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Disengagement complete at LAC

◄roopdisengagementprocessat two friction points in Depsang Valley and Demchok at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh is complete. Patrolling by India and China will commence soon as agreed upon between the two countries. The two sides will exchange sweets on Thursday on the occasion of Diwali.

Giving this information here on Wednesday, sources said the local commanders of the level of Brigadier from both the sides will continue their talks. The two officials will decide on patrolling modalities in the two areas, they said. India on October 21 announced that the two countries have reached an agreement on patrolling. Sources said that verification

post-disengagement is in progress and patrolling modalities are to be decided

Why did Punjab

to Lawrence?

cops give 'studio'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

In a scathing remark, the Punjab and Haryana High Court said that police officers in Punjab provided a studio-like facility to gangster Lawrence Bishnoi to facilitate his interview with a news channel. A Bench of Justices Anupinder

Singh Grewal and Lapita Banerji made the remark while hearing a suo motu matter related to inmates' use of mobile

phones within jail premises. The High Court ordered further probe, rejecting the report of the Special Investigation

Team (SIT) and directed the Director General of Police (DGP) to file an

"The police officers allowed the criminal

to use electronic devices and provided a

studio like facility to conduct the

interview which tends to glorify crime

with the potential to facilitate other

crimes including extortion by the

criminal and his associates. Involvement

of the police officers may suggest receipt

of illegal gratification from the criminal

or his associates and constitute offences

under Prevention of Corruption Act.

Therefore, the case requires further investigation," the Court said in an order

The Bench made the remarks while

questioning the SIT's decision to file a

cancellation report in a case related to the

affidavit in this regard.

dated October 28.

Continued on

page 8

interview given by Bishnoi.



On October 25, sources here said the disengagement process was

signed first at the diplomatic level and then military-level talks took

place, they had said, adding the rear locations in these areas. nitty-gritty of the agreement was worked on during the Corps Commander-level talks which was signed last week.

Adhering to agreements between the two sides, Indian troops then began to pull back equipment to

The process follows the agreement firmed up between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

countries had nosedived following a fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades. Sources earlier said the areas and patrolling status were expected to be moved back to pre-April 2020 level.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on October 21 had said in New Delhi the agreement was finalised following negotiations over the past several weeks and that it would lead to a resolution of the issues that arose in 2020.

On October 23, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping endorsed the agreement on patrolling and disengagement along the LAC in eastern Ladakh during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan in Russia

Continued on page 8



A top view of the banks of the Saryu River during 'Deepotsav 2024' on the eve of the 'Diwali' festival, in

Kashi, Mathura must also shine like Ayodhya: CM

PTI ■ AYODHYA

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said the transformation of Ayodhya is proof of "double-engine government delivering on its promise" and asserted that a similar transformation must also happen in Kashi and Mathura.

Participating in the eighth edition of Deepotsav here - the first since the consecration of Ram temple on January 22, Adityanath said, "This is a historic first as after 500 years, Lord Ram is now in his abode in Ayodhya for Diwali."

"This is just the beginning and this beginning has to reach its logical conclusion. So by 2047, when the country celebrates 100 years of its independence, Kashi and Mathura must also shine like Ayodhya," he said.

'The double engine government has delivered on its promise (construction of Ram temple) and now is the turn of Ayodhya to prove itself. Remember, this 'agnipariksha' of Maa Sita should not happen again and again. "We have to come out of this (bane)... People of Ayodhya must come forward once again (for this). This is why we are here

CM said in his address while hitting out at the opposition for "becoming barriers" in the government's growth agenda. Just like mafias, these barriers would

also be eliminated," he said.

today for this grand celebration," the

His 'agnipariksha' remark, made in a choked voice, was interpreted as an appeal to the people of Ayodhya to ensure that the surprising defeat of BJP

Continued on page 8

between ground commanders.

likely to get completed by October 28-29. The agreement framework was

Rash and drunk drivers may lose their licences soon

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW

In a bid to tackle problems regarding road safety and discourage habitual discourage habitual offenders, the Delhi Traffic Police has written to the Secretary of the Delhi Transport Department to cancel the driving licences of owners of vehicles, which have had three violations relating to dangerous driving and drink and driving or more than five relating to normal challans.

recently released Delhi road roads of the National Capital crash report of 2023, which are among the most prone to revealed that a pedestrian or road fatalities as data reveals 2023 as compared to 539 in



This comes in the light of a a motorist travelling on the

that they constitute 43 and 38 per cent of such casualties respectively.

"In 2023, 622 pedestrians died in 618 fatal crashes caused by all types of vehicles as compared to 629 pedestrian deaths in 2022. The maximum pedestrian casualties were caused due to car, jeep and taxis which have increased to 76 this year compared to 69 in 2022," the report read. It also revealed that two-

wheeler riders have emerged as second most fatal crashprone victims. "The above figure shows 538 fatal followed by Car/Jeep/Taxis (66) in 2023," it stated.

According to the report, prepared by the traffic police and released by Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora, the number of deaths in road

2022. These two-wheelers

were the worst hit by Heavy

Vehicles

(HTVs)

crashes has however decreased from 1,264 in 2022 to 1257 in 2023 despite the increase in the number of vehicle registrations. Moreover, the number of

drivers booked under traffic violation has increased from 4,38,052 in 2022 to 6,39,097 in the Year 2023.

Continued on page 8

Delhi's 'Anywhere Registration SIT to probe tusker deaths Policy' will end touts' careers!

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has approved a policy titled 'Anywhere Registration Policy', with this the sale and purchase of properties in the National Capital can be registered at any subregistrar's office. The move will help the thousands who have to visit Sub-Registrar Offices, at different locations, and is also aimed at curbing corruption and harassment.

Under the policy, buyers can now take an online appointment at any of the 22 Sub-Registrar Offices, across the National Capital for their property registration. They do not have to physically visit any sub registrar office to register the sale/purchase deed of their properties. The policy will save people from long queues for property registration, thus promoting transparency to help



curb corruption.

Traditionally, to buy or sell property in Delhi, people need to visit a designated Sub-Registrar Office. Whether it's a property transaction or registering the property through other means, one has to go to the Sub-Registrar Office. However, this process often led to challenges, including

long waiting lines and delays in booking appointments at certain offices, while others remained underutilised.

now function as joint subregistrars and their jurisdiction will cover the entirety of Delhi. The new registration software, National Generic Document Registration System, now allows people to upload the necessary documents required for the registration of sale deeds, power of attorney and wills from the comfort of their homes, make payment and take appointments at the sub-registrar office to complete the remaining formalities.

"So, anyone residing in Delhi can make an online appointment for property registration at any of the Sub-Registrar Offices in Delhi," said a sub registrar

Continued on page 8

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE UMARIA (MADHYA PRADESH)

Three more elephants have died in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Madhya Pradesh's Umaria district, taking the toll to seven, while the condition of three other tuskers was serious, a forest official said on Wednesday. Madhya Pradesh's Forest Minister

Ramniwas Rawat has ordered a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the death of the tuskers and asked officials to ensure strict action against culprits. According to BTR's deputy director Prakash Kumar Verma, prime facie, the elephants seemed to have

died after consuming Kodo

millet, but the exact cause

will be known after the autopsy. Four wild elephants were

found dead in the BTR on Tuesday while four others, part of the same herd of 13 fuskers, were found ill during routine patrolling, officials earlier said. Verma on Wednesday said so far seven

elephants have died. They were part of the herd of 13 pachyderms, he informed. The condition of three other iumbos serious and they

were being treated, while the BTR teams were monitoring the movement of remaining elephants that were part of the herd, he said.

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Bomb Threat Assessment Committee set up

RAJESH KUMAR MEW DELHI

Amid the multiple hoax bomb threat messages to airlines, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, along with security agencies, has come with new protocols and guidelines to evaluate bomb threats on Indian airlines, especially those emerging via pseudonymous social media accounts. The guidelines are structured to more effectively distinguish between credible threats and hoaxes.

As per the new protocols, the Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) will establish the identity of the person or organisation making the threat, check their credentials to see if they belong to a terrorist or proscribed outfit, and ascertain the motive and specific socio-economic and political situation within the country or around the globe that could be linked to the threat.

Continued on page 8



When brake lights lit up peak traffic chaos

Serpentine snarls were witnessed across the National Capital on Diwali eve

BY SAUMYA SHUKLA

 $T^{\text{he festival of lights is here, and}}_{\text{for thousands of commuters it}}$ also means the brake lights of the scores of vehicles in front of them. It was difficult to enumerate the number and location of these serpentine traffic snarls that were witnessed across the National Capital on the eve of Diwali.

The roads were jammed, the pavements had been taken over as shops set up display counters outside, and inside buyers stood six rows deep waiting for their turns. Many others made a beeline for malls, to grab just the perfect gifts to make the festival of lights a memorable affair for their loved ones, creating significant delays and inconvenience to commuters. Even as traffic police made arrangements to minimise inconvenience to commuters, social media was rife with tales of commuting woes. Videos on social media showed long lines of vehicles stuck in traffic in Laxmi Nagar, Chirag Dilli, Kashmiri Gate, Kamla Nagar, Lajpat Nagar, Sarojini Market, Karol Bagh, Sarai Kale Khan and several other parts

of Delhi.

Expressing frustration over the significant jams against the Delhi Traffic Police, a commuter said, "Please deploy your teams on the roads. There is not a single traffic police available on roads in Delhi despite heavy festive rush. From Sheikh Sarai flyover to Moolchand

flyover, traffic is choked." Another commuter travelling around the Laxmi Nagar area said, "Delhi is experiencing significant traffic congestion due to the festive season, causing delays for commuters. A big reason has also been the mismanagement of traffic despite authorities knowing well in advance that such a situation will

The other massive congestion reported at Dhaula Kuan, Khajuri Khas, Model Town, Sadar Bazar, Rohtak Road, Kishan Ganj, Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place, Mangolpuri, Rajouri Garden and Najafgarh. "Nangloi-Rajouri Najafgarh road is seeing very heavy traffic and no traffic police are available here. I am stuck for the last hour. Should we enjoy Diwali by sitting in our cars?" Commuters took to X saying the traffic was heavy at several places

including Badarpur flyover, CV

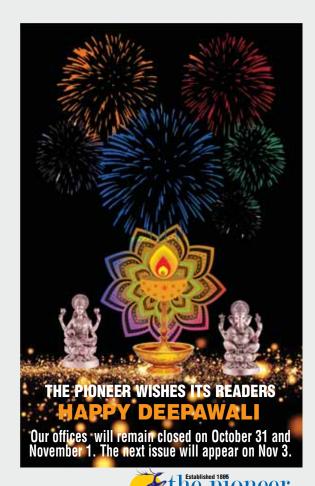
Raman Marg, Punjabi Bagh,

Mehrauli Badarpur Road, Taimur Nagar-Maharani Bagh Road, Ashram and Yamuna Vihar.

This situation remains despite the Delhi Police saying that they have made elaborate arrangements for smooth flow of traffic. A senior traffic police officer said they have intensified checking on the road. 'We have deployed personnel on bikes to check the encroachment on busy roads which could lead to traffic congestion in the area. People who are coming to the markets are also informed that they should park their vehicles at designated places," it said.
"The personnel have loud

speakers on their bikes to make the flow of traffic smooth. Nondestined vehicles are not being allowed to enter the national Continuous capital. encroachment drives are also being carried out in the crowded places," the officer said. In view of the festive season, the

Delhi Metro also stated that it will introduce additional 60 trips on Tuesday and Wednesday in a bid enhance commuter convenience and ease congestion. There are around 4,000 daily Metro trips.





Eco-friendly crackers attract revellers

PNS LUCKNOW

Diwali revellers are opting for eco-friendly crackers this year, keeping the pollution causing aspect of crackers in mind.

Shubham Nigam, selling crackers at the Kautha Jheel market for crackers, said that there was a huge variety of crackers available in the market. "The crackers are available for children and adults that include noise producing crackers and sparkle producing crackers as per the choice of the customer," he said. He said that there were a large variety of green crackers too which had been approved by the CSIR (Centre for Scientific Industrial Research). "These crackers are devoid of chemicals that cause pollution and can be safely played during Diwali as they do not cause pollution," he said.

He admitted that the environmentally friendly crackers were the most in demand. "The people are aware now and feel that the occasion should be a festive one devoid of any pollution," he said, adding that the sales of crackers were normal with hardly any difference between last year and this year. Amongst the normal crackers he said that fancy ones were

being preferred. "These include sky shots which cover the entire expanse of the sky in several shots. These are available in 240 shots which means that 240 rockets cover the sky with a single cracker burst. These are also available in 360 shots and 550 shots and are the most popular. 'Chatais' go as long as 10,000 to 20,000 crackers. 'Charkhis' are available in all

that sky shots and sparkles were available as eco- friendly crackers. He said that there were no new varieties in crackers and most of the crackers were similar as compared to last year. "Green anars and chakris are available which throw less smoke," he said. He noted that the market has changed over the years with most of the crackers, specially the bigger ones, being banned. However, he pointed out that awareness towards pollution had impacted the sales. "The buyer is opting for lighter versions of crackers," he added.

Vartika Nigam another seller said that for children customers were buying 'phuljhadis', 'anar', torches with colourful lights and siren, colourful matches, pop pops that create a sound when hit on the ground.

plaint, Dr Shiv Prakash, a res-

PNS LUCKNOW

itating a job for him as an agri-culture officer in an energy

plaint at the Gudamba police station and the police are inves-

According to the com-



NOTICE

Father's name in my passport has wrongly been mentioned as Mohammad Israil Khan. His correct name is Mohd Israil Khan and he be known and identified by this name. Mohammad Mustkim Khan R/o 191/174, Pach Roza, Jajmau Dargah Sharif, Shivans Tanray, Kanpur

NOTICE

I Rashida W/o Mohd Sharif Mansoori R/o 80/72, Mill Compound Latouche Road Kanpur 208001 have changed my name to Rashida Begum for all future purposes.

NOTICE

I Mohd Shareef S/o Late Abdul Aziz R/o 80/72, Mill Compound Latouche Road Kanpur 208001 have changed my name to Mohd Sharif Mansoori for all future

NOTICE

That the GENERAL PUBLIC is hereby informed that Smt. Ashok Sonker W/o Late Sh. Phool Chandra Sonker R/o 176/83, Bhairon Ji Road, Aminabad, Lucknow U.P. has served all their relations with their son Namely Sumit Sonker and behavior of both of them towards me as my Son is in power and complete control of his wife and due to instigation of his wife, he starting misbehaving with me. I have disowned and debarred my son and his wife from all my movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with my son and his wife will do so at his/her/their own risk and responsibility and I will not be responsible for any act. Deed or dealing done them.

NOTICE

e inform that my client Piramal Capital ar ousing Finance Limited intends to provide nance to one of its clients **Sri Firoj Ali & Sm** inance to one of its clients Sri Firoj Ali & Smt. Sakira against their property being A plot of land admeasuring 800 sq. fts. ie. 74.349 sq. mtr. being portion of Khasra No. 204, situated at Village- Rahim Nagar Dudauli, Ward-Faijullagani, Lucknow and in chain of title being Original sale-deeds both dated 16.12.2014 vide document Nos. 20291 & 20292 favoring the ex-owner Sri Saeed, son of Sri Mohammad Aafak, are allegedly lost and misplaced. If any person has any right, title or interest over the said property, he may approach to the undersigned within 14 days in writing along with the evidence of his such right, title or interest and if no such objection will be received within the said period it will be presumed that the property in question is free from all encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against purchaser shall be void and ineffective.

(Tarun Prakash Srivastava)
Advocate, Mob.: 9335914262
Office: Room No. 111, Citi Hotel, 24, B.N. Road, Lalbagh, Lucknow

sizes also," he added. Kuldeep, another seller, said

Man duped of ₹48,000

man was duped of Rs Aman was unpea of 48,000 in the name of facilcompany based in Singapore.

The victim filed a com-

tigating the case.



Dr Prakash became suspicious when the job facilitator demanded another Rs 1.16 lakh. He subsequently went to the police station and filed a complaint.



NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that my wife's name has been wrongly mentioned as AAMINA RIZWAN in my passport whereas her correct name is AMNA RIZWAN. AAMINA RIZWAN and AMNA RIZWAN both are names of the same person Najeebul Hasan husband of Aamna Rizwan resident of - 104 Taya Apartment First Floor Rajeshwar Singh Marg La Place Colony Hazratganj Lucknow

NOTICE

I have changed my name from RAFEEK KHAN to RAFIQ KHAN for all future Purposes. Rafiq Khan S/o Munir Sher Khan 8/8, Begum Purwa Safed colony

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Shaheen to Shahin Haq for future purpose, Shahin Haq W/o Naushad Alam R/o 94/69, Farash Khana Pench bagh Kanpur Nagar

NOTICE

I, RAMKESH holding Indian Passport No:M8380101 issued at LUCKNOW on 06/04/2015, Permanent Resident of VILL MUDAILA POST LAPRI SARAIKHAWAJA JAUNPUR PIN 222139 UTTAR PRADESH INDIA and presently residing at DUBAI UAE do hereby change my name from RAMKESH to RAM KESH (Given name)BIND (Surname) with immediate effect

NOTICE

It is informed that the name of Arshad Ullah Siddiqui is wrongly recorded in the passport, the correct name is Arshad Ullah Siddiqui. From today onwards I should be known and recognized by this name. Arshad Ullah Siddiqui S/o Rehmat Ullah Siddiqui, Address E- 16/6, G. T.B. Nagar, Karaili, Allahabad

City all set for Festival of Lights

PNS LUCKNOW

The state capital is all set for the Festival of Lights, Deepawali. The city dazzled with coloured lights on the occasion of Chhoti Diwali on Wednesday with residential houses, commercial complexes all decked in lights.

Markets witnessed a huge rush with the people finishing off their last-minute purchases. Traffic snarls occurred near all

Traffic snarls occurred near all shopping areas because of the rush of shoppers.

Makeshift shops selling the essentials of Diwali puja attracted customers in large numbers. Ganesh-Laxmi idols ranging from Rs 200 to Rs 2000 witnessed customers making their choice. The markets also choice. The markets also offered a huge variety of diyas prices from Rs 5 to Rs 20, clay toys costing Rs 30 each along with rangolis with a starting range of Rs 40, candles, wicks,

sugar toys, garlands, jhallars

Flower sellers sat with piles of marigold, rose and lotus flowers with flower strings of one metre costing Rs 60 and a single lotus flower costing Rs 50. Coloured lights were a great draw amongst the people with fancy lights in all shapes and sizes being picked up with alacrity by the buyers. A seller said the people were preferring the Indian lights to the Chinese lights. "We are not displaying the Chinese lights because there are hardly any takers. The customers are choosing the Indian made lights which cost Rs 100 for 12 metres and Rs 400 for six metres of fancy lights," he said.

Preeti Saxena, a banker, said that it was fun to shop amongst the makeshift shops. "I spent a good one to two hours amongst these shops buying decorative items, lamps, kandeels, rango-



lis along with puja items and artificial flowers. The atmosphere was filled with the festive spirit and there were a myriad of small items in the shops that are not available anywhere else," she added.

The sweet meat shops saw a huge rush of customers with people purchasing sweets for their home and offices. Sweet shops remained full of extra manpower to handle the overflowing business. A salesman at

a prominent sweet shop in Gomtinagar said that kaju katli was the most sought after item at a cost of Rs 1,400 per kg while the most priced sweet was the pista mithai that cost Rs 3,500 per kg. Gift packs

registered the case

as custodial death

investigation. The

will soon receive

notices to record

their statements.

officers concerned

and initiated an

costing anywhere between Rs 1,700 to Rs 7,000 sold like hot cakes. The salesman said that there were different combinations of sweet, savoury and dry fruit items in these gift packs. Arunima Shankar, a teacher, said that gift packs had become more attractive over the years.
"From single dry fruit packs these gift packs have evolved into packages that have a wide range of items which are not possible to assemble by a buyer. There is a creative element involved not only in the choice of the products but also in the display," she said. Siddharth Malhotra, an execu-

tive, said that he preferred giving gift packs instead of sweets to his bosses for the immense variety they displayed. "They look trendy and carry a host of items which people do not purchase. Besides being health conscious, people mostly avoid sweets, " he added.

16-year-old player brutally murdered over land dispute

PNS LUCKNOW

A 16-year-old Taekwondo player was brutally mur-dered over a 40-year-old land related dispute in Jaunpur. The victim was identified as Anurag Yadav.

Anurag was brushing his teeth outside his house on Wednesday morning when his neighbours armed with a sword came there and attacked him. Anurag ran to save his life, but the assailants chased him and beheaded him with a single blow of the sword.

Hearing her son's scream, Anurag's mother ran outside, but it was too late. She fainted on seeing her son's decapitated

After the incident, angry locals came out on the road and staged a protest. Police from several police stations were deployed in the area in view of

The police have arrested a

retired sub-inspector and his son in connection with this sensational murder case. The incident, the fallout of a

land related dispute, was reported from Kabiruddinpur village under Gaurabadshahpur police station, about 10 kilometers from the district headquar-Anurag had recently won a silver medal in the Open National

Taekwondo Competition held in Noida and a bronze medal in the Indo-Nepal International Taekwondo Competition. He was the only son among five

According to the village head, there was a dispute over a piece of land belonging to the village community for the past 40 years. A few days before the incident, Anurag had cut the grass growing on that land, due to which he had a dispute with retired sub-inspector Laalta Yadav and his son Ramesh Yadav. On Wednesday morn-

ing, while he was brushing his teeth, the father and son duo suddenly attacked and killed

Superintendent of Police Ajay Pal Sharma said, "The land dispute has been festering for 40 to 45 years.

to 45 years.
Two people from one of the parties, Ramesh and Laalta, were among those who attacked the opposite side and one person was killed. The district magistrate and I are at the spot. Some of the accused have been taken into custody and are being questions. custody and are being questioned. Further investigation

Jaunpur District Magistrate Dinesh Chandra said the peo-ple who committed the crime ple who committed the crime would be given the harshest-possible punishment. "This is an old land dispute between the two parties and it is also pending in the civil court. I have asked for a report on the dispute" he could

SHRC takes cognisance of **Chinhat custodial death**

PNS LUCKNOW

The State Human Rights Commission has taken cognisance of the death of 32year-old school dress supplier Mohit Pandey in police lockup at Chinhat police station.
The SHRC, on a petition filed by a private organisation, registered the case as custodial death and initiated an investigation. gation. The responsible officers will soon receive notices to

record their statements. Meanwhile, the police team investigating the case is yet to record the statements of the bereaved family members.

Mohit Pandey of Vibhav Khand in Gomtinagar, died under suspicious circumstances on Friday. Chinhat police had detained him in the lockup

over a minor altercation with

one Adesh on Saturday. His

family filed a murder report,

accusing Inspector Ashwini

Chaturvedi, the Chinhat police station in-charge, and other unidentified officers of beating Mohit, which, they allege, led to his death. Also, Adesh and his unidentified uncle were named in the report. Inspector Chaturvedi has been suspended, and his subordi-nates — Additional Inspector Shriprakash Singh and head constable Anand Bhushan —

have been transferred to other

police stations till the investi-

tigation has been assigned to Inspector Sudhir Awasthi of Gomtinagar Extension. Inspector Awasthi said they tried to contact Mohit's family

for their statements on Tuesday,

but the family's grief and visi-

tors prevented it. The magisterial inquiry report has been sent to the district

judge for approval. CP Amrendra Kumar Singh Sengar recommended a magisterial inquiry to the district magistrate, who passed the

request to the district judge, Lucknow, for authorisation. Once approved, an officer will be appointed for the inquiry. An official from the district administration mentioned that since the implementation of the police commissionerate system, the court holds the authority to appoint a magistrate for such investigations. The inquiry officer will be named upon court approval. gation is completed. The inves-

BBAU researchers to study smokeless tobacco's oral health impact

and Dr Yusuf Akhter, a computational biologist at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU), Lucknow, have received a prestigious Core Research Grant from the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of

The grant will fund their research into the effects of smokeless tobacco (ST)derived metabolites on oral bacteria, particularly those present in the mouths of tobacco

Dr Akhter noted, "The study aims to uncover the molecular mechanisms behind STinduced biofilm formation and antibiotic resistance among these bacteria."

According to the World Health Organisation, nearly 8 million people die each year due to tobacco consumption, with around 80% of these deaths occurring in low- and middleincome countries such as India. Tobacco's harmful effects on

4,000 chemicals, many of which may promote the growth and biofilm formation of harmful oral bacteria like Streptococcus mutans and Staphylococcus aureus.

Biofilms are structured clusters of biomolecular polymers that impede antibiotics from effectively targeting pathogenic bacteria in the oral cavity, contributing to antimicrobial resistance.

While nicotine is known to be linked to biofilm formation, our study will be the first to explore how other tobacco metabolites interact with biofilm-forming and virulencerelated proteins in bacteria," Dr Akhter explained.

The research will employ highthroughput molecular docking and molecular dynamics simulations to analyse proteinmetabolite interactions, providing crucial insights into how smokeless tobacco contributes to bacterial virulence and resis-

PNS LUCKNOW

health are compounded by its complex chemical composition. Smokeless tobacco production. Smokeless tobacco production. Smokeless tobacco production. ucts contain approximately lites on antibiotic-resistant bac

teria. Dr Akhter added, "The insights gained could significantly enhance public health awareness, particularly among smokeless tobacco users, by highlighting the increased oral health risks associated with tobacco-related bacteria. The results could also inform regulatory bodies, such as the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), in developing stricter

guidelines. This research aligns with efforts to strengthen India's Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) of 2003, advocating for more stringent regulations on smokeless tobacco

products. This study represents a vital step towards mitigating bacterial-derived oral diseases in tobacco users and has the potential to aid in developing novel drugs targeting biofilm formation and antibiotic-resistant pathogens."

70+ senior citizens can now enroll for Ayushman card

enior citizens of 70 years and Sabove will also get the benefit of Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The scheme was officially launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday. A senior official said that the

benefit of AB-PMJAY would be available to all senior citizens of the country aged 70 years and above, irrespective of their social and economic status. "To avail the benefits of the scheme, senior citizens have to

in

Aadhaar number, they will receive an OTP on the mobile number linked to their Aadhaar card. After entering the OTP and after successful registration of their e-KYC, they can download their Ayushman card. After receiving the Ayushman card, the beneficiaries will be allowed a benefit of up to Rs 5 lakh through the hospitals listed under the scheme. Only IPD (indoor patient department) services will be allowed under the scheme," she said. So far, 5,784 (2,948 government

beneficiary.nha.gov.in. For and 2,836 private) hospitals have been scheme in the state. Information about the listed hospitals and the specialties available in them can be obtained by the beneficiaries on pmjay.gov.in or from the scheme's toll free helpline number 1800 1800 4444.

"The only condition for eligibility for the scheme will be completion of 70 years of age and the age will be calculated on the basis of the age mentioned on the Aadhaar card. The only condition for the scheme is that the document Aadhaar card be valid.

IDFC FIRST Bank

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited

(erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limit CIN: L65110TN2014PLC097792

Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031 Tel: +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 The following borrowers and co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile

Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) The loans of the below-mentioned borrowers and co- borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loan were classified as NPA as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) are mentioned as per respective notices issued more particularly described in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be applicable and the same will be charged as per contractual rate with effect from their respective dates.

Sr	Loan	Type of	Name of borrowers	Section 13 (2)	Outstanding amount as
No.	Account No.	Loan	and co-borrowers	Notice Date	per Section 13 (2) Notice
1	103837021.	LOAN AGAINST PROPERTY	1. MR. ASHISH KUMAR TIWARI 2. MS. SHALINI TIWARI	25.09.2024	11,62,162.89/-

PROPERTY ADDRESS: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF NEW HOUSE NO. 258, OLD HOUSE NO. C-289, ADMEASURING 31.2 SQ. MTR., RCC RESIDENTIAL HOUSE, VILLAGE KARANPUR, KHAS MEERA BHAWAN, PARGANA & TEHSIL SADAR. DISTRICT PRATAPGARH, NEAR B.S.A. OFFICE, PRATAPGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-230144, AND, BOUNDED AS: EAST: PORTION OF HOUSE NO. 258, WEST: 6 METER ROAD, NORTH: HOUSE NO. C - 302, SOUTH: 9 METER ROAD

Sr	Loan	Type of	Name of borrowers	Section 13 (2)	Outstanding amount as
No.	Account No.	Loan	and co-borrowers	Notice Date	per Section 13 (2) Notice
2	101158346		1. BALVANT KUMAR YADAV, 2.SURESH	25.09.2024	9,58,089.30/-

PROPERTY ADDRESS: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF GATA NO. 275, AREA 163.68 SQ. MTRS., SITUATED AT VILLAGE: CHAUKHAD PURE ANTI, PARGANA & TEHSIL: SADAR, DISTRICT: PRATAPGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-230502 BOUNDED AS: EAST: ANSH NUMBER HAZA, WEST: 12 FT. WIDE ROAD PURE ANTI TO JAGDISHPUR NORTH: ANSH NUMBER HAZA, SOUTH: ANSH NUMBER HAZA

You are hereby called upon to pay the amounts to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited) as per the details shown in the above table with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc. within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to initiate proceedings, under Section 13 (4) and section 14 of the SARFAESI Act, against the mortgaged properties mentioned hereinabove to realize the amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited). Further you are prohibited under Section 13 (13) of the said Act from transferring the said secured assets either by way of sale/lease or otherwise.

Date: 31.10.2024

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)

UP bypolls: 5 candidates withdraw, 90 in fray

PTI LUCKNOW

 $F^{\rm ive}_{\rm Wednesday\ withdrew\ their}^{\rm\ candidates\ on}$ nominations, leaving 90 candidates in the fray for the November 13 bypolls on nine assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh, according to an official notification.

Among those who took back their names on the last day of nomination withdrawal, two were on the Kundarki seat (Independent candidates Jaiveer Singh and Brijanand) and one each on Meerapur (Independent Mohammed Rana), Sishamau (Mohd Aftab Sharif of? Rashtrawadi Jantantrik Party) and Katehari (Krishnawati of? Rashtriya Bhagidari Party).

The bypolls are being held in

Meerapur (Muzaffarnagar),

Kundarki (Moradabad), Ghaziabad, Khair (Aligarh), Karhal (Mainpuri), Sishamau (Kanpur), Phulpur (Prayagraj), Katehari (Ambedkar Nagar) and Majhawan (Mirzapur). By October 25, 149 nomina-

tions were submitted, with 34 in Meerapur, 19 in Kundarki, 19 in Ghaziabad, 16 in Khair, 10 in Karhal, 11 in Sishamau, 19 in Phulpur, 14 in Katehari and 17 in Majhawan.

After scrutiny, 95 nominations were found valid and after the last date of withdrawal of candidature, 90 candidates remain in the fray from the nine seats where bypolls are to be held. The election results will be announced on November 23.

Eight of the bypoll-bound seats

fell vacant after their MLAs

were elected as MPs in the Lok

Sabha polls, while by-election is being held in Sishamau due to the disqualification of SP MLA Irfan Solanki, who was convicted in a criminal case. In the 2022 assembly polls, Sishamau, Katehari, Karhal, Milkipur and Kundarki were held by the SP, while the BJP had won Phulpur, Ghaziabad, Majhawan and Khair. The Meerapur seat was held by the RLD. The ruling BJP in Uttar

Pradesh has announced its candidates for eight of the nine assembly seats where bypolls will be held on November 13, leaving one seat for ally the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD). The Congress announced it would not field candidates in the nine assembly bypolls and would support SP or other INDIA bloc candidates.

LUCKNOW | THURSDAY | OCTOBER 31, 2024

Ayodhya celebrates 'return' of Treta Yuga with Deepotsav

This year's Deepotsav transformed into a historic celebration, filling Ayodhya with an unparalleled spirit. Following the enthronement of Ram Lalla in the grand temple, the festival sparked a pro-found enthusiasm among saints and devotees.

Ayodhya's saint community expressed profound joy, describing this Deepotsav as a unique and momentous occasion, realised after a long 500year wait. Mahant Bindu Gadyacharya Swami Devendra Prasadacharya of Ayodhya's Dashrath Mahal described Deepotsav as a heritage of Sanatan dharma.

He said, "Deepawali and Deepotsav form the foundation of Sanatan dharma, and this year's Deepotsav is particularly special as Lord Shri Ram has returned to his abode in Ayodhya. This celebration offers a unique opportunity to express our faith and devotion to Lord Shri Ram. The saints feel that Ayodhya once again mirrors the scene from Treta Yuga, when Shri Ram first arrived in the city."

The saint community voiced their appreciation for the Yogi Adityanath government,

attributing the divine occasion of Ram Lalla's consecration to the government's dedicated efforts. According to them, the government has successfully revived Ayodhya's religious and cultural heritage, filling the entire saint community

with joy. Mahant Brijmohan Das Maharaj of Chaubhuji temple conveyed his emotions through self-composed verses, expressing that the pride in Ram Lalla's presence is shared not only by the saints, but by all of Ayodhya. The people are celebrating this Deepotsav with immense enthusiasm, united in their reverence, he added.

Mahant Rajiv Lochan Sharan Maharaj of Badhaai Bhawan temple said, "The divine scene witnessed on Lord Ram's arrival in Ayodhya during Treta Yuga has reappeared before us today. We saints are overioved to witness this historic moment and are participating in Deepotsav with profound enthusiasm."

Through the combined efforts of the Sant Samaj, devotees, and the government, Deepotsav is not only a religious festival but a message of Avodhva's divinity and faith to the world. The devotion and spirit of the saints infuse this historic Deepotsav, giving Ayodhya a heightened spiritual presence.

TABLEAUX MESMERISE DEVOTEES

The Yogi Adityanath government's eighth eighth Deepotsav celebration in Ayodhya brought the city alive with vibrant tableaux and a grand procession. Eighteen special tableaux, depicting episodes from 'Ramcharitmanas', were showcased along the route from Saket Mahavidyalaya to Ram Katha Park, drawing large crowds on

Wednesday. Culture and Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, MLA Ved Prakash Gupta, Mayor Girish Pati Tripathi, and others inaugurated the tableaux. As they moved through the streets, devotees captured these powerful scenes on their mobile phones, while fireworks and coloured gulal filled the air.

Saket College students beautifully illustrated iconic moments from 'Ramcharitmanas', from the Putreshti yajna to Shri Ram's coronation, bringing

each scene to life through skillful portrayals. Folk artistes enhanced the spectacle, engaging the

audience with live narrations between tableaux. For this year's Ayodhya
Deepotsav, Saket
Mahavidyalaya crafted 18
stunning tableaux, 11 were prepared by the Information department and seven by the Tourism department. The Tourism department's tableaux beautifully depict scenes from the seven chapters of Tulsidas' 'Ramcharitmanas' - Bal Kand, Ayodhya Kand, Aranya Kand, Kishkindha Kand, Sundar Kand, Lanka

Kand and Uttar Kand -

Ramayana to life for devo-

tees.

The eighth Deepotsav included special displays illustrating key episodes in Shri Ram's life: from his education and marriage to Sita, the forest exile, Bharat Milap, Shabri's devotion, Ashok Vatika, Hanuman's journey to Lanka, Laxman's injury from Shakti arrow, Ravana's defeat, and the grand return to Ayodhya for Deepotsay.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath applies 'tilak' to the artistes dressed as Lord Rama, Lord Lakshmana and Goddess Sita and others during 'Deepotsav 2024' on the eye of the 'Diwali' festival in Ayodhya and various eyents being held on the occasion (below)







Ayodhya sets two records on Deepotsav 2024

25,12,585 diyas illuminated, Sarayu aarti by 1,121 Vedacharyas



PNS AYODHYA

Ayodhya marked two historic achievements as Lord Ram was enshrined in his palace after 500 years. During Deepotsav 2024, a record-breaking 25,12,585 diyas lit up the city - surpass-ing last year's count of 22.23 lakh - and 1,121 Vedacharyas jointly performed the Sarayu aarti, setting another milestone. Verified by Guinness World Records, the event showcased Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's commitment to Ayodhya, bringing global recognition to Ramnagari. Under the leadership of the

Yogi government, teachers of Ram Manohar Lohia Avadh University and its affiliated colleges, teachers and students of intermediate colleges, voluntary organisations, saints, Ayodhya, the state, and the

local public representatives, local administration, Tourism, Culture department and others also played a big role in creating the record. As soon as the scheduled time of lighting the diyas began, 25,12,585 diyas were lit one by one amid the chanting of 'Shri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram'. With the announcement of the record by the representatives of Guinness Book of World Records, the whole Ayodhya resounded with the slogan of 'Iai Shri Ram'.

This milestone was confirmed by a Guinness World Records répresentative after drone calculations. Last year, a record was also set for Deep Prajavani, and upon receiving the certificate, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath extended heartfelt congratulations to

nation on this unforgettable

achievement. Since initiating Deepotsav in 2017, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has strengthened Ayodhya's connection with his Gorakshapeeth lineage, enriching the festival year after year. In his two terms, Deepotsav has flourished, illuminating Ayodhya with both lights and devotion, endearing the chief minister further to the people.

The progression of Deepotsav records speaks for itself: 1.71 lakh diyas in 2017, 3.01 lakh in 2018, 4.04 lakh in 2019, 6.06 lakh in 2020, 9.41 lakh in 2021, 15.76 lakh in 2022, and 22.23 lakh in 2023. This year, over 25.12 lakh diyas were lit, symbolising the prosperity and growing pride of the state under the Yogi

BJP scared of growing strength of PDA: AKY

Lucknow (PNS): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party was afraid of the growing strength of PDA and the pichhda, Dalit, alpsankhyak people would defeat the saffron party in Uttar Pradesh by-elections. Akhilesh Yadav, who was in Hardoi on Wednesday, said: "They (BJP) have coined a new slogan as they are afraid of the PDA's growing power. People are joining the PDA. We all know the origin of this slo-

Talking about the coming bypolls in Uttar Pradesh, the SP chief said, "The BJP will lose all nine seats in the state bypolls. Their (BJP) strategy is clear, first falsely implicate someone and then tarnish their image through media."

Slamming the BJP over the 'batenge toh katenge' statement of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Akhilesh Yadav said the ruling party was fright-ened by the unity of PDA (pichhda, Dalit, alpsankhyak) people.

In an apparent dig at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who had on September 23 reiterated his 'batenge toh katenge' remark, Akhilesh Yadav said, "We (SP leaders) are doing the politics of social justice. PDA's slogan is a progressive slogan. The BJP's 'batenge toh katenge' slogan is a negative slogan. The BJP does politics of hatred and dividing the society."
"The slogan has been prepared in a lab and the shirt principle."

in a lab and the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh has been chosen to promote it.

Yogi govt revamps Maha Kumbh with grand vision, extensive infra upgrades

The Uttar Pradesh govern-ment led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is setting the stage for Maha Kumbh 2025 with a vision of unparalleled grandeur, divinity, and modernity for devotees from India and abroad.

In preparation for the world's largest cultural and spiritual event, development projects worth thousands of crores of rupees are underway, transforming Prayagraj with new infrastructure and amenities to elevate the experience for millions of pilgrims.

Devotees arriving in Prayagraj and local priests who have witnessed previous Kumbhs are calling the scale of development "nothing short of a marvel". They attribute the sweeping changes to Chief Minister Yogi's administration.

According to them, such extensive efforts were unheard of in

they say, neglected the event's infrastructure and planning. The ambitious upgrades are reshaping the Maha Kumbh, turning it into an event that is both modern and deeply conboth modern and deeply con-nected to its spiritual roots. Anupam Parihar, author of 'Religious and Spiritual Heritage of Prayagraj', high-lights the Yogi government's key historical decisions in his

book. He explains how, due to a lack of interest from previous governments, the traditional Dwadash Madhav circumambulation ritual in Prayagraj

had stopped since 1991. However, Chief Minister Yogi revived this significant pil-grimage ritual on February 6, 2019, during Kumbh, following the initiative of Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad president, the late Mahant Narendra Giri, and general secretary Mahant Hari Giri. This revival has

previous governments, who, since benefited both local priests and saints as well as pilgrims from across India and

abroad. To further prepare for Maha Kumbh 2025, the state government has allocated a special budget to improve religious sites throughout Prayagraj. Major temples and historical sites, including Akshayvat, Saraswati Koop, Patalpuri, Bade Hanuman Mandir, Dwadash Madhav Mandir, Bhardwaj Ashram, Nagvasuki Mandir and Shringverpur Dham are being renovated with extensive funding. This restoration effort is part of the Yogi government's broader vision to restore Prayagraj's ancient glory and enhance the religious and cultural appeal of these sacred sites for devotees during the upcoming Maha Kumbh.

HELPLINE LAUNCHED Anticipating a massive influx of devotees for Maha Kumbh

2025 in Prayagraj, a toll-free helpline has been launched for train passengers.

The Prayagraj Division Railway has introduced the helpline, to ensure smooth and hassle-free travel experiences for the millions of pilgrims. It is the first time that such a service is being made available specifically for this event. The helpline, which will go live on November 1, is designed to help devotees easily access information about train schedules, arrivals, and other rail-related services. In addition to this, the

Prayagraj Railway Division is enhancing accessibility through a dedicated mobile app specifically for Maha Kumbh. Along with the rail-way website, this app will serve as a one-stop resource, offer-ing devotees convenient access to information and assistance to make their pilgrimage as smooth as possible.

Over 29 lakh destitute women receive pension ahead of Diwali in UP

PNS LUCKNOW

Over 29 lakh destitute women have received the third instalment of pension ahead of Diwali in Uttar Pradesh following Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's

directive in this regard. The chief minister had directed that the third pension instal-ment be transferred to the accounts of destitute women under the Nirashrit Mahila Pension Yojana before Diwali

and Chhath festivals. The move is intended to provide much-needed support to the

widows facing financial hard-ship and help them celebrate the festivals with joy. The Yogi government has ensured they receive this assistance without inconvenience. Chief Minister Yogi has also instructed officials to ensure timely aid to every eligible woman, reinforcing his commitment to bring festive joy to even the most vulnerable households in the state.

The Nirashrit Mahila Pension Yojana supports widows aged 18 and above with an annual family income of up to Rs 2 lakh. To qualify, beneficiaries must not be receiving aid from any other state or Central government pension scheme. This initiative serves as a lifeline for impoverished women who lack other forms of financial assistance. In the 2024-25 financial year, pension distribution under this scheme has been managed in three quarterly instalments. During the first quarter, Rs 78,838.54 lakh was provided to 26.12 lakh beneficiaries. The second quarter saw Rs 91,517.75 lakh being transferred to 28.47 lakh beneficiaries, while in the third quarter, ahead of Diwali, Rs 90,176.91 lakh was distributed to 29.03 lakh beneficiaries.

By ensuring the funds reach the accounts of beneficiaries before Diwali, the government has helped support their financial stability, allowing them to enjoy the festival without worry. From 2024-25, the pension dis-

tribution process has been integrated with the Aadhaar-based Payment System and the Public Financial Management System. This technological linkage enables direct transfers to beneficiaries' bank accounts, making the process more efficient and transparent and ensuring beneficiaries receive their payments promptly.

People throng markets on Diwali eve

midst tight security Amiast tight occur was seen in almost all the markets on the eve of Diwali. Even on the occasion of Chhoti Diwali, most of the markets in this holy city glittered with attractive lighting arrangements. In many areas, traffic jams were witnessed during the evening hours. Tight security arrangements were made in all sensitive localities apart from airport, railway stations, bus depots, Ganga ghats and other places.

Meanwhile a grand shringar was done on the jayanti of Shri Trilok Mahabir Hanuman at Paradkar Smriti Bhavan here on Friday. The programme started with Sundarkand. On the occasion Lord Hanuman was smeared with jasmine oil and dressed in angavastram and a grand aarti and laddu, gram and halwa were offered by Pandit Kashi Nath Tiwari.



Hanuman Jayanti being celebrated in

flowers, garlands and Ashoka leaves. Melodious presentation of bhajans was done and after that the bhandara continued till late night. Ramu Saav provided special support to the event. by Pandit Kashi Nath Tiwari. On the occasion Dinesh The temple was decorated with Modanwal, Vishwadeep Bapuli,

Prem Kumar, Rajendra Yadav, Shivkumar Yadav, Rajiv Chaurasia, Shiv Kumar Yadav, Shiv Modanwal, Kallu Gupta, Murat Rajbhar, Ashok Sah, Sandeep Sah, Somaru Rajbhar etc were present.
Meanwhile, the local unit of

Namami Gange appealed to the people not to throw old religious items, worship materials, idols, pictures etc in Ganga river on the occasion of Diwali. Appealing to the people to protect the river, the activists of Namami Gange launched a cleanliness campaign at Rajghat on Friday. Regional convenor Rajesh Shukla appealed not to immerse religious items of houses in the river after the

worship.

TRAINING: The Staff
Development Cell (SDC) at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) conducted a dynamic training programme titled managing time and understanding the importance of response' here on Tuesday. This event aimed to instil cru-

practical time management strategies and encouraged participants to use scheduling apps, reminders and prioritisation frameworks to effectively manage both professional and peral development and improved workplace efficiency.
Assistant registrar Raj Kumar Soni initiated the programme, warmly welcoming participants and emphasising the transformative impact of ongoing skills development on the university's operations. He encouraged staff sonal responsibilities. "Time is wealth", Dr Tiwari reminded participants, underscoring that effective planning and adher-ence to deadlines help balance responsibilities at both work and home. He further illustrated the 'Value of Time" by demonstrating how each interval can profoundly impact different lives. SDC coordinator and dean of the Institute of Management Studies Prof SK Dubey concluded the programme by gathering feedback from participants. Prof Dubey emphasised that mastering time management skills is vital for thriving in all areas of life. He said that the SDC plans to host further programmes, equipping staff with up-to-date knowledge and skills crucial for effectiveness in their roles and



Police officers celebrate Diwali with orphans

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The city police officers celebrated Diwali with orphan children at the government girls probation house in Nawabganj on Tuesday. They reached there with sweets, new clothes, firecrackers and other goods and distributed among the girl inmates. On the occasion, officials also made the girls aware about good touch, bad touch, self-defence, police helpline etc. ADCP (Central) Mahesh Kumar said police officers celebrated Diwali with the inmates of Rajkiya Balika Grih, Nawabganj, under the Mission Shakti programme on Tuesday. Chief guest DCP (South) Ankita Sharma along with ADCP (Traffic) Archana Singh, ADCP (Central) Mahesh Kumar, ACP Shristi Singh and other officers reached the probation house and distributed sweets, new clothes, firecrackers and other items among the inmates. They also stayed there for many hours and enjoyed the festivities by bursting firecrackers with children.

Officials also assured the children of making all possible efforts for locating their missing family members. On the occasion of Dhanteras officials also distributed shawls to children/girls to prevent them from cold.

Keeping in mind the security of women/girls, officials informed the girl inmates of various



City police officers celebrating Diwali with girl inmates at the Government

Metro service from 6 am to 7 pm on Diwali

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

The Kanpur Metro train services will be available from 6 am to 7 pm on the day of Diwali (October 31). Metro train service from both the terminal stations i.e. IIT Metro Station and Motifheel Metro

Station will start at 6 am and the last train will leave at 7 pm.
This change in servicetiming will be only for the day of

On the remaining days, metro train services will start as usual from 6 am and contin-

helpline services launched by the UP Government which included the 1076 CM Helpline; 1090 Women Powerline, 181 Women Helpline, No 112 Police Emergency Service, 102 Ambulance Helpline various road safety rules.

for Pregnant Women and New-born babies, 108 Ambulance Service, 1098 Childline, 101 Fire Service and 1930 Cyber Helpline. Children were also apprised of

NER issues guidelines for crowd National Unity management during Chhath

contributing to BHU's mission of excellence.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

cial skills in time management

and accountability among

BHU's administrative staff as

part of the university's dedica-

tion to continuous profession-al development and improved

operations. He encouraged staff

to actively engage with the iGOT (Integrated Government

Online Training) platform and demonstrated navigation on

the portal reiterating the time-ly completion of UGC-mandat-

ed courses. He urged partici-pants to embrace goal setting, complete their tasks and step

outside their comfort zones for personal growth. The pro-

gramme's resource person, Dr Sumil Tiwari, Section Officer,

conducted engaging sessions filled with actionable insights.

Utilising multimedia presenta-tions, Dr Tiwari highlighted

The Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER), which mainly covers Purvanchal (eastern UP) and adjoining Bihar districts, issued several guidelines for crowd management during Chhath festival. This festival is a supply to the control of th tival is celebrated in a grand way in this region of UP and Bihar. Issuing the guidelines, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operations) Rajesh Kumar Singh said that during the festival time, trains should arrive at their designated platforms and should not be changed. If changes have to be made due to unavoidable circumstances, then the train will be operated by giving sufficient halt time. It will be mandatory for the station master to give prior information (minimum 15 minutes in advance) to the enquiry office about the change in operation. As many unreserved ticket/reservation counters as possible will work continuously at Chhapra, Siwan, Ballia and Ghazipur City stations, arrangements should be made for ticket distribution from additional counters as per requirement. CIT/Chhapra and Siwan should depute two employees each in each shift at the enquiry window and one employee each in each shift at Ballia. Information should be continuously broadcast at all three stations through the public address system. Instructions were given to make alternative arrangements for additional employees from the booking office if required. Besides, during Chhath festival, all the equipment installed at major stations, including railway, BSNL phones and coach guidance, train display board, announcement system should be kept operational continuously. Control room will function in the room of station superintendent/Chhapra which will be monitored by the officers. Uninterrupted supply of electricity and water along with cleanliness should be ensured at all the stations related to Chhath festival.

Sufficient number of Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel should be deployed to control

the crowd on platforms and to make queues at foot over bridges, arrival and departure gates, booking windows of all the stations related to Chhath. The ADRM directed the RPF personnel to make the passengers stand in queue to take tickets and board them in the coaches of trains to deal with the excessive crowd of railway passengers during Chhath Puja. Various departments were instructed to ensure adequate water supply, electric lighting and cleanliness in the coaches of all the trains running during Chhath. The EnHM team instructed the doctors and paramedical teams for cleanliness and medical arrangements at all stations related to

Prior to this, the ADRM (Operations) conducted a window trailing safety inspection of Banaras-Chhapra rail section on Tuesday for safety of passengers and in rail operations, smooth running of festival special trains and to be vigilant during Chhath Puja. During his inspection, the ADRM took a detailed cognisance of the railway track, overhead traction and caution orders and reached Chhapra Jn while ensuring safe train operation at maximum speed on the rail section. He held a meeting at Chhapra station and a detailed discussion with officers and supervisory staff on the basis of the estimate of possible passenger traffic increase at the station to monitor and provide service 24 hours a day on the occasion of Chhath Puia. He directed the officers to fully monitor the passengers coming and going during Chhath as well as to do intensive monitoring of all the activities of the station. Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer-II C Yashveer Singh Divisional Commercial Manager Ramesh Pandey, Divisional Operations Manager Ratan Deep Gupta, Divisional Electrical Engineer Ram Dayal, Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Train Set) Abhishek Kumar, Assistant Security Commissioner/ Chhapra MK Pawar, Coaching Depot Officer Ajit Kumar, Station Director Rajesh Prasad along with senior supervisors and station staff were present.

Day observed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The National Unity Day was

observed on Friday at

Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) on the occasion of 149th birth anniversary of Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Various programmes were organised on the occasion at BLW in which officers, employees and members of various departments and organisations participated enthusiastically. The programme was inaugurated in the premises of the Administration Building under the leadership of General Manager Sushil Kumar Srivastava. He was accompa-Srivastava. He was accompanied by Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer (PCME) Subrat Nath, Principal Chief Materials Manager (PCMM) Rajneesh Gupta, Principal Financial Advisor (PFA) Neeraj Verma, Principal Chief Medical Officer (PCMO) Dr Devesh Kumar, Principal Chief Engineer (PCE) Vinod Kumar Shukla, Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) Janardan Singh, Inspector General-cum- Principal Chief Security Commissioner Nurul Hoda, Chief Materials Manager Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Chief Mechanical Engineer Service Engineer Neeraj Jain, Chief Design Engineer Electrical Manoj Kumar Gupta Chief Design Engineer (Project) Anurag Gupta, Chief Quality Assurance Manager Praveen Kumar, Chief Safety Officer SB Patel, Chief Mechanical



Choubey, Deputy Chief Personnel Officer Shyam Babu, Senior Personnel Officer (SPO) Rajkumar Gupta, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Rajesh Kumar and senior officers. Everyone paid floral tribute at Sardar Patel's portrait and bowed to him with reverence. Later, the general manager inspected the parade of various organisations and took the salute. The contingents of Railway Protection Force (RPF), St John's Ambulance Brigade, Civil Defence and Bharat Scouts and Guides impressed everyone with their disciplined performance and dignified presentation in uniform. The unity and discipline of all these contingents was a symbol of the ideals of Sardar Patel, which was presenting his message in a lively manner. After the wreath-laying ceremony, the GM administered the oath of national unity to all the officers and employees. The programme was conducted by translator Alok Pandev.

Rani Lakshmibai's birth anniversary celebrated



Rani Lakshmibai's birth anniversary being celebrated in Varanasi on Friday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

 $T^{\text{he 95 Battalion of Central Reserve Police}} \\ \text{Force (CRPF) and Bharat Vikas Parishad}$ (Shiva Branch) celebrated the 189th birth anniversary of Rani Lakshmibai near her statue site at JHV Mall on the occasion of Kartik Chaturdashi as per Hindu calendar here on Friday. Rani Lakshmibai sacrificed her life to protect Jhansi and self-respect.
The students of Gurukul Vidyalaya, Panini

Vidyalaya and Nivedita Vidyalaya portrayed the life struggles of Rani Lakshmi Bai, popularly known as 'Jhansi Ki Rani' through song

The chief guest of the function was CRPF 95 Battalion Commandant Rajeshwar Balapurkar. In his address, he encouraged all the students and gave them a message to learn from his-

On the occasion, the chief guest was honoured by Bharat Vikas Parishad (Kashi Province) Patron SN Khemka, provincial president

Ravi Prakash Jaiswal and branch president Kaushal Pati Sharma by giving a shawl and a memento. Environment cell head Madan Ram Chaurasia presented lotus plants to the guests on the occasion of Diwali. SN Khemka reminded everyone of the biography and saga of bravery of Kani Lakshmibai.

The special guest was Sumedha Pathak, a silver medalist in Para World Cup shooting, who narrated the story of her struggle from being a handicapped person to becoming a World Cup winner. She was awarded this year's Lakshmibai Veerangana Award by Bharat Vikas Parishad. Women coordinators Meena Agarwal and Archana Agarwal honoured her by giving a shawl and a memento.

Kamal Goenka, Akhilesh Tiwari, Rajkumar Gupta, CRPF Battalion PRO Praveen Singh and others along with students and teachers from various schools were also present. The programme was conducted by Amarchand Agarwal. Kaushal Pati Sharma proposed the

3 of family killed in accident

man and his two sons were A man and his two sons were killed after being hit by a speeding dumper on Hamirpur-Kalpi national highway near Aman Shahid locality in Hamirpur late on Tuesday night. Both the sons were killed on the spot while their seriously injured father also succumbed to his injury on way to a Kanpur hospital. Irate mob staged a massive agitation at the district hospital. Police pacified the issue by assuring the mob of initiating

action against the guilty. Reports said that Jai Prakash Savita (46) of Ramedi Mohalla, Sadar Kotwali police area, was employed as a senior assistant in employed as a senior assistant in Public Works Department (CD-2). On Tuesday after completing the office work he was going to the market with sons — Ayush (12) and Athary (10) on the bike. On the Kalpi highway in front of the PWD office in Aman Shahid Mohalla, an empty dumper going towards Kurara ran over the father and his two sons. Both the sons were killed on the spot while the lower part of Jai Prakash's body got badly crushed. With the help of local residents, all the three were taken to the district hospital where Dr Mahendra on emergency duty declared both the boys dead.

Seriously injured Jai Prakash was referred to Kanpur but he also succumbed to his injury on the way. SP Diksha Sharma said the dumper had been impounded while its driver managed to

escape from the spot.
In another incident two friends were killed after being hit by a speeding car near Damar village on Hamirpur-Kalpi fourlane in Kurara police area of Hamirpur on Tuesday night. The incident

took place when both the youths were standing on the roadside with their bikes. After being knocked down by the speeding car, one of the youths was killed on the spot. Abhay (28) son of Jar Singh of Kurara Ward 9 was standing with friend Himanshu (21), son of Rajesh of Damar village late on Tuesday night. Around 10 pm the speeding car knocked them down causing them serious injury. They were taken to the district hospital where, according to kin Kamlesh Kumar, Himanshu was declared dead by the doctor. Abhay also succumbed to his injury during treatment on Wednesday morn-

In yet another incident a man was killed after being hit by an unidentified vehicle in Mahrajpur police station area on Wednesday morning. The incident took place when the man was crossing the road. The driver managed to escape from the spot with the vehicle after the incident. On getting information police rushed to the spot which, after sending the body for an autopsy, started a probe in the matter. Prem Kumar (48), son of late Ram Prasad of Ruma village (Maharajpur) was going on foot near Kulgaon overbridge on Wednesday morning. Meanwhile, when he was crossmorning. ing the road he was knocked down by an unidentified vehicle due to which he died on the spot. Maharajpur Station House Officer (SHO) Sanjay Kumar Pandey said CCTV cameras

installed nearby are being examined in order to identify the

vehicle. On receipt of complaint, a first information report (FIR) will be lodged and action will be taken

against the accused in this connection, he said. **CRIMINALS ARRESTED:** The city police arrested two criminals in an encounter early on Wednesday morning. The criminals opened fire on police party and sustained bullet injury in

firing by the police. The injured criminals were sent to a hospital for treatment. After quizzing, police will produce them in the court and send them to jail. It may be recalled here that on October 23 a woman was robbed in Fazalganj police area. Since then, police was searching for the criminals. With the help of CCTV footages, though police had identified them but failed to

arrest them due to their being

their leg during the retaliatory

underground. ADCP said on being spotted, Gulfan and his accomplice Sultan of Nazirabad police station area escaped after leaving their bike. On being chased they opened fire on police party following which the police retaliated. As a result both of them sustained bullet injury in their leg. He said both the criminals were sent to hospital. After quizzing, they will be produced in the court and sent to jail. He said one of the brothers of Gulfan was already lodged in jail in a murder case. Both the criminals are natives of Fatehpur and living in Kanpur for the past 15-20 years. ADCP said apart from being tea vendors, both the criminals are also involved in committing loots. He said the modus operandi of this gang is different. After committing crime in Kanpur, they migrate to other places like Unnao or Fatehpur to commit another crime. He said Fatehpur police

was also searching for these

Awareness raised about gender issues



Workshop on gender sensitivity being organised at DAV College on Wednesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

The Internal Grievance Committee of DAV College Kanpur organised a workshop on gender sensitivity under Mission Shakti Phase-V on Wednesday. Around 70 students (boys and girls) of different departments took part in

the programme. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Nidhi Nagar made the partic-ipants aware about gender issues and appealed to be sensitive towards other genders. She also provided valuable information to all participants for creating an environment of gender equality. All the participants were awarded certifi-

Apart from the in charge, Internal Grievance Committee, Prof Pramila Tripathi, others present at the workshop were Prof Abhishek Kumar Srivastava, Prof Adesh Gupta, Dr Pratibha Tripathi, Dr Geet and Dr Charu.

LOOT CASE: Some car-borne robbers allegedly looted a youth's chain in Cantonment area late on Tuesday night. They also made a futile attempt

to loot the chain of his elder brother following him. Both the youths made a video of the incident carrying the car registration number and gave a complaint to the police. Akash Gupta of Shiv Katra along with younger brother Sagar and two cousins Lakshya and Ansh had gone to Meerpur to deliver clothes for stitching. When they were returning around 2 am some car-borne miscreants snatched the chain of scootyborne Sagar near Hanuman temple in the Cantonment area. They also made a futile attempt to loot Akash's chain and escaped towards the highway. During the loot, the brothers prepared a video of the incident and informed the police apart from submitting a written complaint.

However, ACP (Cantonment) Ajay Trivedi said there was a dispute over overtaking of car and denied any loot. A probe was on in the matter, he added. Meanwhile a cop allegedly duped his colleague of over ₹1 lakh on pretext of buying him a bike. The victim has lodged an FIR at the Kotwali police station in this connection.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate Museum of Valour, Sardar Patel statue in Tawang, celebrate Diwali with soldiers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will visit Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh on Thursday to inaugurate the Museum of Valour dedicated to Major Ralengnao Bob Khathing and unveil a statue of Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in the border district. He will also celebrate Diwali with soldiers stationed along the India-China border. Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi will also be

present. Manipur Chief Minister N

Biren Singh will also join the

Sharing the information on social media, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu welcomed both Rajnath Singh and the Manipur Chief Minister to the

"The inauguration of Major Ralengnao Bob Khathing Museum of Valour and unveiling of Desh Ka Vallabh, the statue of Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Tawang, by him in the august presence of Hon'ble Manipur CM Shri @NBirenSingh ji and other dignitaries will be cherished by

posted in the micro-blogging

"The heroic deed of Major Ralengnao Bob Khathing, who bravely led an expedition in February 1951 to bring the Indian administration to Tawang, has no parallel in

human history. What 'Iron Man' Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel did as India's first Home Minister by integrating several princely states into the country leaves us forever indebted to him. I on behalf of the people of Arunachal Pradesh heartily welcome Hon Defence Minister Shri @rajnathsingh ji



on the pious land of dawn-lit mountains," the chief minister

The two monuments dedicated to two great and brave souls will always remind us of their critical contributions to our country's integrity and sovereignty, the chief minister said in another social media post. Set against the backdrop of the eastern Himalayas, Tawang has long symbolised India's commitment to securing its borders. Rajnath's visit comes at a time when India and China reached a breakthrough in patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)

Meanwhile, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)General Anil Chauhan, will be in Andaman and Nicobar to participate in festivities with soldiers deployed there. Navy chief, Admiral Dinesh Tripathi, will celebrate with naval troops in Gujarat's Porbandar, while Air Chief Marshal AP Singh will celebrate with soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir. The tradition of celebrating

Diwali with troops was started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he came to office. In his first Diwali as prime minister, Modi visited Siachen,

was in Punjab's Amritsar. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, he went to Hiamchal Pradesh's Kinnaur, Gurez sector (Jammu and Kashmir) and Harsil in Uttarakhand, respectively. In 2019, the prime minister

was again in Jammu and Kashmir, as he celebrated the festival with jawans in Rajouri. Next year, he was in Rajasthan's Longewala and, in 2021, he was back in Jammu and Kashmir (Nowshera). He spent the next two Diwalis with troops in Ladakh's Kargil and Lepcha, Himachal Pradesh respectively.

Scheme launched to train 2.37 lakh young volunteers | Congress seeks immediate probe across country as first responders to disaster relief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELH

Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan has launched a special scheme to train 2.37 lakh young volunteers in 315 districts across the country as the first responders to disaster preparedness and response.

The 'Yuva Apada Mitra Scheme' was launched at the 20th formation day function of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) here on Monday, an official release said.

According to the plan, under the 'Yuva Apada Mitra Scheme', 2,37,326 young volunteers from the youth organisations such as National Cadet Corps (NCC), Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), Bharat Scouts & Guides (BS&G) and National Service Scheme (NSS) will be trained in 315 districts of 28 states as a first respondents to



disaster preparedness and

response. Besides, 1,300 trainers will also be prepared under the up-scaling of 'Aapda Mitra Scheme' with an estimated total cost of Rs 469.53 crore. The theme of the formation day event was 'Empowering Communities for Disaster Risk Reduction through Awareness for Behavioral Change'. During the event, the union home secretary launched seven guidelines, SOP and handbook on disas-

ter management. In his address, he urged the Himalayan and Northeastern Region (NER) states to put up their projects on Glacier Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) in consultation with respective stakeholders according to national programme on GLOF, the release said.

into deaths of seven elephants in MP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The death of seven elephants in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve has sparked outrage, with Congress leader Jairam Ramesh calling it "absolutely shocking". He has sought an immediate probe into the mortalities stating that this loss represents about 10 per cent of the reserve's elephant population. The Congress general secretary in-charge communications said, "The news from the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve that seven elephants have died while two or three more are critical, is absolutely shocking."

"This wipes out some 10 per cent of the elephant population in the reserve at one go. A full inquiry must take place immediately and preventive measures must be instituted," the former environment minister said on X,



Bhupender Yadav. According to reports, State Forest Minister Ramniwas Rawat has ordered a Special Investigation Team probe, while officials are investigating potential causes, including the consumption of Kodo millet. The situation remains critical, with three more elephants in serious condition.

A forest official said three more elephants have died in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Madhya Pradesh's Umaria district, taking the toll to seven. "The condition of three other tuskers was serious," the official said.

Madhya Pradesh's Forest Minister Ramniwas Rawat has ordered a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the death of the tuskers and asked officials to ensure strict action against culprits.

BTR's deputy director Prakash Kumar Verma said prime facie, the elephants seemed to have died after consuming Kodo millet, but the exact cause will be known after the autopsy.

Four wild elephants were found dead in the BTR on Tuesday while four others, part of the same herd of 13 tuskers, were found ill during routine patrolling, officials earlier said. Verma on Wednesday said so far seven elephants have died.
They were part of the herd of 13 pachyderms, he informed. The condition of three other jumbos was serious and they were being treated, while the BTR teams were monitoring the movement of remaining elephants that were part of the herd, he added.

Apologise to country: BJP to Congress after EC rejects Haryana irregularities charge

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

rhe BJP on Wednesday 1 asked the Congress to introspect and apologise to the country after the Election Commission(EC) rejected its allegation of irregularities in the just-concluded Haryana assembly polls as "frivolous and unfounded".

In a strongly-worded letter to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, the poll panel on Tuesday dismissed the party's allegations of irregularities in Haryana polls and said it was raising "the smoke of a generic doubt" about the credibility of an entire electoral outcome like it did in the

"frivolous and Such unfounded" doubts have the potential of creating "turbulence" when crucial steps like polling and counting are in live play, a time when both public and political parties' anxiousness is peaking, the EC had said.

Attacking the Congress over the issue, BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said, "In 1,642 pages, the Election Commission has given a detailed reply to the Congress over its baseless and preposterous allegations. The party stands completely exposed now. It does not have faith in any of the democratic systems and is ready to go to any extent to weaken the systems in India."

In the manner the Congress is trying to "demean" the dignity of the Constitutional bodies, it is not just ridiculous but suspicious, he charged.

"Hence, after the Election Commission's reply, the Congress should apologise to the country and introspect," the BJP spokesperson added.

India accounts for 26 per cent of global TB burden: WHO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

India's ambitious goal to Leliminate tuberculosis (TB) by 2025, five years ahead of the global target, appears challenging with a new World Health Organization's (WHO) report pointing out that India accounts for 26% of the global TB burden, the highest among 30 high-burden countries.

per the Global erculosis Report 2024, globally, TB also emerged as the leading infectious dis- increase from 7.5 million ease killer in 2023, surpassing COVID-19. The WHO reported about 8.2 million was found to be most comnew cases of TB, marking the mon among men (55 per highest incidence since monitoring began in 1995. While India led the list was followed by Indonesia, China, the Philippines, and Pakistan. This also represents a notable and sickens so many people is



reported in 2022.

The top infectious disease cent). Women accounted for more than 30 per cent, while 12 per cent were children and young adolescents. "The fact that TB still kills

an outrage, when we have the tools to prevent it, detect it and treat it," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, in the report. He called on countries to "make good on the concrete commitments they have made to expand the use of those tools, and to end TB". The report identifies five key

risk factors for TB: undernutrition, HIV infection, alcohol use disorders, smoking, and diabetes, stressing the need for multisectoral action to address these issues. The report said, MDR-TB

poses a significant obstacle. Despite treatment success rates reaching 68%, only 44% of those estimated to have MDR-TB were diagnosed and treated in 2023. "Of the 400 000 people estimated to have developed MDR/RR-TB, only and treated in 2023," the report said.

The complexities involved in managing these cases make eradication efforts more difficult. While the coverage of TB preventive treatment has been sustained for people living with HIV, multidrugresistant TB remains a public health crisis.

The report calls for increased

funding for TB research and sustained efforts to improve treatment success rates for multidrug-resistant TB, which have reached 68%. "Critical determinants like poverty and GDP per capita also require coordinated multisectoral action," said the report, while calling for increased funding for TB research.

On the positive front, meanwhile, the report noted a decline in the gap between the estimated number of new TB narrowed to about 2.7 million, down from Covid pandemic levels of around 4 million in 2020 and 2021.

In March 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made a commitment to eliminate TB from India by 2025, as the rest of the world aimed to achieve the TB-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets by 2030.

Diwali an opportunity to help deprived and needy: President Murmu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

President Droupadi Murmu Wednesday greeted citizens on the eve of Diwali and said the festival is also an opportunity to help the deprived and needy and share happiness with them.

On the auspicious occasion of Diwali, "we should illuminate our conscience, adopt virtues of love and compassion, and promote social harmony", she said. This festival is also an opportunity to help the deprived and needy, and share "our happiness with them", the President said in a message issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Diwali is a festival of happiness and enthusiasm, she said. "This festival symbolises the victory of knowledge over



ignorance and good over evil. Various communities in India and abroad celebrate this festival with great zeal," President Murmu said, adding that this festival also kindles hope for a brighter

"Let us be proud of the glori-

faith in goodness, let us celebrate a pollution-free Diwali and pledge to build a healthy, prosperous and responsible society," she said while extending Diwali greetings to all Indians living in the country and abroad.

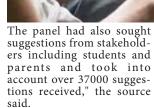
Centre's panel on exam reforms mull reduced outsourcing, online exams

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 $M_{\text{of staff and examination}}^{\text{inimising outsourcing}}$ centres, holding maximum entrance examinations online and capping the number of attempts in major entrances are among the measures being contemplated by a high-level panel set up by the Centre to review functioning of National Testing Agency (NTA).

The Centre had on October 21 sought two weeks time from the Supreme Court to submit the final report of the panel led by former ISRO chief R Radhakrishnan.

"The report is almost ready. Several recommendations are being made to streamline the functioning of NTA and the conduct of major entrance exams in the country," a source said. Among the recommendations that the panel is likely to make are reducing offline exams or opting for hybrid exams where switching to online mode completely is not feasible; capping the numnot feasible; capping the num-ber of attempts in major exams including medical entrance NEET and reducing the role of outsourced staff and centres to ensure sanctity of exams is not affected. The panel held 22 meetings to address the complexities

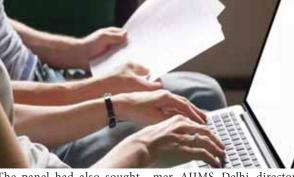


In the line of fire over alleged examinations by NTA.

While NEET was under the scanner over several irregularities, including alleged leaks, UGC-NET was cancelled as the ministry received inputs that the integrity of the exam had been compromised. Both matters are being probed

Two other exams - CSIR-UGC NET and NEET PG were cancelled at the last involved in conducting such moment as a pre-emptive

large-scale exams, the risks and the security measures. The panel also includes for-



irregularities in the medical entrance examination NEET and PhD entrance NET, the Centre had in July set up the panel to ensure transparent, smooth and fair conduct of

by the CBI.

mer AIIMS Delhi director Randeep Guleria, Central University of Hyderabad Vice-Chancellor B J Rao, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Civil Engineering at IIT Madras K Ramamurthy, People Strong co-founder and Karmayogi Bharat board member Pankaj Bansal, IIT Delhi Dean of Student Affairs Aditya Mittal and MoE Joint Secretary

Govind Jaiswal. The committee was also been tasked with examining the existing security protocols related to the setting of the papers and other processes for various examinations and making recommendations to enhance the robustness of

the system. The panel had also opted two IIT Kanpur academicians as members -- Amey Karkare, professor of Computer Science and Engineering and Debapriya Roy, assistant pro-

Scientists develop luminescent ink with advanced security features Ink may help in combating counterfeiting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Scientists at the Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST) have developed a groundbreaking luminescent ink with advanced security features to combat counterfeiting in currency, certificates, branded goods and medicines among a few others.

The INST is an autonomous Department of Science and Technology (DST) under the Science Technology Ministry. Counterfeiting is a growing

problem worldwide and researchers are trying to find unique ways to prevent it. Luminescent properties of rare earth ions and the characteristic emissions of bismuth have long been known. However, this is a first of its kind security ink based on luminescent nanomaterials with rare earth doping, enabling excitation dependent luminescence (Under both UV and NIR light it gives Visible emission).

By utilising rare earth ions and bismuth, this ink emits different colors under specific light wavelengths—vibrant blue, pink, and orange-redmaking it difficult to duplicate, said a statement from the



"Its unique properties allow for clear verification of authenticity in currency, certificates, medicines, and branded products.

This innovative solution promises to enhance product integrity and consumer trust, providing a powerful tool against counterfeiting."

The ink can overcome the limitations of current covert tags, which are security features usually visible only under UV light and can be easily duplicated. "Specifically, the ink appears vibrant blue under 365 nm light, pink under 395 nm light, and orange-red under 980 nm near-infrared (NIR) light and remains effective under a range of light, temperature, and humidity conditions,"

The luminescent nanomaterial was synthesised using a simple co-precipitation

said the statement..

method at 120°C. After synthesis, the nanomaterials were dispersed into commercially available PVC ink using sonication (process of dispersing nanoparticles into solvent by applying

sound energy). This mixture was then used to create patterns and letters through a screen-printing

technique. These printed patterns, when exposed to different wavelengths of light, clearly showed the desired colour changes, proving the effectiveness of the ink, said the statement.

By combining rare earth ions with well-known luminescent properties and bismuth with characteristic emissions, the team was able to enhance the encryption and decryption capabilities of the ink, improving its security poten-

Autonomous vessel to sail 1,500 km from Mumbai to Tuticorin



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

In an effort to showcase the Ltechnological advancements achieved through innovation led by startups, the Indian Navy launched Sagarmala Parikrama on Wednesday, navy said here.

Giving details, officials said Matangi- an Autonomous Surface Vessel developed by Sagar Defence Engineering was flagged off by Defence Minister Rajna Singh here during the Plenary Session of Swavlamban 2024 at Bharat Mandapam. The sea transit from Mumbai to Tuticorin spans a distance of 850 nautical miles or 1500 kilometers. During the transit

Autonomous mode without human intervention, using the indigenously developed 'navigation and collision avoidance software'. Matangi has successfully com-

pleted the first leg of the Autonomous mode transit from Mumbai to Karwar covering about 600 km (350 nm) passage at night. Nearly 1,000 km more are to go to Tuticorin for the expedition, they added. Startup's and MSMEs lead the way to successful development and validation of niche technology embodying the spirit of Swavlamban 2024. Strength and power through innovation and indigenization to make science, technology and innovation a revolutionary idea in the Matangi will proceed in country is the objective.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION—

Traffic mayhem

On the eve of Diwali, Delhiites found themselves stranded for hours as traffic jams clogged major roads

iwali is the biggest festival in Delhi. It is awaited eagerly by one and all. While the festivities galore it is also during this time, the Delhiites suffer the most; high pollution levels and traffic jams dampen the festive spirit. On the eve of Diwali, thousands of commuters in Delhi found themselves trapped in an unending traffic nightmare. With the festive season in full swing, the city's roads, particularly around popular market areas, became scenes of frustration as vehicles moved at a snail's pace, leaving commuters stranded for hours. Despite pre-announced traffic measures by Delhi Police, congestion overwhelmed key roads, with frustrated citizens questioning the effectiveness of traffic management efforts. Heavy traffic jams were reported across several areas, including the DND flyway, Ashram Marg, and Sarai Kale Khan, stretching into congested points such as Karol Bagh, Taimur Nagar-Maharani Bagh Road, Punjabi Bagh, and Badarpur Mehrauli Road. As the festive rush built up on



Dhanteras, shoppers headed to market areas in droves. Many took to social media to share images and videos of the gridlocked streets, sparking discussions about the city's recurring traffic woes. In a bid to curb the chaos, Delhi Police had announced intensified road checks, anti-encroachment drives and measures aimed at keeping traffic flowing smoothly. Additionally, non-essential vehicles were restricted from entering the capital, and shoppers were instructed to park only in designated areas.

Despite these efforts, the measures seemed insufficient against the overwhelming crowd of festival shoppers. Sarojini Nagar, Sadar Bazar, and Khan

Market saw an enormous influx, leaving shop owners struggling to manage both security and traffic. In some areas, the traffic snarls dampened the Diwali spirit. Ironically, the unexpected security measures, intended to reduce congestion, left sections of the market unusually empty on Dhanteras. As commuters endured bumper-to-bumper delays, voices of discontent grew louder and many people vent their spleen on social media. With Diwali celebrations continuing, these issues are likely to persist. Despite attempts to bolster security and traffic regulation, the administration's efforts seem to have fallen way short, leaving commuters to bear the brunt of another chaotic festive season on Delhi's streets. The traffic jams reflect poorly on the administrations capability to handle it. No denying that more cars are on the roads and given the limited capacity of roads, traffic jams cannot be completely eliminated. But having said that it is also true that the preparedness to deal with such a scenario were inadequate. At places there was no traffic police personnel to control the traffic and many signal lights reportedly did not work. We actively campaigned to bring this issue to the attention of relevant departments through a series of reports well in advance, right before the festive season began. Yet, as always, complacency prevailed.



sts dance on the Rampath ahead of Deepotsav celebrations, in Ayodhya

'Trophyisation' of weapon platforms



In the propaganda war, the symbolic power of "trophy" weapons extends far beyond the battlefield, reshaping the narratives of geopolitical rivalries

f Ukrainians made a public spectacle of captured Russian weaponry, the Russians did likewise in flaunting captured Western military hardware, from the Ukrainians. It is surreal to see captured battle trophies like the American M1 Abrams tank, German Leopard tank or the British Husky tactical support vehicle etc., in a public park. The symbolism supports the Russian narrative that the 'West'/NATO is attacking Russia, and yet the Russians are triumphing. However, the ground truth is more complex as the Russians had invaded Ukraine and the war status is a stalemate at best, as the envisaged '10-day operation' has gone on for over a year and a half. Such displays are common across militaries, and they understandably do not sit well with the other

Now, the Chinese have got riled over similar symbolism as the US Navy plans to exhibit a warplane, albeit of its own, that harks back to the 2001 Hainan Island incident that involved a midair collision of a Signal Intelligence aircraft i.e., EP-3E Aries II of the UN Navy, and a Chinese Air Force F-8 fighter plane. Flying over the tense and disputed South China Seas, the US plane had taken off from its Kadena Air Base in Japan and was intercepted by two F-8 fighters midway between the Hainan Islands and Paracel Islands. Whilst making aggressive passes, one of the Chinese fighter planes collided with the American plane and the Chinese fighter plane broke.

The Chinese fighter pilot's body was never recovered. The damaged American plane along with its 24 crew members made an emergency landing at China's Hainan airbase without authorization and its crew were detained.

There was a counterclaim by the Chinese that the American plane had deliberately hit the Chinese fighter plane, but it was never substantiated, even though the Chinese had the data from the flight recorders of both planes. 10 days of hectic diplomatic parleys ensued with each side blaming the other for provocation and unreasonable conduct.



China insisted on the illegality of the American plane's presence claiming the region to be part of its exclusive economic zone as per the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS)whereas the Americans claimed patrolling rights under its right of Freedom of Navigation. But embarrassing delays in securing the release of American crew were publicly distracting from the more pressing foreign policy issue of launching the 'War on Terror' for the then US President, George Bush, in Afghanistan, following 9/11.

A due 'letter of the two sorries' (for the death of the Chinese fighter pilot and unauthorized landing) from the American side led the same to be conveniently interpreted as a 'letter of apology' by the Chinese media, and the same led to the release of American crew and the return of the disassembled aircraft. 23 years later, the Americans are bringing back the same plane i.e., EP-3E Aries II, at its Pima Air & Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, for public display. The 'trophyisation' will be accompanied by a backstory explaining its significance in a historic incident that was fraught with risks of further escalation, for public consumption. The Chinese fear an American

THERE WAS A COUNTERCLAIM BY THE CHINESE THAT THE AMERICAN PLANE HAD DELIBERATELY HIT THE CHINESE FIGHTER PLANE, BUT IT WAS NEVER SUBSTANTIATED, EVEN THOUGH THE CHINESE HAD THE DATA FROM THE FLIGHT RECORDERS OF BOTH PLANES

narrative of 'capitulation' that paints the Chinese reaction in a dim light, even though it had the American plane and its 24 crew members, on its soil. As a riled Chinese social media commentator reacted, "It is not 2001. Wake up! It's 2024" – as if to suggest that the Chinese PLA was no minnow any longer, and it would give a befitting reply.
The unofficial mouthpiece of

the Chinese regime i.e., Global Times, captured the reactionary mood in China, "Chinese people saw the incident as a painful memory for the nation and the reported plan to display the US warplane at a sensitive moment when China-US relations are delicate and face uncertainties, is like "rubbing salt into the wound" and reflects an unfriendly stance by the US toward China". However, the situation in the choppy South China Seas has not changed much with the Chinese belligerence continuing and growing by the day, and with the Americans still sorties and naval exercises to

counter the same. Countries like Taiwan, Japan and most recently Philippines, are in the direct line of competing territorial claims, against China. Symbolism with the conceptualisation of con-

like (Quadrilateral of Sino-wary, Japan, US, Australia and India) or Naval Exercises are part of vital international optics and narrative building. In a dictatorial country like China where propaganda has been elevated to a fine art, Beijing understands the power of public perception, hence its discomfort with the re-positing of the Hainan incident, entailing the return of EP-3E Aries II in public imagination.

The Chinese pipedream would like the new US exhibit to include, "calls from China and other countries worldwide to end US reconnaissance operations near their borders", but as the most encroaching, expansionist, and coercive neighbour - it would know better than to expect the American exhibit to be kind towards China's propaganda position. With many famous defections of fighter pilots towards 'enemy' countries (especially from China to Taiwan), the 'trophyisation' of weapon platforms is an old hat, conducting reconnaissance air and in that context, the thinskinned and hyper-reaction by the Chinese recently is churl-

> (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

The benefits and reality of organic food choices



From freshly harvested crops to packaged foods, the organic label now commands a premium price; is it for real or just a sales gimmick

n recent years, a remarkable trend has emerged, with organic products now prominently displayed on supermarket shelves and featured on packaging across the board. It encompasses everything from freshly harvested crops to essential packaged goods. And, given that the organic brand will cost significantly more, people are questioning if it is worth it. Organic foods offer health, aetiology, and environmental benefits. This type of food is promoted as a more wholesome and righteous option. The concept is straightforward: reduce pesticide use, eliminate synthetic fertilisers, and avoid genetically modified organisms. For numerous individuals, opting for cleaner and more organically cultivated produce justifies the expense. And yet, aren't we, in our way, being chipped away at our true worth as customers?

Years ago, before the rise of industrial farming, vegetables like ladyfingers (okra) were a lot less predictable. We often found worms inside, an unpleasant but

natural reminder of the environment in which they grew. These "flaws" assured us that the produce was authentic, untouched by synthetic chemicals. Fast forward to today, and the produce is picture-perfect, but the trade-off has been significant.

Our vegetables, once vibrant and full of flavour, are now coated in pesticides that strip them of their natural essence. We've all noticed it: the tomatoes don't taste like they used to, and a bell pepper is just... bland. With the essence of fresh vegetables fading from our experience, many sought refuge in the convenience of pre-packaged meals.

The appeal and taste of fast ily equate to "organic." It food or packaged snacks overshadow the presence of vegetables offered alongside them.

It's hardly unexpected that many individuals find themselves torn between the less appealing, time-consuming superfoods and the quicker, more delicious meal alternatives. Yet, what is the price to pay? Here's the point: it's not about flavour or ease—it's about well-being.

Even minimal exposure to pesticides has been linked to a variety of health issues, including hormone disruption and neurological complications. As time passes, these substances may build up within the human body, and despite increasingly stringent regulations, the long-term consequences remain largely unclear.

This justifies the higher price tag, reinforcing the value of organic foods. Is "organic" always synonymous with better quality? Not exactly. Organic does not guarantee perfection. Certification processes have gaps, meaning that pesticide-free does not necessar-

promises a reduction in synthetic chemicals and the adoption of more sustainable farming practices. Additionally, organic farming enhances biodiversity and soil health—both essential for the future of our planet.Is this a worthwhile investment?

It hinges on what you value most. Choosing organic is a positive move towards minimising chemical exposure and fostering sustainable practices. However, to truly enhance the flavour of your meals, seeking out local farmers and fresh produce that hasn't undergone excessive processing or long-distance transport could be a more effective solution to that issue.

Embracing organic choices transcends mere financial considerations; it represents a commitment to your wellbeing, an enhancement of your culinary experience, and a forward-thinking approach to the future of our food systems.

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

POPULATION CENSUS 2025

Madam —Regarding 'Population Census Takes Off in 2025' (Oct 29), the census is far more than a political activity; it's a strategic framework for development as India progresses toward becoming a superpower. The proposed 31 questions for the census should encompass aspects such as the agricultural workforce, tribal and coastal populations, elderly and infirm populations, women's education and economic standing, the skilled youth workforce, informal sector engagement, child mortality rates, school and college enrollment, residents abroad, border-area inhabitants, those who have traveled or hold properties abroad, and OCI and NRI populations in India. The upcoming election delimitation should ensure fair population representation per constituency for MPs and

Although caste census isn't constitutionally mandated, it is often used as a political tool that risks dividing society along caste lines. The lack of exact figures on castes among Hindus and Muslims and the absence of official caste records make the legitimacy of caste data contentious, often resulting in disputes and litigation. Furthermore, with the prevalence of intercaste marriages, the caste census appears increasingly outdated.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

DIGITAL FRAUD Madam— When a Prime Minister warns citizens about digital fraud, it underscores the gravity of this issue and its deep infiltration at the grassroots level. According to available data, Indian citizens lost around ?120 crores to digital fraud in the first quarter of 2024 alone—a conservative estimate, as many cases go unreported due to fear of police harassment or lack of awareness. The methods used by fraudsters vary widely and evolve constantly. A common tactic involves scammers posing as relatives to extract bank details, often from numbers originating abroad. This is particularly prevalent in Punjab, where many have relatives overseas, making

Revisit West Asia policy

he editorial on the looming war clouds in West Asia (Oct 28) should resonate more deeply with India than with other nations, given India's critical stakes in the region. For decades, attacks and counterattacks in West Asia have been common, but the current wave of violent escalations and genocides on both sides has far-reaching implications globally. India, in par-

tion leans ideologically toward supporting Israel, despite India's historical support for the Palestinian cause. Additionally, India benefits from affordable crude oil sourced from Russia, although these savings are primarily enjoyed by select private players in the oil sector rather than reaching the public. However, as tensions intensify, potentially drawing in the US and Russia, nations worldwide may find themselves compelled to align with one side. This situation could pressure the government to prioritize ideological support for Israel or risk trade disruptions that could affect India's economic stability-already challenged by an unfavorable trade balance. India, surrounded by a region of strained relations, cannot afford isolation in such turbulent times. It is essential for prudence to pre-

AG Rajmohan | Anantpur

them easy targets.

These foreign-based numbers make tracing the criminals more challenging. While the Digital India initiative launched in 2015 has successfully propelled the nation toward digital empowerment, it has also exposed more citizens to cybercrime. This calls for increased caution, particularly among the elderly and those less familiar with digital technology. Only by staying vigilant can we protect ourselves from these evolving digital threats.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

RISING CASES OF STROKES AMONG YOUNG

Madam — Countries worldwide are making significant investments to position themselves at the forefront of the semiconductor industry, with India setting aside \$11 billion and considering an additional \$5-10 billion.

These are sizable figures, particularly when compared to the relatively lower investment in labor-intensive industries like leather and handicrafts. But what is the government's ultimate goal with such a massive investment? Is it to establish a base

for a larger electronics sector, or to support the expanding automobile supply chain? Unfortunately, the government's response has been unclear and less than satisfactory, with an emphasis on promoting "aatmanirbharta" or self-reliance.

However, self-reliance may not be entirely practical given the complex nature of global supply chains. Reducing dependence on allied nations like South Korea and Taiwan may not be necessary; rather, the focus could be on lessening reliance on China. A key challenge for the government in implementing this plan will be securing a skilled workforce. A more strategic approach would be to target specific, scalable segments of the supply chain, such as fabrication, design, assembly, and packaging. Instead of focusing solely on selfreliance, India should aim to establish itself as a key player in the global semiconductor supply chain, maximizing the impact of this significant investment.

Pratyush Tiwari | Ujjain

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FIRST COLUMN

WHERE DO **WE GO WRONG?**

It is essential to recognise the diverse spiritual paths that humanity traverses



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

am referring to our relationship with God. To understand this properly, clarity must be there about different classes of men. There are two main ones. The first one is of majority. In this, there are five types. Many do not know God, those who are living in the wilderness, and do have not much connection with civilization.

The next are those, who are aware but have no opinion about God. They take a neutral stance in this matter. They are called agnostics. The next level is of those, who are aware of God, but are too lazy to have anything to do with Him, i.e., they don't do any spiritual practices to develop a link with God. The fourth category is of those, who are envious of God. Why is God superior to us, why should we take His shelter, why does He control everything, etc.? And the last category is atheists, who forcefully deny God's existence. Now I come to those, who have faith in God and His instructions, but are of different levels.

The first level is of those who do some spiritual practices as rituals. For example, someone has a murti of Lord Krishna in his home, which he has placed on a shelf. He lights an 'agarbatti' every morning after bath and places it near the murti. Someone else may be chanting Gayatri Mantra three times a day. Or someone maybe worshipping Suryadeva every morning with water. These are very nice activities and bring benefits, which are limited in extent. The worshiper has certain material desires, which he is keen on. He is superior to an ordinary man carrying out his material activities in pur-



suit of material goals like wealth, power, fame, etc. The next level is those who do some rituals and also have some faith in the Lord's instructions, as given in bonafide spiritual texts like the Bhagavad-Geeta. But they restrict themselves for two reasons what they can get from God. They don't do more to please God and become deserving, but displease God by their lusty, greedy, angry, hateful, etc. activities. Is this intelligent?

They end up gaining some material benefits for the spiritual acts done, and also punishments for bad acts done. They don't cancel out, i.e., both come to fruition. The next level of faith is better. They do rituals and try to gain purity in action through their minds, senses, and words. This helps them enhance their mode of goodness. They reap many benefits as a consequence. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 14.6) Then, comes the next level, who can be called devotees. They desire to please God in addition to their senses, minds and bodies. They have faith in Good's instructions, i.e., try to act accordingly. But they also don't go far enough. This happens due to many reasons like fault in nature (svabhava) and not great 'sanskars' (cultural training).

They only come to a stage described by Lord Krishna. (6.41)Now we come to the highest level of devotees; he is helplessly attracted towards God due to practice done in the previous life. He transcends the ritualistic part of the Vedas. (6.44)Let us, therefore, not go wrong. We should stop ourselves from denying the existence of God staying neutral or being feeble about connecting with God. We have so much to gain even if we are not thinking of gaining liberation. God has so much to offer like opulence of all six kinds including success.

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

India's shift toward competency-based hiring



The focus on competency over credentials promises not only to improve employability but also to foster a more inclusive workforce



ndia is moving towards skillsbased hiring over degrees, marking a significant shift in the job mar-ket. Companies increasingly adopt competency-based hiring practices, focusing on practical skills and inclusivity rather than traditional degrees. This change is influenced by the growing importance of industry-relevant competencies in today's digitised business landscape. IBM India is a notable example of this trend, as it has implemented a 'skills-first' policy, where a college degree is no longer a prerequisite for recruitment. Similarly, companies like TCS, Infosys, and Wipro are also shifting towards skills-based hiring, investing heavily in training programs in the dig-

This shift has broad implications for India's education sector, prompting universities and educational institutions to incorporate more industry-relevant training and competency-based curricula. Many Indian universities are partnering with businesses to offer specialized training in artificial intelligence, data analytics, cyber security, and beauty and well-

Recently, Medhavi University collaborated with Orane International, a pioneer global institute in beauty-wellness. Such collaborations aim to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and industry requirements, ensuring graduates are job-ready from day one. Reports have shown that such partnerships have significantly increased employability in specialized fields, highlighting the importance of aligning education with industry needs. Competency-based hiring is revolutionising university education and professional development in India. In today's technology-driven economy, continuous learning and upskilling are crucial for career advancement. Companies like IBM, TCS, and Infosys

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THAT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IS digital future.

Over the next five years, approx-NATIONAL

PERFORMANCE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH. AS REFLECTED IN THE 2024 **EDUCATION** BUDGET, SIGNIFICANT FUNDING HAS BEEN DIRECTED

TOWARDS DIGITAL PROJECTS TO PREPARE YOUNG INDIANS FOR A

heavily invest in training programs on the digital economy. These programs often include online courses, certifications, and micro-credentials, enabling employees to acquire new skills

The Indian government recognizes that skills development is critical to national performance and economic growth. As reflected in the 2024 education budget, significant funding has been directed towards digital projects to prepare young Indians for a

CRITICAL TO imately 2 million young people ed. will receive skills training. Additionally, 1,000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) will be modernized, with updated course content tailored to industry

> This government support is crucial for India's ambition to remain a talent hub.India stands at a critical juncture in its economic journey, with immense potential for growth but facing a significant challenge in bridging the unemployment-employability gap. As the world's fifth-largest economy, India's vision for "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 hinges on effectively skilling its youth to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving job

The Union Budget 2024-25 has highlighted this priority, allocating substantial funds for education, employment, and skilling initiatives. However, the task ahead is daunting, with nearly 73% of workers aged 15-59 years DIGITAL FUTURE tional training. A multi-pronged lacking formal or informal voca-

ing India's demographic dividend and fueling economic growth. This includes bolstering institutional support, strengthening industry-academia connections, and leveraging innovative financing solutions like impact bonds. As India navigates this crucial phase, the success of its skill development efforts will play a pivotal role in shaping the nation's future and realizing its economic potential.Competencybased hiring transforms the job for diverse groups often exclud-

In India, many individuals see ing to re-enter the workforce often in remote or part-time roles-benefit from this approach. During the pandemic, many women took online courses in digital marketing, content creation, and I.T. services while balancing home responsibilities. This shift towards skills-based hiring opens doors for a more inclusive and diverse workforce and paints an optimistic picture of the future of employment in India, full of opportunities and potential for growth. India's thriving start-up culture is

a testament to the adaptability and practical experience valued in skills-based hiring. Startups, often operating with limited resources, place less emphasis on educational background and more on the skills and potential of their employees.

As a result, startups are setting the pace in adopting skills-based hiring practices, inspiring more giant corporations to follow suit

approach is essential to harness- and revolutionise the job market. Their innovative approach to hiring is not only inspiring but also a sign of the changing times in the Indian job

in the Indian job market. Transitioning to skillsbased hiring comes with challenges, including the need for accurate and unbiased skills assessments.

Traditional hiring, reliant on academic qualifications, is relatively straightforward. In contrast, evaluating practical skills requires sophisticated testing and assessmarket and creates opportunities ment techniques. Additionally, companies must train their H.R. teams to recognize and nurture talent based on skills rather than credentials.

Acknowledging these challenges is the first step towards overcoming them, and it prepares us for the future of hiring. By acknowledging these challenges, we can better prepare for the future of hiring and ensure a more effective and inclusive job market.

Despite these challenges, the benefits of competency-based hiring are evident. Companies can access a broader and more diverse talent pool by focusing on skills, including individuals overlooked by traditional hiring processes. This approach helps fill critical skills gaps and fosters a more inclusive and innovative workforce.

(The writer is co-founder and MD of Orane International, a training partner of the National Skill Development Corporation and a network Member of India International Skills Centres, an initiative of GoI. The views expressed are personal)

Reviving Bihar's libraries: Bridging the gap between tradition and technology

A well-conceived hybrid model could revitalise Bihar's libraries, providing a space where traditional and digital learning coexist

n today's era of rapid dig-ital transformation, Llibraries in Bihar and across India are facing a critical challenge: how to remain relevant in a world increasingly dominated by digital content and online resources. Historically, libraries have been pillars of knowledge and learning, preserving history, culture, science, and philosophy for generations. However, with the rise of the internet, mobile technology, and social media, the traditional role of libraries is being questioned, especially in rural areas and smaller towns. The digital revolution has reshaped the way people, especially the youth, con-sume information. Where decline of public libraries, libraries were once the sole custodians of knowledge, the



RINKU KUMARI

Internet now offers instant access to vast amounts of data. E-books, online courses, and educational videos are available at the click of a button, challenging the need for physical spaces to access information. While this shift has opened new avenues for learning, it has also conparticularly in states like Bihar.Bihar's once-thriving

library culture has dramatically deteriorated. Where and Nav Yuvak Samiti Trust there were once 540 public libraries in the state during the 1950s, only 51 remain today, according to a 2022 report from the Bihar Library Assembly

Committee. Entire districts, including Arwal, Kaimur, Banka, Sheohar, Kishanganj, and Sheikhpura, now have no public libraries at all—neither in rural areas nor in urban centres. The closure of these institutions reflects a deeper cultural shift, where reading and communal learning spaces are no longer central to the lives of many. Muzaffarpur, highlights the concerning reality of the fading library tradition. Its few remaining libraries, such as

and Nav Yuvak Samiti Trust Library, are either poorly resourced or neglected. In a city of this size, there isn't

a single well-functioning library that caters to literature lovers or cultural enthusiasts, leaving little hope for their counterparts in rural areas. Yet, as the world embraces digital transformation, the role of libraries must evolve rather than disappear. The challenge lies not in replacing libraries but in reimagining them as hybrid spaces—integrating digital resources with the physical charm and purpose of traditional libraries. Libraries, with their rich legacy of providing knowledge, can be transformed into community hubs that offer more than just



books. They can become centres for digital literacy, elearning, and skill development, especially in areas where access to the internet and technology is still a challenge.In this context, Vinay, a social worker from Muzaffarpur, suggests a forward-thinking solution: modernizing libraries to meet the needs of the current generation. Libraries should be equipped with computers, internet access, and resources

for career counselling and education. "We need to reconnect young people, who are lost in the virtual world, with the world of books," he

Libraries can offer both the serenity and richness of traditional books and the practicality and excitement of digital resources. This transformation would not only make libraries more accessible but also relevant to today's youth, who are accustomed to consuming knowledge digi-

The success of such an initiative would depend on con-certed efforts by local leaders, communities, and governments. For instance, establishing a digital library in every Panchayat would bridge the urban-rural divide, bringing digital literacy to the forefront while preserving the cultural and intellectual heritage libraries represent. Panchayat representatives and village intellectuals can play a critical role in promoting the use of these modernized libraries, ensuring that the younger generation has access to both digital and physical forms of knowledge. The ongoing digital revolution has created an urgent need to rethink the purpose and structure of

The Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna, one of the few libraries still thriving in Bihar, is a testament to the potential of such institutions. However, unless libraries across the state are modernized to embrace digital tools and resources, their

future seems uncertain. The decline of libraries in Bihar isn't just about the closure of physical spaces—it reflects the broader societal changes driven by technology. But rather than view this as the end of the library's role, it should be seen as an opportunity to redefine its importance in a digital-first world. (The writer is an educator in

Muzaffarpur Bihar; views are personal. Charkha

Maha Yuti blues: BJP throws lot with MNS' Amit Thackeray in Mahim

T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

In a development that exposed lack of consensus among the constituents of the ruling MahaYuti on certain issues Maharashtra's deputy chief minister ments made in separate tele-Devendra Fadnavis said on Wednesday that the BJP was committed to supporting MNS chief Raj Thackeray's son Amit Thackeray in Mumbai's Mahim constituency where his party's ally - the Shinde Shiv Sena - has

plicated, Raj went to town in Mahim constituency --

claiming that after the polls, the MNS -- which is not part of the pre-poll grand alliance would be part of the MahaYuti government headed by a BJP chief minister.

The positions taken by Fadnavis and Raj - in statevision interviews of a Marathi television channel have led to intense speculation within the state government that the BIP would no longer back current chief minister Eknath Shinde for the current term. If anything, Fadnavis' open put up a candidate. declaration that the BJP "want to support Amit Thackeray"

where the Shinde Sena has fielded sitting party MLA Sada Sarvankar in Mahim constituency against Amit Thackeray - has set the cat among the pigeons.

On his part, Fadnavis claimed that there was consensus between him and Eknath Shinde on supporting MNS candidate Amit Thackeray, who is making an electoral debut from Mahim.

'I am told that leaders from the Shinde-led Shiv Sena argued that if the party does not contest the election, its traditional voters would shift to the Uddhav Thackerayled Shiv Sena (UBT). As far



The BJP is still firm on its stand," Fadnavis said.

as we are concerned, we Fadnavis, however, hastened would like to support Amit. to add: "When we (leaders of Mahayuti) meet, we will discuss and try to find a solu-

Raj and Fadnavis have enjoyed close rapport over the years. The Raj Thackeray-led MNS, which did not contest the recent Lok Sabha polls, had extended its unconditional support to the BJP-led NDA in the LS polls.

If the Shinde does not withdraw the candidature of its candidate Sada Sarvankar who is adamant on contesting the polls, then it will be a triangular contest among the Amit Thackeray, Sarvankar (Shide Sena) and Mahesh Sawant of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena. On the other hand, while

programme, expressed confidence that the BJP-led MahaYuti would return to power in the state.

The political situation in Maharashtra has changed vastly during the last three months. It now appears that the MahaYuti will come back to power in the State in the 2024 polls. One of the factors that contributed to the improved chances of the MahaYuti is the BJP's victory in Harvana".

The pre-poll alliance among the ruling MahaYuti and Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) notwithstanding, "friendly fights" are being witnessed between the Yuti and MVA partners in at least 13 constituencies across the state. Full Clarity will come after the withdrawal of nominations on November

From the MahaYuti, the ruling BJP is contesting 152 seats, while its allies have fielded candidates in 80 and 50 constitiences respectively. On the MVA front, the Congress is contesting 102 seats, while the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena and NCP (Sharad Pawar) have nominated 96 and 87 seats

Now rural Bengal rebels against Didi Government

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

fter the doctors it is the turn After the doctors the distribution of rural Bengal to rebel. Villagers deprived of pucca houses under the rural housing scheme have rebelled in a number of districts against alleged corruption in allocation of funds for housing.

Angry villagers from Hooghly, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Burdwan West, Birbhum, East Midnapore, Malda districts demonstrated outside respective panchayat and block development offices alleging corruption and favouritism on the part of Trinamool Congress leadership in enlisting eligible recipients of houses under the Banglar Baari (House of Bengal) scheme.

The project has been floated by the Mamata Banerjee Government as an alternative to the central Prime Minister Awaas Yojna scheme alleging discrimination by the Centre in allocation of funds.

"We had submitted all the requisite forms and necessary certificates but our names have not appeared in the list of recipients," said Asma Khatoon a homemaker from Canning in South 24 Parganas. Her neighbor Azizul, Rehmat and Bilasi too

raised similar questions. At Mathurapur in the same district villagers like Swapna, Anima and Dipti too agitated before the panchayat and block offices asking "why should we not get houses when people who already have two-storey pucca

Earlier the State had decided to construct houses for villagers who had been left out of the Centre's housing scheme.

houses and toilets are getting

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who had been crying hoarse for the past couple of years alleging deprivation by the Centre on account of releasing funds to the tune of Rs 1.50 lakh crore on account of 100-days' work, PM Awaas, rural roads and other

The state government has decided to build houses for all people in the state who have been deprived under the central scheme," the Chief Minister had told the officials in a meeting and asked State Panchayat Minister Pradip Majumdar to take stock of the people who had

yet to receive houses. The Centre had blocked funds following widespread complaints of corruption from the villagers in distribution of hous-"The Centre has been sending funds but these are going to the pockets of the TMC leaders . and their relatives and cronies ... so the Centre is asking to account for the previous funds

before releasing subsequent

tranches," State Opposition

Kashi, Mathura must also shine like Ayodhya: CM

candidate in Faizabad Lok Sabha seat in the 2024 polls was not repeated in the yet-to-be-announced bypoll to Milkipur assembly seat which fell vacant after Samajwadi Party's Awadhesh Prasad was elected Faizabad MP.

Adityanath said Ayodhya's transformation was part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for development of the heritage of Sanatan Dharma and taking them to the global stage.

"On January 22 this year, after 500 years of wait, Lord Ram Lalla was once again enshrined at his birthplace, sending a message to the oppressed and troubled world that one should never stray from their path as this approach would surely lead to success," the CM said.

He said this was a moment to remember all those souls who had dedicated their lives for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

"I bow to all those saints on this occasion, and to the martyrs, around 3,50,000 in number, who laid down their lives with one wish as they left this world: that, no matter the cost, even at the price of their sacrifice, a temple for Lord Ram must be built on the soil of Ayodhya," Adityanath said.

"Their vow has been fulfilled... Ram Lalla has returned to reside in Ayodhya Dham," he added.

"Earlier, we used to say that we deliver on what we promise. This doubleengine government does exactly that. For Ayodhya alone, where there was no regular electricity before 2017, projects worth Rs 31,000 crore have either been



completed or are progressing at a rapid

There is much more to be done. This is just the beginning. Ayodhya is the starting point for Šanatan Dharma, translating Prime Minister Modi's vision of heritage and development into reality on the ground, and taking that mission to the global stage," Adityanath said. "Today, Kashi (Varanasi) is shining. The world is witnessing the grandeur and divinity of Kashi," he said, adding that the government was determined to make Ayodhya one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

The reference to Mathura and Kashi was significant as the two Hindu religious places are locked in legal disputes and court cases over ownership and control of temples and religious sites.

Referring to the first edition of Deepotsav in 2017, Adityanath said, "When we started, this Ram Katha Mandap was small. Back then there was just one slogan 'Yogi ji ek kaam karo, mandir ka nirman karo (Yogi ji do one thing, help construct the temple)."

we are grateful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his farsightedness due to which even in the midst of Covid scare, the PM arrived in Ayodhya on August 5, 2020 to lay the foundation stone of Ram temple where the consecration ceremony was performed on

'While we delivered on our promises, we all have witnessed the black deeds of those responsible for Ayodhya and its Saryu river soaked in blood," Adityanath said while appealing to the people to ensure that Maa Sita doesn't have to give "agnikpariksha" again.

"People of Ayodhya will have to ensure that the place gets the grandeur of the past," he told the public during the Deepotsav event at Ramkatha Park.

Lashing out at the opposition, he said, "Those who question the Sanatan Dharma from time to time must know that Sanatan is eternal, timeless and allembracing. But those who do politics in the name of secularism question Sanatan Dharma and in the process want to encourage terrorism...Those who become barriers in the path of development would face the same fate as that of the mafia. We shall not rest without ending obstacles in the path of Sanatan Dharma."

After lighting the lamps for Deepotsav, Adityanath said Sanatan Dharma has harmed no one and embraced everyone. He said some people questioned not only Lord Ram but also Sanatan, adding that was akin to questioning "our heritage and ancestors".

Union Tourism and Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Deputy CM Brajesh Pathak, UP ministers Suryapratap Shahi, Swatantra Dev Singh, Jaiveer Singh, Satish Chandra Sharma, MLA Ved Prakash Gupta, and many revered saints and officials of Ayodhya were present on the occasion.

Why did Punjab cops give...

From page 1

The gangster is facing charges in the murder of Punjabi singer Shubdeep Singh Sidhu Court did not agree with this, By order dated 24.09.2024, we alias Sidhu Moosewala. His and ordered a further probe had also directed the State to was telecast by a news channel in March 2023. In the interview with ABP News, he said he knew about

the murder plot. The Court said that the interview had taken place within the premises of CIA Staff Kharar, in the presence of senior officers of the Punjab Police. "The office of the Officer Incharge of the Police Station was used as a studio to conduct the interview. The official Wi-Fi at the premises of the CIA staff had been provided for conducting the interview which is a pointer towards the criminal conspiracy. The indicates that report roznaamcha was also forged and fabricated. The matter calls for further investigation as to for what consideration this was done and the various aspects towards offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act besides other offences need to be examined," said the High Court blaming the Punjab

Special DGP, Punjab State Human Rights Commission, Prabodh Kumar told the Court that the SIT did not level officers should not be internet.

have the mandate to look into other offences including those under the Prevention of into the matter lirect that a new SIT headed by Mr. Prabodh Kumar and also comprising of Mr. Nageshwar Rao, ADGP, Provisioning and Mr.Nilabh Kishore, ADGP, STF to carry out further investigation conspiracy, criminal abetment, forgery, offences

Prevention Corruption Act, Information Technology Act and also under any other offence. The SIT shall file a status report within a period of 6 weeks." The Court was earlier told including officers

gazetted officers have been placed under suspension, and departmental proceedings have been initiated against the 8 officers. It was also submitted that Inspector Shiv Kumar, then officer-in-charge of the CIA Kharar police station, who had been given extension in services, had been terminated.

Observing that it had specifically directed that action should be taken against the senior officers who had facilitated the interview and lower

made scapegoats, the Court said. "No action appears to have been taken against the Corruption Act. However, the senior officers of the District. inform affidavit of the competent authority as to why the interviewee had been kept in the premises of CIA Staff Kharar for a long period of time, and whether the repeated remands to keep the interviewee there was a deliberate attempt to keep him at the same station for extraneous reasons or whether he was generally required for investigation. Explanation was also sought as to why Shiv Kumar, the then Incharge CIA was given that seven Punjab police extension and posted there," said the Court asking the DGP for further probe.

The Court also asked the DGP to explain his statement in an earlier press conference that the interview had not taken place in any jail in Punjab. "The fact that the had been within the interview conducted premises of CIA staff Kharar, District SAS Nagar makes it even worse as it appears to have been conducted in connivance with the police officers," said the Court directing the interview videos

to be deleted from the

focuses on identifying any

SIT to probe

On Tuesday, Verma informed that four elephants were found dead in Salkhania and

Bakeli areas under Khitoli range of the reserve, a popular tourist attraction, during routine patrolling by forest guards. În a social media post late night, Forest

Tuesday Minister Rawat said the death of the untimely precious elephants in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve was saddening and heart-breaking. In view of the seriousness of the issue, officials have been directed to immediately constitute an SIT and take strict action against the culprits, Rawat said.

Happy Diwali at Depsang...

From page 1

In Kolkata, Ambassador of the course to steer bilateral China to India Xu Feihong on ties back on the path of steady Wednesday called the recent development. The meeting Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of BRICS Summit at Kazan in Russia 'very important'.

The diplomat qualified the talks, the first formal one between the two leaders in the past five years, had reached an important understanding and set guidelines for further development of relations between the two neighbours. Speaking at a session organised by the Merchant Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Chinese diplomat said both the leaders reached important

common understandings on

improving and developing Indo-China relations and set October 23.

Responding to a question on the completed Indo-China border disengagement in Eastern Ladakh, the Chinese Ambassador said, "I hope that under the guidance of this consensus, relations will be moving forward smoothly in the future and not be restricted and interrupted by disagreements between the two sides. The most important thing is how to handle the differences." Referring to the resumption

of direct flights between China and India, he said, "As an Ambassador, I am looking forward to this as it saves

time. I am also looking forward to smooth cooperation not only in politics but also in business." Meanwhile, PTI reported meeting between Indian between Modi and Xi was from Beijing, China on Prime Minister Narendra held in Russia's Kazan on Wednesday said the Chinasa and Indian militaries are implementing

'resolutions" concerning the disengagement in eastern Ladakh along the LAC in an "orderly" manner.

China and India have reached resolutions on issues concerning the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lin Jian told a media briefing here replying to a question on the progress of the disengagement.

"At the moment, the Chinese and Indian frontier troops are implementing the resolutions in an orderly way," he said and declined to provide any

Delhi's 'Anywhere Registration... From page 1

official. According to an estimate, nearly documents of 28 different categories are registered Sub-Registrar offices on a given working day. Some offices get 50 applications and there are a few which receive up to 150 documents in a day. In 2022, 1.25 lakh documents were registered at the offices of the sub registrar.

While Janakpuri, Kashmere Gate, Model Town and Pitampura are among the most-crowded Sarojini Nagar, Preet Vihar and Defence Colony witness the least number of The Delhi applicants. government recently appointed joint sub-registrars at six of its most crowded

offices to ease the rush. Explaining this, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi said that the 'Anywhere Registration' policy is being introduced to resolve these problems. "Under this policy, anyone seeking property registration can go to any sub-registrar office in Delhi. Residents will no longer be limited to just one designated office for property registration," Atishi added.

The government has received a number of complaints and suggestions to improve the functioning of the sub registrar office which is one of the major departments to contribute to the state's financial health.

One complaint was that in some sub-registrar offices, there were long queues and consequently, it takes a long time to book an appointment, whereas in some other offices, there were no excessive crowds.

Another complaint was that corruption was prevalent in many subregistrar offices.

There are middlemen outside the offices, who demand money from people wanting to register their property. People were often forced to pay these middlemen to get their registrations done in these offices. The move will also increase transparency, since if officials in a certain office demand bribes, people will have the choice to go to other offices.

Driving rash and drunk? Get ready to lose...

Ajay Chaudhary, Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) said, "The efforts of the Delhi Traffic Police have led to a total reduction in road crash deaths in Delhi by 20 per cent over the last decade. Continuing our efforts to save lives, we have

airport or any part of the

now increased focus on more pedestrian centric traffic management."

In the report, traffic Police have also identified 10 black spots which includes ISBT Kashmere Gate, Mukarba Chowk, Libaspur bus stand, Kashmere Gate Chowk, Burari Chowk, Britannia Chowk, Bhalswa Chowk,

Wazirpur Depot, Mori Gate and Gandhi Vihar bus stand. increasing air quality index in mind 4,000 personnels will be Further, the mentioned the 10 roads that recorded ten or more deaths last year are Kanjhawala Road, NH-24, Patel Road and Pankha Road among others.

The traffic department added that keeping the festival and coming months.

intent,

actions, and potential to

This assessment provides

carry out the threat.

mind 4,000 personnels will be deployed on the roads of Delhi which includes 400 home guards. Moreover, 72 cranes will be deployed to remove or tow away vehicles and 150 motorcycles to regulate the flow of traffic will also be present in the

guidelines notified on

October 19, will adopt a

Bomb Threat Assessment Committee

From page 1

Some additional questions will now be answered by the BTAC before categorising a threat as specific, that would to triggering of established security protocols of diverting an aircraft, sending it to an isolation bay upon landing or just before taking off, and conducting fresh anti-sabotage checks of passengers and their belongings.

The protocols are designed to swiftly analyse and neutralise digital threats based on their severity, responding effectively to the alarming trend of threats

Despite being hoaxes, the threats caused significant flight delays and financial losses for airlines, estimated at Rs 13-17 lakh per hour, with average disruption costs of Rs1.5- Rs 2 crore per domestic flight, escalating further for larger aircraft and international routes. On Wednesday, a message claiming a bomb had been placed on Air India's flight from Delhi to Mumbai via Indore was posted on a social media platform, which later

turned out to be a hoax. Under the revised Bomb Threat Contingency Plan, the

process now begins with an

immediate review of flight

recently. If any such passengers are confirmed, all security protocols will be promptly activated. As per the guidelines, the BTAC will adopt a multilayered approach to distinguish between specific threats and hoaxes, saving operational resources.

politicians,

VIP passengers such as aviation ecosystem that bureaucrats, to declare diplomats, scientists, senior "specific" or serious or "nonofficials of the sensitive specific" or hoax. The department and celebrities committee comprises who may have officials from the Bureau of specifically received threat Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), local police, airport operator and officials and airline representatives of some other agencies.

Identifying the origin of the threat is crucial, as it allows officials to assess the reliability of the source. A As per the current practice, verified source may elevate BTÂC is convened at a the priority of the threat. If designated airport to analyse the threat is received via proliferating through social details upon receiving a a bomb or security threat email, message, or letter, organisation making a threat behaviours," it said. media and online platforms. threat. This initial check issued against an airline, analysing the language, involves evaluating their The BTAC, as per the new

phrasing, and writing style can provide valuable insights into the sender's background or intent. In cases where the threat is received by phone, voicemail and call records can offer clues, such as geographical location or identifiable background noise.Capability of the person / organisation giving threat, "key component in threat evaluation, this factor involves assessing whether organisation individual has the practical means, resources, technical skills required to carry out

threat.Assessing

insights into how serious the threat might be and what preventive measures are necessary. Also, its key considerations include financial capability, as wealthier organisations have financial resources that could support the threat, and also investigate if the person or group has access to firearms, explosives, digital hacking tools, or other equipment that might be needed to act on the threat. the the likelihood of a followcapability of a person or through based on past

resources,

'multi-layered" approach to assess threats and determine the "credibility and seriousness" of such threats issued on social media and satisfy themselves about the "credibility" of the source of information. Some additional questions will now be answered by the BTAC before categorising a threat as specific, that would lead to triggering of established security protocols of diverting an aircraft, sending it to an isolation bay upon landing or just before taking off, and conducting fresh anti-sabotage checks of passengers and their

Israel must step in if it bans UNRWA, says UN

AP UNITED NATIONS

 $T^{\text{he United Nations stressed}}_{\text{Tuesday that if Israel puts in}}$ place new laws cutting ties with the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, the Israeli government will have to meet their needs under international law.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a letter obtained by The Associated Press that there is no other alternative to the agency, known as UNRWA. It has been a lifeline during the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, and the Israeli legislation "will have devastating consequences for Palestinian refugees" in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, he said.

The UN agencies for children, health and migration also stressed that UNRWA is the "backbone" of the world body's operations in Gaza, where people have relied on its emergency food aid and health centers during the more than yearlong war, which has killed tens of thousands and left much of the enclave in ruins.

The United Nations is heartened by statements of support for UNRWA from all quarters and countries, U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said, and "we would very much appreciate efforts by any member state to help us get over this hurdle." Israel has alleged that some of UNRWA's 13,000 staffers in Gaza participated in the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks by Hamas that sparked the war. It's also accused hundreds of UNRWA staff of having militant ties and

tary assets in or under the agency's facilities.

Israel's new laws: Two laws passed Monday could prevent UNRWA from continuing its work. Even the US, Israel's closest ally, joined many governments and humanitarian organizations in opposing the legislation, which doesn't take effect for three months.

Guterres sent the letter Tuesday to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu outlining his concerns.

As an occupying power, under international humanitarian law, Israel is required to ensure the needs of the Palestinians are met, including for food, health care and education, Guterres said. And if Israel isn't in a position to meet those needs, it has an obligation to allow and facilitate the activities of the UN, and "UNRWA is the principal means by which assistance is supplied to Palestinian refugees," he said.

If UNRWA's activities are restricted or halted, the secretary-general said, Israel would have to fill the vacuum "to ensure the needs of the population are met."

"Otherwise, it would be in violation of international law," said Dujarric, the UN spokesmań.

Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon responded to the letter by saying, "Rather than con-demning UNRWA for turning a blind eye to terrorism and in some cases participating in terrorism, the UN instead condemns Israel."

He claimed in a statement that

said it has found Hamas mili- UNRWA isn't interested in providing humanitarian aid to Gaza, calling it "nothing but an arm of Hamas operating under the guise of the United

Nations." "Israel will continue to facilitate humanitarian aid in Gaza according to international law," Danon said, "but UNRWA has failed in its mandate and is no longer the right agency for this job."

Dismay from UN agencies: World Health Organization spokesman Tarik Jasarevic said UNRWA health workers have provided over 6 million medical consultations over the past year. They also offered immunizations, disease surveillance and screening for malnutrition, and UNRWA's work "couldn't

be matched by any agency including WHO," he said.
Jeremy Laurence, spokesman for the UN human rights office, said that "without UNRWA, the delivery of food, shelter, health care, education, amongst other things, to most of Gaza's population would grind to a halt." UNRWA was established by the UN General Assembly in 1949 to provide relief for Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes before and during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war that followed Israel's establishment, as well as their descendants. Israel faces criticism: Timed

Gaza and Lebanon. to the Israeli laws, Norway US Ambassador Linda announced Tuesday that it will Thomas-Greenfield expressed ask the 193-nation General deep concern at the Israeli legislation, saying, "right now there is no alternative to Assembly to request a ruling from the top United Nations court about whether Israel is UNRWA when it comes to obligated to facilitate the delivdelivering food and other lifesaving aid in Gaza." ery of humanitarian aid to

Spanish authorities say 63 dead from devastating flash floods



Guterres told Netanyahu that AP BARCELONA it any activity by UNRWA "within the sovereign territo-

At least 63 people have died in Spain's eastern region of Valencia after flash floods swept away cars, turned village streets into rivers and disrupted rail lines and highways in the worst natural disaster to hit the European nation in recent memory.

Emergency services in the eastern region of Valencia confirmed the death toll on Wednesday.

Rainstorms on Tuesday caused flooding in a wide swath of southern and eastern Spain. Floods of mud-colored water tumbled vehicles down streets at frightening speeds. Pieces of wood swirled with household articles. Police and rescue services used helicopters to lift people from their homes and

Authorities reported several missing people late Tuesday, but the following morning brought the shocking announcement of dozens found dead.

Over 1,000 soldiers from Spain's emergency response units were deployed to the devastated areas.

'Yesterday was the worst day of my life," Ricardo Gabaldón, the mayor of Utiel, a town in Valencia, told national broadcaster RTVE. He said several people were still missing in his

"We were trapped like rats. Cars and trash containers were flowing down the streets. The water was rising to three meters," he said.

Spain has experienced similar autumn storms in recent years, but nothing compared to the devastation over the last two

The death toll could easily rise with other regions yet to report victims and search efforts continuing in areas with difficult access. In the village of Letur in the neighboring Castilla La Mancha region, Mayor Sergio Marín Sánchez

said six people were missing. A high-speed train with nearly 300 people on board derailed near Malaga, although rail authorities said no one was hurt. High-speed train service between Valencia city and Madrid was interrupted, as were several commuter

lines. Valencian regional President Carlos Mazón urged people to stay at home so as not to complicate rescue efforts, with travel by road already difficult due to fallen trees and wrecked

"The neighborhood is destroyed, all the cars are on top of each other, it's literally smashed up," Christian Viena, a bar owner in the Valencian village of Barrio de la Torre, said by phone. "Everything is a total wreck, everything is ready to be thrown away. The mud is almost 30 centimeters

deep. Spain's central government set up a crisis committee to help coordinate rescue efforts.

The rain had subsided in Valencia by late Wednesday morning. But more storms were forecast through Thursday, according to Spain's national weather service.

Spain is still recovering from a severe drought earlier this vear. Scientists say increased episodes of extreme weather are likely linked to climate

Biden calls Trump supporters garbage, sparks backlash

PTI WASHINGTON

Us President Joe Biden sparked a controversy when he compared supporters of Republican presidential can-didate Donald Trump to garbage. Biden was commenting on a racist joke a comedian made at a Trump rally days ear-lier likening Puerto Rico to an 'island of garbage."

"The only garbage I see floating out there is his supporters, his demonisation of Latinos is unconscionable, and it's un-American. It's totally contrary to everything we've done, everything we've been," Biden said in his remarks on a campaign call for Latino voters on Tuesday. "Just the other day, a speaker at his rally called Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage." Well, let me tell you something. I don't know the Puerto Rican that — that I know — or a

Puerto Rico, where I'm fr- — in

my home state of Delaware,

they're good, decent, hon-ourable people," he said. Republican Senator Marco

Rubio raised this issue in front of thousands of Trump supporters in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Trump, the former president, was also quick to condemn it. Trump, who was holding a rally in Allentown, described Biden's remarks as "terrible," and likened them to Hillary Clinton's comments calling some of supporters Trump's

"So, you have to remember Hillary [Clinton]—she said 'deplorable' and then she said 'irredeemable," Trump said.

'Garbage' I think is worse." In a damage control exercise, Biden later tried to explain his

remarks on X. "Earlier today I referred to the hateful rhetoric about Puerto Rico spewed by Trump's sup-porter at his Madison Square Garden rally as garbage—which is the only word I can think of to describe it," Biden wrote. 'His demonisation of Latinos is unconscionable. That's all I meant to say. The comments at that rally don't reflect who we are as a nation," Biden said. Trump's running mate Ohio Senator J D Vance described it

as disgusting. "This is disgusting. Kamala Harris and her boss Joe Biden are attacking half of the country," he wrote on X.

"There's no excuse for this. I hope Americans reject it." he added. Karoline Leavitt, the Trump Campaign's National Press

Secretary, said in a statement that Trump is backed by Latinos, Black voters, union workers law enforcement officers, border patrol agents and Americans of all faiths.

"(Kamala) Harris, (Tim) Walz and Biden have labelled these great Americans as fascists, Nazis, and now, garbage," Leavitt

China successfully launches new crew to space station

PTI BEIJING/JINQUAN

Palestinians by international

organizations, including the

The International Court of Justice in July condemned Israel's rule over the Palestinian

territories, declaring its occu-

pation unlawful. The nonbind-

ing opinion called on Israel to

end its occupation and immediately halt settlement con-

Norway's foreign minister, Espen Barth Eide, told the AP that Israel's policy is making it increasingly difficult for

Palestinians to access life-sav-

ing assistance. He said Norway will argue that even if Israel's

occupation is illegal, it has obligations, "and we believe that these are not met."

while the Israeli laws prohib-

ry of the State of Israel," the

UN considers Gaza, the West

Bank and East Jerusalem part

of the occupied Palestinian

territory and Israel has no sov-

ereignty because of its occu-

pation. Meanwhile, at the UN's regu-

lar Security Council meeting on the Middle East - this

month open to all UN members - speakers supported UNRWA and virtually all called

for immediate cease-fires in

struction.

hina on Wednesday suc-Cessfully launched its spaceship sending three astronauts, including the country's first female space engineer on a six months' mission to fine tune its low orbiting space sta-

The Shenzhou-19 crewed spaceship was launched by a Long March-2F carrier rocket, early Wednesday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China.

About 10 minutes after the launch, the Shenzhou-19 spaceship separated from the rocket and entered its designated

The crew members are in good shape and the launch is a complete success, the CMSA announced.

The spaceship will perform a fast, automated rendezvous and docking with the front port of the space station core module Tianhe in about 6.5 hours, forming a combination of three modules and three spacecraft. China built its space station

after it was reportedly excluded from the International Space Station (ISS) over concerns that China's space programme is manned by its military, the People's Liberation Army, (PLA).

It is currently the only country to have a space station.

The ISS is a collaborative project of several countries. Observers say China's space station may become the only one of its kind in orbit once the ISS retires in the coming years. The two robotic arms of the station, especially the long one which has the ability to grab objects including satellites space, drew international con-

Early this month China announced its plans for the further development of space programmes which included launching a manned lunar mission, construction of a lunar space station, exploration of habitable planets and extra-terrestrial life to expand its space programme in the next few

Besides building its space sta-



number of space missions including a lunar probe that collected samples for the first time from the far side of the moon and brought them back to earth for scientific studies. The Shenzhou-19 crew consists of mission commander Cai Xuzhe, and astronauts Song Lingdong and Wang Haoze. Wang is currently China's only female space engineer and the third Chinese woman partici-

pating in a crewed spaceflight mission, the CMSA said. The tasks for new crew included conducting space science and application tests, performing extravehicular activities,

installing protective devices against space debris, and managing the installation and recycling of extravehicular payloads and equipment. Lin Xiqiang, CMSA spokesper-

son told a press conference on Tuesday that the crew will

carry out 86 space science research and technology experiments, covering various fields including space life science, microgravity fundamental physics, space material science, space medicine and new space technologies.
The Shenzhou-19 astronauts

will complete in-orbit rotation with the trio currently manning and stay at the space station for approximately six months. Wang Haoze explained that she

will be mainly responsible for space experimental projects, cargo management, and space station operation management. China is also engaging in dis cussions to select and train astronauts from partner nations, inviting international counterparts to join its space station flight missions, Lin

Considering the close ties, an astronaut from Pakistan was expected to join in future space station missions.

"No matter which country participates, it is humanity's collective quest to unravel the mysteries of the cosmos," Lin said

NY rally was an absolute lovefest: Trump

Urged by some allies to apologise for racist comments made by speakers at his weekend rally, Donald Trump took the opposite approach on Tuesday, saying it was an "honour to be involved" in such an event and calling the scene a "lovefest" the same term he has used to describe the Jan. 6 insurrection at the US Capitol.

Trump gathered supporters and reporters to his Mar-a-Lago resort two days after a massive rally at Madison Square Garden featured a number of crude remarks by various speakers, including a set by comedian Tony Hinchcliffe in which he joked that Puerto Rico was a "floating island of garbage." Some of Trump's top Republican allies have condemned the remarks, and his campaign took the rare step of publicly distancing itself from Hinchcliffe's joke, though not the other comments.

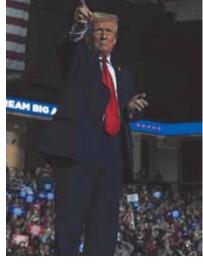
But given the opportunity to apologize at multiple events and in interviews Tuesday, Trump instead leaned in. Speaking at his Florida resort, he said that "there's never been an event so beautiful" as his Sunday rally in his hometown of New York.

'The love in that room. It was breathtaking," he said. "It was like a lovefest, an absolute lovefest. And it was my honor to be involved."

On Tuesday night, he told Fox News' Sean Hannity that he knows nothing about Hinchcliffe but said, "I can't imagine it's a big deal."

With just a week before Election Day, some Trump allies have voiced alarm that the rally, which was supposed to highlight the Republican presidential nominee's closing message in grand New York fashion, has instead served as a distraction and even a liability, given the electoral importance of Puerto Ricans who live in Pennsylvania

and other key swing states. "This is not a time to have anyone criti-



cize Puerto Rico or Latinos," former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, who challenged Trump for the GOP presidential nomination and later endorsed him, said in an interview with Fox News Channel.

Trump later held a rally in Allentown, Pennsylvania, a city with a large Hispanic population, where Puerto Rico's shadow S. senator, Zoraida Buxo, joined him and defended the former president's record. We need this man to be our commander in chief," said Buxo, who cannot vote in the Senate because Puerto Rico is not a state.

Still, there was anger in Allentown. Ivet Figueroa, 61, stood outside the rally venue holding a trash can with the words "Trash Trump" on it.

"He will make us feel safe and he will pro-

She said of the insult and Trump:: "The person who said it was vetted by him. So that's what he allowed, so he has to take responsibility for what he said. Now it's too

late for saying sorry.' I don't want an apology, I want justice, and justice is on Nov.

The fallout from the Madison Square Garden event risked highlighting voters' concerns about Trump's rhetoric and penchant for controversy in the closing stretch as both campaigns are scrambling for votes. Speakers at the rally also made racist comments targeting Latinos, Black people, Jews and Palestinians, along with sexist insults directed at Trump's Democratic rival, Vice President Kamala Harris, and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

In an interview with ABC News earlier

"I don't know him. Someone put him up there. I don't know who he is," Trump said, according to the network, insisting that he hadn't heard Hinchcliffe's comments. When asked what he made of them, Trump "did not take the opportunity to denounce them, repeating that he didn't hear the comments," ABC reported.

In the Hannity interview, Trump said people were trying to make the comedian's appearance into a "big deal" when it "has nothing to do with the party, has nothing to do with us."

The comments have drawn outrage from Puerto Rican leaders. The archbishop of Puerto Rico called on

Trump to disavow them, saying it wasn't enough for the campaign to say the joke didn't reflect Trump's views. The president of Puerto Rico's Republican Party called the "poor attempt at comedy" by Hinchcliffe "disgraceful, ignorant and totally reprehen-

In Pennsylvania, where Trump campaigned Tuesday night, the Latino eligible voter population has nearly tripled since 2000. More than half of those are Puerto

Trump is unstable, obsessed with revenge: Harris

US Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris launched a fierce attack on her Republican rival Donald Trump, describing him as "unstable" and "obsessed with revenge" while urging Americans to reject his chaos and division.

Making a passionate appeal to her countrymen, Vice President Harris used the last Tuesday, Trump claimed to not know major speech of her campaign to present Hinchcliffe but did not denounce what he herself as a fighter who would usher in a new generation of leadership.

"Donald Trump intends to use the United States military against American citizens who simply disagree with him. People he calls —"the enemy from within". This is not a candidate for President who is thinking about how to make your life better," she

'This is someone who is unstable, obsessed with revenge, consumed with grievance, and out for unchecked power," Harris said. Harris, 60, will take on Trump, 78, in the November 5 election.

Addressing thousands of people at the Ellipse in Washington, DC, where Trump told his supporters on January 6, 2021, to "fight like hell," shortly before they ransacked the US Capitol, Harris described the election as an existential choice between the liberties and the "chaos and division". "He has an Enemies List of people he intends to prosecute. He says one of his highest priorities is to set free the violent extremists who assaulted those law enforcement officers on January 6," she

Harris said it was time to stop pointing fingers and start locking arms.
"It is time to turn the page on the drama



for a new generation of leadership in America," she said.

"And I am ready to offer that leadership as the next President of the United States,"

In discussing her policy plans, she cast herself as a president who would expand Medicare to cover home health care, who would back women's reproductive rights and a president who would prize compro-

"I am someone who has spent most of my career outside of Washington. So I know that not all good ideas come from here. I am not afraid of tough fights against bad actors and powerful interests," she said.

drive to hold accountable those who use their wealth or power to take advantage of other people. "The drive to protect hard-working

Americans who aren't always seen or heard, and deserve a voice. That is the kind of president I will be," Harris said. When elected, Harris said she would walk into the Oval Office, with a To-Do

Full of priorities on what I will get done for the American people. And I will work with everyone —Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—to help Americans

who are working hard and still struggling to get ahead," she said.

Petrol, diesel commission hiked; no change in prices

PTI NEW DELHI

Commission paid to petrol pump dealers on sale of petrol and diesel has been hiked without change in retail price but rates will go down in several places in states such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Himachal Pradesh on account intrastate freight rationalisation.

Commission on sale of petrol has been hiked by 65 paise a litre and that on diesel by 44 paise per litre. Alongside, the state-owned firms also rationalised intrastate tariffs which could lead to a reduction in rates of up to Rs 4.5 a litre in some parts.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) -- the state-owned market leader -- on October 29 wrote to dealers informing of an increase in dealer margin for all categories.

"Considering the hardship of retail outlets selling less than
Rs 170 per kilolitre per month, special care has been taken to alleviate the same," it said. "You will be entitled to BPCL in a post said the an upward revision of dealer revised commission will be margin of approximately Rs 0.65 per litre for petrol and Rs 0.44 a litre of diesel."

This is the first revision in commission paid to dealers in nearly eight years.

All the three state fuel retailers -- IOC, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) -- took to X to announce the revision in dealers' commission.

announce a revision in the experience and enhanced



30th October 2024), following the resolution of a pending litigation. This will have no additional impact on the Retail Selling Price of products," IOC said in a post

effective October 30. This would be "at no additional cost to consumers".

"On the auspicious occasion of Deepawali, HPCL is happy to announce revision in dealer commission effective 30th October 2024. This will have no additional impact on the Retail Selling Price of Petrol & Diesel," HPCL said. "Thru this revision, HPCL aims to strengthen the ability of our dealer network in "IndianOil is pleased to delivering superior customer dealer margins (effective from service standards for millions

of customers who visit our Retail Outlets on a daily basis.

The revision, it said, also aims at delivering happiness to all the committed staff employed at retail outlets and their families.

Dealers commission was last revised on October 5, 2016 when it was raised to Rs 1,868.14 per kilolitre, plus 0.875 per cent of produce billable price on petrol and Rs 1,389.35 per kl plus 0.28 per cent of product billable price on diesel. This has now gone up up Rs 0.65 per litre on petrol and Rs 0.44 a litre on diesel.

The three firms also rationalised intra-state freight that will result in a cut in petrol and diesel prices in several places in states such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Himachal Pradesh.

"Further, demonstrating the core value of Nation First, our endeavour to provide affordable petrol and diesel across the length and breadth of the country on a sustained basis has come to fruition. #IndianOil has undertaken intrastate rationalisation of freight which will reduce variation of retail selling price of product across various markets within a state, except in geographies where Model Code of Conduct is in place," IOC said.

BPCL said intra-state freight rationalisation will reduce disparities benefiting petrol/diesel, consumers, especially in remote areas.

"Simultaneously, we have also intrastate undertaken rationalisation of freight thus benefiting customers at remote places, far from our supply locations, except in areas under model code of conduct," HPCL said.

Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri welcomed the intra-state freight rationalisation which he said will "benefit consumers located at remote locations (far from petrol and diesel depots of oil marketing companies) which will result in a decrease in petrol and diesel prices in several parts of the country. (Decision in poll-bound states and constituencies will be implemented later)".

In a post on X, he cited the example of Kunanpally and Kalimela in Odisha's Malkangiri where petrol price will reduce by Rs 4.69 and Rs 4.55, respectively; and diesel

rates will be cut Rs 4.45 and Rs 4.32, respectively. Similarly, prices will reduce by Rs 2.09 in petrol price and

Rs 2.02 in diesel price in Chhattisgarh's Sukma. Rates will also be cut in Bijapur, Bailadila, Kateykalyan, Bacheli, and

Dantewada of the state. Similarly, prices will also be cut in several places in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh. Uttarakhand, and Mizoram.

"The dealer commission increase will provide better services to approximately 7 crore citizens who visit our fuel retail outlets in the country everyday, without increasing fuel prices," he

"The fulfilment of this demand pending for the last 7 years will bring joy and happiness in the lives of petrol pump dealers and nearly 10 lakh staff working at more than 83,000 petrol pumps across the country."

Ajay Bansal, President of All

India Petroleum Dealers' Association, welcomed the decision saying it will help meet a part of the increase in cost of running petrol pumps over the past eight years.

"This revision comes after seven years and eight months. We welcome it," he said, adding that the dealers have withdrawn a legal case they had filed against the oil companies over oil companies marketing enforcing discipline guidelines.

dealer commission revision has happened following the withdrawal of the court cases.

BRICS+ group's share in global goods exports can overtake G7 by 2026

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The share of BRICS+ I grouping in global merchandise exports can overtake the G7 bloc by 2026, EY India said on Wednesday. The October edition of EY Economy Watch reveals a significant shift in global trade dynamics, with the BRICS+ group rapidly increasing its share in merchandise exports and imports.

From 2000 to 2023, the BRICS+ group's share of global merchandise exports has risen from 10.7 per cent to 23.3 per cent, marking an impressive increase of 12.6 percentage points. In contrast, the G7's share has

seen a notable decline, dropping from 45.1 per cent to 28.9 per cent. Meanwhile, the rest of the world has maintained a relatively stable share, increasing slightly from 44.2 per cent to 47.9 per cent. G7 is a grouping of advanced grouping of the United economies -- the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

This trend highlights the growing prominence of the growing prominence of the BRICS+ group in the global trade arena, suggesting a potential shift towards a multipolar global economic landscape, EY India said.

"Given the present trends and the likelihood of several new members joining the BRICS+ group being strong, the share of BRICS+ in global merchandise exports can overtake that of the G7 group by 2026," EY India Chief Policy Advisor DK Srivastava



BRICS, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, has now expanded with five additional members - Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the

Central to this transformation

are India and China, two key members of the BRICS+ alliance. In 2023, they ranked third and first, respectively, globally in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), both countries are projected to retain these positions by 2030.

China's contribution to BRICS+ exports has surged dramatically, increasing from 36.1 per cent in 2000 to 62.5 per cent in 2023. India has also made significant strides, contributing 7.9 per cent to BRICS+ exports in 2023.

analysis further EY's underscores the increasing importance of high-tech exports from BRICS+ countries.

The group's share of global high-tech exports has risen significantly, from just 5 per cent in 2000 to 32.8 per cent in 2022.

This shift reflects a strategic move toward technologyintensive products, positioning BRICS+ nations as vital players in the global

high-tech market, it added. In addition to trade dynamics, the currencies of BRICS+ nations are gaining traction in the global economy. The Yuan has remained stable, with slight appreciation, while the Indian

particularly since 2018. Notably, the share of the US dollar as a global reserve currency has declined from 71.5 per cent in 2000 to 58.2 per cent in 2024, signalling a potential shift toward a more multipolar framework.

rupee has faced depreciation,

"As geopolitical tensions continue, the coordinated policies among BRICS+ members may challenge the established dominance of the G7 and the US dollar, paving the way for a new multipolar global economic landscape," Šrivastava said.

The BRICS+ establishing a platform for conducting trade and international investment transactions, which could become a low-cost alternative to the existing SWIFT platform.

The group is also developing a trade and reserve currency, backed by gold and other select commodities. Srivastava added.

Businesses expect resounding sales this Diwali

The roads are jammed and shops chock-a-block as responsibility. I guess zeroing people make beelines for in on budget and what to give malls and markets to grab just to whom is never easy, and I the perfect gift to make the doubt if anyone has mastered festival of lights a memorable affair for their loved ones.

Dinner sets, beauty hampers, been the favourite time of the gourmet food basl electronic gadgets, and the ever reliable chocolates and mithai, the options are endless for the fervent Diwali shoppers but the task is to balance budgets with big expectations.

Khanna, Samriti homemaker in her 30s, knows it too well as she treads the fine line between temptation and staying within budget.

"The temptation to give innovative and expensive gifts to your near and dear ones is always there but one can't go out of budget too. The key is in finding the right balance," Khanna told PTI.

On her shopping list is an eclectic mix of home decor for friends, smartwatch for her

for house helps.

it," she added. The festive season has always

expecting "resounding sales". While Bikano, a leading name in the traditional snack target in the festive season, Surya Roshni, a lighting and consumer durable company, proportion of their sales, accounting to about "30 per cent", happens during this

purchasing tendencies flout

"Gifting during the Diwali

vear for businesses and this vear is no different as leading players in the online and offline retail sector are market, has set a mammoth "Rs 300 crores plus" year-end explained how a large

period. When it comes to the festivities, most people tend to spend more than usual, which is somewhat of a distinct period when the husband, board games for all the rules," Jitendra children and home appliances Agrawal, ceo of Surya Roshni,

He added that it's not just the urban centres but the semiurban centres have also been "recording steady growth" in the festive period.

Chirag Gupta, founder and ceo of premium snacking company 4700BC, is upbeat about this year's demand, witnessing a "20-25 per cent" increase for its festive gourmet hampers.

The festival season has set the cash registers ringing for brands selling their wares online. And like previous years, the online sector continues to garner strong demand. online

For instance, marketplace

witnessed a "1.8X growth" in order volumes during the festive sale. "Women's fashion (2.5 X

growth), children's fashion (2X growth) and home decor (1.6X increase) are among the categories that saw significant increase compared to the previous year," a Snapdeal spokesperson said.

In addition to buying physical gifts, shoppers have come to rely on digital gift cards that offer minimum inconvenience and enticing discounts.

Gift cards are not just hassle free for the ones gifting but also allow the recipients the freedom of choice. Tata Neu's gift

marketplace, which offers a diverse range of gifting options from high-value electronics to everyday essentials like food and travel, said the category has become very popular on their platform with "over 50 per cent" of existing customers returning frequently to make trend to continue and will

Revelling in the festive spirit are also the alcohol brands, with many ditching conventional gift choices such ditching as bed linen or crockery sets for spirits.

Major players in the breweries and distilleries industry, such DeVANS Modern Breweries Ltd and Radico Khaitan, are witnessing growing demand and bumper sales. They have launched new variants and festive packs for their premium products. Mocktail brand Swizzle has also recorded a noticeable uptick of 25 per cent in the sales last month.

Last year, according to figures by the excise department, 64 lakh liquor bottles worth about Rs 121 crore were bought by people in Delhi in just three days running up to Diwali.

"One of the reasons liquor has emerged as a preferred gifting choice during festivals is its strong association with celebration and social gatherings.
"This year, we hope for this

show sustained growth in alcohol sales, fuelled by an expanding customer base and heightened interest in distinctive " beverage said Amar experiences. Sinha, Chief Operating Officer at Radico Khaitan Limited.

Gifting an "experience" in Diwali also has its own loyal takers.

Instead of delivering a package to the loved ones, many are opting to give them a break from the daily hustle by booking an exclusive staycation at five-star hotels and resorts. The Claridges, for instance, has an array of staycation offers at its different properties in picturesque Uttarakhand, with packages starting at Rs 20,000 inclusive of breakfast.

3F Oil Palm inks pact with Karnataka Government to empower farmers

PTI MUMBAI

r⊓he 3F Oil Palm on ■ Wednesday said it has signed a pact with the Karnataka government to sustainable advance agriculture in rural communities.

This partnership will pro farmers access to advanced agricultural technologies, training programmes and essential resources to enhance productivity and support Karnataka's growing horticultural sector. according to a statement.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Department of Horticulture of Karnataka with an aim to increase palm community empowerment.



oil productivity, empower farmers knowledge, sustainable offering a model for longterm agricultural success for oil palm cultivators in Udupi, Dakshina Kannada and Sedam taluk of Gulbarga district, the company said in a statement. The company plans to introduce cultivation practices, focusing sustainable growth focusing

INBRIEF

VIT AP UNIVERSITY HONOURED WITH BHARAT BLOCKCHAIN AWARD

AMARAVATI: VIT AP University is proud to announce that it has been awarded with Bharat Blockchain Academic Excellence Award 2024, representing the state of Andhra



PRACTICAL EXAMINATION FROM NOVEMBER 04

AMRITSAR: The practical examination for all subjects of Guru Nanak Dev University affiliated colleges for BA/BSc Semester - First, Third and Fifth classes under Guru Nanak Dev University are commencing from November 04, 2024.

GNDU EXTENDS LAST DATE FOR ODL AND ONLINE COURSES

AMRITSAR: Guru Nanak Dev University has extended the last date for admission to courses offered under Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Online mode until 15th November 2024 as per the guidelines issued by the University Grants Commission- Distance Education Bureau (UGC-DEB)

BLOOD DONATION CAMP AT GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY



AMRITSAR: Guru Nanak Dev University has extended the last date for admission to courses offered under Open and Distance Learning and Online mode until 15th November 2024 as per the quidelines issued by the University Commission- Distance Education Bureau Notification.

GNDU CELEBRATED THE "DIWALI FESTIVAL - GREEN GLOW FEST"

AMRITSAR: The Department of Education of Guru Nanak Dev University celebrated the "DIWALI FESTIVAL under the title "GREEN GLOW FEST" with great enthusiasm under the guidance of, Head, Department of



Piyush Goyal meets Schneider Electric CEO; discusses investment plans

PTI NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday held a meeting with Peter Herweck, CEO of energy management and automation major Schneider Electric, in Riyadh and discussed the company's investment plans for India.

The minister is in Saudi Arabia to discuss ways to further deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries and explore new efficient solutions to the bilateral avenues of trade, investment and economic cooperation.

"Held a meeting with Mr Peter Herweck, CEO of @SchneiderElec, a global company specialising in energy management and digital automation with a for India and how it can leverage the nation's talent to provide high-tech, sustainable, and energy-

world," Goyal said in a post on social media platform X. In March this year, Schneider Electric said that it will invest Rs 3,200 crore by 2026 to make India its manufacturing hub for domestic sales as well

as exports. strong presence in our country. Discussed the company's investment plans facilities for its various products and solutions across Îndia.

pool and government support Presently, the company has 30 factories across India. The minister also held a

meeting William E Ford, Chairman and CEO of the global growth investment firm, General Atlantic.

"Discussed the company's potential to collaborate with India's healthcare sector, especially in consumerfocused health enterprises. Additionally, explored potential for expansion of their investment in Global Capability Centres (GCCs), as well as various other sectors. in the country," Goyal said in another post.

Suzuki to supply electric SUV to Toyota as collaboration expands

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $S_{\text{will}}^{\text{uzuki Motor Corporation}}$ will supply the all-new battery electric vehicle SUV model to Toyota Motor model to 10yota Corporation as the companies expand their further expand collaboration.

The new model is scheduled to be manufactured at Suzuki Motor Gujarat from the early months of 2025, Suzuki Motor Corporation said in a statement. Maruti Suzuki India plans to

Suzuki has around 58 per cent stake in Maruti Suzuki. "Suzuki will supply our first BEV (Battery Electric Vehicle) to Toyota globally. I am grateful that the

collaboration between the

two companies has further

launch the same model next

deepened in this way," Suzuki President Toshihiro Suzuki said. While continuing to be competitors, the companies will deepen collaborations toward solving social issues, including the realisation of a The BEV unit and platform



carbon-neutral society through a multi-pathway approach, he added.

Toyota President Koji Sato said by leveraging the BEV unit and platform that the companies have jointly developed, they will take a new step in the collaboration in the field of electrified vehicles.

"This will allow us to deliver various choices that contribute to a carbonneutral society to customers worldwide. We would like to learn from each other's strengths, compete, and further joint efforts based on a multi-pathway approach," he added.

and diverse Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

> choice even in the SUV remarkable growth.

adopted for this model were iointly developed by Suzuki, Toyota, and Daihatsu Motor Corporation, utilising each

company's strength. Both Suzuki and Toyota's

businesses have their roots in

Enshu - the western part of Shizuoka Prefecture - and both companies took on the challenge of switching their businesses from looms to the automobiles industry, the statement said. Suzuki and Toyota started exploring business partnerships in 2016. The fields of collaboration are include production and mutual supply of vehicles, and the spread of electrified vehicles. As a result, the market launch of collaboration vehicles has expanded to Japan, India,

The new development marks the first BEV in the OEM relationship between the two companies. It will be launched worldwide, providing a BEV market, which is showing



India to play international FIFA friendly against Malaysia on Nov 18 in Hyderabad

in three matches after chief coach Manolo Manolo Marquez took charge as head coach, the Indian men's football team will play Malaysia in an international friendly in Hyderabad on November 18, national federation (AIFF) said on Wednesday.

India Football Federation (AIFF) had last window of this year. In month announced that the international

match will be played on scheduled during a FIFA November 19 but did specify window, clubs are mandated to the venue.

On Wednesday, it advanced the match by a day and also announced the venue. The FIFA Friendly match

between India and Malaysia will be played on November 18, 2024, at Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, Telangana," the AIFF said. November 11-19 is the last FIFA international match

release players for national

The Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad had also hosted the three-team Intercontinental Cup tournament last month. India had played out a goal-less draw with Mauritius on September 3 before losing 0-3 Syria, the eventual champions, on September 9 in that tournament.

India then travelled to

international friendly against the hosts on October 12. The match ended 1-1.

The November 18 match will be Marquez's fourth match in charge of the national team and he would be looking for a win against a lower-ranked team, though it will not be an easy one. Malaysia are ranked 133rd in the FIFA chart while India are at 125th.

The last time the two teams met was in October 2023 in the Merdeka Cup semifinal. India

Ronaldo misses late penalty as Al-Nassr ousted from Saudi cup

AP RIYADH (SAUDI ARABIA)

Cristiano Ronaldo missed a stoppage-time penalty and Al-Nassr was eliminated from the King's Cup in a 1-0 loss to Al-Taawoun. The five-time Ballon D'Or winner has yet to win a major trophy since signing for the club almost

two years ago. Playing at the round-of-16 stage of Saudi Arabia's premier knockout competition, Al-Taawoun took the lead on Waleed Al-Ahmad's header with 20 minutes remaining. Al-Ahmad was then whistled for a foul in the area in the 95th minute.

Ronaldo had converted all 18 of his previous penalties for Al-Nassr but this time shot over the bar to the shock of the home crowd of 14,519. The defeat is the first for Stefano Pioli since the Italian succeeded Luis Castro as head coach in

Ronaldo and Al-Nassr still have two chances at silverware this season but are already six points



behind leader Al-Hilal after eight games of the Saudi Pro League and have seven points from three games in the group stage of the Asian Champions League.

"Technically we performed well but we couldn't win the game," Pioli said. "We feel disappointed to be out of the cup. But we still have two trophies to go for and we will give our best in

winning the first leg 5-0.

Brazilian teams have won the

tournament for the past five

years.
The final will be played on Nov. 30 at the same Monumental de Nunez

Atletico's win also affected the race to be the last South

American qualifier for the 2025 Club World Cup, as it eliminated Olimpia of

Olimpia would have advanced

the United States had River

Plate won this Copa Libertadores edition. River

Plate already qualified based

on its consistent results in the

continental competition across

four seasons. FIFA will make

the draw for the June 15-July

13 tournament on a date in

early December it has not yet

to the 32-team tournament in

Paraguay from contention.

Stadium in Buenos Aires.



Bopanna-Ebden advance to quarterfinals of Paris masters

PTI ■ PARIS

Veteran Indian tennis player Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden advanced to the quarterfinals of the men's doubles event of the Paris Masters here.

The Indo Australian pair eked out a 6-4 7-6 win over the Brazilian-German combine of Marcelo Melo and Alexander Zverev in one hour 16 minutes at the ATP 1000 event on Tuesday.

Bopanna and Ebden won 91 percent of their first serve and hit four aces in the course of the match. The third seed Ind-Australian

duo made a crucial break in the first game to take the opening set.

The reigning Australian Open champions then had the opportunity to break their opponents in the fifth game of the second set but Melo and Zverev managed to hold with the match heading to a tiebreaker.

Earlier this week, Bopanna and Ebden had clinched a spot in the prestigious season-ending ATP Finals.

Brazil's Atletico Mineiro draws at Argentina's **River Plate and reaches Copa Libertadores final**



AP BUENOS AIRES

Brazil's Atletico Mineiro drew 0-0 at Argentina's River Plate and reached the final of the Copa Libertadores for the second time.

The team of veteran striker Hulk had beaten its rivals 3-0 in the first leg of the semifinal. The festive atmosphere at the

full Monumental de Nunez Stadium with more than 80,000 fans did not affect the Brazilian side, which had some of the clearest chances to score. Atletico's rival in the decider will be decided on Wednesday, and it is very likely to be fellow Brazilian side Botafogo. The Rio de Janeiro-based team will play at Uruguay's Penarol after

Alcaraz and Tsitsipas reach 3rd round at Paris Masters but Rublev loses temper and match for the Finals. The big-serving outside contention for Turin, while American reached the seasonending tournament for the second

> Zverev and Daniil Medvedev in the Sinner pulled out of the Paris Masters on Monday, citing a virus. The Italian player is guaranteed to finish the year as No. 1. He was the second high-profile player to pull out following seven-time champion

time in three years. The indoor

Fritz joined U.S. Open champion

Jannik Sinner, Alcaraz, Alexander

event takes place from Nov. 10-17.

Novak Djokovic. In remaining first-round play, Holger Rune - who beat Djokovic in the 2022 final - advanced with a 6-4,

No. 12 Hubert Hurkacz lost 6-1, 6-3 to Alex Michelsen.

U.S. Open semifinalist Jack Draper won 7-5, 6-2 against Jiri Lehecka; American Ben Shelton beat Corentin Moutet 6-3, 6-7 (8), 6-3, and Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard hit 28 aces in defeating U.S. Open semifinalist Frances Tiafoe 6-7 (5), 7-6 (4), 6-3.

Fresh from his title in Basel, Mpetshi Perricard next plays Karen Khachanov and will look to add to his 512 aces.

Frenchman Arthur Fils also progressed by edging Croatian Marin Cilic 7-6 (5), 6-4 and next faces Jan-Lennard Struff. But

beat Nicolas Jarry 7-5, 6-1 and reach the third round of the Paris Masters.

The second-seeded Spaniard was troubled by Jarry's strong forehand at times. The Chilean broke his serve in the ninth game and held for 5-5. But Jarry double-faulted in his next service game to lose the first

arlos Alcaraz overcame some

rusty moments on his serve to

"It was a little bit complicated, really happy to get through the first set Alcaraz said. "I have to get used to the speed of the court. It's really fast

Alcaraz saved a break point in the third game of the second set with an ace and broke for a 4-1 lead with a crisp forehand winner.

Serving for the match, Alcaraz saved another break point with an ace to make it deuce and won the next two points, clinching victory when the erratic Jarry's two-handed backhand clipped the net and went

"He's a really dangerous player on these courts," the 21-year-old Alcaraz said. "I'm super happy to win here."

The four-time Grand Slam champion is looking for his fifth title of the year and next plays either 15th-seeded Ugo Humbert or American qualifier Marcos Giron. "It's been a great year so far," said Alcaraz, who won major titles at the French Open and Wimbledon. Tenth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece beat Alejandro Tabilo 6-3, 6-

4 to stay in contention to reach the

season-ending ATP Finals for the Turin, Italy, next month. top eight players. It is being held in Seventh-seeded Casper Ruud of

Francisco Cerundolo and was so frustrated at one point in the second set that he smashed his racket against his left knee at least seven times in succession and made it

took a hit.

bleed.

The Russian player held the eighth and final qualifying place in the race for the Finals and could be

Norway, a three-time Grand Slam

runner-up, started well before losing 7-6 (3), 3-6, 6-4 to unseeded

In an earlier second-round match,

sixth-seeded Andrey Rublev lost two tiebreakers and his temper as

his hopes of qualifying for the Finals

Rublev lost 7-6 (6), 7-6 (5) to

Australian Jordan Thompson.

became the fifth player to qualify

overtaken by rivals. 6-4 victory over Matteo Arnaldi. U.S. Open runner-up Taylor Fritz No. 9 seed Alex de Minaur beat to retire after next year's French Mariano Navone 7-5, 6-1 to stay in Open, lost 6-3, 6-4 to Zizou Bergs.

Punjab FC, Chennaiyin FC clash following a string of good run

In-form sides Punjab FC and Chennaiyin FC will square off in the Indian Super League here on Thursday as the battle for playoffs spots heats up. Punjab FC are placed fourth in the table after as many matches

while Chennaiyin FC are positioned sixth with two victories and draws each in their five games thus far. They are arguably two definite contenders for the top-six and

hence this fixture carries significance for both teams, giving them an opportunity to move up the standings and develop pressure on the higher-ranked opponents.

So far, across both seasons, Punjab FC have scored 34

goals in the ISL - boiling down to 1.30 strikes per game. Impressively though, only once



matches without finding the back of the net in the competition, which was a sequence of two clashes in December last year.

Given that they didn't score in the previous game, Punjab FC run the risk of equalling that record, something that they would want to avoid especially with the coming game taking place at their home turf. In their last home match, have they gone back-to-back Punjab FC held their own

against the Hyderabad FC attackers by winning 2-0. Never before in the ISL have Punjab FC managed to keep successive clean sheets at home though. They have a chance of scaling that feat against a dynamic Chennaiyin FC frontline that has netted eight goals in five games this season. Chennaiyin FC have put forth a unified front in ISL 2024-25, regularly dragging the team back from precarious positions

to achieve positive outcomes. For instance, they have won seven points from losing situations this season - the joint-most with Kerala Blasters

Contrastingly, Punjab FC have claimed no such points so far, highlighting the need of an early lead for the Marina Machans.

The Owen Coyle-coached side have also emerged as a force to reckon with on the road. They are unbeaten in their last three ISL away games - winning twice and drawing once.

The last time Chennaiyin FC registered a longer such streak was for five games from January-February 2020. Interestingly, they had made it all the way to the final that year, under the tutelage of Coyle. "We want to follow our style," Punjab FC head coach

expressed confidence by saying that he wants his team to take the lead in setting the tempo of the game regardless of the ideas and plans that Chennaiyin FC come up with. "The main topic before us this season is that we want to make the opponents follow our style of play. That's our biggest concern. Chennaiyin FC have good players and a good style of play but we want to follow our style," Dilmperis added. Chennaiyin FC and Punjab FC have faced each other twice in the ISL, winning once each. "I want us to believe we can win every game," Chennaiyin coach Coyle said.

"I want my players to believe that they can win every game. That won't be possible. But the intent should be there always and that's the kind of players I like working with," Coyle



Jürgen Klopp defends his decision to join Red Bull after fan backlash

AP ■ BERLIN

Jürgen Klopp has defended his decision to head up Red Bull's group of soccer clubs, saying he "didn't want to step on anybody's toes" after his decision prompted a backlash from fans of his former teams in Germany. Klopp is taking over as the

drinks company's head of global soccer from January in what was widely seen as a surprise move. It will be his first job after leaving Liverpool at the end of last season.

"I didn't want to step on anybody's toes, definitely not, and personally I love all of my ex-clubs," Klopp said in an interview released Wednesday on a podcast hosted by former Real Madrid and Germany midfielder Toni Kroos.

Klopp suggested any decision he made to coach another club would also have disappointed "I really don't know what exactly I could have done for everyone to be happy," he said. Red Bull, and especially its Leipzig team, are widely resented by many German

soccer fans, who see the drinks company as an unwelcome corporate presence trying to buy success. Fans at Klopp's former clubs like Borussia Dortmund have criticized the move, and Mainz fans held up banners this month expressing their disappointment and questioning whether he was

"crazv." Klopp spent 18 years at Mainz as a player and coach before joining Dortmund in 2008, where he went on to lead the club to two Bundesliga titles and the Champions League final.

Klopp said he had never viewed Red Bull's involvement in soccer "so critically," and suggested it played an important role in bringing high-level club soccer back to the former East Germany with the Leipzig project.

Klopp previously said he planned to take a "long break" from soccer after leaving Liverpool, where he coached his last game in May after nine years with the club.

"I'm 57 so I can still work for a couple more years but I don't really see myself on the sideline (as a coach) for the time being," he said. "But it was always clear that I wasn't going to do nothing at all. And then this story with Red Bull came into the picture, and for me it's outstanding."

Klopp said he saw his Red Bull role primarily as an "adviser" working together with coaches at the clubs backed by the drinks giant. "I always had the feeling that the coach is very, very often the loneliest person at the club," he said.

FIFA announces first Club World Cup sponsor with Chinese electronics firm branding VAR checks

AP ■ SHANGHAI

 F^{IFA} finally announced a first sponsor for its revamped Club World Cup on Wednesday in a deal that will brand video review checks at the tournament in the United States next vear.

Chinese consumer electronics firm Hisense will have "branding appearing in the video operation room and on pitchside screens," FIFA said in a statement, when match officials study key incidents in the 32team tournament being played in 11 American cities from June 15 to July

Though

tournament has had a sponsor for video reviews since the technology was approved before the men's 2018 World Cup in Russia, Hisense was the official "VAR Screen Provider" for this year's European Championship

organized by UEFA in Germany.
Less than eight months before the Club World Cup opens - with Lionel Messi's Inter Miami hosting the first game of a tournament that sees Real Madrid, Manchester City and Bayern Munich play their first competitive games in the U.S. - it now has one sponsor but still lacks any broadcast

FIFA's talks for a global streaming no previous FIFA deal with Apple+ stalled several

months ago and U.S. Sponsors have been more focused on deals for the men's 2026 World Cup that will be cohosted with Canada and Mexico. Saudi Arabian sponsors are expected to sign soon and help FIFA President

Panagiotis

Gianni Infantino fulfil promises to clubs that the tournament's total prize money will run to hundreds of millions of dollars every four years. FIFA is set to confirm Saudi Arabia as the 2034 World Cup host on Dec. 11. The new Hisense deal "paves the way for further sponsorship deals for FIFA's new flagship club competition to be announced in the coming weeks," soccer's world body said. FIFA did not specify the value of the of Euro 2016.

deal sealed with Infantino at a signing ceremony in Shanghai.

Reviews of referee decisions in key incidents - for goals, penalty awards and red cards - can extend to at least two minutes, despite FIFA's aim during trials in 2016 of completing checks in about 10 seconds. Hisense first signed up as a FIFA sponsor for the 2018 World Cup and

it renewed for the 2022 edition in Oatar. television and laptops The manufacturer also signed its first sponsor deal with UEFA, when

Infantino was still the European soccer body's general secretary, ahead

EASWARAN, NITISH REDDY, PRASIDH TO BE UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY

outings Abhimanyu Easwaran, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Prasidh Krishna will be the primary focal points of India A's four-day match against their Australian counterparts, starting here on Thursday. Easwaran, Nitish and Prasidh

have been included in India's squad for the five-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, beginning on November 22, and the thinktank will be eager to know how they fare in Australian conditions.

Easwaran's performance will, however, have far more significance as the 29-year-old opener could potentially Rohit Sharma's replacement if the captain skips a match or two against Australia for personal reasons.

Easwaran, who is also the vicecaptain of India A here, is a vastly experienced campaigner having played 99 First-Class matches to score 7638 runs with 27 hundreds and 29 fifties.

He has also been part of the India squad in the past but recent form in First-Class

The right-hander struck 157 and 116 for India B in the Duleep Trophy before making a 191 against Mumbai for Rest of India in the Irani Trophy and made another hundred in his final red-ball game before flying out to Australia - an unbeaten 127 against Uttar Pradesh in the Ranii Trophy. So, he has the body of work to feel in fine fettle ahead of the match against Australia A, though the conditions here will

season in India. On the other hand, Nitish does not boast of such impressive First-Class numbers, as he has been drafted into squad for his perceived ability as a pacebowling all-rounder and, even in that, batting is his stronger

be vastly different from what

he has experienced so far this

In the Duleep Trophy earlier this year, Nitish made two ducks with a highest of 40 in five matches while grabbing just two wickets.

But the selectors have backed him ahead of senior names such as Shardul Thakur, who has resumed playing domestic what inspires confidence is his matches after recovering from



So, this will be a good opportunity for the selectors to check how the Andhra man measures up to a very capable Australia A side that includes the likes of Camreon Bancroft. Marcus Harris, Michael Neser, Cooper Connolly and Scott Boland.

Prasidh is a late addition to the India A squad in place of initially picked up Yash Dayal, and the Karnataka pacer needs to find some rhythm here. Since his return from injury,

Prasidh has picked up just seven wickets in as many innings across Duleep Trophy, Irani Cup and Ranji Trophy. But the selectors seemed to have been influenced by the theoretical advantage his height brings in on the Australian decks. Prasidh can use this opportunity to keep himself ready if he gets a callup to the first eleven as the third seamer behind Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj or if the management wants to rest one of the frontline pacers as part of workload management during the tour. Other than aforementioned troika, the likes of skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad, top-order batter B

Daval and Navdeep Saini and middle-order batter Devdutt Padikkal can look forward to churn out some good efforts to keep themselves on the periphery of selection in case of an eventuality in the senior

Ishan Kishan, the wicketkeeper batter, too will be eager to make the most of this chance after a finding his favour back

with the powers that be.
TEAMS (FROM):

India A: Ruturaj Gaikwad (capt), Abhimanyu Easwaran (vice-capt), Devdutt Padikkal, Sai Sudharsan, B Indrajith, Abishek Porel (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Mukesh Kumar, Ricky Bhui, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Manay Suthar, Navdeep Saini, Khaleel Ahmed, Tanush Kotian, Prasidh Krishna.

Australia A: McSweeney (c), Cameron Bancroft, Scott Boland, Jordan Buckingham, Cooper Connolly, Ollie Davies, Brendan Doggett, Marcus Harris, Sam Konstas, Nathan McAndrew, Michael Neser, Todd Murphy, Fergus O'Neill, Jimmy Peirson, Josh Philippe, Corey Rocchiccioli, Beau

Need to be patient with Virat & Rohit: Nayar

India's a Abhishek assistant coach Nayar Wednesday insisted that they do not ask for tailor-made pitches in Tests and also backed out-of-form legends Virat Kohli and skipper Rohit Sharma, saying that they must be given "space and time to come back".

After suffering their first-ever Test series loss at home in 12 years, India will strive to salvage their pride when they clash with New Zealand in the third and final Test from Friday.

Playing on a track that assisted spinners, India lost the Pune Test by 113 runs. It is being speculated that the pitch at Wankhede Stadium here could again favour the spinners.

Nayar refuted suggestions that turning tracks are being made at the behest of the team.

"I wish we could curate pitches, but we don't. The curators do. Whatever we're provided with, we go on and play (whether) that'd be a pitch that seamed or a pitch that turned. We don't got to be a little patient, even and get conditions according to what we want," Navar said on eve of of the final Test. Both Rohit and Kohli are woefully out of form, and that team's impacted performance.

Navar said there is nothing wrong with the modern-day greats and all they need is just a bit of time and backing.

"I've seen nothing but love for them all over. When a top



been through the journey, goes through a lull, a lot of times it's about giving them their space and trusting that they will come back. They will put in the work," he said.

hard, everyone wants to do well, whether you're Virat Kohli or Rohit Sharma or even someone as young as Shubman Gill. The effort is there."

"Sometimes, sometimes you've with the greatest of players. I'm pretty sure sooner rather than later, we'll have more to praise about Virat Kohli and else as well," he said.

as those in the past.

"That's a bit of a harsh statement. When you're trying

player, when someone who's

and they can have tough times. Rohit Sharma and everyone

to say the current Indian batters do not play spin as well

"Everyone's worked really

Nayar said it would be "harsh"

to achieve something, there's always going to be a time when you take a certain dip because you're trying to play cricket in a different way and you're trying to push yourself out of the comfort zone," he said.

"Sometimes the results don't go your way, but if you're patient enough and when that upward curve hits the team and hits an individual, then your purple patch lasts for really long.
"We're hoping that the

transition that we're trying to have in terms of the mindset and the approach of the players in Team India, (given) that we're facing this dip now, but once we start hitting the upward curve, it'll be a long curve." Navar said the dressing room atmosphere hasn't changed over the last two matches. "There are going to be times when you don't do so well. When India lost the World Cup (final) in India.

that was a low point in Indian cricket for everyone...

"In the same breath, a couple (eight) of months later, we were world champions. Coming back is always a great journey. That's how stories and legacies are made.

"Hopefully we can be part of creating something as special as that in the future, but the atmosphere is great. Still a lot of jokes and bubbly cricketers in the dressing room. You'll see our (training) sessions (are) filled with fun and nothing has changed.

India have collapsed thrice so far in the series, starting with 46 all-out for lowest Test innings total at home in Bengaluru. After that, India made 156 in the first essay of Pune Test and crumbled to 245 all-out from 81/1.

Nayar refused to read much into it and said, "I wouldn't call it a collapse, when you lose wickets in a bunch or when we pick wickets in a bunch - like we did in the last game as well, where we got seven wickets in 51 runs - I think that tends to happen in this game of

"Sometimes it is the mindset. It may not be perceived from outside as trying to be aggressive or trying to have intent, but intent is not necessarily swinging at the ball. Intent is more about your approach towards the ball.

"Is it worrying? Well, the only way we look at it is how we can get out of it. That's our thought process (and) mindset."

Shubman Gill takes pay cut to keep core in tact

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gujarat Titans captain Shubman Gill has decided to take a pay cut and will be the second player retained by the IPL franchise ahead of the October 31 deadline.

Gill led Titans for the first time this season and both he and the management are now keen to retain the core group of players. The first retention for the franchise would be star spinner Rashid Khan, followed

by Gill, Sai Sudharsan and two uncapped players in Rahul Tewatia and Shahrukh Khan. Titans will also have the option of retaining another squad member via the right to match card at the mega auction next month. Gill is seen a future leader in the Indian cricket setup. "Gill has decided to take a pay cut to ensure the core players are retained and build a stronger team," an IPL source said. As per the IPL retention guidelines released ahead of

the mega auction, a team will lose Rs 18 crore from the increased purse of Rs 120 crore for the first player retained, Rs 14 crore for second, Rs 11 for third while for the uncapped players, a team will have to shell out Rs 4 crore each.

If a team retains five capped players, they will lose Rs 75 crore from the auction pot. The mega auction is likely to be held overseas in the last week of November. The auction purse has

increased to Rs 120 crore from the Rs 100 crore teams had at their disposal at last year's auction.

The total salary cap now comprises an auction purse, incremental performance pay and match fees. The match fee, set at Rs 7.5 lakh per game, has been introduced ahead of the next season. The teams can retain up to six players, via retention or right to match, from the existing squad, the highest in IPL history.



चौधरी चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय, मेरठ (उ.प्र.)

Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut (U.P.) NAAC A++ ACCREDITED







चौधरी चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र का एक महत्वपूर्ण विश्वविद्यालय है। पिछले ५९ वर्षों में विश्वविद्यालय परिवार के समस्त सदस्यों ने अपनी गहन निष्ठा, मेहनत और भविष्य दृष्टि संवारने का अथक प्रयास किया है। पौराणिक काल से ही महत्वपूर्ण यह क्षेत्र देश की आजादी के आंदोलन में भी अपनी महती भूमिका के कारण विख्यात रहा है। विश्वविद्यालय आधारभूत सुविधाओं की दृष्टि से अपना विशिष्ट स्थान रखता है। विद्यार्थियों को वर्तमान वैश्विक यग की आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार गुणवत्ता यक्त उच्च शिक्षा देने में प्रयत्नशील हैं। उच्च शिक्षा को जन-जन तक पहुंचाने के दायित्व का निर्वहन विश्वविद्यालय अपने सीमित संसाधनों में पूरी ईमानदारी व लगन से कर रहा है। यह विश्वविद्यालय लगभग 222 एकड़ भू-क्षेत्र में विकसित है, जिसमे पृथक-पृथक विभागीय शैक्षणिक भवन, नवीनतम उत्कृष्ट उपकरणों से समृद्ध प्रयोगशालाएं, आधुनिक सुविधाओं से युक्त पुस्तकालय, भव्य प्रेक्षागह, विशाल प्रशासनिक भवन, सामदायिक केन्द्र, चिकित्सालय, कम्प्यूटर केन्द्र, वातानुकुलित बृहस्पति सभागार, नव निर्मित मूल्यांकन केन्द्र, आठ छात्रावास, अभियांत्रिकी व विद्वत विभाग के पृथक-पृथक भवन, डाकखाना, बैंक, रेलवे आरक्षण केन्द्र, क्रीडा भवन, कुश्ती स्टेडियम, विशेष रूप से विकसित किये गये विविध खेल मैदान तथा कोर्ट, तपोवन एवं साहित्य कुटीर आदि ढांचागत सुविधाये हैं।

India still have wood on New Zealand while playing on turning wickets: Ajaz

first ever series loss at Ahome to New Zealand notwithstanding, India still have the "wood on us" while playing on turning wickets, said Kiwis spinner Ajaz Patel here on Wednesday.

New Zealand have outplayed India on all fronts in their backvard so far in the three-Test series, particularly in the spin department as they head into the third and final match starting here on Friday with an unassailable lead of 2-0.

While New Zealand hammered India in a rain-truncated opening Test at Bengaluru by eight wickets, exposing their shortcomings on a challenging pitch at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, the world No 2 side was given a taste of its own medicine on a spin-friendly track in Pune in the second Test, which the hosts lost by 113 runs.

Ahead of the final Test at the Wankhede Stadium, another spin-friendly track is in making despite the struggles of the Indian batters.

Patel hoped that New

opportunity to inflict a 3-0 Patel acknowledged that the whitewash on India, would visitors will need to stick to need to continue to make all the right moves despite the hosts being more adept in playing on such tracks.

India still have the wood on us when it comes to playing on turning wickets, and traditionally, the Indian batters have done well in turning surfaces," Patel told the media after New Zealand's training session.

"Obviously, they haven't had maybe as much success as they would have liked in this series so far but they're certainly an opposition that are very, very skilled and not the easiest to come up against." "Their skill set is very vast and for us as a spin group, especially it's about being able to control what we can control and making sure that we can apply pressure for long periods of time and making sure that we're delivering the best balls on a

given surface," he added. New Zealand's accuracy and recentness in attack, both with the bat and the ball, has been the feature of their first-Zealand, who have an ever series win in India and

the basics.

"It is really about continuing to challenge them. As a batter it's not easy out there when you're facing a ball that's turning as much, and so it's about us making sure we put the balls in good areas for long periods of time," he said. "On the flip side, India have got phenomenal spinners so our batters are trying to do the opposite and they're trying to create opportunities

to score runs," he added. Patel, who created history here three years ago by claiming 10/119 to become only the third spinner in Test cricket to take all 10 wickets in an innings, said the pitch for the upcoming contest looked different from the one before.

"Being back in Mumbai is always quite special and it's a place I call home as well. Having the opportunity to play out here again is quite special. To be honest, after my 10wicket haul, I wasn't sure whether I'd get another opportunity to play out here again throughout my career,"

"To be honest with you my memory is very poor so I don't exactly remember the surface that well but one thing I do remember was it looked a lot drier to start with," he added. Patel, who had to play second fiddle to fellow left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner in the Pune Test, said he was happy to keep exerting pressure on India from the other end. "It's (about) looking at what

roles you're playing for the team when it comes to a bowling perspective," he said. "Mitch (Santner) was bowling exceptionally well from the other end so for me it was really important that from my end while I'm still trying to take wickets, I'm also performing the holding role and trying to restrict as many runs as possible so that pressure doesn't come back on "The way Mitch was bowling, there was no real need for me to try too many things. It was about trying to keep it as simple as possible. Once again, going into a new surface and a new game that may completely flip again," he

विश्वविद्यालय की उपलब्धियाँ

- नैक मुल्यांकन का तीसरा चरण सम्पन्न एवं सम्मानजनक A++ ग्रेड की प्राप्ति। अगलों नैक मुल्यांकन ससमय सम्पन्न कराने की ओर अग्रसर।
- 2 विश्वविद्यालय के समस्त प्रवेश ऑनलाइन सुनिश्चित एवं प्रक्रियाओं का
- 3 परिसर को रैगिंग-मुक्त, प्रदूषण मुक्त तथा धूम्रपान-मुक्त बनाना, जैविक खाद निर्माण द्वारा कूझ निस्तारण योजना का क्रियान्वयन।
- 4 शैक्षणिक विभागों में अध्ययन, अध्यापन एवं अनुसंधान पर विशेष ध्यान। ई-पाठ्य सामग्री अपलोड तथा निरन्तर संचालित पाठ्यक्रमों का उच्चीकरण। 5 विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में पर्याप्त हरियाली तथा प्रदूषण रहित शुद्ध वातावरण
- की व्यवस्था एवं नियमित वृक्षारोपण कार्यक्रम। 6 विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में 46 वर्षा जल संग्रहण संयंत्र स्थापित किये गये एवं अनुसंधान के क्षेत्र में पं० दीनदयाल उपाध्याय शोधपीठ एवं बापू जगजीवन राम शोधपीठ की स्थापना।
- 7 विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में सौर ऊर्जा संयत्र द्वारा 1260 किलोवाट विद्वत ऊर्जा 8 विश्वविद्यालय में छात्रों की समस्याओं के निस्तारण हेत् Online Grievance
- Redressal System का संचालन। 9 राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति-२०२० को त्वरित रूप से स्वीकृत करते हुए स्नातक स्तर के ऑनर्स पाठ्यक्रमों का संचालन। राष्ट्रीय व अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय उच्च शोध संस्थानों / व्यवसायिक प्रतिष्ठानों के साथ अनुबन्ध।
- 10 योग के प्रति बढ़ते हुए लोकाकर्षण हेतु योग व ज्योतिष एवं कर्मकांड डिप्लोमा कोर्स का प्रारम्भ। योग के प्रचार-प्रसार हेत् योग दिवस पर विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा 1,74,115 लोगों द्वारा शपथ लेकर उत्तर प्रदेश का नाम गिनीज बुक ऑफ रिकार्ड में दर्ज कराने हेतु सहयोग।
- ११ ऑनलाइन आर्वेदन द्वारा उपाधि, माइग्रेशन, अंकतालिका व ट्रान्सस्क्रिप्ट उपलब्ध कराना।
- 12 नेक ग्रेड A++ प्राप्त होने के उपरान्त विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग, नई दिल्ली द्वारा केटेगरी-१ का प्रमाण पत्र प्रदान हुआ।
- 13 विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा ओ.डी.एल. पाठ्यक्रमों के संचालन हेतु प्रक्रिया का

- 14 विश्वविद्यालय परिसर में फार्मेसी, ज्वेलरी डिजाईनिंग एवं फोरेर्सिक साइंस जैसे आधुनिक पाठ्यक्रमों का विधिवत संचालन।
- 15 तिलक पंत्रकारिता एवं जनसंचार स्कूल में सामुदायिक रेडियो 90.8 एफ.एम. का संचालन एवं इंडिया टुडे व वीक जेसी प्रतिष्ठित पत्रिकाओं द्वारा रैकिंग। देश में सार्वजनिक विश्वर्विद्यालयों में उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रथम व देश में चतुर्थ स्थान

Recognitions & Rankings

- . NAAC: A++ with 3.66 CGPA
- Ranked among Top 100 Universities under state funded Govt. University category (Rank-Band: 51-100) is NIRF Rankings 2024. Ranked among Top 200 Universities under Universities category
- (Rank-Band: 151-200) in NIRF Rankings 2024.
- Top among state universities of UP as received Research Excellence Award 2023 by Clarivate.
- Top in India as received women in research category Excellence Citation award 2023 by clarivate. 1st Rank in UPI KHELO INDIA 2023
- 17th rank lo India in KHELO India
- 3rd rank in BEST University Ranking 2023 in all Govt. University of UP and 18th rank in India by India today MDRA.
- 4th rank in India in Patents granted among Govt. Universities in 2023. Top 5th among Govt. Universities with the highest number of patents
- field in past 3 years in 2024. 219th rank in South Asia in QS WORD University Ranking 2024.
- 1st in UP and 35th in INDIA in SCIMAGO Institutions Ranking 2024.
- It Index of last five years is 43 (Excellent category).
- Average citation is 11.4 (very impressive)
 Highest impact factor of Publication is 31.6 Sanctioned 100 Cr in MERU under PM-USHA
- · Signed more than 17 MOU with national Universities across the 2nd Position among state funded universities of UP in Webometric

दीपावली की हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

धीरेन्द्र कुमार कुलसचिव

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