-19 batter Sachin Dhas, the damage was already done.

## Pressure on Siraj after only 19 wickets from 13 Tests in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma believes in consistency when it comes to team selection but he will have to take a leap of faith to retain speedster Mohammed Siraj in the playing eleven for the second Test against New Zealand considering his poor run in home conditions. The match starts in Pune from October 24 and inclusion of spin bowling all-rounder Washington Sundar as the fifth slow bowler is an indication that coach Gautam Gambhir and Rohit might go for the jugular on a spin-friendly track. The 30-year-old Hyderabad has so far taken 80 wickets in 30 Test matches but 61 of those scalps have come in 17 away Test matches in three of the SENA countries (South Africa, England, Australia). Only 19 wickets after bowling 192.2 overs in 13 home Tests are figures that imply that Siraj has struggled in sub-continental conditions unlike



Jasprit Bumrah and Indore and Delhi where he got to bowl only 10 and six overs respectively. But what has been disappointing is that the last seven home Tests have yielded only 12 wickets for him which is less than two per match. Also, he hasn't been

consistent enough to get initial breakthroughs leaving Bumrah with all the heavy-lifting to do with the new ball. PTI spoke to a coach, who has worked extensively with some of the current national team bowlers, and he thinks that Siraj's length is erroneous for Indian conditions. He explained the technical flaw that has cropped up in his bowling. "If you see Siraj's record, he has five-wicket hauls in Australia and South Africa where there is more bounce. The six to eight metre length away from the batter is considered to be ideal Test match length. But it varies from country to country depending on the bounce," the coach, who was a top domestic performer during his time, told PTI on condition of anonymity. "The ideal length in Australia is eight metres, it is around six metres in England and on low bounce Indian wickets, it is 6.5 metres. If you pitch it around 6.5 metres and get movement, you are in business for both outside edge, bowled and leg before. "Siraj is bowling around eight metre length and in India with that length, you can't hit top of off (stump). He isn't pitching it up enough," he further explained. However, the coach is confident that once Siraj goes Down Under, for the five-match series starting November 22, he will again find his mojo as the length. Which he is hitting here, will work like magic in those conditions. "When you are hitting eight metre length on Indian tracks which are devoid of pace, the batter has more time to gauge the line and it becomes hittable. "I am not sure how effective he will be in Pune or Mumbai although latter was the only venue where he looked menacing against New Zealand in 2021. Problem is when you play white ball, this back of length in Indian conditions can still fetch you wickets," he reasoned.

## Reports say hockey set to be axed from 2026 Glasgow CWG; CGF, FIH mum

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Hockey is set to be axed from the 2026 Commonwealth Games as the host city of Glasgow looks to cut costs, several media reports here stated but both the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) remained tight-lipped on the matter. Hockey has featured in each CWG since making its debut in 1998, but according to reports here, the Glasgow Games organisers want to drop it from the schedule along with net ball and road racing to ensure a trimmed programme that would be easy on the budget. Scotland stepped in to save the 2026

Games after the Australian state of Victoria pulled out due to rising costs. The schedule is due to be unveiled on Tuesday. When reached out by PTI, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) declined comment till the roster was officially out. "In a couple of days, the situation will be clear - you will get the information accordingly. From our side, until there is any official communication from CGF, we are not in a position to provide you any comment," an official said. The CGF also gave a similar response. "The sports programme for the 2026 Commonwealth Games will be confirmed tomorrow," read a statement from the body when it was approached for a clarification on the media reports.



Hockey's probable omission could also be down to the fact that the Games, to be held from July 23 to August 2, are being organised close to the World Cup that is scheduled two weeks later from August 15 to 30 in Wavre, Belgium and Amstelveen, Netherlands. To cut costs, the Glasgow Games organisers have reduced the number of

sporting disciplines from 19 (in 2022 Birmingham) to 10 with only four proposed venues — Commonwealth Arena and Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome, Scotstoun Stadium, Tollcross International Swimming Centre and Scottish Events Campus. None of these venues have a hockey turf. Hockey's exclusion from the Games would be a major blow for India as their men's team is a three-time silver-winner and two-time bronze-medallist in the sport. The women have won three medals, including a gold in the 2000 edition. The biggest hit would be to Australia, which has won the men's gold for a record seven times and the women's top honours in four editions.

## Ronaldo and Al-Nassr's ACL game moved amid Iran security fears

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Cristiano Ronaldo and Al-Nassr's AFC Champions League Elite game with Esteghlal of Tehran on Tuesday will be as closely watched in India as it is in Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said in a statement released last Tuesday that Esteghlal had to move its home fixture with Al-Nassr to the United Arab Emirates city of Dubai due to the security situation in Iran. The decision was greeted by surprise in India as, on Oct. 7, the AFC ruled that Mohun Bagan Super Giants of Kolkata

had been "considered to have withdrawn" from the second tier AFC Champions League Two for refusing to travel to Iran to play its Oct. 2 fixture against Tractor SC in the northwestern city of Tabriz. It is not only Al-Nassr's game that has been relocated. Tractor's home game against Ravshan of Tajikistan, scheduled for Wednesday, has been switched to become an away tie. Iran's national team also had to move its Oct. 15 World Cup qualifier against Qatar to Dubai. "... (Mohun Bagan) notes that the AFC has indeed recognised the volatility of the situation in Iran and as such, has

rescheduled or shifted venues for several games," a spokesperson for Mohun Bagan told Associated Press, adding that the confederation had taken the same geopolitical instability into account that the club had. "Failing to apply the same standard to Mohun Bagan would result in unequal treatment by the AFC." According to the spokesperson, Mohun Bagan had made a request to the AFC that the game's date or venue be changed before it decided not to travel. "We consistently communicated concerns about the volatile and unsafe



conditions in and around Iran, particularly regarding the safety of players and staff," the official added. The Indian Super League club said that it had appealed the

decision to the relevant AFC committee and hoped to be reinstated into the tournament. The AFC did not reply to an invitation to comment. Al-Nassr has four points from the first two games and can take a big step towards the second round with a win. The revamped tournament now consists of two groups of 12 - divided into west and east geographic zones - with the top eight from each advancing to the Round of 16. Nassr is going well in the Saudi Pro League with a 97th minute penalty from Ronaldo giving the team a 2-1 win over Al-Shabab on Friday to stay in third place.

"There are a lot of games at the moment and it is not easy," said Stefano Pioli, Al-Nassr's coach. "We will do our best to maintain our performances in the Asian Champions League." Saudi Arabia has three of the four top teams in Group A. Al-Hilal is first and the four-time winner meets defending champion Al Ain of the United Arab Emirates and could welcome Neymar back to action after a year out through injury. Jeddah club Al-Ahli also has maximum points and travels to Qatar to face Al-Rayyan. **FRONT RUNNERS MEET IN EASTERN ZONE:** In the eastern zone the top two meet.

Gwangju FC of South Korea is making its first ever appearance in Asian competition and is the only team with two wins from two. It takes on Johor Darul Ta'zim of Malaysia. Australia's Central Coast Mariners has lost both games so far and head to China to take on Shanghai Port, coached by former Australian international Kevin Muscat, also seeking a first win. Last season's defeated finalist Yokohama F. Marinos also travels to China and meets Shandong Taishan while three-time winner Pohang Steelers of South Korea faces Thailand's Buriram United.

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