

OPINION 6

THE DECEPTIVE FACADE
OF CHINA'S MILITARY

WORLD 8

HEZBOLLAH'S DEPUTY
LEADER VOWS TO FIGHT ON

MONEY 10

GOVERNMENT EXTENDS I-T
AUDIT REPORT FILING DATE

RAIPUR, TUESDAY OCTOBER 1, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

Established 1865

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADALate City Vol. 13 Issue 269
*Air Surcharge Extra if ApplicableBIG WINS FOR
RAKSHA IN CROATIA
AND BELGIUM
11 SPORTS

KEEP GODS OUT OF POLITICS: SC

SUPREME COURT SLAMS ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Observing that at least Gods should be kept out of politics, the Supreme Court slammed Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu for prematurely going public with the claim that previous regime of YSR Congress Party used substandard ghee containing animal fat to prepare laddus at Sri Venkateswara temple in Tirupati.

Studying the lab report produced by the Government, the Apex Court on Monday, said that the ghee that had been sent for testing was rejected and not used for making laddus.

A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan noted that the Chief Minister made the claim on September 18, even though the FIR in the matter was lodged on September 25, and a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted on September 26. "It was not appropriate on the part of a higher constitutional functionary to go in public and make a statement which can affect the sentiments of crores of people," the Bench said.

The Bench said there is no conclusive proof yet to substantiate such a claim. It questioned the need to make a public statement on the issue



File photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

when a probe had already been ordered by the State into the allegations. Justice Gavai also asked whether there was any material with the CM to conclude definitively that animal fat had been used to prepare laddus at Tirupati Temple.

Justice Viswanathan observed that the ghee sample had been rejected as per reports. "So what was the need to go to the press at all, when you yourself ordered an investigation?" the judge asked. "At least the Gods should be kept away from politics," the Court remarked.

when SIT was ordered? Prima facie there is nothing at least to show, no concrete proof to show at this stage, that the same ghee was used and procured. Even pending investigation when such statements are made by responsible public functionaries then what effect it will have on the SIT? What was the material?"

The Court told Senior Advocate Siddharth Luthra, representing TTD, that he was not answering the court's queries on this aspect. "You have still not answered. There is nothing to show that ghee was used. These are processes used to justify the rejection and stop payment!"

The Bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to assist it in deciding whether the investigation by the state-appointed SIT should continue or the probe should be conducted by an independent agency. The Bench has posted the matter for further hearing on October 3.

Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu claimed earlier this month that animal fat was used in preparing Tirupati laddus during the previous YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government in the state, triggering a massive political row. The YSR Congress has accused Naidu of indulging in "heinous allegations" for political gains.



BJP and Congress spat over remarks on PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and their parties engaged in war of words following the latter's remarks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a public meeting in Jammu when he said he won't die before PM Modi is removed from power. Shah termed Kharge's remark as "absolutely distasteful and disgraceful".

At an election rally in Jammu on Sunday, Kharge felt dizzy and uneasy but resumed his speech after a brief pause, saying he won't die before PM Modi is removed from power. Shah said "in a bitter display of spite", Kharge unnecessarily dragged the Prime Minister into his personal health matters by saying that he would die only after removing Modi from power. "Yesterday,

the Congress president Shri Mallikarjun Kharge Ji has outperformed himself, his leaders and his party in being absolutely distasteful and disgraceful in his speech. He said Kharge's remarks showed how much hate and fear the Congress people have for PM Modi and that they are constantly thinking of him. "As for the health of Mr. Kharge Ji, Modi Ji prays, I pray and we all pray that he lives a long, healthy life. May he continue to live for many years and may he live to see the creation of a Viksit Bharat by 2047," the Minister said. Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Nirmala said the Congress leadership never loses any opportunity to display their hate towards Modi. "Aptly said, Home Minister Amit Shahji," Sitharaman said in a social media post.

Kharge responded to Amit Shah's attack on him and said

the Home Minister should focus on serious issues such as the Manipur situation, census and a caste census. "Home Minister Amit Shah should focus on serious issues like Manipur, census and caste census. Your Government's own survey says that 92 percent of the employees cleaning urban sewers and septic tanks come from SC, ST, OBC categories," the Congress chief said.

"The BJP is against caste census because then it will be known by which work SC, ST, OBC, EWS and all other categories are earning their livelihood. What is their economic and social status? What kind of targeted benefits of Government schemes should they get?" Kharge said. He asserted that the Congress party is firmly committed to getting a caste census done. "We will get it done," he added.

Continued on Page 2

ED books Siddaramaiah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday booked Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and some others in a money-laundering case linked to the Mysuru Urban Development Authority, taking cognisance of a recent state Lokayukta FIR, official sources said. The federal agency has filed an enforcement case information report (ECIR) to book the Chief Minister and others, they said.



Siddaramaiah, his wife BM Parvathi, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy and Devaraju, from whom Swamy had purchased land and gifted it to Parvathi, and others have been named in the FIR registered by the Mysuru-located Lokayukta police establishment on September 27.

The FIR was lodged after a special court in Bengaluru last week ordered a Lokayukta police probe against Siddaramaiah in the case.

Continued on Page 2

Delhi road rage: One arrested for cop's murder

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Monday arrested a person in connection with the death of a constable, who was mowed down in an incident of road rage involving two men inside a car, in Outer Delhi's Nangloi area early on Sunday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Jimmy Chiram said the arrested person identified as Rajnish alias Sittu, a resident of Veena Enclave, was arrested in connection with the death of Constable Sandeep, 30. Rajneesh was sitting in the car at the time of the accident, from Noida. However, the man who was driving the car is still on the run. Earlier, some reports claimed that one of the occupants in the car was a liquor smuggler. "The offending vehicle has been seized. Multiple teams have been formed for investigation and several raids are ongoing in Delhi, UP, and Haryana to trace the other accused," said Chiram.

According to the FIR registered against two persons for murder, on Sunday at around 2 a.m., the constable Sandeep Malik allegedly stopped two occupants of a car from drinking alcohol inside the vehicle.

Continued on Page 2

Kosi drowns Bihar in sorrow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
PATNA

Flood situation in several parts of Bihar worsened on Monday as embankments of Kosi river in Darbhanga district and Bagmati river in Sitamarhi were breached, officials said.

Kosi river was in spate and breached its embankment near Kartarpur block, inundating Kirtarpur and Ghanshyampur villages in Darbhanga late on Sunday, while seepage was reported in the embankment of Bagmati river in Runni Saipdur block in Sitamarhi district, they said. "The flood situation has worsened with fresh embankment breaches but it is under control. There is nothing to panic," an official said.



NDRF personnel conduct a rescue operation at a flood affected area, in Bihar's Supaul district

The State water resources and disaster management departments have been working on a war footing, he said. "Altogether six incidents of embankment breach have so far been reported from various parts of the State. Some of

them have already been repaired and work is going on for others," Bihar Water Resources Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhary said. The embankment of the Bagmati River at Madhkaul village in Sitamarhi and the

Gandak river's embankment in West Champaran were damaged due to excessive water pressure, resulting in inundation in the Valmiki Tiger Reserve, another official said.

"Water flowing above the embankments was reported from Valmikinagar and Kirtarpur in Darbhanga. But now the water level in several rivers started receding. No casualty has been reported so far in Bihar due to the flood", the minister said. Considering the gravity of the flood situation in north Bihar, six more teams of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDRF) from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and Ranchi in Jharkhand are being deployed, he said.

Continued on Page 2

IMD announces end of Monsoon

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2024 southwest monsoon season officially ended on Monday. India recorded 934.8 mm rainfall, the highest since 2020.

The country experienced a rainfall deficit of 11 per cent in June, followed by an excess of 9 per cent in July, 15.7 per cent in August, and 10.6 per cent in September.

The IMD had predicted above-normal rainfall (106 per cent of the long-period average) for the monsoon season this year.

It also accurately forecast below-normal monsoon rainfall for northeast India, normal rainfall for the northwest, and above-normal rainfall for central and southern peninsular regions.

Gujarat man buys real gold with fake currency

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
AHMEDABAD/NEW DELHI

A Gujarat bullion trader has been duped of 2.1 kg of gold after unidentified common handed over counterfeit currency featuring the face of noted Bollywood actor Anupam Kher. A h m e d a b a d based bullion trader, Mehul Thakkar has filed a complaint with the Navrangpura police station, detailing how he was tricked into accepting 26

bundles of counterfeit Rs 500 notes.

The fake currency which conveyed to the trader as Rs 1.90 crore, also labelled "Resole Bank of India," and was presented to his staff in exchange for 2.1 kgs of gold on September 24.

According to police complaints Thakkar, a gold dealer received a call from another manager of a jewellery shop Prashant Patel whom the bullion trader knew. Patel was eager to buy



2.1 kgs of gold, and transaction was pegged at Rs 1.90 crore.

Thakkar instructed his staff to meet Patel at an 'angadia pedhi' (Hawala) office - a

traditional money-moving service where they were handed over bundles of what they claimed were Rs 500 notes.

The unsuspecting staff was told to count the 'money' using a machine provided by the trio. Two of them then went out with the gold biscuits on the pretext of fetching the remaining Rs 30 lakh from a neighbouring office, while a third one stayed on.

Continued on Page 2



CBI nabs 26 global cyber criminals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a multi-State crackdown on organised cybercrime, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested 26 alleged cyber criminals involved in fraudulent activities targeting people globally, officials said on Monday. The action under operation Chakra-III started with raids at 32 different places across Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Visakhapatnam late night last Thursday. The central agency has seized Rs 58.45 lakh cash, locker keys and three luxury vehicles, they said.

Four call centres — V.C. Inconformities Pvt. Ltd at Regent Plaza, Pune; V.C. Infrometrix Pvt. Ltd, Murli Nagar, Visakhapatnam; Viajex Solutions, Hyderabad; and Atriya Global Services Pvt. Ltd, Visakhapatnam — were among the places raided by the agency. The CBI intercepted 170 people engaged in live online

criminal activities across the four call centers, the officials said.

"The cyber criminals targeted in this operation were involved in a range of illicit activities, including impersonating... Tech support services and approaching victims, especially in the USA in the guise that the victim's systems have been hacked," a CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

He said the victims were convinced by the criminals that their identities had been stolen and that a large number of unauthorised transactions were being made in their bank accounts.

The scammers told the victims that they were under the scanner of investigation agencies of their respective countries, he added.

"The cyber criminals then induced the victims to transfer their bank holdings into new bank accounts given by cyber criminals in the guise of safeguarding their finances.

Continued on Page 2

Dadasaheb Phalke finally acknowledges Mrigayaa actor

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

Dancing into the hearts of millions of Indian cine goers in the chartbuster "I am a disco dancer" Mithun Chakraborty, 74, has come a long way from the bylanes of Kolkata to reach peak stardom. Recognising Chakraborty's contribution to Indian cinema, the Union government on Monday bestowed the Dadasaheb Phalke award upon him. The announcement was made by Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnav on social media.

The veteran actor, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) member, was recently awarded Padma

Bhushan, the third highest civilian honour. Congratulating Chakraborty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the actor is a "cultural icon" admired across generations. "Delighted that Shri Mithun Chakraborty Ji has been conferred the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award, recognising his unparalleled contributions to Indian cinema. He is a cultural icon, admired across generations for his versatile performances. Congratulations and best wishes to him," the Prime Minister said in a social media post.

Vaishnav said Chakraborty's remarkable cinematic journey "inspires generations." "Honoured to announce that the

Dadasaheb Phalke Selection Jury has decided to award legendary actor, Sh. Mithun Chakraborty Ji for his iconic contribution to Indian Cinema," the minister said in the post. The award will be presented to Chakraborty at the 70th National Film Awards ceremony on October eight, Vaishnav said.

Though the actor made his debut in film 'Mrigayaa', directed by renowned director Mrinal Sen, Chakraborty in 1976. He bagged his first National award for best actor, and tasted commercial success with his film 'Disco Dancer'. All the songs of the film including 'I am a disco dancer' and 'Yaad aa raha' were a huge hit in the late



1970s.

Then followed several hits like 'Mujhe Insaaf Chahiye', 'Hum Se Hai Zamana', 'Pasand Apni Apni', 'Char Ek Mandir', 'Kasam Paida Karne Wale Ki' and 'Commando'. Chakraborty was also praised for his role in the 1990 film 'Agneepath', fronted by Amitabh Bachchan. Chakraborty's unique moves, which popularised disco dancing, and fight scenes enthralled the audience all over the country and even in Russia. He earned two more National Awards for 1992's 'Tahader Katha' (best actor) and 1998's 'Swami Vivekananda' (best supporting actor). When he got the news about the award Chakraborty said his life

kept replaying in his mind, including the initial struggle for food and shelter. "I am short of words. It is an occasion which reminded me of the past. I went to Mumbai from Kolkata. In Mumbai, I did not have food and would sometimes sleep in the garden..." "This kept replaying. After all this, you get this huge honour. I have no words. I can only say I dedicate this award to my family and to fans all over the world. "You know my life has never been smooth, I did not get anything on platter, I had to fight for everything, but when the result comes like this, you forget all the pain, God has been kind," the actor told reporters in Kolkata.

Chakraborty also praised Prime Minister Modi. "I have great respect for PM Modi, he is a fantastic man. I know him, he is a gem of a person," he added. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also congratulated the veteran actor. "Mithun Ji's illustrious career spanning several decades has not only enriched our films but has also set standards of excellence in acting. All my best wishes to him," Shah said. The three-member jury — comprising former Dadasaheb awardee Asha Parekh, actor-politician Khushbu Sundar and filmmaker Vipul Amrutlal Shah — selected Chakraborty for the prestigious honour.

Continued on Page 2

Big fat Indian weddings to drive ₹5.9 lakh crore expenditure this festive season

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The big fat Indian wedding season starting from November 12, 2024, is set to witness 48 lakh weddings, generating business worth Rs 5.9 lakh crore. The estimated figure is based on the data collected from 75 cities across the country who are dealing with wedding-related goods and services. The national capital is also estimated to see 4.5 lakh weddings and is expected to contribute a massive Rs 1.5 lakh crore alone in business. Last year, 35 lakh weddings generated a total business of Rs 4.25 lakh crore. These expenses range from Rs 3 lakh per wedding for 10 lakh ceremonies, to over Rs 1

crore for high-end weddings. This diverse spending spectrum is expected to fuel growth across various sectors, with significant demand for goods such as clothing, jewellery, electronics, and food items. According to a study conducted by the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), this year there is an increase in wedding date, which is expected to result in substantial growth in business. While there were 11 auspicious dates in 2023, this year there are 18. In India, wedding expenditures peak during two distinct periods: November to mid-December and mid-January to July, commonly referred to

as the 'Wedding Season'. These periods coincide with increased economic activity, especially during the first peak period which aligns with the festive season. Acharya Durgesh Tare, Convenor of CAIT's Veda and Spiritual Committee, said the wedding season will kick off from November 12 (Dev Uthani Ekadashi) and will last until December 16. The auspicious dates in November are 12, 13, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, and 29, while in December, the dates are 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 16. Weddings will then pause for about a month and will resume from mid-January 2025 through March. The second phase of the wedding season is set to resume from



16 January 2025, after Makar Sankranti adding another wave of business opportunities for traders and service providers. CAIT's National Secretary General and Chandni Chowk MP, Praveen Khandelwal, said the study also revealed that consumers are increasingly prioritising Indian products on the lines Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for 'Vocal for Local' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India).

Indian products have made significant inroads in the market and their demand has increased dramatically overshadowing foreign goods, he said. Additionally, services like banquet halls, event management, catering, transportation, and photography will also see a sharp rise in business. Another emerging trend this year is the increased expenditure on social media services for wedding coverage, as more couples look to enhance their digital presence during the festivities. As per data, at least 10 lakh weddings will be solemnized with an expenditure of Rs three lakh per wedding; 10 lakh weddings with an expen-

diture of Rs 6 lakh per wedding; 10 lakh weddings, with an expenditure of Rs 10 lakh per wedding; 10 lakh weddings, with an expenditure of Rs 15 lakh per wedding; 7 lakh weddings, with an expenditure of Rs 25 lakh per wedding; 50,000 weddings, with an expenditure of Rs 50 lakh per wedding and 50,000 weddings, with an expenditure of Rs 1 crore or more per wedding. According to traders, these estimates may actually be conservative, given the massive scale of economic activities expected during the wedding season. Traders say the major sectors expected to see significant business which include cloth-

ing, sarees, lehengas, and apparel (10%), jewelry (15%), electronics, electrical appliances, and consumer durables (5%), dry fruits, sweets, and snacks (5%) and groceries and vegetables (5%) and gift items (4%) and other goods (6%). Besides, it is estimated banquet halls, hotels, and wedding venues are expected to generate revenue upto five percent of the 5.9 lakh crore business, event management (5%), tent decoration (12%), catering services (10%), floral decoration (4%), transportation and cab services (3%), photography and videography (2%), orchestra and bands (3%) light and sound (3%) and other services (3%) this year.

Rajnath Singh to launch car rally from National War Memorial

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday will give a send-off to a car rally from the National War Memorial here. It is a mega 7,000-km long 'Vayu Veer Vijeta' car rally from Thoise in Ladakh to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh organised to mark the 92nd anniversary of Indian Air Force (IAF) on October eight. Giving details, officials said the defence minister will flag-off the rally before it is formally flagged-off from Thoise, one of the world's highest altitude air force station at 3,068m above mean sea level, on October eight. Enroute, the air warriors will have 16 halts comprising interactions with students in various colleges and univer-



sities. The halts will be Leh, Kargil, Srinagar, Jammu, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Agra, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Darbhanga, Bagdogra, Hasimara, Guwahati, Tezpur, Dirang and Tawang. The rally will culminate on October 28. The aim of the rally, organised by IAF in coordination with the veterans of Uttarakhand War Memorial, is to raise awareness among the people about the glorious history of

IAF; the deeds of valour of the air warriors in different wars and rescue operations and attract the youth to serve the motherland. Fifty-two (52) air warriors, including women, will be behind the wheels during this mega car rally, which will also witness the participation of former Air Force Chiefs in different legs. The IAF's Adventure Cell is leading and coordinating the rally.

Army recovers four bodies from Rohtang pass, 56 years after plane crash

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Army has managed to recover the bodies of four persons from Rohtang pass 56 years after their plane crashed there. The ill-fated IAF AN-12 aircraft was carrying 102 passengers. As of now, nine bodies including the latest have been recovered. Giving details, army officials said here on Monday, in an extraordinary development, the ongoing search and rescue mission to recover the remains of personnel from the aircraft has achieved significant breakthrough. The mission, led by the Dogra Scouts of Indian Army in collaboration with representatives of Tiranga Mountain Rescue, is part of the larger Chandra Bhaga Mountain Expedition. The joint team has recovered the remains of four more individuals from the site, marking a significant success in one of

India's longest-running search and recovery operations. The tragedy dates back to February 7, 1968, when an IAF AN-12 aircraft, carrying 102 passengers, went missing after taking off from Chandigarh and encountering severe weather conditions near the Rohtang Pass. For decades, the wreckage and remains of the victims remained lost in the icy terrain. It was only in 2003 when mountaineers from the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering discovered the wreckage, sparking multiple expeditions over the years by the Indian Army, especially the Dogra Scouts, who have been at the forefront of search missions in 2005, 2006, 2013, and 2019. Despite the treacherous conditions and unforgiving terrain, only five bodies were recovered by 2019. However, the Chandra Bhaga Mountain Expedition has now recovered four addi-



tional bodies, bringing renewed hope to the families of the deceased and the nation. As of September 29, three fully intact bodies and remains of a fourth have been recovered from the snowbound mountains. Malkhan Singh (Pioneer). Identified by a voucher found in his pocket, Malkhan Singh's identity was confirmed with the help of documents obtained from Pioneer Records Office. His body was recovered nearly six decades after the ill-fated flight.

Sepoy Narayan Singh (AMC). Narayan Singh, a sepoy from the Army Medical Corps (AMC), was identified by his paybook found on his person. Singh hailed from the village of Kolpadi, Chamoli Tehsil in Garhwal, Uttarakhand. His next of kin (NOK) is his wife, Basnati Devi. After years of uncertainty, his family can now finally lay him to rest with the dignity and honour he deserves. While documents recovered from the third body have not conclusively identified the individual, details of the next of kin were found. The wife, Parvati Devi, and father, Netram, were notified of the discovery. Craftsman Thomas Charan (EME). The remains of CFN Thomas Charan from the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME) were identified, with further confirmation through his paybook. He hailed from Elanthoor, Pathanamthitta dis-

trict in Kerala. His next of kin, his mother Eleama, has been informed of the discovery. The Chandra Bhaga Expedition has once again demonstrated the Indian Army's relentless determination to bring closure to families, even after half a century. The Dogra Scouts of Indian Army, renowned for their expertise in high-altitude operations, have led this mission with exemplary courage, battling through extreme weather conditions and hostile terrain to recover the remains of their fallen comrades. This discovery also stands as a testament to the unwavering commitment of the Tiranga Mountain Rescue, which has been instrumental in assisting the Indian Army during the expedition. The recovery of these bodies brings some solace to the families who have been waiting for decades, hoping for answers and the return of their loved ones.

LG slams AAP Government for failure to constitute Board of Visitors for Delhi Prisons

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday slammed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government for failing to constitute the Board of Visitors for Delhi Prisons mandated by law and ordered to be constituted by Delhi High Court way back in Sept 2019. The proposal is pending for the last five years. The Lt Governor criticised the government for forwarding a half cooked proposal to this effect. "It is indeed disturbing that the constitution of a Board of Visitors which plays the crucial role of providing independent feedback to prison authorities about the standard of basic facilities to be maintained in the prison, including health, hygiene, security and other basic minimum facilities, is pending for five years now. The Board serves as a platform for hearing the grievances of the prisoners/convicts and enables authorities to undertake remedial measures in this regard," Saxena said. "I take strong exception of this approach and attitude which flies in the face of established norms of governance. A simple decision of this nature had to

wait for 05 years and even then a half-baked proposal has been submitted without proper application of mind and following due process. The file is returned accordingly with directions to rectify the shortcomings in the notification in terms of appointment of District and Sessions Judge as Chairman and sending a panel of names under section 45 D of GNCTD Act, 1991 and with specific direction that the Standing Counsel shall present this note to the Hon'ble High Court so as to bring the correct picture of where the fault lies as far as delay is concerned, on the next date of hearing i.e. 01.10.2024," the Lieutenant Governor said in a note to Atishi. Saxena said, "What is more disturbing is the fact that the notification which has been put up now after approval of Minister (Home), GNCTD and Chief Minister, run contrary to the provisions of Rule 1643 of the Delhi Prison Rules, 2018 which envisages that the Board of Visitors shall be chaired by the District and Session Judge. It is not understood as to, under what authority this has been substituted by District Magistrate in the said notification."

Rahul to visit Kolhapur on October 4-5

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Ahead of the formal launch of the party's electioneering for the forthcoming Maharashtra Assembly polls, leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi will take part in a series of programs during his visit to sugar-rich Kolhapur district in western Maharashtra on October 4 and 5. The Congress is planning to use Rahul's two-day visit to Kolhapur to set the tone for the party's campaign for the State Assembly polls, for which the schedule is expected to be notified by the Election Commission of India (ECI) after the declaration of the results in the Jammu & Kashmir and Haryana Assembly polls on October 8. Rahul, who will arrive in Kolhapur on October 4, will unveil a huge statue of Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji at Kasba Bawda. On the following evening, the Congress leader will witness a dance drama - in which more 2,000 participants and half of them will sport dresses of Chhatrapati Shivaji. On the morning of October 5, Rahul will pay his respects at the memorial of Maratha king and social reformer



Chhatrapati Rajarshi Shahu, the first Maharaja (1900-1922) of the princely state of Kolhapur. Later he will participate in a conference organised to commemorate the Indian Constitution. "We have invited more than representatives from all religions and different NGOs. At this conference, Rahul Gandhi will interact with different sections of the society," former State minister and current MLC Satej Patil, who is hosting Rahul's two-day visit to Kolhapur, said. Senior Congress leaders, including AICC general secretary Ramesh Chennithala, former Chief Ministers Sushilkumar Shinde, Prithviraj Chavan state Congress President Nana Patole, Leader of the Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly Vijay Wadetiwar and Congress legislative party leader Balasaheb Thorat will remain present on the occasion.

Gujarat man buys real gold with fake...

From Page 1

When the staff sent by Thakkar noticed the currency notes were fake after taking them out from plastic wrap for counting, they questioned the third person, who told them he was there just to deliver the counting machine for 'angadia pedhi', the complainant told the police. It also later came to light that the 'angadia' office was opened by the accused persons two days before the incident, as per the complaint. An FIR has since been filed against the two unidentified suspects, and police have launched an investigation to track down the culprits behind this unusual con.

ongoing, it said. "These operations have resulted seizure of critical digital evidence and incriminating material. 951 items have been seized including electronic devices, mobile phones, laptops, financial information, communication records and incriminating material used by this cyber crime network for criminal activity and to defraud victims," the spokesperson said. This operation has resulted in significant disruption and dismantling of a major trans national technology enabled crime network, he said.

Dadasaheb Phalke finally...

From Page 1

Filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri, who worked with the actor on films such as 'The Tashkent Files' and 'The Kashmir Files', also wished him in a social media post. Chakraborty, whose real name is Gourang Chakraborty, is an alumnus of Pune's Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) who has predominantly worked in Hindi and Bengali cinema. A former Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament, Chakraborty joined the BJP ahead of the 2021 West Bengal Legislative Assembly election. The actor also served as the head judge or 'grandmaster' on the popular dance reality series 'Dance India Dance' from 2009 to 2018. In 2023, Waheeda Rehman was named recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

ED books... The order of the special court judge came a day after the high court upheld the sanction granted by Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot to conduct an investigation against the senior Congress leader on allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA). The ED has pressed sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to book Siddaramaiah in its ECIR, the equivalent of a police FIR. According to the procedure, the ED is empowered to summon the accused for questioning and even attach their assets during the investigation. In the MUDA site-allotment case, it is alleged that compensatory sites were given to Siddaramaiah's wife in an upmarket area in Mysuru, which had higher property value as compared to the location of her land that was "acquired" by MUDA. The Lokayukta FIR has been registered under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) like 120B (criminal conspiracy), 166 (public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person), 403 (dishonest misappropriation of property), 406 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), 426 (mischief), 465 (forgery), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating), 340 (wrongful confinement) and 351 (assault).

BJP and Congress...

From Page 1

Addressing the rally on Sunday, Kharge had said, "I am 83 years old. I am not going to die so early. I will stay alive till PM Modi is removed from power." "I wanted to talk. But due to dizziness, I have sat down. Please pardon me," the Congress leader said. BJP slammed Mallikarjun Kharge, terming his remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi "absolutely distasteful and disgraceful". It also said Modi became the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term with the people's mandate and not because of the Congress president's grace. BJP national spokesperson Syed Shahnawaz Hussain hit out at Kharge for his remarks and said Modi has become prime minister for the third consecutive term with the blessings of the people of the country. Asked about Shah's attack on Kharge, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "In his election speech,

Kharge said 'I am not going to retire till I see the exit of the Prime Minister', which is a perfect political statement to make. The non-biological prime minister and this self-declared Chanakya (Shah) have made disgraceful statements and they are now accusing Kharge." "There is nothing wrong about Kharge's statement. This is a deliberate distortion, a deliberate and malicious twist (to the Congress chief's remarks). If I start recounting all the nonsense spouted by the Prime Minister on the Congress and its leaders, I can go on and on," Ramesh said. Congress's media and publicity department head Pawan Khara also hit out at Shah over his attack on Kharge. "What Amit Shah has said in his tweet is wrong -- that we hate Narendra Modi. We do not hate Narendra Modi but we love our country and hence, we want to make India free from his rule. It is our intention and aim," Khara said.

Kosi drowns Bihar in sorrow...

From Page 1

They are being engaged in addition to the existing 12 teams of NDRF and 22 of State Disaster Management Authority (SDRF) deployed in the relief and rescue operation in the flood-affected districts," said a bulletin issued by the disaster management department on Monday. "Despite water levels receding in several small rivers, the overall situation remained grim with over 16 lakh people affected by the deluge. No fatality has been reported so far," another official said. The Bihar Government sounded an alert for floods in northern, southern and central parts of the state, following heavy discharge of water from Birpur and Valmikinagar barrages on Saturday and Sunday. However, the water

discharge from the Valmikinagar and Birpur barrages across the Gandak and Kosi rivers respectively reduced this morning, another official said. The water discharge through Valmikinagar barrage was 5.62 lakh cusecs on Sunday, while the same was 1.89 lakh cusecs till 8 am on Monday, he said. Similarly, the water discharge from the Birpur barrage was 6.61 lakh cusecs on September 29, and the same was reduced to 2.88 lakh cusecs till 8 am on Monday, the official said. Affected districts in the state include West and East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj, Siwan, Saran, Vaishali, Patna, Jehanabad, Madhubani, Araria, Purnea, Katihar and Bhojpur.

Delhi road rage: One arrested for cop's...

From Page 1

As he closed in on the car of two men he had been chasing after rebuking them for drinking on the road, Delhi Police Constable Sandeep did not realise it was what they wanted. "Brother Bhandre, let's run Sandeep over and finish him," said accused Rajnish alias Sittu, to Dharmender alias Bhandre, who was driving the car. They waited for the constable to get close enough, according to the FIR registered in the matter. Dharmender revved the throttle and hit Sandeep's motorcycle from behind, dragging him for some distance before hitting a stationary car and crushing the constable between the two cars, the FIR said. The gruesome incident was caught on CCTV camera. The incident occurred in the early hours of Sunday near Veena Enclave here when Sandeep, 30, was headed towards Railway Road from

Nangloi police station during duty hours in plainclothes. While Sandeep was on duty, he met his colleagues, Constables Khushi Ram and Sachin, who were returning home after duty. "We spotted him (Sandeep) on his bike in plainclothes. I asked him about his duty hours and he told us that on the directions of his SHO (station house officer), he was on duty in plainclothes as incidents of thefts had increased in his beat area," Ram stated in the FIR. As the three started moving towards Nangloi Railway Road, they saw a white Wagon R parked near a government school and that two men inside it were consuming alcohol, the FIR said. "We identified one of the occupants as Dharmender alias Bhandre, who lives in Veena Enclave. Since I was previously posted at Nangloi police station, I knew Dharmender," Ram said in the FIR.

When Sandeep objected to the duo drinking alcohol on the road, Dharmender shouted, "You are interfering in our personal matter. How dare you?" Sandeep asked Dharmender and Rajnish to come to the police station but the two started moving towards Nangloi railway station in their car. Sandeep chased them on his motorcycle. Ram and Sachin also followed them. After reaching near Jaat Dharmshala, Dharmender slowed down the vehicle and waited for the three policemen to get close. As he approached the car, Sandeep asked the accused to stop their vehicle. Instead, Dharmender hit Sandeep's motorcycle with his car. Dharmendra stopped dragging Sandeep only after his car hit the other car. While Ram and Sachin rushed to Sandeep's rescue, Dharmender managed to flee the spot, leaving behind the car. Rajnish was nabbed from

the spot, the FIR stated. Ram and Sachin rushed Sandeep to Sonia Hospital. He was then referred to Balaji Action Hospital, where he was declared dead. Rajnish managed to give the constables a slip while they were running around for Sandeep's treatment at Sonia Hospital. He was caught by police on Monday. DCP Chiram said Rajnish was questioned and efforts were being made to nab Dharmender. A senior police officer said they are also trying to ascertain if the accused have connections with bootleggers in the area. It will be clear once prime accused Dharmender is arrested, he said. Police said the car used by the two accused did not belong to any of them and the car owner was also being questioned. A 2018-batch constable, Sandeep was a native of Rohtak in Haryana. He is survived by his mother, wife, and a five-year-old son.

Centre okays Rs 11K crore for transport landscape in C'garh

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday okayed Rs 11,000 crore for Chhattisgarh to develop four major national highways, set to transform the state's transport landscape and promote industrial growth. Gadkari made the announcement at a meeting with Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Dev Sai in New Delhi. Sai told the media that in the progress of the ongoing national highway projects in Chhattisgarh was discussed.



Union Ministers of State for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, and Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vishnu Dev Sai are seen in a meeting.

Chief Minister Arun Sao were also present. During the meeting, Gadkari emphasized the need to address hurdles causing project delays, directing the Forest Department to expedite clearances and resolve any pending issues. The four main projects discussed include the Uрга-Katghora bypass (NH-149B), Basna to Sarangarh (Manikpur) feeder route, Sarangarh to Raigarh feeder route and the Raipur-Lakhanadon economic corridor. The total length of these projects is 236.1 km. The Union minister has approved

a total of Rs 9,208 crores. At the same time, eight works worth Rs 908 crores have been approved under the Central Road Fund. A four-lane widening work of Keshkal Ghat and Dhamtari-Jagdarpur road was also approved. Instructions were given to complete the Raipur-Visakhapatnam road and the Bilaspur-Uрга-Pathalgaon road under NHAI within the time limit. Sai said: "This is a significant gift for the development of Chhattisgarh, which will provide new direction to our industrial and business activities."

Cabinet panel recommends paddy procurement from Nov 15

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh cabinet sub-committee on Monday recommended beginning the paddy procurement from November 15 for the kharif marketing year 2024-25. The recommendation came at a meeting of the cabinet panel held under the chair of Food Minister Dayaldas Baghel to review paddy procurement on minimum support price (MSP) and its custom milling policy here, an official statement said. The sub-committee discussed procuring around 160 lakh metric tonnes paddy this kharif year besides the



The sub-committee decided to procure 21 quintals paddy per acre from registered farmers on MSP at procurement centers. Chhattisgarh had procured 144.92 lakh tonnes of paddy on MSP.

Devendra Yadav's judicial remand extended

STAFF REPORTER ■
BALODABAZAR

A court here on Monday extended the judicial remand of Congress legislator Devendra Yadav till October 3 in the arson case in Balodabazar city in Chhattisgarh. Civil Judge Class-I and Chief Judicial Magistrate Ajay Kumar Xaxa passed the order via video conferencing, Balodabazar Superintendent of Police Vijay Agrawal said. The Bhilai MLA Yadav was presented before the judge after the expiry of his judicial custody. He was arrested last month on August 17. Yadav was booked for promoting enmity between different groups, criminal conspiracy, rioting, obstructing public servants from performing duty and assault.

Choudhary among group of Ministers for reorganizing tax system

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary was on Monday made a member of a group of Ministers for reorganizing the GST compensation cess. Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Choudhary will be the chairman of the group of Ministers. The group of Ministers will contemplate on making an effective and comprehensive tax system to be enforced after ending the GST compensation cess. The group includes Assam Finance Minister Smita Neg, Gujarat Finance Minister Kanubhai Desai, Karnataka Revenue



Minister Krishna Baire Gauda, Madhya Pradesh Finance Minister Jagdish Deora, Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Chima and Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Thangam Thinnarasu.

The group of Ministers will contemplate on making an effective and comprehensive tax system to be enforced after ending the GST compensation cess.

compensate the states for the loss of revenue arising due to the implementation of GST.

National Nutrition Month concludes in Chhattisgarh



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

After a succession of drives aimed at ensuring that people adopt a healthy lifestyle, the National Nutrition Month concluded in Chhattisgarh on Monday.

Authorities and volunteers educated people on the importance of meeting daily nutritional requirements for quality life. They also taught people how to prepare ready-to-eat foods that fulfil necessary nutritional needs and where

to acquire them. On the concluding day, a cleanliness drive was held at Anganwadi centres to convey the importance of cleanliness and hygiene. Anganwadi workers also visited the homes of some beneficiaries and taught them how to prepare vegetable gardens. This year's Nutrition Month activities are themed around anaemia, growth monitoring, supplementary nutrition, nutrition education, hygiene, better administration, transparency and efficient service delivery. Improving the health of pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls and malnourished children was prioritised this year.

Four held with pangolin



STAFF REPORTER ■
JAGDALPUR

The Chhattisgarh Forest Department on Monday arrested four persons for trying to sell a pangolin in Bastar district. Ranjit Malik, Makar Bhatra, Ajay Nihal and Laba Suna were apprehended on the Karpavand-Kolaval route in the Odisha-Bastar border area by the Bastar Forest Division. They hailed from Odisha. They were caught while heading to Bastar district on their motorcycles to sell the pangolin. The team seized the rare species and two bikes used in the crime.



A glimpse from the fourth day of the Congress' Chhattisgarh Nyay Yatra. The six-day Yatra, led by PCC chief Deepak Baij, will end in Raipur on October 2.

GSI organises Swachhata Run



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Under the Swachhata Hi Seva 2024, the Chhattisgarh unit of the Geological Survey of India and Pt Ravi Shankar Shukla University (RSU) on Monday conducted a Swachhata Run here to spread awareness about clean and green

environment. Chief guest Amit A. Dharwadkar of the Geological Survey of India graced the occasion. A total of 170 male and female athletes participated in the event. Three winners were awarded medals and cash prizes in male and female categories each.

C'garh to honour elderly today



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Honour ceremonies called 'Siyam Samman' will be held in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday to observe the International Day for Older Persons. The day is observed to highlight the challenges faced by the ageing population and seek community participation to address those challenges. Chief Minister Vishnu Dev

Sai will preside over the main event in Surajpur district. He will also lay the foundation stone of 109 development works to cost Rs 110.67 crore and inaugurate 50 works worth Rs 76.84 crore. Sai said the elderly give invaluable contributions to society. Social Welfare Minister Laxmi Rajwade said it was a collective responsibility to provide a respectful environment to the elderly.

Five Maoists with Rs 1 lakh bounty surrender

STAFF REPORTER ■
SUKMA

Five Maoists, one of them carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his head, on Monday surrendered to security forces in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh. Madvi Dudwa, Madkam Joga (35), Madvi Lachhu (33), Madvi Lachhu (45) and Kartam Mase (33) turned themselves in, Sukma Additional Superintendent of Police Akash Rao Girepunje said. Dudwa, who carried the bounty, was the Puvarti Revolutionary Party Committee Militia Commander. The four were lower-rung cadres of the outlawed Maoist outfit.

HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

Corporate Office: 167-169, 2nd floor, Near Little Mount Metro Station, Saijpet, Chennai - 600015
Branch Office- 3rd Floor, Near Axis Bank, Pujari Chamber, Pachpedi Naka, Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001

Appendix IV : Symbolic Possession NOTICE (for Immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Hinduja Housing Finance Limited (HHFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of power conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice (s) issued by Authorized Officer of the Company to the Borrower(S) / Guarantor(S) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice here by given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The Borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the change of HHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

Name of Borrower/ Guarantor / Co-Borrower	1. Demand Notice Issued Date 2. Loan Account No. 3. Amount Due as on Notice Date	Description of Secured asset (Immovable Property)	Date of Symbolic Possession
Mr. ASHWANI KUMAR TIWARI (Borrower) Mrs. UMA TIWARI (Co Borrower)	1. Issuance Date - 28-06-2024 2. CT/CTG/RAPR/A000000889 3. Total Amount Due - Rs. 19,54,372/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakhs Fifty Four Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Two Only)	All That Part And Parcel of The Property Bearing Plot/House Mauja - Kobiya, R.N.M.-Bemetara, P.H.No. 35, Ward No. 10, Rani Laxmi Bai Ward, Block, Tehsil & Distt-Bemetara, Part of Khasra No. 1468/1, Chhattisgarh, India - 491335 Total Area - Parches Hectare Area Of 0.008, Total 0.0560 Hec or 86.524 Sq.Mtr. or 931 Sq.Ft Bounded As - East - House Of Sobh, West - 20 Feet Road, North - Plot Of Pandey, South - Plot Of Sahu	25/09/2024
Mr. SEWAK RAM SAHU (Borrower) Mrs. LOKESHWARI SAHU (Co Borrower)	1. Issuance Date - 28-06-2024 2. CT/CTG/RAPR/A000000752 3. Total Amount Due - Rs. 12,32,841/- (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Thirty Two Thousand Eighty Hundred Forty One Only)	All That Part And Parcel of The Property Bearing Plot/House Mauja Gram - Budhni P.H.N.-01, Part of Khasra. No.-454/33, R.N.M. - Kareilbadi, Tehsil - Magarlodh, Distt.-Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh, India - 493885 Total Area - 185 Sq.Mtr. Bounded As - East - Road (galli), West - Road (galli), North - House Of Teeju, South - House Of Romlal	30/09/2024
Mr. SANJAY BAGHEL (Borrower) Mrs. MADHU BAGHEL (Co Borrower)	1. Issuance Date - 28-06-2024 2. CT/CTG/RAPR/A000000935 & COJGPC/CPHF/A000003143 3. Total Amount Due - 12,56,989/- (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Fifty Six Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Nine Only)	All That Part And Parcel of The Property Bearing Plot/House Mauja - Bhiloni, R.N.M.-Chapora, P.H.No. 00024, Tehsil- Tilda & Distt-Raipur, Khasra No. 268, Chhattisgarh, India-493441 Total Area- 0.0490 Hec. Or 5274 Sq.Ft. Bounded As - East - Gali, West - House Of Vishnu, North - Gali, South - Baisakhu Ki Badi As Per Title Deed	25/09/2024

STATUTORY NOTICE TO BORROWERS/GUARANTORS

Borrower(s)/Guarantor's are hereby put to caution that the property may be sold at any time herein after by way of public auction/tenders and as such this may also be treated as a notice under Rule 6, 8 & 9 of Security (interest) Enforcement Rules, 2002. Authorised Officer **Mobile No. - Vaibhav Shrivastava - 7987969803, Rajesh Chaokitya - 8435571111, Shivendra Mishra - 8839287191, Sameer Singh - 9584290575**

Place: Raipur, Date: 01.10.2024

Authorised Officer, Hinduja Housing Finance Limited

Rule of law key to social development: President Murmu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said economic growth and social development are possible only where the rule of law is upheld. Without maintaining law and order, ensuring justice and protecting citizens' rights, progress becomes a meaningless term, she said addressing a group of Indian Police Service (IPS) probationers, who had called on her at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. "One category of crime I would like to highlight here is crimes against women. While it is a complex phenomenon with its roots deep in a sick mindset as well as sickening social prejudices, it is, first of all, a crime. Therefore, fighting it requires action at many levels, but the first response comes from the police force," President Murmu said. She said police officers working on these cases are expected to have exceptional sensitivity, empathy for the victim besides utmost commitment to the task of ensuring justice. The president said police officers working on cases of crime against women are "expected to have exceptional sensitivity and empathy for the victim and utmost



commitment to the task of ensuring justice". She said law and order is not only the bedrock of governance but also the very basis of the modern state, and asked the officers to be efficient, sympathetic, fearless as well as friendly. President Murmu said police officers' roles become more crucial as India aims to scale new heights in the years to come. "Economic growth and social development are possible only where the rule of law is upheld. Without maintaining law and order, ensuring justice and protecting citizens' rights, progress becomes a meaningless term,"

she said. The President asked the police officers to be tech-savvy and stay a step ahead of the criminals. Maintenance of law and order, crime prevention and detection as well as other aspects of policing have benefited from advances in technology, she said. "The flip side, however, is that criminals and terrorists too have resorted to using technology. When cyber-crimes and cyber warfare are rising around the world, you will be expected to be tech-savvy and stay a step ahead of the criminals," President Murmu said. She expressed happiness over the rise

in the number of women officers in the IPS. "I am told that in this batch there are 54 lady officers out of the total strength of 188. At 28.72 per cent, it is a sharp jump from last year's numbers as well as the average of recent years," the President said. She said the role of lady officers goes much beyond addressing gender-based crimes. "Their increasing numbers can change the overall character of policing for the better, improve the police-community relations, and will prove beneficial to the nation too," the president said, addressing the IPS probationers of the 76 Regular Recruits (2023) batch. President Murmu also advised the officers to make yoga a part of their routine and not ignore their mental well-being. "I have spoken about the great responsibilities placed on your shoulders. These can sometimes be too stressful. I would like to offer you a word of advice in this regard. "Never ignore your mental well-being. Make yoga, 'pranayama' and relaxation techniques part of your routine from now, and they will help you do your job better," she said. "The 'S' in 'IPS' stands for service," President Murmu said, and added that "one watchword above all is to serve the nation and its citizens".

Modi to launch projects worth ₹83,300 crore in Jharkhand



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Jharkhand on October two and lay the foundation stone, launch and inaugurate various projects worth over Rs. 83,300 crore in Hazaribag, Jharkhand, Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said here on Monday. In line with his commitment to ensure comprehensive and holistic development of the tribal communities across the country, Prime Minister will

launch Dharti Aaba Janatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan with a total outlay of over Rs 79,150 crore. The Abhiyan will cover around 63,000 villages benefitting more than 5 crore tribal people in 549 districts and 2,740 blocks across 30 States and UTs. It aims to attain saturation of critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, livelihood, through 25 interventions implemented by various 17 Ministries and Department of Government

of India. In order to boost the educational infrastructure for the tribal communities, Prime Minister will inaugurate 40 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) and lay the foundation stone for 25 EMRS worth over Rs 2,800 crore. Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for multiple projects under Pradhan Mantri Janati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) worth over Rs 1360 crore. It includes more than 1380 kms of road, 120 Anganwadis, 250 multi purpose centres and 10 school hostels. Further, he will also unveil a series of landmark achievements under PM JANMAN, which include, electrification of more than 75,800 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) households in around 3,000 Villages, operationalization of 275 Mobile medical units, operationalization of 500 Anganwadi centres, establishment of 250 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras and saturation of more than 5,550 PVTG Villages with 'Nal se Jal'.



NHRC seeks report on tribal students electrocution

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Taking "suo motu cognisance of a media report that two students, belonging to a Scheduled Tribe, got electrocuted to death while cleaning a water tank on the instructions of the superintendent of a government-run hostel in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh on September 25", the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the chief secretary and the director general of police, the State government, seeking a detailed report within two weeks. It appears that the hostel authorities have acted in an "insensitive manner" by asking the young boys to execute such a hazardous task resulting in their deaths, the Apex rights body said. It has issued a notice to the Madhya Pradesh government over reports that two tribal students were electrocuted allegedly while cleaning a water tank on the instructions of the superintendent of a government-run hostel in Dhar district. In a statement, the NHRC

said, going by the reports, it appears that the hostel authorities have acted in an "insensitive manner" by asking the young boys to execute such a hazardous task resulting in their deaths. According to the media report, carried on September 26, the students came into contact with a live wire connected to a water pump inside the tank while cleaning it. They were spotted lying in the tank by villagers, who reportedly informed the hostel authorities, it said. The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, raise a serious concern about human rights violations of the victim students. Accordingly, the Commission has issued a notice to the chief secretary and the director general of police, the government of Madhya Pradesh, seeking a detailed report within two weeks, said a statement by the NHRC here. It is also expected to include the status of the police investigation and compensation, if any, paid to the aggrieved families of both victims, the statement added.

Indo-Pacific regional dialogue set to begin on October 3

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Situation in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region will figure prominently during the three-day conference here starting October three. More than 20 countries will take part in the annual apex-level international Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD), organized by the Indian Navy. Giving details, officials said here on Monday, in focusing upon "Resource-Geopolitics and Security in the Indo-Pacific", the 2024 edition of the IPRD would explore and elaborate upon the several dimensions of two vital pillars of the IPOI Web, namely, "Marine Resources" and "Resource Sharing". This year's conference would concentrate upon the manner in which traditional and newly identified marine resources are driving



contemporary geopolitics and are likely to do so in the foreseeable future. These include dwindling fish-stocks - with a concomitant increase in Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, especially in oceanic areas beyond national jurisdiction. Another manifestation of resource-geopolitics is the geopolitical race for cobalt, lithium, nickel, and other hard-to-find minerals, as also rare earth elements (REE) such as tellurium and neodymium that are needed for the millions of batteries, solar panels, wind turbines, and other such renewable-energy devices required to successfully transition from fossil-fuels to renewable sources of energy. In addition, offshore energy

resources such as hydrocarbons, are likely to retain their geopolitical significance, even as more unconventional ones, such gas hydrates and oceanic renewable energy resources - ocean-sourced hydrogen for example, appear likely to drive future geoeconomic strategies across the Indo-Pacific. The IPRD-2024, through the agency of a series of globally renowned subject-matter experts and eminent speakers, will endeavour to identify mega trends of resource-geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific and posit policy-options that could be pursued to advantage. Over a period of three days, it would also explore whether and how cooperation, collaboration, and comity might offer alternative pathways within the paradigm of resource-geopolitics.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh takes charge as IAF Chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh, an accomplished fighter pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience, on Monday assumed charge as new chief of the Indian Air Force, succeeding incumbent Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari who superannuated. Air Chief Marshal Singh was serving as Vice Chief of the Air Force in his previous assignment. Born on October 27, 1964, Air Chief Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter pilot stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1984. In his long and distinguished service spanning nearly 40 years, he has served in a variety of command, staff, instructional and foreign appointments. An alumnus of the National Defence



Academy, Defence Services Staff College and National Defence College, the air officer is a qualified flying instructor and an experimental test pilot with more

than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of fixed and rotary wing aircraft. Air Chief Marshal Singh has commanded an operational fighter squadron and a frontline air base. As a test pilot, he led the MiG-29 upgrade project management team at Moscow. He was also the project director (flight test) at National Flight Test Centre and was tasked with flight testing of the Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas. The officer has held important staff appointments of Air Defence Commander at South Western Air Command and Senior Air Staff Officer at Eastern Air Command. Prior to assuming the charge of Vice Chief of the Air Staff in February last year, he was the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Central Air Command.



India-Kazakhstan Joint Military Exercise begins in Uttarakhand

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The eighth edition of India-Kazakhstan Joint Military Exercise KAZIND-2024 commenced on Monday at Surya Foreign Training Node, Auli, Uttarakhand and will conclude on October 13, defence ministry said here. The joint exercise has been held annually since 2016. Last edition of the Joint Exercise was held at Otar, Kazakhstan from October 30 to November 11 last year. The Indian Armed Forces, comprising 120 personnel, are being represented by a battalion of the Kumaon Regiment along with other arms and services, as well as personnel from Indian Air Force. The Kazakhstan contingent will be represented mainly by personnel from Land Forces and Air Borne Assault Troopers. Aim of the Joint Exercise is to enhance joint military capability of both sides to undertake counter terrorism operations in a sub conventional scenario under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. The Joint Exercise will focus

on operations in the semi-urban and mountainous terrain. Objectives to be achieved from the Joint Exercise are high degree of physical fitness, rehearsing and refining drills for operations at tactical level and sharing of best practices. Tactical drills to be rehearsed during the Joint Exercise include joint response to a terrorist action, establishment of a Joint Command Post, establishment of an Intelligence and Surveillance Centre, securing of helipad / landing site, combat free fall, Special Heliborne Operations, Cordon and Search operations, besides employment of drones and counter drone systems among others. Joint Exercise KAZIND-2024 will enable both sides to share best practices in tactics, techniques and procedures of conducting joint operations. It will facilitate developing inter-operability, bonhomie and camaraderie between the two armies. The Joint Exercise will also enhance defence cooperation, further augmenting bilateral relations between the two friendly nations.

Young travelers shape family vacations, says Hilton report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

An overwhelming 93 per cent of young travelers specifically Generation Alpha and Generation Z are actively involved in shaping their family's vacation plans, according to a study. Interestingly, these young travelers are eager to explore both local and international destinations, showing a growing interest in cultures beyond Asia. Their preferred travel destinations include India (34%), Singapore (28%), the USA (22%), and Australia and the UK (17%), said the "Small Voices, Big Choices: Hilton 2025 Trends Report". Revealing that these younger generations are emerging as key decision-makers, influencing destinations and activities, the report notes that in India, 76 per cent of parents



base their travel choices on their children's interests, demonstrating the power of youth preferences in shaping family trips. Generation Alpha, those aged 14 and under, comprises a quarter of India's population, while Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, makes up 30 per cent. Although young travelers play a significant role in selecting activities and destinations, parents still handle logistical decisions like transportation (44 per cent), dining (40 per cent), and accommodation (32 per cent). The report notes that young travelers in India

take an average of two to three trips per year, with 94 per cent traveling at least once annually. Looking ahead, 90 per cent of these youths plan to travel in the coming year, highlighting a strong demand for travel among younger generations. In contrast, millennials (Generation Y) tend to favor familiar Asian destinations for comfort and convenience, such as Japan and the Maldives. This generational shift is prompting the travel industry to innovate, creating more immersive and culturally enriching experiences that align with the values of these younger travelers. Alexandra Jaritz, senior vice president of brand management for Asia Pacific at Hilton, said that the preferences of Generation Alpha and Z are reshaping the travel landscape. "The

demand for more meaningful, immersive, and culturally enriching experiences is prompting the travel industry to innovate. This shift reflects a broader trend where younger generations seek not just to visit places but to engage with them in a deeper, more authentic manner." The findings are based on two surveys: a global Ipsos poll and an APAC-focused OnePoll survey, indicating a comprehensive analysis of travel trends among young people in India and beyond. While the Ipsos survey sampled 13,001 adults (18+) across 13 countries, the OnePoll survey included 8,000 Gen Z and Millennial parents (born in or before 1981) with children aged 6 to 19, from Australia, mainland China, India, Japan, and Singapore, said the report.

Congress: Government employment opportunities are half-truths

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday dismissed as "half-truths" the government's assertions of creating eight crore employment opportunities between 2021 and 2024 and 6.2 crore net subscribers joining the EPFO database, and said no "spin-doctoring" can take away from the fact that 2014-24 has seen "jobless growth". Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said amidst the "U-turns and scandals" that have marked the last few months of this "tottering" government, "the non-biological PM and his drum beaters have tried to find some solace in their economic record, claiming to have



created eight crore employment opportunities between 2021 and 2024". "This claim initially emerged from the RBI KLEMS data, which we had earlier countered on July 15th, 2024. The Government's spin doctors have now mustered another statistic - that of 6.2 crore net subscribers joining the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) database between September 2017 and March 2024. Both

claims are based on half-truths," he said in a statement. To justify its claim of eight crore new jobs, the government adopts an expansive definition of employment, without registering the quality and circumstances of employment, Ramesh argued. A large part of the claimed "employment growth" is recording unpaid household work done by women as "employment", he said, adding that it is not new job creation. Amidst the poor economic climate, the share of salaried, formal employment in the labour market has decreased, he said and pointed out that workers are moving to low-productivity informal and agricultural jobs, which KLEMS is capturing as jobs created.

Pak refugees, Valmiki, Gorkha community to vote for first time post abrogation of Article 370

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

On the eve of the third and final round of polling in Jammu and Kashmir, the mood was upbeat among the first-time voters who belong to the West Pakistani refugee community, Valmiki Samaj, and Gorkha community. These people got voting rights in assembly, urban local bodies, and panchayat elections only after the Abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A.

first time in the Assembly polls. "We have already booked a band group to celebrate the festival of democracy. The first-time voters will march in a group to the polling station in RS Pura on Tuesday to cast their vote", he added. Labha Ram Gandhi also credited the Union government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who gave them their citizenship rights, ending their seven-decade-long struggle. The mood in the Valmiki colony in Jammu was equally upbeat. A large number of first-time voters were keen on collecting their voter slips to avoid any chaos and confusion at the last minute. A first-time voter in the Valmiki colony Eklavya told The Pioneer, "Our parents were deprived of their voting rights by successive

governments in the past. Now we have been empowered by the constitution of India to exercise our voting rights. We are eagerly waiting to participate in the festival of democracy to choose our public representative. According to official sources, over 39.18 lakh voters will be exercising their right to vote across 40 Assembly segments in the final round of polling on October 1. The Election Commission of India has deployed over 20,000 polling staff across seven districts of Jammu and Kashmir. The fate of several senior leaders including two former deputy chief ministers Tara Chand and Muzaffar Beig will be decided in the crucial phase. Prominent among others in the fray include People's Conference chairman and



former minister Sajjad Lone and National Panthers Party India president Harsh Dev Singh. While Lone is fighting on two seats from Kupwara, Singh is contesting from Chenani seat of Udhampur. Former ministers Raman Bhalla (R S Pura), Usman Majid (Bandipora), Nazir Ahmad Khan (Gurez), Taj Mohiuddin (Uri), Basharat Bukhari (Wagoora-Kreeri), Imran Ansari (Pattan),

Ghulam Hassan Mir (Gulmarg), Choudhary Lal Singh (Basohli), Rajiv Jasrotia (Jasrota), Manohar Lal Sharma (Billawar), Sham Lal Sharma and Ajay Kumar Sadhotra (Jammu North), Mula Ram (Marh), Chander Prakash Ganga and Manjit Singh (Vijapur) are other strong contenders in the fray. Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Jammu zone, Anand Jain, said adequate security arrangements have been put in place in the poll-bound areas to ensure "terror-free and peaceful" polling. Amid tight security arrangements, thousands of election staff along with poll material left their respective district headquarters this morning to take positions at their designated polling stations by this evening. The voter turnout was robust

in the earlier phases, with 61.38 per cent participation recorded in the first phase on September 18 and 57.31 per cent in the second phase on September 26. Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir PK Pole said a total of 5,060 polling stations have been set up across the poll-bound districts. A total of 39,18,220 lakh voters eligible to exercise their franchise include 20,09,033 male voters, 19,09,130 female voters and 57 third gender voters, the CEO said, adding as many as 1.94 lakh youth between the age 18 and 19 years, along with 35,860 Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and 32,953 elderly voters above the age of 85 are also eligible to exercise their franchise in this phase. He said there will be 50

polling booths managed by women, known as Pink Polling Stations, 43 polling stations manned by specially-abled persons and 40 polling stations manned by youths. Also, there will be 45 green polling stations to spread the message about environmental concerns and 33 unique polling stations, he said, adding 29 polling stations are established near the Line of Control or International Border for border residents. "The purpose behind these special polling stations is to spread awareness among sections of society like women, specially-abled persons and first-time young voters to come forward and exercise their right to vote," he said. He said over 1.07 lakh saplings have been planted in the premises of all polling stations.

26 Indian fishermen died in Pakistan jails in last ten years

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As many as 26 Indian fishermen died in Pakistan's jails India during the last ten years, according to information received under the Right to Information Act (RTI). In a reply to an RTI query sought by Mumbai-based journalist-peace activist Jatin Desai, the High Commission of India in Islamabad said that 24 Indian fishermen died in Pakistan's custody between January 2014 and December 2023. Of the 24 deaths, two deaths were reported during 2024. Of the two fishermen who died during the current year, Vinod Laxman from Dahanu taluka of Palghar district, Maharashtra, passed away on March 17 and his mortal remains reached his village on 1 May. Suresh Nathu died on 5 September 5. Nathu's family members and friends are waiting for his mortal remains. "Pakistan must



repatriate his mortal remains without further delay urgently," Desai said. As of today, 210 Indian fishermen have been languishing in Pakistan's jails for crossing the water border 'inadvertently'. "Of them, around 180 Indian fishermen have completed their sentences and their nationality was also verified long ago," Desai said. The section (V) of the bilateral Agreement on Consular Access, 2008, states: "Both Governments agree to release and repatriate persons

Congress confused, leaders absent in Haryana: CM Saini

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini attacked Congress fiercely, saying- In the last 15-20 days, no big leader of Congress was ready to come to Haryana. Congress is in a state of confusion today. CM Saini visited Sohna Constituency in support of party candidate Tejpal Tanwar. The Independent candidate from the Sohna assembly, Subhash Bansal, was also present in support of the BJP candidate Tejpal Tanwar. Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Haryana co-in-charge Surender Nagar, and District President Kamal Yadav were also present on this occasion. Saini, while attacking the Congress party, said in the last few days, it has become clear that the condition of Congress is also going to be like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh; now Where it used to be strong but has lost its influence over time. Even the Congress leaders have started believing this.



"Now the news has come that Rahul Gandhi, who gave anti-reservation statements on foreign soil, is coming to Haryana on a 2-3 day political tour. In the last 10 years, the BJP government has developed Haryana in all directions, so Rahul Gandhi should come here and roam around and do his tourism activities," Saini said. The youth of Haryana will ask him why he is silent on the 'kharchi, parchi' system that happened during Hooda's rule. Dalits of Haryana will ask with what face he has come to Haryana after opposing reservation? Rahul Gandhi should answer all these questions," Saini said. Meanwhile, A total of 47 candidates are in the fray for four Assembly seats in the

upcoming Assembly elections. Prominent among those in the fray from Gurgaon constituencies are BJP Mukesh Sharma from Gurgaon seat, Congress Mohit Grover from Gurgaon and Independent Naveen Goyal. Likewise, former minister and BJP candidate Rao Narbir Singh from Badshahpur seat Congress, Vardhan Yadav and Independent Kumudni Jhangu. Similarly, BJP Bimla Chaudhary from the Pataudi (SC) constituency, Congress Parul Chaudhary, from the Sohna assembly constituency BJP's Tejpal Tawar from the Sohna seat, Congress Rohtas Khatana and others. Moreover, 7 candidates from the Pataudi Assembly, 13 from the Badshahpur Assembly, 17 from the Gurgaon Assembly and 10 from the Sohna Assembly are now in the poll battle. Voting for the Assembly elections will be held on October 5, and counting will be held on October 8; the result will be declared along with the counting.



India to launch first Ayush Jan Aushadhi Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India is set to get its first Ayush Jan Aushadhi Centre on October 9, aiming to integrate traditional healthcare practices like Ayurveda with modern medicine, Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State, Ministry of Ayush said on Monday. These Centres will be on the lines of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra which are dedicated to making quality generic medicines accessible to all sections of society. Jadhav stressed that the initiative (Ayush Jan Aushadhi Centre) seeks to enhance access to holistic treatments and promote awareness of traditional remedies, enriching the country's healthcare system. People are interested in experiencing authentic Ayush services, but many times it is observed that either they are unaware or don't have access to these services. But we are taking several steps to reachout to the general masses. It is now vital to India's healthcare system, including integration into AIIMS and defence hospitals, he emphasised. The Minister was speaking at the Ayush Medical Value Travel Summit 2024, themed 'Global Synergy in Ayush: Transforming Health and Wellness through Medical Value Travel', in Mumbai. He also exhorted the Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to establish a Ministry of Ayush and an Ayush University in the State. As per the statement issued here, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has issued new guidelines,

requiring health insurance companies to offer AYUSH treatments at par with other treatments. So far about 49 life insurance companies are providing about 69 packages. Jadhav further said, "Our focus on comprehensive health encompasses physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, making India a global leader in health tourism...With the G-20 presidency, we have positioned Ayush globally, integrating these practices into various healthcare systems and institutions nationwide." In his keynote presentation, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, Union Ayush Secretary delved into the Ayush industry's growing global presence. "The global reach of Ayush has significantly expanded, with exports witnessing substantial growth. The size of the sector has increased dramatically. According to an analysis, the size of the Ayush sector grew from USD 3 million in 2014 to USD18.1 million in 2020—an increase of sixfold within six years." Dr. Manoj Nesari, Advisor (Ayu), Union Ayush Ministry said that as the number of foreign travellers seeking Ayush treatments grows, it's vital for all stakeholders—tour operators, insurance providers, and hospitality leaders—to unite and leverage government initiatives to boost this essential sector. According to a report, India ranks 10th globally in the Medical Tourism Index, and its top wellness tourism destinations underscore the nation's potential to attract international patients seeking integrated and cost-effective healthcare solutions.

Muslim League welcomes PV Anvar

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Muslim League in Kerala is preparing the stage ready for welcoming P V Anvar, the independent MLA from the Left Democratic Front to its fold. The Muslim League leadership is in talks with Congress leaders in the State for declaring Anvar, who has been declared a persona non-grata in the LDF by the CPI(M). Since Anvar had ridiculed and humiliated Rahul Gandhi during the Lok Sabha polls by demanding a DNA test on the Leader of the Opposition, it may not be easy for the former to get into the Congress fold. What gives him relief is that the Muslim League is the "A" team of the Grand Old Party in the State and a phone call from League supremo Panakkadu Thangal in Malappuram to 10 Janpath in New Delhi would remove all hurdles, if any, in the path of Anvar. Anvar, who declared additional director general of police M R Ajith Kumar as a criminal and P Sasi, the political secretary to chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan as a forest brigand went one step by describing N P Mohanan, the Malappuram district secretary as a stooge of the RSS. The independent MLA who got elected from Nilambur with support from the CPI(M) has been behaving as a bull in a China shop by attacking all close confidantes of Vijayan. Though the CPI(M) leadership had suffered all humiliations meted out by Anvar as part of its appeasement politics, the time has come for the party to declare its stance viz-a-viz the independent MLA. Though the public meetings convened by the dissident MLA drew big crowd in his constituency, only time alone would make it clear what the future holds for Anvar, said Althaf Roshan, a young CPI(M) leader in Malappuram district.

If I can make it, anyone can: Mithun Chakrabarty

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

If I can make it then anyone I can make it." That is how Krishnan Iyer YamYa (MA) ... Nariyal Paani Wala (Invoke Agneepath) explained his 48-year journey to success, hours after the news of him being nominated for the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. Providing a few snatches from his hard days — "that was hardly considered hard by me" — Mumbai mega star Mithun Chakrabarty on Monday said, "when a journalist contacted me for an interview after I got my first National Award — for Mrinal Sen's Mrigaya — I remember telling him that I would give him one if he could treat me to good food ... that sums up my struggling days." A veteran of the famous Scottish Church College, Kolkata — where went the greats like Swami Vivekananda, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose — the Disco Dancer of the eighties got



emotional saying he was running short of words. "Neither I can laugh nor cry. It is beyond my imagination," he said dedicating his success "to my family and my fans across the world." The super star who too is often referred as Dada in Mumbai expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for acknowledging his success saying "he is a fantastic human being to be with ... I had occasions to meet him several time and I am fortunate to be congratulated by him." Earlier the Prime Minister wrote, "delighted that Shri Mithun Chakrabarty Ji has been conferred the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award, recognising his unparalleled contributions to Indian cinema." Earlier Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said announcing Dadasaheb Phalke award for the North Kolkata boy of the 1970s, "Mithun Da's remarkable cinematic journey inspires

generations! Honoured to announce that the Dadasaheb Phalke Selection Jury has decided to award legendary actor, Sh. Mithun Chakrabarty Ji for his iconic contribution to Indian Cinema." An alumnus of Pune's Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Chakrabarty has worked predominantly in Hindi and Bengali cinema and is perhaps among very few actors who have three National Awards in his kitty for his debut film Mrigayaa, followed by Tahader Katha and Swami Vivekananda. He is also known for his other famous parallel films like Mera Rakshak, Patita etc. However it is the main stream Mumbai blockbusters that got him the real fame like Disco Dancer with its chartbusters like Jimmy Jimmy and Yaad Aa Raha Hai, Guru, Pyar Jhukta Nahin, Agneepath, Suraksha etc that catapulted him to be the first mega star of Hindi films. When asked as to whether he expected praises from Bengal

political circles like Chief Minister Banerjee he answered in the negative saying he was not expecting such praises. "I am thankful to her that she sent me to Rajya Sabha but I came out of my own ... I should not say much on things that would invite controversies." He however acknowledged how late President Pranab Mukherjee had lobbied for him saying, "Yes I must acknowledge that he wrote several letters for me," adding apart from these I don't have any obligations from anyone. Even as Bengal cine fraternity like actors Prasenjit and Rituparna Sengupta saw him in a "great actor and inspiration for many people because he never stopped and went on." Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh said, "I must congratulate Mithun da the actor and ... also would request him to for once remember during his hours of success how late Pranab Mukherjee wrote several letters for him for the award."

Bengal doctors threaten to cease work again

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal junior doctors' forum protesting against the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital rape and murder case besides demanding overall secured and safe environment for them to work in Government hospitals once again said that they were contemplating resumption of cease work in the wake of repeated attacks on the on-duty doctors and threats issued by the ruling party leaders. "We have no other way but to return to our cease work as there is no other way to make this Government and the police administration to listen to our woes ... despite the horrific incident of rape and murder of our postgraduate colleague and despite the orders to this effect by the Supreme Court the Government hardly seems to have done anything to increase our security in the hospitals," Dr Kinjal Nanda one of the agitating doctors said after three successive attacks on the junior doctors in three different medical colleges in the past several days. Doctors were attacked and injured by the patient parties at Sagar Dutta Medical College a few days ago, then inside the National Medical

College — both in Kolkata — yesterday and today at Rampurhat Medical College ... our women colleagues are being manhandled ... boys and other medical staff beaten up ... we are not feeling safe," said Dr Maity another Junior Doctors' Forum leader. "We are thinking in terms of resuming our cease work," another doctors said adding how "leaders and MLAs are threatening us every day with gheraoing us in the hospitals ... one MLA has threatened to take 50,000 men to Behrampore Medical College ... then how can we work ... it seems that another Abhaya is waiting to happen," he said. A lady doctor reminded how in most of the cases "the women doctors and staff are being threatened with 'RG Kar like treatment'" adding "how can we work in an atmosphere of fear ... it seems that the entire establishment is conspiring against us ... we want to work but we don't want to die." The junior doctors' ultimatum came close on the heels of the Supreme Court — hearing suo motu the — on Monday rebuking the Bengal Government for the "tardy" progress in installation of CCTVs and construction of toilets and separate resting rooms at medical facilities."

Liquor worth ₹95.43 lakh seized in Gurugram after poll code imposed, 399 arrested

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Around 399 people were arrested and Rs 95.43 lakh worth over liquor seized from across in Gurugram district after the imposition of the model code of conduct for the upcoming assembly polls, police said on Monday. The model code is a set of guidelines, issued by the Election Commission, for political parties, candidates, government and the party in power during elections concerning speeches, announcements, election manifestos and general conduct. Assembly elections in Haryana will be held on October 5 in a single phase



with the counting of votes on October 8, the results will also announced on the same day Election Commission announced. With the announcement of the schedule, the Model Code of Conduct for governments, candidates and political parties has come into force. Giving details of seizure, police said in a statement

etc. Keeping this in mind and with the aim of ensuring the rules of the code of conduct, as per the instructions of the Police Commissioner, Gurugram, police formed various special police teams and directed them to take action against those smuggling illegal liquor, cash, weapons and transferring them illegally. "The Gurugram police chief has given special instructions to all SHOs, crime branch teams and various police teams to keep an eye on illegal trading. Team have also been formed in plain/civil clothes and deployed at various places, through which every illegal activity is being monitored, police said.

26351.805 litres of liquor worth over Rs 95.43 lakh has been seized with the period of 16 September to 29 September and around 359 case were registered after imposition of the poll code, police said. During elections, there is a possibility of increased activities like smuggling of illegal liquor, cash, weapons



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

Cauldron boiling

West Asia is once again on the precipice of a larger conflict, as tensions between Israel, Hezbollah and Iran reach a boiling point

The situation in the West Asia is becoming critical and it would not be surprising if the region is embroiled in a full-fledged war. The assassination of Hezbollah's long-standing leader, Hassan Nasrallah, marks a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Lebanese militant group. This development could pull not only Iran but also the United States into a broader and potentially devastating confrontation. Hezbollah, reeling from the assassination of its leader and the destruction of much of its command structure, finds itself at a critical juncture. With over a dozen of its top commanders eliminated and its communications infrastructure crippled, the group faces significant operational challenges. However, expecting Hezbollah to capitulate is unrealistic. The group, which has thousands of fighters and a sizable arsenal of long-range, precision-guided missiles capable of hitting major Israeli cities, has vowed revenge. With pressure mounting from within its ranks, there is a strong likelihood that Hezbollah

will attempt to launch a major offensive against Israel, potentially overwhelming Israeli air defences. If such an attack takes place and results in significant civilian casualties, Israel's response is expected to be swift and devastating, targeting Lebanon's infrastructure or even expanding the conflict to Iranian territory. Such a scenario could ignite a much wider conflict that drags the entire region into chaos.

For Iran, the loss of Nasrallah is as much of a blow as it is for Hezbollah. Iran, which has yet to respond to the assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, is now facing heightened pressure from hardliners to retaliate. Iran's influence extends across the region through a network of militias known as the 'Axis of Resistance,' which includes Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, and various groups in Syria and Iraq. While Tehran will likely use these proxies to increase pressure on Israel, its response is expected to be measured to avoid triggering a full-scale war. Israel's intentions are now clearer than ever. The assassination of Nasrallah signals that Israel has no interest in halting its military campaign, despite international calls for a 21-day ceasefire, including one from its closest ally, the United States. Israel believes it has Hezbollah on the defensive and aims to continue its offensive until the group's missile threat is neutralised. A broader war would have catastrophic consequences, not only for the parties directly involved but for the entire region. Lebanon, already on the brink of economic collapse, could be devastated and any escalation could disrupt global oil supplies, sending shockwaves through the international economy. The coming weeks will be crucial in determining whether this conflict spirals into a wider regional war or if diplomatic efforts can halt the violence before it escalates further. As of now, this volatile region stands on the edge of a conflict with no clear resolution in sight. This is high time for the UN to step in and the West to make efforts for rapprochement else this region is going to burn for sure.



region through a network of militias known as the 'Axis of Resistance,' which includes Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, and various groups in Syria and Iraq. While Tehran will likely use these proxies to increase pressure on Israel, its response is expected to be measured to avoid triggering a full-scale war. Israel's intentions are now clearer than ever. The assassination of Nasrallah signals that Israel has no interest in halting its military campaign, despite international calls for a 21-day ceasefire, including one from its closest ally, the United States. Israel believes it has Hezbollah on the defensive and aims to continue its offensive until the group's missile threat is neutralised. A broader war would have catastrophic consequences, not only for the parties directly involved but for the entire region. Lebanon, already on the brink of economic collapse, could be devastated and any escalation could disrupt global oil supplies, sending shockwaves through the international economy. The coming weeks will be crucial in determining whether this conflict spirals into a wider regional war or if diplomatic efforts can halt the violence before it escalates further. As of now, this volatile region stands on the edge of a conflict with no clear resolution in sight. This is high time for the UN to step in and the West to make efforts for rapprochement else this region is going to burn for sure.

PICTALK



An artist prepares an environment friendly puja pandal ahead of Durga Puja festival, in Kolkata

The deceptive facade of China's military



BHOPIINDER SINGH

Despite technological advancements, setbacks like the Zhou-class submarine sinking, reveal a widening gap between China's military claims and actuality

Deception is at the heart of Chinese strategy and operations, especially on matters, the military. Ancient Sinological philosophers like Sun Tzu (The Art of War) had propounded extensively on cheating (likening it to a 'magic weapon') as a vital underpinning of deceptive warfare. The Chinese PLA Navy Submarine Academy has formally distilled four examples of deception in war (under the manual, 'Essentials of Sun Tzu and the Art of War and Submarine Operations'). Firstly 'Show yourself to intimidate the enemy', then 'Show the false to confuse the enemy', thirdly 'Create momentum to harass the enemy' and lastly 'Deceive to obstruct the enemy'. Herein, untruth is a natural necessity as per their established treatise. India would be well versed in how the Chinese would talk about the 1962 Indo-China War but remain conspicuously silent on the reversal of fortunes about the 1967 Nathu La and Cho La border clashes. While an estimated 340 Chinese soldiers had died then (88 on the Indian side) — true to their downplaying style, they only accepted a figure of 32 fatalities. The Chinese are similarly circumspect or lying about the essential outcomes of the China-Vietnam War of 1979. This deliberate fudging of facts was to repeat itself in the 2020 India-China skirmishes on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). While India acknowledged the loss of its Bravehearts in the bloody encounters, the Chinese shied away from acknowledging any of their own — this when the US pegged the Chinese fatalities as 20-35, the Russians estimated Chinese loss of about 45, whereas the Australians insisted at least 41 Chinese killed. Almost a year later, the Chinese sheepishly admitted four fatalities killed in the Galwan clashes, as they gave away gallantry awards. True to their practised instincts, the Chinese always overstated their gains and downplayed their losses to deceive the onlookers (especially their citizenry) to retain 'manufactured' optics of infallibility and invincibility, even when the reality was a lot more



unheroic. This sovereign impulse of fake claims, downplaying failures, and overstating their capabilities has been elevated to a fine art, as is the won't of any authoritarian state reeling from regime insecurities.

It routinely manifests in their claims of making advancements in technologies, weaponry and platforms that are ostensibly cutting-edge and even ahead of peers like the United States or Russia. The reality is essentially predicated on reverse-engineering technologies that could be brazenly stolen or surreptitiously acquired — but the claim of 'homegrown' is gleefully posited. A lot of 'fifth generation' fighters, Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, Hypersonic technologies to Chinese nuclear submarines remain in public news but are essentially untested and unsubstantiated in live combat. While it has a considerable industrial base and budgetary allocation granted to its Defence Industry, like everything else in the Chinese realm, claims remain more impressive than reality. With this murky backdrop, came the recent news of the sinking of the latest Chinese nuclear submarine. The fact that the Zhou-class of attack submarine sank even before going into service, speaks volumes of the gap between purported tech-



AS IF ON THE REBOUND AND TO STITCH A COUNTER-NARRATIVE, CHINA IS BELIEVED TO HAVE FIRED AN INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE INTO THE PACIFIC OCEAN, IN A MOVE THAT SEEMS DESIGNED TO DISTRACT AND DEFLECT FROM THE EMBARRASSING NEWS OF ITS SUNK SUBMARINE

nological advancements opposed to factual efficacy. Incidentally, the US Deputy Secretary of State, Kurt Campbell, had confirmed that the Russians were helping China develop this submarine technology and that it too wasn't necessarily homegrown, as claimed. While this sinking of the submarine is believed to have happened in May earlier, it was never owned up by the Chinese and it took satellite images to unravel the sinking of the first-in-class nuclear-powered Chinese submarine. It is certainly a major setback for China's priority weapons programs that is key to its expansionist and hegemonic aspirations. As if on the rebound and to stitch a counternarrative, China is believed to have fired an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile into the Pacific Ocean, in a move that seems designed to distract and deflect from the embarrassing news of its sunk submarine and to reiterate its prowess and capability. Coming as the testing does after more than four decades over the Pacific Ocean, it is unmistakably a 'signal' move to suggest that the 'Dragon' still retains sharp claws and fangs. Incidentally, the missile is part of the PLA's Rocket Force that was subjected to a sweeping corruption crackdown, purge, and complete overhaul last

year — something that could be inflicted again on the PLA Navy leadership, which was in charge of the sunk submarine. Already the chorus of sub-standard Chinese weaponry has gained decibels from traditional clients like Pakistan or from emerging ones like Bangladesh, who complained about the quality of spares for its navy. Russia's decline on the global stage as a military supplier has not resulted in an automatic transfer of business to the Chinese manufacturers, as earlier thought and the growing perception of 'Made in China' has a lot to do with the reactions. With the US returning to the Pakistani arms market (Islamabad accounts for over 50 per cent of Chinese exports), and the overall pressures of economic slowdown haunting the Chinese economy — Beijing is in a tight spot to invest, innovate, and deliver weaponry that truly delivers what it claims. It is premature to write off China's 'Military-Industrial complex' just yet, but the chinks in its armour are getting routinely exposed. While still a 'value player' for the desperate, authoritarian or 'paradise' countries, its claim to cutting-edge technology is suspect. (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PERILS OF MUSI PROJECT

Madam — Congress government's extravagant plan to spend a staggering Rs 1.5 lakh crore on the Musi river beautification project. This expenditure raises serious questions about the government's priorities and its commitment to the welfare of the people of Telangana. As KTR has rightly pointed out, the government's focus on this project while neglecting the Palamuru-Rangareddy project, which is nearing completion, is a clear indication of their misplaced priorities. The Palamuru-Rangareddy project has the potential to transform the lives of countless farmers in the region, yet it seems to be overshadowed by the Musi project, which appears to be more about political gain than public welfare. It is also alarming to note that the estimated cost of the Musi project has tripled from Rs 50,000 crore to Rs 1.5 lakh crore, suggesting a significant financial scandal.

The government must provide a transparent explanation for this drastic increase in expenditure and ensure that the funds are used efficiently and for the benefit of the people. Furthermore, the government has failed to provide clear details about the expected benefits of the Musi project, such as the number of acres of farmland that will benefit, the amount of water that will be stored, and the anticipated industrial benefits. Without such information, it is difficult to justify the massive investment being made in this project.

Juloori B Saraswathi | Hyderabad

HEZBOLLAH LEADER ASSASSINATED

Madam — The unstoppable Israel has once again inflicted another severe wound on Iran when Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah was assassinated in airstrikes by the Israeli defence forces at Lebanese capital Beirut. His death gave jolts to his shell shocked sympathisers in Iran, like the death of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh. But at the same time a cause for celebration for the north-

India's dominance in Asia



The Australian think tank 'Lowy Institute' ranked India as the third strongest Asian power in the Asia Power Index. US and China occupied the first and second position

followed by India in the third place. Considering the economic growth, future potential and the diplomatic influence of India on an improvement, India successfully managed to rank better with passing years than the countries like Japan, Australia and Russia. The improvement from the side of India is particularly welcoming because India strives to make continuous improvement in its performance in all respects and also ensure holistic growth of Asia for a better future together.

The journey of India turning into the Asian giant is particularly strategic and India's efforts for industrialisation, infrastructural development, public policy and administration, good governance and holistic development are much appreciated in this regard.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

western Sunni population in Syria for his atrocities and war crimes during the Assad regime in the Civil War. The back-to-back war between Hezbollah and Israel has spoilt the hope of a ceasefire and wreaked havoc on civilians through constant shelling in various human settlements for more causality.

It proves the hypocrisy of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who pretends to gather international support for isolated Israel in the UN General Assembly but on the contrary continues to provoke Iran for a wide-scale regional war and long-running conflict results in vicious ramifications. Lacking international support for war crime and muscle approach, how long Israel will continue to push for war with the help of the US in Gaza, Lebanon and beyond, only time will tell

Janga B Sunuwar | Jalpaiguri

NEPOTISM IN POLITICS

Madam — It refers to 'Stalin to succeed Stalin' (September 29). The biggest threat to Indian democracy is the appointment of Udhayanidhi as Deputy

CM, which has proven the pervasiveness of dynastic politics and the prioritising of family interests over public welfare. It is easy for a son, daughter, or close relative of a leader to take over the political baton, while others have to spend a significant amount of time in the rough and tumble of politics. Political observers say that there is no harm if a political leader's son or daughter, or close relative, chooses to enter politics, but there is a thin line that separates dynasty politics and a worthy kin's choice to take a plunge. But when we look into the pros and cons of dynastic politics, it highlights the deficiency it could bring to the ideals of democracy, questioning its legitimacy. The trend of dynastic politics will lead to the perpetuation of an elite class that transcends generations and will hamper the smooth inflow of capable, meritorious candidates into politics.

KV Chandra mouli | Mysuru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

The challenges of parenting in the age of technology



ASHA IYER KUMAR

While the challenges are real, so too are the solutions — adaptation and patience remain the cornerstones of successful parenting in these digital times

Conversations these days are rife with the refrain of how challenging life has become and how surfing the turbulent seas is not as easy as it used to be previously. It amuses me that we endorse this view readily despite the conveniences the modern world has introduced to us.

The all-round improvement in quality of life has done nothing much in terms of bringing us the sense of gratification that material accumulation is perceived to bring. Instead, we have only become crazier and more complaining. Among the things that we whine about there is one that stands out — the difficulty of being a parent in these times.

It is not like how it used to be when we were kids, they assert and are at a loss to keep their children under control, be it about the use of gadgets or their demands for new-age comforts or following well-meaning advice. Children these days have a way of growing up that parents can't seem to get a grip over, and parents are at their wit's end. Has parenting become so tough now, tougher than what



it used to be for our parents or theirs?

Before we delve into why it seems more difficult now than ever before, it is important to recognise that parenting has always been tough. Our grandparents may not have had to deal with social media addiction or the anxiety of being on constant alert, but they had their own set of worries—scarcity, lack of information, and fewer opportunities. Yet, they managed, just as we try to manage today. What, then, has changed so significantly that parents now feel a near-constant sense of overwhelm? For one, the digital age has transformed not only how we live but also how we raise children. Social media, YouTube, video games—all these distractions

are not just forms of entertainment; they shape the way children think, act, and even perceive reality. Parents often feel powerless in the face of this digital onslaught, unsure how to manage screen time without seeming authoritarian or disconnected from their children's world.

This struggle is exacerbated by the speed at which technology evolves. By the time parents get a handle on one app or platform, their children have already moved on to the next one.

Then, there's the issue of peer pressure, not just on children but on parents too. The 'Instagram-perfect' life adds a layer of stress to parenting that previous generations didn't face. Parents today are not just competing with themselves to be the best versions of their upbringing—they are competing with a curated version of perfection they see online. The pressure to enrol children in extracurricular activities, make sure they're developing emotional intelligence, cultivate leadership skills, and create future 'success stories' can be crushing. Our grandparents' idea of raising children to be 'good'

has been replaced with a need to raise 'achievers,' and this shift in focus can leave parents feeling like they're running a race with no finish line. Despite these challenges, parenting isn't a lost cause. It is, and always will be, a journey of trial and error. The key is finding balance and knowing that perfection is neither attainable nor necessary. A good place to start is by building a stronger connection with your children. Parents also need to accept that they cannot fight all battles alone.

They must seek help. Many of the challenges we face today are new and unfamiliar, but that doesn't mean they are insurmountable. Just as previous generations found solutions to their problems, so too can we, but it will require adaptation, learning, and, most importantly, patience. After all, our children are not just products of their environment—they are reflections of the love, support, and wisdom we give them, no matter how fast the world around them changes.

(The author is a Dubai-based columnist, writing coach. Views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF ZERO

The symbol of zero holds profound meaning, it symbolises eternity



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Zero is the number people often feel, more so than one, isn't it true? Because more zeroes means more prosperity. However from a spiritual perspective, zero is the point from which all other numbers spring forth. Even visually the number zero is symbolic of a seed, womb or egg from which pure potential emerges. Since the zero also visually resembles a circle, it symbolises eternity, evolution, and infinity. Like an atom is to the physical world and a soul to the spiritual world, the zero is symbolic of both worlds.

Pythagoras viewed the sign of the zero as the container for all things and the birthing place of all other values. The discovery of zero changes the way we calculate, compute and communicate. All these tasks affect almost all fields of human activity today. Zero is counted as an even number along with positive and negative integers. It is important in the number-value system because it defines the value and place of a digit in a number as a thousand, hundred, ten or a million. In a way, it is a symbol that defines nothingness.

While zero is valuable in terms of its contributions to the myriad spheres of human life, it has been used to describe mystical concepts in religious and spiritual philosophies. In Hindi zero is called 'shunya' meaning a void, the supreme state of awareness where everything comes to nothingness. Spiritual seekers perceive this state as 'mukti' or nirvana in which the soul is restored to its original state free from all impressions, influences and impurities of the earthly life. Zero looks like an elliptical circle representing infinity the eternal cycle of cre-



ation. Everything returns to zero or nothingness before being created anew. Hence, most spiritual teachers emphasise attaining the zero state i.e. emptying the mind of all worldly thoughts and detaching from the awareness of the physical body to attain liberation and peace. The egg shaped symbol of the Soul or Supreme Almighty as a point of light surrounded by an oval aura also resembles a zero. In its original state, every soul is like a zero & it has no worldly identity or role but like a seed, it has infinite power and qualities merged within, which manifest when the soul enters the field of karma in this world.

The Supreme Almighty is the eternal seed who always exists in the zero state of awareness, detached from everything yet filled with infinite divine qualities and powers that support the whole creation. It is from this supreme state of nothingness that HE creates a perfect new world whenever the creation becomes degraded and old. Like zero, the soul essentially has an even or positive character. Just as the negative of 2 is - 2 which means lacking in 2, the lack of awareness of positive qualities manifests as negative or odd traits in the soul.

The number zero has very special functions in the calculation. Anything added or subtracted to zero remains unchanged. Any number multiplied by zero gives zero while any number divided by zero gives infinity. Interestingly, when we add zeros after a number, its value grows ten times. These specialities can be ascribed to the Almighty Supreme who remains unchanged in the cycle of eternity.

He does not enjoy the fruits of karma and nothing can be added, subtracted, multiplied or divided from his powers. When we multiply our powers by linking ourselves with him, we too become a zero like him filled with all divine virtues. So let us try our best to remain in the Zero state and achieve a higher state of consciousness to live a life that is minus all worries, tension & stress.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist; views are personal)

Revive shallow aquifers for urban water woes in India

Indian cities, plagued by over-extraction of deep groundwater must turn to the ancient underground reservoirs writes S VISHWANATH and ISHLEEN KAUR



In India, groundwater plays a critical role in meeting urban water demands. These aquifers, found at relatively shallow depths, have served as vital sources of water for centuries. At a time when transporting water across long distances was inconceivable, communities turned to shallow aquifers to meet their water needs.

Found at accessible depths, they offered a cost-effective and reliable water supply for the growing populations. The dug wells and step wells, still standing today, are reminders of a time when water scarcity was addressed by harnessing rainwater to recharge shallow aquifers. However, as modern cities grew, the humble dug wells, once a ubiquitous part of the landscape, began to vanish. These wells have now largely been replaced by deep bore wells tapping into groundwater reserves at alarming depths.

India is the world's largest user of groundwater, consuming more than the United States and China combined. Urban areas, in particular, have increasingly relied on groundwater to supplement their needs, leading to a significant depletion of shallow aquifers, and for too long, groundwater management has been side-lined in urban planning. However recent climate challenges—unpredictable rainfall, flash floods, and urban water crisis—have sparked renewed interest in groundwater management. Increasingly, rainwater harvesting and urban waterbody rejuvenation projects are turning toward these natural underground reservoirs as a solution.

Aquifers are now being studied for their potential to store excess rainwater and mitigate flooding. The launch of AMRUT 2.0 in 2021 marked a paradigm shift in water management, with groundwater finally being prioritized at the 'urban' scale. The mission recognised the need for cities to not only rely on groundwater but to actively manage



URBAN AREAS, IN PARTICULAR, HAVE INCREASINGLY RELIED ON GROUNDWATER TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR NEEDS, LEADING TO A SIGNIFICANT DEPLETION OF SHALLOW AQUIFERS, AND FOR TOO LONG, GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN SIDE-LINED IN URBAN PLANNING

and protect it. Under the mission, the Shallow Aquifer Management (SAM) pilot project was initiated in 2022 in 10 cities. This initiative aimed to raise awareness among city officials and communities about the importance of shallow aquifers and demonstrate effective recharge structures to tackle critical issues like groundwater depletion, contamination and urban flooding. It sought to create an environment where cities could integrate shallow aquifer management into broader water strategies. By emphasising both simple and scientifically sound recharge methods, it aimed to revive approaches that have been overlooked in the pursuit of modern infrastructure. The project has yielded valuable insights for cities on effective shallow aquifer management.

This initiative has led to the development of 12 unique approaches and designs for recharge structures, tailored to local aquifer conditions. These ranged from the revival of existing wells and step wells in Dhanbad, Hyderabad, and Bangalore to catchment treatment of areas showing high recharge potential in Pune. Cities such as Gwalior and Rajkot have undertaken detailed mapping of aquifer systems, and groundwater depths, and created an inventory of recharge structures at the city scale, facilitating informed groundwater management decisions. The project has also shown promising results in showcasing the sustainable use of these recharge structures to supplement water needs for local communities.

In Kanteerava Nagar, Bangalore, a dug well retrofitted under the

project is now supplying water to around 500 households with up to one lakh litre of water being pumped every day for non-potable use. Similarly, in Thane's Yeoor Village, tribal communities are benefiting from water sourced from desilted and retrofitted wells. In Dhanbad and Rajkot, where peri-urban areas heavily depend on shallow wells, the initiative has begun to expand beyond its pilot phase.

Rajkot Municipal Corporation has initiated work on constructing more than 100 additional recharge structures city-wide based on the SAM mapping, showing the renewed awareness and commitment to scale up shallow aquifer management. The project has been able to draw the attention of larger voices in the climate resilience and water security space.

Bangalore's Climate Action Plan has now incorporated groundwater management as a vital aspect of making Bangalore climate resilient.

Pune has even established a dedicated groundwater cell in the municipal corporation to ensure that shallow aquifer management remains a priority in the city's future water plans. In FY 2024-2025, the Pune Municipal Corporation has allocated a dedicated budget of INR 1 crore for aquifer recharge structures, showing significant action in this direction. Despite the progress made through the SAM project, much work remains.

Cities need to acknowledge that deep aquifers hold vast reserves of water accumulated over centuries and must be typically reserved for emergencies, such as droughts. In contrast, shallow aquifers hold

immense potential as the first line of defence for daily water needs, making them essential for urban areas. However, as cities grow, the natural processes that recharge these aquifers are being disrupted.

In the current situation, where urban development is increasingly characterised by impermeable surfaces, inhibiting rainwater infiltration and preventing natural recharge, cities need to make conscious interventions towards artificial recharge of shallow aquifers including rejuvenation of lakes, wetlands and river floodplains.

India's groundwater crisis is complex, but the solution may lie beneath our feet. By managing shallow aquifers, cities can foster a more resilient and sustainable future. The SAM project provides a blueprint for this approach, but its lessons must be scaled up and implemented nationwide.

As India faces the dual challenges of urban growth and water scarcity, it is time to embrace the wisdom of our ancestors and integrate it with the science of hydrogeology.

By restoring shallow aquifers and making them a part of an integrated urban water management ecosystem, cities can ensure that this invaluable resource remains a dependable source of water for generations to come. In the words of Kabir: The well is one, and the water is the same. Let us remember that the water we draw today must sustain us tomorrow.

(S. Vishwanath is co-founder Biome Environmental Solutions, Bengaluru and Ishleen Kaur is senior environment specialist, National Institute of Urban Affairs, Delhi; views expressed are their own)

Right-wing and challenge for Indian Muslims: The path to reform and reconciliation

Indian Muslims must embrace internal reforms that align with a modern, secular framework, helping to bridge societal divisions

The rise of right-wing politics in India seems to have solidified its presence, and the deepening of Hindu-Muslim fault lines is likely to persist. While liberal and secular parties may win several State elections, an increase in their numbers in Parliament or State legislatures is unlikely to mend the fragile communal ties. The division between communities has now reached a deeper societal level, presenting a grave challenge for Indian Muslims. To minimise this damage and repair the social fabric, it is essential to promote a counter-narrative grounded in secularism. Indian Muslims must focus on internal reforms that promote secularisation within their own societal framework. While some right-



TARIQ ASHRAF

wing claims about Muslim life may be exaggerated or entirely untrue, certain aspects warrant closer introspection by the community itself. Although the issues have intensified since 2014, their roots can be traced back to much earlier times. As Muslims, it is critical to rework the internal narrative and processes within the community to align with secular

values. The painful legacy of India's partition, drawn along communal lines, has left a heavy burden on the Muslim community. In response, Indian Muslims need to go above and beyond to heal the sentiments and emotions of the majority community. Despite constitutional protections and safeguards, the community needs to focus on changing perceptions at both societal and communal levels. One step toward this change is to reform Muslim personal laws and harmonize them with a modern, progressive social order. Instead of framing personal law reforms as a Hindu-Muslim conflict, Muslims should see these reforms as standalone processes that benefit the community. A close examination of

some outdated practices will reveal that reforms have already taken place in many Muslim-majority countries. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board missed a crucial opportunity to declare triple talaq un-Islamic before the government passed legislation against it. Similarly, the Shah Bano case harmed the Muslim community's interests and fueled the resurgence of right-wing mobilisation. The Muslim Personal Law Board has exacerbated the community's challenges by opposing every proposed reform instead of acting as a forward-thinking, responsible institution. Another significant issue facing Indian Muslims is the lack of leadership from within the intelligentsia. With few exceptions, Muslim leadership has



been monopolised by the clergy, leaving the community without enlightened, visionary, and progressive guidance. The void left by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has remained largely unfilled. Even leaders like Asaduddin Owaisi, despite their education and goodwill, have failed to adopt a liberal and secular approach in addressing legitimate community concerns. An aggrieved community must commu-

nicate in a conciliatory manner, rather than adopting a confrontational stance. The Muslim leadership's approach to the Hijab controversy clearly illustrates this failure. While Muslim women are entitled to wear the Hijab as a matter of choice and religious freedom, elevating the issue to the extent of students quitting their studies was unwise. It is essential for religion to be separated from public life and confined to the private domain. Although this holds true for all communities, Indian Muslims must make this move more emphatically due to historical reasons. The community needs to create a secular platform to address its concerns. The severe political and socio-economic challenges facing Muslims today

cannot be ignored. One positive step in this direction has been the recent initiative by a group of retired civil servants from Delhi who attempted to engage with leaders from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). However, the initiative failed to gain traction as it was undertaken individually without an organizational framework. To be successful, such efforts must be scaled up to a national-level dialogue with a clear agenda involving eminent citizens from various levels, including state and central governments. It is imperative to address the widespread perception that the Muslim community is resistant to reform, reconciliation, and compromise. Before the Hindu-Muslim fault lines in India reach a danger-

ous level, the country urgently needs a period of cooling off. Many right-wing grievances against Muslims lack substance and truth. In a society governed by constitutional principles and the rule of law, a community cannot be punished for the historical wrongs committed by its ancestors. To address the right-wing narrative effectively, the Muslim community must launch a secular, modern, and progressive narrative based on evidence, rather than countering with equally polarizing rhetoric. It is the only viable option.

(The writer has been associated with the Centre for Policy Research, IIM Lucknow, University of Delhi, and Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi; Views are personal)

HEZBOLLAH'S DEPUTY LEADER VOWS TO FIGHT ON

AP ■ BEIRUT

Hezbollah's deputy leader vowed to continue fighting Israel and said the militant group was prepared for a long war after much of its top command was wiped out, including its leader, Hassan Nasrallah. In his first speech since Nasrallah was killed, Naim Kassem said in a televised statement Monday that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, Hezbollah fighters are ready to fight and defend Lebanon, where the group is based. As deputy secretary-general, Naim Kassem now is the acting leader of Hezbollah until the group's leadership elects a replacement for Nasrallah. Israeli strikes have killed Nasrallah and six of his top commanders in the last 10

days, and have hit what the military says are thousands of militant targets across large parts of Lebanon. Over 1,000 people have been killed in Lebanon, nearly a quarter of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry, and the government says the fighting may have displaced up to a million people. Hezbollah has significantly increased its rocket attacks in the past week to several hundred daily, but most have been intercepted or fallen in open areas. Several people have been wounded in Israel. There have been no fatalities since two soldiers were killed near the border on September 19. Kassem said that despite the killing of Hezbollah's top military commanders over the past months, Hezbollah now is relying on new commanders.

"Israel was not able to affect our (military) capabilities," Kassem said. "There are deputy commanders and there are replacements in case a commander is wounded in any post." Before he spoke, an airstrike levelled an apartment building and killed three Palestinian militants in central Beirut early Monday, as Israel appeared to send a clear message that no part of Lebanon is out of bounds. As recently as two weeks ago, such a strike, outside of the main areas where Hezbollah operates and next to a busy transportation hub, would have been seen as an escalation and likely followed by a long-range Hezbollah strike into Israel. But the unspoken rules of the long-running conflict, and Hezbollah's ability to respond, are no longer clear.

Israel has not claimed Monday's strike but is widely assumed to have carried it out. It's possible that Hezbollah is holding back to avoid an even bigger escalation, including a threatened Israeli ground invasion. But the militant group might also be in disarray after Israeli intelligence apparently penetrated its highest levels. The strike early Monday killed three members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a small, leftist faction that has not been meaningfully involved in months of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah. In the past week, Israel has frequently targeted Beirut's southern suburbs, where Hezbollah has a strong presence — including the massive strike on Friday that killed Nasrallah — but had not hit locations close

er to the city centre. Hezbollah began firing rockets, drones and missiles into northern Israel after Hamas' October 7 attack from Gaza into Israel sparked the war there. Hezbollah and Hamas are allies and both supported by Iran, and Hezbollah said it would continue the attacks in solidarity with the Palestinians until there was a cease-fire in Gaza. Israel has responded to the rockets with airstrikes in Lebanon, where Hezbollah is based, and the fighting has steadily escalated over the past year, displacing tens of thousands of people on both sides of the border. Israel has vowed to keep fighting until the attacks stop and its citizens can return to their homes. The United States and its allies have called for a cease-fire, hoping to avoid further escalation that could draw in Iran

and set off a wider war. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has shown little interest, as his country racks up military achievements against a long-time foe. Some Israelis broke into spontaneous celebrations after Nasrallah's death was announced. Videos circulated of crowds at bars singing a song in Hebrew mocking him. A news anchor on a pro-Netanyahu station sang and danced as the studio audience joined in with him while a commentator on Israel's largest TV station offered co-panelists celebratory shots. Hezbollah, which boasts tens of thousands of battle-hardened fighters and long-range missiles capable of hitting anywhere inside Israel, has long been seen as the most powerful militant group in the region

and a key partner to Iran in both threatening and deterring Israel. Hezbollah fought Israel to a monthlong stalemate in their 2006 war. But Hezbollah has never faced an onslaught quite like this one, which began with a sophisticated attack on its pagers and walkie-talkies in mid-September that killed dozens of people and wounded around 3,000 — including many fighters but also many civilians. White House national security spokesman John Kirby said Israel's airstrikes in Lebanon had "wiped out" Hezbollah's command structure but warned that the group will work quickly to rebuild it. "We're watching to see what they do to try to fill this leadership vacuum. It's going to be tough," he told CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday.

Netanyahu adds rival to Cabinet

Jerusalem (AP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appointed a former rival, Gideon Saar, as a member of his Cabinet on Sunday, expanding his coalition and strengthening his hold on office. Under their agreement, Netanyahu said Saar would serve as a minister without portfolio and serve in the Security Cabinet, the body that oversees the management of the ongoing war against Israel's enemies across the Middle East. Saar (57) had hoped to replace Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, another rival of Netanyahu's. But a deal to become defence minister fell through several weeks ago after fighting intensified with Hezbollah along Israel's northern border, leaving the popular Gallant in office for the time being. Saar has had a strained relationship with the prime minister. He was once a rising star in Netanyahu's Likud party but angrily left it four years ago after accusing the prime minister of turning it into a "cult of personality" as he battled corruption charges. Since then, however, Saar has struggled as leader of a small conservative party, enjoying little support with the broader public. While he and Netanyahu have little love for one another, they share a hard-line ideology toward Israel's Arab adversaries. In recent months, Saar has said Israel must fight until Hamas is destroyed. He also has called for tougher action against Hezbollah's sponsor, Iran. And like Netanyahu, he strongly opposes the establishment of a Palestinian state. In a joint statement, they said they had put their differences aside for the good of the nation. Netanyahu's decision appears to have been driven in part by domestic politics. He faces a number of key political battles in the coming weeks — including the contentious issue of drafting ultra-Orthodox men into the army, passing a budget and taking the stand in his long-running corruption trial.



A billboard with a huge portrait of slain Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah is installed on a building as minarets of a mosque are seen, in downtown Tehran, Iran, Monday. The billboard reads in Farsi on top left: "The beginning of Nasrallah." AP/PTI

Israeli airstrike hits Beirut for first time

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The first apparent Israeli airstrike on central Beirut in nearly a year of conflict levelled an apartment building early Monday. It came after Israel hit targets across Lebanon and killed dozens of people, as Hezbollah sustained heavy blows to its command structure, including the killing of its leader, Hassan Nasrallah. The airstrike hit a multistorey residential building, according to an Associated Press journalist at the scene. Videos showed ambulances and a crowd gathered near the building in a mainly Sunni district with a busy thoroughfare lined with shops. The airstrike killed at least one person and wounded 16, an official with Lebanese Civil Defence said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak to the media. He said the person killed was a member of the al-Jamaa al-Islamiya, or the Islamic Group, a Sunni political and militant group that is allied with Hezbollah.

A Palestinian leftist faction in Lebanon said three of its members were killed in the airstrike. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine said in a statement early Monday that its military and security commanders in Lebanon, and a third member were killed in the attack. Neither militant group has played a significant role in the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Shiite militant group Hezbollah. Also early Monday, another strike killed a commander with the militant group Hamas, which has a presence in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps. Hamas said Fatah Sharif and his family were killed in an airstrike on the Al-Buss refugee camp in the southern port city of Tyre. In the past week, Israel has frequently targeted Beirut's southern suburbs, where Hezbollah has a strong presence — including a major strike on Friday that killed Nasrallah — but had not hit locations near the city centre. Earlier, Hezbollah confirmed that Nabil Kaouk, the deputy

head of its Central Council, was killed Saturday, making him the seventh senior Hezbollah leader killed in Israeli strikes in a little over a week. They include the group's founding members who had evaded death or detention for decades. Hezbollah also confirmed that Ali Karaki, another senior commander, died in the strike that killed Nasrallah. Israel says at least 20 other Hezbollah militants were killed, including one in charge of Nasrallah's security detail. The Lebanese Health Ministry said at least 105 people were killed around the country in airstrikes Sunday. Two strikes near the southern city of Sidon, about 45 kilometres south of Beirut, killed at least 32 people, the ministry said. Separately, Israeli strikes in the northern province of Baalbek Hermel killed 21 people and wounded at least 47. Lebanese media reported dozens of strikes in the central, eastern and western Bekaa and in the south, besides strikes on Beirut. Israel says it targets militants, but the strikes have hit buildings where

civilians were living and the death toll was expected to rise. In a video of a strike in Sidon, verified by the AP, a building swayed before collapsing as neighbors filmed. One TV station called on viewers to pray for a family caught under the rubble, posting their pictures, as rescuers failed to reach them. The Lebanese Health Ministry reported at least 14 medics were killed over two days in the south. President Joe Biden said Sunday that he would speak soon with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and believes that an all-out war in the Middle East must be avoided. "It has to be," Biden told reporters at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware as he boarded Air Force One for Washington. Meanwhile, wreckage from Friday's strike that killed Nasrallah was still smoldering. Smoke rose over the rubble as people flocked to the site, some to check on what was left of their homes and others to pay respects, pray or simply to see the destruction.

Austria's Freedom Party secures first far-right national election win since World War II

AP ■ VIENNA

The Freedom Party secured the first far-right national parliamentary election victory in post-World War II Austria on Sunday, finishing ahead of the governing conservatives after tapping into anxieties about immigration, inflation, Ukraine and other issues. But its chances of governing were unclear. Preliminary official results showed the Freedom Party finishing first with 29.2 per cent of the vote and Chancellor Karl Nehammer's Austrian People's Party was second with 26.5 per cent, according to a near-complete count, national public broadcaster ORF reported. The centre-left Social Democrats were in third place with 21 per cent. The outgoing government — a coalition of Nehammer's party and the environmentalist Greens — lost its majority in the lower house of parliament. Herbert Kickl, a former interior minister and longtime campaign strategist who has led the Freedom Party since 2021,

wants to be chancellor. But to become Austria's new leader, he would need a coalition partner to command a parliamentary majority. Rivals have said they won't work with Kickl in government. The far right has benefited from frustration over high inflation, the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also built on worries about migration. In its election programme, titled "Fortress Austria", the Freedom Party calls for "remigration of uninvited foreigners", for achieving a more "homogeneous" nation by tightly controlling borders and suspending the right to asylum via an emergency law. The Freedom Party also calls for an end to sanctions against Russia, is highly critical of Western military aid to Ukraine and wants to bow out of the European Sky Shield Initiative, a missile defence project launched by Germany. Kickl has criticised "elites" in Brussels and called for some powers to be brought back from the European Union to Austria.

"We don't need to change our position, because we have always said that we're ready to lead a government, we're ready to push forward this change in Austria side by side with the people," Kickl said in an appearance alongside other party leaders on ORF. "The other parties should ask themselves where they stand on democracy," he added, arguing that they should "sleep on the result." Nehammer said it was "bitter" that his party missed out on first place but noted he brought it back from lower poll ratings. He has often said he won't form a coalition with Kickl and said that "what I said before the election, I also say after the election." More than 6.3 million people were eligible to vote for the new parliament in Austria, an EU member that has a policy of military neutrality. Kickl has achieved a turnaround since Austria's last parliamentary election in 2019. In June, the Freedom Party narrowly won a nationwide vote for the first time in the European Parliament election, which also brought gains for other

European far-right parties. Dutch far-right leader Geert Wilders, whose party dominates the Netherlands' new government, congratulated the Freedom Party on social network X. So did Alice Weidel, a co-leader of the Alternative for Germany party. The Freedom Party is a long-established force but Sunday's result was its best yet in a national parliamentary election, beating the 26.9 per cent it scored in 1999. In 2019, its support slumped to 16.2 per cent after a scandal brought down a government in which it was the junior partner. Then vice chancellor and Freedom Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache resigned following the publication of a secretly recorded video in which he appeared to offer favours to a purported Russian investor. The leader of the Social Democrats, a party that led many of Austria's post-World War II governments, positioned himself as the polar opposite to Kickl. Andreas Babler ruled out governing with the far right and labelled Kickl "a threat to democracy".

Supplies rushed to isolated areas as Helene death toll rises to 100

AP ■ PERRY

North Carolina officials pledged to get more water and other supplies to flood-stricken areas by Monday after Hurricane Helene left a trail of destruction across the US Southeast and the death toll from the storm rose to nearly 100. At least 91 people across several states were killed. A North Carolina county that includes the mountain city of Asheville reported 30 people killed. Gov. Roy Cooper predicted the toll would rise as rescuers and other emergency workers reached areas isolated by collapsed roads, failing infrastructure and widespread flooding. Supplies were being airlifted to the region around the isolated city of Asheville. Buncombe County Manager Avril Pinder pledged that she would have food and water to the city by Monday. "We hear you. We need food and we need water," Pinder said on a Sunday call with reporters. "My staff has been making every request possible to the state for support and we've been working with every single organization that has reached out. What I promise you is that we are very close." Officials warned that rebuilding from the widespread loss of homes and property would be lengthy and difficult. The storm upended life throughout the Southeast. Deaths also were reported in Florida,

Georgia, South Carolina and Virginia. Cooper implored residents in western North Carolina to avoid travel, both for their own safety and to keep roads clear for emergency vehicles. More than 50 search teams spread throughout the region in search of stranded people. One rescue effort involved saving 41 people north of Asheville. Another mission focused on saving a single infant. The teams found people through both 911 calls and social media messages, North Carolina National Guard Adjutant General Todd Hunt said. President Joe Biden described the impact of the storm as "stunning" and said he would visit the area this week as long as it does not disrupt rescues or recovery work. In a brief exchange with reporters, he said the administration is giving states "everything we have" to help with their response to the storm. Hurricane Helene roared ashore late Thursday in Florida's Big Bend region as a Category 4 hurricane with 140 mph (225 kph) winds. A weakened Helene quickly moved through Georgia, then soaked the Carolinas and Tennessee with torrential rains that flooded creeks and rivers and strained dams. There have been hundreds of water rescues, including in rural Unicoi County in East Tennessee, where dozens of patients

and staff were plucked by helicopter from a hospital rooftop on Friday. More than 2 million homeowners and other utility customers were still without power Sunday night. South Carolina had the most outages and Gov. Henry McMaster asked for patience as crews dealt with widespread snapped power poles. "We want people to remain calm. Help is on the way, it is just going to take time," McMaster told reporters outside the airport in Aiken County. Begging for help in North Carolina as that help is slow to arrive. The storm unleashed the worst flooding in a century in North Carolina. One community, Spruce Pine, was doused with over 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain from Tuesday through Saturday. Jessica Drye Turner in Texas had begged for someone to rescue her family members stranded on their rooftop in Asheville amid rising floodwaters. "They are watching 18-wheelers and cars floating by," Turner wrote in an urgent Facebook post on Friday. But in a follow-up message on Saturday, Turner said help had not arrived in time to save her parents, both in their 70s, and her 6-year-old nephew. The roof collapsed and the three drowned. "I cannot convey in words the sorrow, heartbreak and devastation my sisters and I are going through," she wrote.

S Korean court sentences to prison 3 cops over 2022 Halloween crush

Seoul (AP): A South Korean court gave three police officers prison sentences on Monday over their botched handling of a 2022 Halloween crush in a Seoul nightlife district that killed nearly 160 people. It was the first conviction of officials over the failure by authorities to prevent or adequately respond to the overcrowding that occurred in the popular Itaewon district. No top-level officials have been charged or held accountable, prompting criticism from bereaved families and opposition politicians. The crush, one of the biggest peacetime disasters in South Korea, caused a nationwide outpouring of grief. The victims, who were mostly in their 20s and 30s, had gathered in Itaewon for Halloween celebrations.

The Seoul Western District Court sentenced Lee Im-jae, the former chief of Seoul's Yongsan police station, whose jurisdiction includes Itaewon, to three years in prison. It sentenced another Yongsan police officer to two years in prison and gave a third officer a suspended two-year term. The three officers were convicted of professional negligence resulting in death. The court ruled that the crush wasn't a natural disaster and could have been prevented or the toll reduced if the three officers had prepared properly for the crowd, alerted others of the danger quickly and supervised other police officers appropriately. The police officers and prosecutors can both appeal the ruling. The court also ruled that Park Hee-young, head of

the Yongsan ward office, and three other ward officials were not guilty. It said a ward office was unlikely to have a legal right to control or break up a crowd of people. Bereaved family members criticized the acquittal of Park and the other ward officials. "Does this make sense? We can't really accept this," Lee Jeong-min, a representative of the families, told reporters. In early 2023, a police special investigation concluded that police and municipal officials had failed to formulate effective crowd control measures despite anticipating a huge number of people in Itaewon. Investigators said police also ignored hotline calls by pedestrians who warned of swelling crowds before the surge turned deadly.

Britain's last coal-fired electricity plant closing

London (AP): Britain's last coal-fired power plant is closing on Monday, ending 142 years of coal-generated electricity in the nation that sparked the Industrial Revolution. The Ratcliffe-on-Soar station in central England is finishing its final shift at midnight after more than half a century of turning coal into power. The UK government hailed the closure as a milestone in efforts to generate all of Britain's energy from renewable sources by 2030. Plant manager Peter O'Grady said it was "an emotional day." "When I started my career 36 years ago, none of us imagined a future without coal generation in our lifetimes," he said. The shutdown makes Britain the first country from the Group of Seven major economies to phase out coal — though some other European nations, including Sweden and Belgium, got there sooner

Owner Uniper says many of the 170 remaining employees will stay on during a two-year decommissioning process. Energy Minister Michael Shanks said the plant's closure "marks the end of an era and coal workers can be rightly proud of their work powering our country for over 140 years. We owe generations a debt of gratitude as a country." "The era of coal might be ending, but a new age of good energy jobs for our country is just beginning," he said. The world's first coal-fired electricity plant, Thomas Edison's Edison Electric Light Station, opened in London in 1882. Ratcliffe-on-Soar, which opened in 1967, is a landmark whose eight concrete cooling towers and 199-metre (650-foot) chimney are seen by millions of people a year as they drive past on the M1 highway or speed by on trains. In 1990 coal provided about 80 per cent of Britain's electricity.

By 2012 it had fallen to 39 per cent, and by 2023 it stood at just 1 per cent, according to figures from the National Grid. More than half of Britain's electricity now comes from renewable sources such as wind and solar power, and the rest from natural gas and nuclear energy. "Ten years ago, coal was the leading source of this country's power — generating a third of our electricity," said Dhara Vyas, deputy chief executive of trade body Energy UK. "So, to get to this point just a decade later, with coal's contribution replaced by clean and low carbon sources, is an incredible achievement," Vyas said. "As we aim for further ambitious targets in the energy transition, it's worth remembering that few back then thought such a change at such a pace was possible." Coal has fuelled civil strife as well as powering the country. Tens of thousands of miners

walked out in 1984 over plans by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government to close more than 20 coal pits. The strike lasted a year, divided communities and saw widespread violence as police clashed with pickets. The miners' eventual defeat helped break the power of Britain's trade unions and hastened the end of the mining industry and the communities that relied on it. Coal remains a combustible issue. Plans to open Britain's first new coal mine in 30 years in northwest England divided residents, with some welcoming the promise of well-paid jobs and others opposing the pollution and carbon emissions it would bring. On September 13 the High Court struck down planning permission for the mine that had been granted by the previous Conservative government in 2022. Another chapter in Britain's

carbon-burning industrial heritage ends Monday with the closure of the last blast furnace at one of the world's biggest steelworks, in Port Talbot, Wales. Almost 2,000 jobs are being lost with the shutdown at the plant, owned by India's Tata Steel. Tata plans to replace the blast furnace, which runs on the coal derivative coke, with a cleaner electric furnace that will emit less carbon and require fewer workers. At its 1960s peak, more than 18,000 people were employed at the Port Talbot steelworks, before cheaper offerings from China and other countries hit production. Roy Rickhuss, general secretary of the Community union, said the closure "marks the end of an era, but this is not the end for Port Talbot." "We will never stop fighting for our steel industry and our communities in South Wales," he said.

India's consumer durables market to become global powerhouse: CII

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's consumer durables market is expected to touch a size of Rs 5 lakh crore by FY30 and will become the fourth largest in the world by 2027, industry body CII said on Monday.

While the country's products are inching towards global reliability, it is imperative to build a robust quality ecosystem and adopt standardisation in the sector and also export Indian standards globally, said B Thiagarajan, Chairman, CII National Committee on Consumer Electronics and Durables.

Speaking at the CII Consumer Electronics & Durables Summit 2024, Thiagarajan, who is also the Chairman and Managing Director, Blue Star Ltd, further said the next decade is expected to create multiple opportunities across the value chain in the sector.

"From finished goods as well as development of an indigenous component ecosystem, with the right focus on domestic scale, India's prospects of becoming a global manufacturing powerhouse holds great promise," he asserted.



Thiagarajan said, "India is already the fastest growing major market for consumer durables in the world and is expected to become the fourth largest by 2027 with a projected market size to reach Rs 5 lakh crore by fiscal year 2030."

He acknowledged the government's support to the sector through various initiatives, including the PLI scheme to boost competitiveness and make India a self-reliant and technologically advanced global player.

"The momentum we are witnessing is a clear sign that India is emerging as a key player of the global manufacturing stage and we

standards also globally as envisioned by the Prime Minister and the government of India," he added.

By adopting and promoting Indian standards on a global scale, Thiagarajan said, "We can enhance our reputation in the international markets and ensure that our products meet the expectations of the consumers worldwide."

However, he said, "While we have made significant strides, there is still more work to be done to drive growth in sector R&D and innovation is of paramount importance."

He said advancement in technology, particularly, artificial intelligence, has revolutionised the sector, presenting it with new market opportunities and innovative applications.

"To harness the potential of these technologies, it is crucial for the industry to proactively invest in R&D aimed at integrating artificial intelligence into consumer electronics and durables to bring innovation to the sector," Thiagarajan asserted.

are well on track to meet the goal of manufacturing to contribute 25 per cent of the GDP to the country. With over USD500 billion in FDI and the creation of over 8.5 lakh jobs, the progress is undeniable. The air conditioning sector, for instance, is expected to become the largest in the world by 2040," Thiagarajan said.

On the quality front, he said Indian products are inching towards global reliability. "As strengthening the quality ecosystem fosters consumer trust in the products offered, it is imperative to build a robust quality ecosystem and adopt standardisation in the sector and export Indian

Government extends I-T audit report filing date



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The income tax department has extended the date for filing audit report for 2023-24 by 7 days till October 7.

In a circular, the I-T department said considering the difficulties faced by taxpayers in electronic filing of various audit reports under the Income Tax Act, the deadline is being extended from September 30 to October 7.

Moore Singhi Executive Director Rajat Mohan said technological issues in electronic filing of tax audit reports have pushed the government to extend timelines by 7 more days.

"Load of filings is quite high on the portal in the last few days, throwing the entire ecosystem in a frenzy. Government should either upgrade the system to handle such rush or stagger the timelines for tax filings," Mohan said.

BharatPe, Ashneer Grover settle dispute, end months of legal battle

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fintech firm BharatPe has reached a settlement with its former co-founder Ashneer Grover, ending months of acrimonious legal and public dispute, the two sides said on Monday.

As part of the settlement agreement, Grover will not be associated with BharatPe in any capacity nor be a part of the shareholding of the company.

Grover will transfer a part of his shareholding to the BharatPe board and the rest will be managed by a family trust, keeping him off the company's capital table. Also, the two sides will not pursue legal cases, BharatPe and Grover said in separate statements. The settlement comes days after the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Delhi Police arrested Deepak Gupta on charges of misappropriation of fintech Unicorn's funds. Gupta is the husband of Madhuri Jain Grover's sister.

"Certain number of shares held by him will be transferred to the Resilient Growth Trust for the benefit of the company and his remaining shares will be managed by his family trust.

"Both parties have decided not to pursue the cases filed," BharatPe said in a statement. It all started in January 2022 when Grover had to go on



leave following allegations of using abusive language against Kotak Mahindra Bank staff and fraudulent practices, which he denied.

BharatPe had roped in SAM, Alvarez and Marsal (A&M) and PwC for governance review in February 2022 after sending Grover on leave.

In a report by A&M, it was alleged that Madhuri Jain Grover and her family members, brother Shwetank Jain and brother-in-law Deepak Jagdishram Gupta were involved in financial irregularities at the company.

BharatPe sacked its head of controls and Grover's wife Madhuri Jain Grover on February 23, 2022, for alleged financial irregularities ranging from producing fake invoices to billing the company for personal beauty treatment and trips abroad.

These followed allegations of illegitimate payments to bogus human resource consultants linked to Madhuri Jain's brother Shwetank Jain. Also, there were allegations of

inflated transactions, undue payments through pass-through vendors, sham transactions in input-tax credit, illegal payments to travel agencies, forged invoices etc. Grover quit as managing director of the firm on March 1, 2022, after an emergency arbitrator in the Singapore International Arbitration Centre held that there was no ground to stop governance review at the fintech firm. That followed months of bickering by both sides.

Grover in a post on X said, "I have reached a decisive settlement with BharatPe. I repose my faith in the management and board, who are doing great work in taking BharatPe forward in the right direction. I continue to remain aligned with the company's growth and success. I will no longer be associated with BharatPe in any capacity, nor be part of the capital table."

Grover, who had previously accused the BharatPe board of mismanagement, ended the post with "Peace!"

Coal will remain part of India's energy mix for decades: Experts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As the UK officially shut down its last remaining coal power plant on Monday, policy experts said coal will continue to be a part of India's energy mix for the next few decades, given that it is still a developing country with significant energy needs.

The UK on Monday closed its last coal power plant, becoming the first G7 nation to do so amid calls for a global coal-free energy system by 2040.

The world's first coal power plant opened in London in 1882, and until 2012, coal accounted for 39 per cent of the UK's electricity generation. Global energy think tank Ember said the closure of the UK's last coal plant means that more than a third of OECD countries are now coal-free, with three-quarters expected to eliminate coal power by 2030, in line with global climate goals aimed at limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The International Energy Agency's (IEA) "Net Zero by 2050" report recommends that developed countries phase out unabated coal by 2030, while developing countries should aim to do so by 2040 to remain on track for global net-zero emissions by 2050.

The term "unabated" in this context refers to electricity production that does not use technologies designed to capture and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These developments occur as developed countries push their counterparts in the developing world to accelerate the phase-down of unabated coal power.

India, the world's second-largest consumer of coal for



electricity generation after China, saw the share of coal-fired power generation rise to 75 per cent in 2023-24 from 71 per cent in 2019-20.

According to the IEA, while coal consumption fell in Europe and the US in 2023, it rose by 8 per cent in India and 5 per cent in China.

That said, India's coal usage for power generation began several decades later than that of developed nations. While the UK's first coal power plant opened in 1882, India established its first major thermal power plant, the Hussain Sagar Thermal Power Station in Hyderabad, in 1920. Policy experts say India is focusing on a long-term energy transition, where coal will continue to be part of the energy mix for the next few decades.

Sunil Dahiya, an independent analyst, said that while coal will not disappear in the near future, India must reduce harmful emissions from the sector by deploying advanced air pollution control technologies and improving efficiency to curb carbon emissions.

According to climate activist Harjeet Singh, India has made remarkable progress in renewable energy, but the intermittent nature of these sources and the lack of scalable battery storage mean that coal still underpins its power supply and industries like steel and cement.

"Yet, the cost of coal goes far beyond emissions -- it destroys ecosystems, displaces communities, and deepens environmental injustice. India must urgently shift away from coal, and the international community must provide the financial and technological support needed for a just transition -- for both people and the planet," he said.

Montek Singh Ahluwalia, former deputy chairman of the erstwhile Planning Commission, said in a webinar organized by the think tank Centre for Social and Economic Progress last week that India can't cut down coal immediately and it is hypocritical in the West to focus solely on coal while ignoring oil and natural gas.

"However, if we are going to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, we must recognise that we need to phase out thermal power. We should indicate to the world that India's emissions will increase for a while, then peak, and eventually decline. Right now, there's a lot of misunderstanding in the West about India's willingness to reduce emissions, which is not true," he said.

Sunita Narain, the director general of the Centre for Science and Environment, echoed this sentiment, saying that India is currently dependent on coal, as it remains the cheapest form of energy available.

UP Government to start paddy procurement from October 1

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government will commence paddy procurement across the state starting October 1 and payments to farmers will be processed within 48 hours of the sale.

The process will roll out in phases, beginning in western Uttar Pradesh and extending to the eastern districts later in the month, according to an official statement issued here on Monday.

Procurement will start on October 1 in the districts of Hardoi, Lakhimpur Kheri and Sitapur. It will be followed by procurement in Lucknow, Rae Bareilly and Unnao from November 1, among others, the statement added.

"Paddy procurement will continue until January 31, covering various districts including Meerut, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Agra, Aligarh and Jhansi," it stated.

The minimum support price (MSP) for paddy has been set



at Rs 2,300 per quintal, while the price for grade A paddy stood at Rs 2,320 per quintal. Additionally, farmers will receive a reimbursement of Rs

20 per quintal for unloading, sieving and cleaning their produce, it added.

To facilitate this extensive procurement process, the Food and Civil Supplies Department has established around 4,000 purchase centers statewide.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed that payments to farmers be processed within 48 hours of the sale, ensuring timely financial support, according to the statement.

directed that payments to farmers be processed within 48 hours," it added.

Registration for the paddy purchase scheme commenced on September 1, with approximately 32,000 farmers already registered within the first month. The Agriculture Department estimates that the paddy cultivation area for the Kharif marketing year 2024-25 is 61.24 lakh hectares, with an anticipated production of 265.54 lakh metric tonnes and an average yield projected at 43.36 quintals per hectare.

Centre's fiscal deficit touches 27 per cent of full-year target in first five months



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre's fiscal deficit at the end of the first five months of the current fiscal touched 27 per cent of the full-year target, government data showed on Monday.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit gap between expenditure and revenue was at Rs 4,35,176 crore as of August-end, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

The deficit stood at 36 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) in the corresponding period of 2023-24.

In the Union Budget, the government projected to bring down the fiscal deficit to 4.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the current 2024-25 financial year. The deficit was 5.6 per cent of the GDP in 2023-24.

In absolute terms, the government aims to contain the fiscal deficit at Rs 16,13,312 crore during the current fiscal.

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for the first five months of 2024-25, CGA said the net tax revenue was Rs 8.7 lakh crore or 33.8 per cent of the BE for the current fiscal. The net tax revenue collection was 34.5 per cent at July-end 2023.

The central government's total expenditure in the four months through August stood at Rs 16.5 lakh crore or 34.3 per cent of BE. The expenditure was 37.1 per cent of the BE in the year-ago period.

Of the total expenditure, Rs 13,51,367 crore was in the revenue account and Rs 3,00,987 crore was in the capital account.

Out of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 4,00,160 crore was towards interest payments. Fiscal deficit is the difference between the total expenditure and revenue of the government. It is an indication of the total borrowing that is needed by the government.

Of the total expenditure, Rs 13,51,367 crore was in the revenue account and Rs 3,00,987 crore was in the capital account.

Out of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 4,00,160 crore was towards interest payments. Fiscal deficit is the difference between the total expenditure and revenue of the government. It is an indication of the total borrowing that is needed by the government.

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for the first five months of 2024-25, CGA said the net tax revenue was Rs 8.7 lakh crore or 33.8 per cent of the BE for the current fiscal. The net tax revenue collection was 34.5 per cent at July-end 2023.

Solex Energy announces investment for Vision 2030



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Solex Energy Limited on Monday announced an investment exceeding Rs 8,000 crore as part of its Vision 2030 strategy.

The initiative reflects Solex's commitment to advancing solar technology and scaling operations, positioning the company as a fully integrated solar player. Solex is exploring the development of a new cell manufacturing facility with an initial capacity of 2 GW, designed to scale up to 5 GW. Its module manufacturing capacity will also be increased from 1.5 GW to 15 GW. Solex aims to expand its workforce to over 25,000 to support this growth.

Chetan Shah, Chairman & Managing Director of Solex Energy Limited, said, "Vision 2030 represents a key milestone in our journey to becoming a fully integrated solar

company. With the introduction of N-Type TOPCon Technology featuring Rectangular Cells, Solex Energy is raising the bar for efficiency and reliability."

A major component of Vision 2030 is the launch of the Tapi-R series. This revolutionary solar module incorporates N-Type TOPCon Technology and a rectangular cell design, setting a new standard for solar energy generation in India. The series, named after the Tapi River, a symbol of vitality in the region where Solex is headquartered, and the "R" for its rectangular cell design, significantly enhances power efficiency and reliability. In addition to technological advancements, Solex Energy Limited is committed to supporting India's national goal of achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based installed electricity capacity by 2030.

CRED reduces losses by 41 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Credit card bill payments app CRED on Monday reported 66 per cent year-on-year increase in revenue to Rs 2,473 crore in FY24, on the back of growth in monetised members and a drop in user acquisition costs.

Operating losses were reduced by 41 per cent from Rs 1,024 crore in FY23 to Rs 609 crore in FY24, a company statement said.

"This came on the back of some very exciting sort of pieces of execution that we always had as a thesis, but it's always good to see that play out in action. The number of members that we monetised



grew 58 per cent year-on-year. Our CAC (customer acquisition costs) came down significantly by 40 per cent," CRED founder Kunal Shah said during a press briefing.

Total Payment Value (TPV) for the platform surged 55 per cent to Rs 6.87 lakh crore, while monthly transacting users (MTU) rose by 34 per cent. "Members used CRED for a

wide range of payments beyond credit card bills, with strong adoption of P2P UPI payments. They also expanded adoption of CRED Pay across online merchants, boosting transaction volumes by 254 per cent during the year," the statement said.

Organic growth contributed to a high-quality user base and dropped customer acquisition costs by 40 per cent, Shah said,

adding that 70 per cent of its customer acquisition now comes through organic or referral channels.

The unicorn fintech launched its in-app vehicle management feature-CRED Garage-in September last year.

"We managed to cross close to 4.2 million vehicles in the last financial year and now touching close 6.5 million vehicles on the platform. And it kind of demonstrates the power of the platform coming together where we are squarely focused on an audience segment," Shah said.

In July 2024, it introduced CRED Money, a tool that enables users to track, analyze, and reflect on their financial

behaviour. The entrepreneur also hinted at new products in the pipeline.

"When you think from a capital investment and capital allocation perspective, there's a lot of exciting things coming up on the road map. A significant amount of our capital utilization is towards research and development costs, for example, things on products, investments on products that are in the works, and will come out pretty soon," he said.

Responding to whether CRED plans to go public, Shah said the company's still in its growth phase and doesn't intend to list anytime soon.

Tata Power inks pact with Rajasthan Government for investment in green energy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power on Monday said it has inked an initial pact with the Rajasthan government for investment of Rs 1.2 lakh crore, including Rs 75,000 crore in green energy, in the state's power sector.

The 10-year plan aims to support Rajasthan's transformation into a power surplus state, providing 24/7 clean, affordable, and reliable power supply. Investments will be made in renewable energy projects and manufacturing, nuclear power, rooftop

installations, and EV charging, a company statement said.

The MoU was signed during the 'Rising Rajasthan' Investor Meet in New Delhi on Monday. An amount of Rs 20,000 crore will be invested in the state transmission and distribution area to modernize the grid infrastructure, reduce energy losses, and improve power quality across the state. Besides, Rs 10,000 crore will be invested for transmission systems exploring opportunities to develop nuclear power plant. Nearly Rs 75,000 crore will be for renewable energy projects.

An investment of Rs 1,000 crore has been earmarked for setting up 1 lakh EV charging points across Rajasthan. Rooftop solar power for 10 lakh households will support the PM Surya Ghar Yojana. The MoU will have a transformative socio-economic impact, creating over 28,000 direct jobs in the state. Tata Power already has a significant footprint in Rajasthan, with a robust portfolio of energy projects. The company has commissioned 1 GW of solar projects and 185 MW of wind projects in the state.

USHA SLAMS EC MEMBERS FOR NOT FELICITATING OLYMPIC MEDALLISTS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha on Monday said it is "deeply concerning" that the Executive Committee members failed to honour Olympic medallists and accused the Finance Committee of blocking funds intended to support Indian athletes' preparation for the Paris Games.

India secured six medals, including two historic bronze by young shooter Manu Bhaker, but Usha said the "EC does not want to celebrate their success" and it makes her "very sad."

"These athletes have made the nation proud, and it is the responsibility of the IOA to celebrate their achievements with the respect they deserve. It is deeply concerning that, even after returning home in mid-August, the EC has failed to discuss or take any steps towards organizing a formal felicitation ceremony," she said in a statement.

She revealed that a proposal for a

preparatory grant of Rs 2 lakh for each Olympic-bound athlete and Rs 1 lakh for each coach had been blocked by the Finance Committee, notably by IOA Treasurer Sahdev Yadav.

"I strongly believe that this grant would have given our athletes and their coaches the support they needed in the crucial period leading up to the Olympic Games.

"The refusal to disburse these funds reflects a lack of understanding of the needs of athletes and shows a complete disregard for their preparation and well-being," she stated.

Highlighting the contrast with previous leadership, Usha pointed out that a successful felicitation ceremony was organised for the seven medallists from the Tokyo 2021 Olympics, even amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If my predecessors could celebrate the achievements of our athletes during a global pandemic, what is stopping the current EC members from doing the same? These medallists have worked tirelessly to



bring honour to our nation, and they deserve to be acknowledged." Usha questioned the commitment of some EC members, particularly those who are former athletes.

"As someone who has represented India on the world stage, I understand the importance of recognising the hard work, sacrifices, and victories of our athletes. It is disheartening to see that others in positions of power, especially those who have also worn the national colours, are failing to uphold this duty."

The IOA had planned to award each individual medallist between Rs 50 lakh and Rs 1 crore, with coaches receiving Rs 15 lakh to Rs 25 lakh as part of the official felicitation.

"By not following through on these plans, the IOA is letting down the athletes who have made our country proud. I urge the Executive Committee to take immediate action and ensure that our athletes receive the honours and recognition they deserve."

She reaffirmed her commitment to stand by the athletes, saying: "Our

athletes are the heart and soul of Indian sport. I will not rest until they are given the due respect, support, and acknowledgment they have earned."

On Saturday, 12 members of the Executive Council had sent a letter to senior International Olympic Committee (IOC) official Jerome Poivey, accusing Usha of running the organization in an "autocratic" manner after she rejected their demand to remove Raghuram Iyer as IOA CEO during a contentious meeting.

Usha called the accusations "malicious and false," asserting that they aimed to undermine her leadership and the efforts to improve Indian sports. On Sunday, she criticized the dissenting council members for prioritizing personal power and financial gain over the welfare of the sport.

In a press release, Usha on Sunday alleged that several of these EC members have questionable track records, including accusations of sexual harassment against them.

World Cup winner Antoine Griezmann retires from international soccer after 10 years with France



AP ■ PARIS

World Cup winner Antoine Griezmann took the soccer world by surprise on Monday when he announced the end of his international career with France.

The 33-year-old Atletico Madrid player has played 137 matches with Les Bleus, scoring 44 goals during a successful 10-year tenure.

Griezmann started with France in 2014 in a friendly match against the Netherlands then quickly established himself as a

stalwart of the team coached by Didier Deschamps with his versatile talent and influence as both a goalscorer and an assist provider.

Only two players, Hugo Lloris and Lilian Thuram, have played more international games with France than Griezmann.

"It's with a heart full of memories that I close this chapter of my life," Griezmann said in a message posted on Instagram. "Thank you for this wonderful tricolor adventure and see you soon."

Griezmann is fourth on France's list of all-time scorers behind Olivier Giroud,

Thierry Henry and Kylian Mbappe. He won the 2018 World Cup and the Nations League three years later with his France teammates.

"After 10 incredible years, marked by challenges, successes and unforgettable moments, it is time for me to turn a page and make way for the new generation," he said. "I was lucky enough to experience some incredible moments alongside some exceptional teammates. We have shared victories that will remain forever engraved in our memories."

After a disappointing showing at the European Championship earlier this year, where France lost in the semifinals, Griezmann had lost some of his influence in Deschamps' team. His final appearance in the France kit was in September in a 2-0 win over Belgium in a Nations League match when he came on as a late substitute. Although Griezmann has admitted he struggled at the Euros, he was expected to keep on playing with France until the 2026 World Cup.

In his retirement message, Griezmann thanked Deschamps for his support over the last decade despite the coach's decision to make Mbappe France captain ahead of him last year following Lloris' retirement. Griezmann had previously said Deschamps' snub had been difficult to stomach.

Griezmann didn't say how long he'll continue with his club career.



Young Indian shuttler Raksha Kandasamy wins titles in Croatia and Belgium

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Young Indian badminton player Raksha Kandasamy continued her brilliant run as she clinched back-to-back titles in the Croatian International and Belgium Junior tournaments.

The 16-year-old remained unbeaten throughout the two tournaments as she won each of her five games en route to her title wins.

Raksha defeated England's Leona Lee 21-9, 21-5 in the final of the Croatian International played at Samobor on Sunday. She had

earlier defeated Bulgaria's Stefani Stoeva 21-14, 21-23 in the semifinal and Poland's Joanna Rudna 21-11, 21-10 in the quarterfinal.

Earlier, Raksha had crushed the challenge from Tammi van Wouterghem of Belgium 21-5, 21-8 in the quarterfinals of the Belgium Junior event.

Ireland's Siofra Flynn presented a strong fight against Raksha but the Indian prevailed 21-8, 19-21, 25-23 in their last-four clash.

Raksha beat Germany's Gloria Poluektov 21-14, 10-21, 22-20 in the final played in the Belgian city of Herstal.

Delhi Capitals co-owner GMR group takes over Hampshire in county cricket



PTI ■ LONDON

The GMR Group, co-owners of IPL franchise Delhi Capitals, on Monday completed an agreement with Hampshire to buy majority stake in the English county club.

Initially, the GMR Group will hold 53 percent stake in Hampshire, thereby making it the first county team to have an overseas ownership.

In a phased manner through the next 24 months, the Indian conglomerate will acquire 100 percent stake.

"Hampshire Sport & Leisure Holdings Limited, owner of the Utilita Bowl site and Hampshire Cricket, has signed and exchanged definitive agreements with GMR Global Pte Ltd (GGPL), marking the start of a significant strategic partnership," the club said in a statement in its website.

"As part of the agreement, GGPL will initially acquire a majority stake in Hampshire Sport & Leisure Holdings Limited, with the completed acquisition of 100% ownership expected within the next 24 months," the statement added.

Kirankumar Granthi, Corporate Chairman of the GMR Group, said his aim will be to cultivate "value creation" and providing opportunities to budding talents.

"With this acquisition, along with our investments in the US, Dubai, and India, GMR is focused on engaging and connecting with the global youth. We are committed to financial prudence, value creation, and creating opportunities for young talent.

"Our vision is to transform sports into a platform that unites people and cultures, drives global excellence, and nurtures the creation of future

world champions," said Granthi.

Currently, GMR holds a 50 percent stake in the Delhi Capitals (IPL and WPL), the Dubai Capitals (ILT20) and the Pretoria Capitals (SA20). Additionally, the GMR group has invested in the Seattle Orcas in the Major League Cricket, USA.

Under the new ownership structure, Hampshire's existing leadership team will remain in place.

Rod Bransgrove will continue as Group Chairman until at least September 30, 2026, and David Mann will retain his role as the Group CEO.

"This is the fulfilment of a dream for me and, I hope, for all Hampshire Cricket supporters. After a thorough selection process, we chose GGPL (the parent company of GMR) as our partners due to their shared values and commitment to our vision.

"Becoming the first English cricket club to join an international cricket group will open exciting new opportunities as we embrace the globalization of this great sport," said Bransgrove.

Richard Gould, ECB Chief Executive Officer, welcomed the acquisition.

"This is an exciting time for Hampshire Cricket. I am pleased to see GGPL's commitment to continuing to develop Hampshire's cricket teams and pathways and enhance facilities at Utilita Bowl, and their respect for the traditions of the game in this country.

"This announcement also demonstrates the global interest in investing in cricket in England and Wales, and underlines the continuing appeal of county cricket," said Gould.

Arteta talks up Enrique's 'unbelievable power' as Arsenal hosts PSG in Champions League game

AP ■ LONDON

Days after professing his "love" and "respect" for Pep Guardiola, Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has spoken in an equally effusive manner about another influential Spanish coach he will face in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Luis Enrique takes his Paris Saint-Germain team to Emirates Stadium for the most high-profile fixture in the second round of games in the new-look competition.

Arteta and Enrique go way back, having been together at Barcelona in the late 1990s and early 2000s when Arteta was starting out his professional career and Enrique was coming toward the end of his.

Arteta said he "learned a lot of things" from Enrique as a player and now as a coach, saying Monday his compatriot "brings a smile on my face."

"I am a huge admirer of him," Arteta said. "I remember his personality, huge character, huge energy, very supportive of his young players. What I love about him is that wherever he has been, as a player or as a manager, his fingerprints are all over place. You can see it's



his team. You can see PSG in his team. "He has this unbelievable power ... Then there's his approach to life, his profession - it's something to really look at and I learnt a lot of things from him."

Arteta spent much of last week talking about Guardiola and Manchester City amid the fallout from Arsenal's feisty 2-2 draw at the Premier League champions that appears to have ignited a rivalry between the teams.

He has long been viewed as a protégé of Guardiola, yet it seems that Enrique has been an influence, too.

"I love his honesty - he is very straightforward, he looks you in the eyes and tells you what he thinks," Arteta said. "I think

Chennaiyin FC aim for strong show against winless Hyderabad FC

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad FC would look for their first win of the season while Chennaiyin FC seek to move up the standings when the two sides face each other in an Indian Super League match here on Tuesday.

In their previous match, Hyderabad lost 0-2 to Punjab FC, while Chennaiyin succumbed to a 0-1 defeat to debutant Mohammedan Sporting.

Hyderabad have a strong defensive structure that could trouble Chennaiyin. The two teams have clashed against each other on 10 occasions in the ISL and have registered four wins each, while two matches ended in a draw.

Meanwhile, CFC have scored in their previous four away matches. Their previous longest goal-scoring run in away games was 16 contests between January 2020 to February 2023.

Ahead of Tuesday's fixture, Hyderabad head coach Thangboi Singto hoped to draw inspiration from last season when his side triumphed over Chennaiyin.

"I can see that the boys have gelled with each other in the



last few weeks of training. So far, we have played only away games, and our next match will be at home," Singto said on the eve of the game.

"Chennaiyin FC were the only team that we beat last season. Are we going to defeat them again? I wish.

"It won't be easy because of the kind of foreigners that they have brought in, and the Indian players are there; they are much better in terms of physicality and experience. It will be tough, but the only thing we can do is train and keep trying."

Chennaiyin head coach Owen Coyle said while their start has been better than the last

season, there are still some grey areas that need to be worked upon.

"I'd love to be sitting here with six points, for sure. We're obviously on three, which is better than we were this time last year. But six was achievable. So, we have to take that punch to the nose and look to bounce back quickly," he stated.

Chennaiyin's Farukh Choudhary has taken eight shots from inside the box this season. Hyderabad's Abdul Rabeel's 50 touches inside the opposition's box since the beginning of the year is the most by any player from the side so far.

Atletico equalises late against Madrid in derby interrupted after objects thrown on the field

AP ■ MADRID

Angel Correa scored in stoppage time and Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 with Real Madrid in a tense Spanish league derby that was interrupted for more than 15 minutes in the second half after Atletico fans threw objects onto the field.

Correa equalised for Atletico in a breakaway five minutes into added time with a goal that was initially disallowed for offside but was awarded after video review. Eder Militao had given Madrid the lead in the

64th.

The draw left Madrid in second place, three points behind leader Barcelona, which lost 4-2 to Osasuna on Saturday to end its seven-game winning streak. Atletico was third, two points behind Madrid after eight rounds.

"I always think positively," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said.

"We moved closer to the leader and we have been playing well." The derby was interrupted shortly after Madrid's goal at the Metropolitano, with the referee sending the players to

the locker rooms after Atletico fans kept throwing objects onto the field.

Militao had celebrated near the sideline in front of Atletico fans, and Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois was seen appearing to provoke Atletico fans after Militao scored.

"What the fans did wasn't right but we are not helping when we provoke them," Atletico coach Diego Simeone said.

"I'm not justifying what the fans did, but we need to help as well."

It was Courtois who alerted the referee about the objects -



including lighters - being thrown onto the field near him.

Atletico defender José María Giménez and midfielder Koke Resurrección went to talk to the fans in the section behind Courtois' goal. That section is where usually the more radical Atletico supporters are located.

Atletico coach Diego Simeone also asked several times for the fans to behave.

A message over the stadium loudspeakers said the match was being interrupted for 15 minutes, and that it would be suspended if the problem

continued.

The interruption came a day after the Spanish league said it would ask police to act against the promoters of a social media campaign which the league said was aimed at promoting racist acts against Madrid star Vinicius Junior at the derby.

The social media campaign was based on a hashtag encouraging Atletico fans to wear face masks, apparently to make it more difficult for authorities to identify individuals who participate in racist chants or insults.

Social media videos showed

Atletico fans before the match chanting "Vinicius is different." Vinicius occasionally clashed with Atletico players at the Metropolitano.

Atletico's Marcos Llorente was sent off in stoppage time.

OTHER RESULTS: Fourth-place 10-man Athletic Bilbao conceded a stoppage-time equaliser in a 1-1 draw with Sevilla at home, while Giovanni Lo Celso scored an 85th-minute goal in Real Betis' 1-0 home win over Espanyol.

Iago Aspas got an 81st-minute equaliser for Celta Vigo in a 1-1 draw against visiting Girona.

INDIA PUSH FOR VICTORY WITH T20-STYLE BATTING

PTI ■ KANPUR

Trying to force a result in the limited time available, India played a sensational T20-style cricket to take a 52-run first-innings lead against Bangladesh in the second Test, infusing life into the rain-hit contest here on Monday. The sun shone bright in the Kanpur sky after two gloomy days and the on-field action finally began after losing eight sessions. India had six sessions to force a win, and the hosts did everything they could on the fourth day of the match. The pitch hardly offered assistance to India bowlers but the hosts still bundled out Bangladesh for 233 in their first innings, built around Mominul Haque's patient unbeaten 107. India then unleashed their batting might on the visitors, striking at 8.22 runs per over to reset the records for fastest team 50 (18 balls), 100 (74 balls) and 200 runs (24.2 overs) in Test cricket. India declared their second innings at 285 for nine to have another go at the visiting batters. At stumps, Bangladesh were 26 for two with Zakir Hasan and Hasan Mahmud becoming off-spinner

Ravichandran Ashwin's victims. They were trailing India by 26 runs. India are going for the kill as an outright victory will consolidate their top position in the World Test Championship (WTC) table. Considering the tougher assignments ahead, especially the Australia Tour, India need to log as many wins as possible against comparatively easier rivals to get some cushion before the tough overseas rubbers. Young opener Yashvi Jaiswal (72 off 51 balls) set the tone with three boundaries in the opening over bowled by Hasan Mahmud and skipper Rohit Sharma (23 off 11) bludgeoned Khaled Ahmed for two consecutive sixes - one landing on the roof of the stadium. It was clear that India were showing an urgency to surpass the Bangladesh total quickly after more than two days' play was lost to bad weather. The onslaught surprised the rival attack but the home fans were rewarded for visiting the stadium. Adopting a see-the-ball and hit-the-ball approach, India completed the fastest team fifty in three overs. Realising the ineffectiveness of his pacers, Bangladesh skipper



Najmul Hossain Shanto introduced spinner Mehidy Hasan Miraz and he responded to the call by casting Rohit. Jaiswal completed his fifty with a single off left-arm spinner Tajjul Islam and continued in his aggressive fashion. His innings, which contained 12 fours and two sixes, was cut short by Mahmud. The young opener added 72 runs for the second wicket with Shubhan Gill (39). Rishabh Pant did not last long but there was no change in approach for the hosts with Virat Kohli and KL Rahul building on the foundation with their swift 87-run stand for the fifth wicket. In a breathtaking show, Indian batters hit 28 fours and 11 sixes, collecting 158 runs in boundaries. In the process, Kohli became only the fourth player in history to complete 27,000 runs in international cricket across formats. Ravindra Jadeja also cherished a rare double of 300 Test wickets and 3000 Test runs. He is the second quickest to complete the double behind England great Ian Botham. He also became only the seventh Indian to take 300 Test wickets when he dismissed Khaled Mahmud.

Good to get some overs under the belt at home as we would need to bowl a lot more in Aus: Bumrah

PTI ■ KANPUR

Jasprit Bumrah is gradually increasing his workload at home as the India pace spearhead knows he would be required to bowl a lot more overs during the five Test series in Australia. After the two Test series against Bangladesh, India will host New Zealand for three games before departing for Australia. "You have to be smart (to stay fit for Australia) and it's good to get some overs under the belt here

although the number of overs to be bowled will be a lot more in Australia," Bumrah told host broadcaster ahead of the fourth day's play. "Day two and three of the Kanpur Test were wiped out due to a wet outfield at the Green Park stadium here. "Weather is not in your control, it is the way it is. Good to get some time to relax. You've to quickly adjust to the changing conditions here after Chennai, quickly adapt and communicate with others, like



about changing lines and lengths," said Bumrah. "The five-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy begins in Perth on November 22. "Bumrah relishes playing Test matches and is determined to give his best in the format. "My favourite format is the Tests, I've always said that. I'm trying to give my absolute best in this format," said the champion bowler who has featured in 36 Tests since making his debut in 2018.

Samit Dravid misses India U19 first four-day game against Aus

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Injured Samit Dravid ruled out of the opening four-day game between India U-19 and Australia U-19 and is also unlikely to be fit in time for the second match of the series. The series opener began here on Monday. Samit is currently at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) recuperating from a knee injury that forced him to sit out of the three-match youth one-dayers against the Aussies recently. He was expected to make his India U-19 debut at Puduchery but did not feature in any of the three matches. India had won the series 3-0. "As of now he's at the NCA, recovering from his knee injury. So, I don't know yet. It looks unlikely," head coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. In fact, for Samit, son of former India captain and head coach Rahul Dravid, this is the last chance to represent India at the

U-19 level. He is set to turn 19 on October 11 this year, which will also make him ineligible for playing for India in the ICC 2026 Under-19 World Cup. "His MRI scan was done during the one-day matches. We thought of giving him a go at the four-day game, but let's see how he progresses at the NCA. We are waiting for their report. We also have a second match," a source close to the development told PTI. The second four-day match will start from October 7 at Chepauk, hence Samit has another week to recover from the knee injury. Kanitkar said playing four-day red-ball game at the Under-19 stage will help the development of players. "It's a great initiative to play Test games because red-ball [cricket] really tests you. There's enough time for the bowlers to plan and make strategies. So, for both batters and bowlers and even for fielders it's the ideal challenge to see where you stand.

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Pakistan great Zaheer Abbas feels the comparisons between Virat Kohli and Babar Azam are baseless as the Indian superstar is a lot more consistent than the under-fire Pakistan batter. Once regarded as part of the 'Fab Five' including Kohli, Steve Smith, Joe Root, and Kane Williamson, Babar is currently enduring an extended slump in form. "Yeh fizoool ki baatein hai (the comparisons are pointless). Virat Kohli scores in every match the other player (Babar) doesn't score in any match so then how can you compare. The person who scores, he is the bigger player," Abbas told PTI on the sidelines of the Cricket Predicta Conclave here. Kohli has 80 international hundreds to his name while the much younger Babar has scored 31 centuries across formats. Abbas also acknowledged the consistency displayed by India across formats and said the Rohit Sharma-led team will be a strong contender for the upcoming Champions Trophy. "Indian team overall is very good. Their batters are doing well and the bowlers both are good. It is a very balanced team, one that plays such

Comparing Kohli and Babar baseless, the Indian star way ahead: Zaheer Abbas

samajh kar (thoughtfully)," said Abbas. "They have a very good captain, who understands cricket very well. So, when everything is going in your favour it is smooth sailing. That's the case with India right now. "There is a very good chance of them doing well (at the Champions Trophy) because they have a balanced team," the 77-year-old said. Hailed as the 'Asian Bradman' for insatiable appetite for runs, Abbas was one of the most elegant batters of his time. He played 78 Tests and 62 ODIs for Pakistan, accumulating 5062 and 2572 runs respectively. TEAMS IN T20S CAN WIN BY FLUKE, NOT IN TESTS: The 77-year-old strongly believes that Test cricket truly tests the players' character, resilience, mental strength, technique, and consistency. "Test cricket is real cricket. That it is the real Test of any player, bowler. At one point India and Pakistan's Test team



know people like to get results fast but slowly they will get bored of T20s and we need Tests and ODIs." An increasing number of players are turning down central contracts from their boards to focus on careers in T20 franchise leagues, a worrying trend that Abbas believes should be addressed. "Test cricket is ultimate. Anyone can win in T20. Teams can win by fluke. But that is not the case in Test cricket as it has two innings. You have the scope to do well in one innings. Test cricket teaches you a lot.

"I know a lot of the players don't want to play Test cricket and play T20 instead. That needs to be stopped. They need to come up with something... "Something like you have to play at least 5 or 6 Test matches a year then you can play ODI or T20s. Every year a minimum number of Test matches need to be allotted," he added.

AUTHUM AUTHUM INVESTMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED

Registered Office: 707, Raheja Centre, Free Press Journal Road, Nariman Point, Mumbai-400 021. Ph.: (022) 6747 2117 Fax: (022) 6747 2118 E-mail: info@authum.com

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the borrowers/co-borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors mentioned hereunder had availed the financial assistance from Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited ("AIL") (Resulting Company pursuant to the demerger of lending business from Reliance Commercial Finance Limited ("RCFL") to AIL, vide NCLT order dated 10.05.2024) We state that despite having availed the financial assistance, the borrowers/ guarantors/ mortgagors have committed various defaults in repayment of interest and principal amounts as per due dates. The account has been classified as Non Performing Asset on the respective dates mentioned hereunder, in the books of AIL in accordance with the directives relating to asset classification issued by the National Housing Bank, consequent to the Authorized Officer of AIL, Under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices on respective dates mentioned herein below under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 calling upon the following borrowers/guarantors/mortgagors to repay the amount mentioned in the notices together with further interest at the contractual rate on the amount mentioned in the notices and incidental expenses, cost, charges etc until the date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of notices. The notices issued to them on their last known addresses have been returned un-served and as such they are hereby informed by way of public notice.

Sr. No.	Loan No. / Name Of The Borrower / Address	Co-Borrower and Guarantor Name Director Name	NPA DATE	Date Of Demand Notice	Outstanding Amount	Loan Amount
1.	RLLPBIL000314765 / VEERDEV LALCHANDANI Rishi Colony, Ward No 31, Indira Nagar, Dayaband, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh-495001	Meera Devi Lalchandani Sanjay Lalchandani	09-03-2024	29-08-2024	Rs. 51,04,401/- (Rupees Fifty One Lakhs Four Thousand Four Hundred and One Only)	Rs. 49,000.00/- (Rupees Forty-Nine Lakhs Only)

Property Address Of Secured Assets: All That Piece And Parcel Of Residential Property Mauja Juna, Ph No 110a Nazul Plot No 1/41 [New Plot No 1/76 & 1/77] Part Of 35/A, Sheet No 39, Rishi Colony, Dayaband Ward No 31, Indira Nagar Ward, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh Measuring Area 1200 Sq. Ft. North- Plot No. 35 B, East- Others House, South : Plot No 36, West- Colony Road

In the circumstances as aforesaid, the notice is hereby given to the above borrowers, co-borrowers and/ or their guarantors (where ever applicable) to pay the outstanding dues as mentioned above along with future interest and applicable charges within 60 days from the date of the publication of this notice failing which further steps will be taken after the expiry of 60 days of the date of this notice against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the borrowers and the mortgagors under Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and the applicable rules there under.

Please note that under Section 13 (13) of the said Act, no Borrower shall, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise any of his secured assets referred to in the notice, without prior written consent of the secured creditor.

Dated : 01.10.2024 Place: Chhattisgarh Authorized Officer, Authum Investment & Infrastructure Limited

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, A/C Bose Road, Kolkata 700020 CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

The Authorized ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Proveen Kumar/ Ruby Kumar/ Behind Guman Bhai Aata Chkrki, Changora Bhatra District Raipur Chhattisgarh Raipur- 492013/ LBRPR00005389948	Plot No. 21, "Shanti Enclave", Kharsa No. 677/3, 678/3, 678/4 and 680/2, P.H. No. 104/57, Ward No. 68, Madhav Rao Sorep Ward, Mouza Raipura, R.N.M. Raipur, Tahsil and District Raipur, Chhattisgarh Measuring An Area of 13.5 X 37= 503 Sq. Ft./ Date of Symbolic 25.09.2024	28/05/2024 Rs. 15,63,325/-	Raipur

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/guarantor(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold for 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: October 01, 2024 Place: Raipur Sincerely Authorised Signatory For ICICI Bank Ltd.

MOTILAL OSWAL HOME FINANCE LIMITED Regd. Office: Motilal Oswal Tower, Rahimullah Sarani Road, Opp. Patel ST Depot, Prabhadevi, Mumbai - 400 025, CS : 8291889898 Website: www.motilaloswal.com, Email: info@motilaloswal.com

POSSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMovable PROPERTY/IES) (UNDER RULE 8 (1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002)

Whereas the undersigned being the authorized officer of Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited, (Formerly known as Aspire Home Finance Corporation Ltd), under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002), and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated mentioned hereunder calling upon the following borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being also mentioned hereunder within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The following borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the following borrowers and the public in general that undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned hereunder:

Sr No	Loan Agreement No. / Name of the Borrower/ Co Borrower/Guarantor	Date of Demand Notice & Outstanding	Date of possession Taken	Description of the Immovable Property
1	LXRAI00217-180054125 Ravishankar Sen & Anita Ravishankar Sen	09-07-2024 for Rs. 294855/-	25-09-2024	Plot No Lig-63 Kh No-224/13 Park Green Vista Iconic Homes Abhanpur R N M Abhanpur Ward No 14 Lal Bhadur Shastri Ward O 493661 Raipur Chhattisgarh

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the Charge of Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited for an amount mentioned herein above and interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Place : Chhattisgarh Date : 01.10.2024 Authorized Officer (Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited)

Public Notice For E-Auction For Sale Of Immovable Properties

Sale of Immovable property mortgaged to IIFL Home Finance Limited (Formerly known as India Infoline Housing Finance Ltd.) (IIFL-HFL) Corporate Office at Plot No. 98, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Gurgaon-122015 (Haryana) and Branch Office at "1st Floor, Lal Ganga City Mart, Banjari Chowk, Opposite Hotel Amit Regency, Regency, CG 492001 under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter "Act"). Whereas the Authorized Officer ("AO") of IIFL-HFL has taken the possession of the following properties pursuant to the notice issued U/S 13(2) of the Act in the following loan accounts/prospect nos. with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS AND WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of IIFL-HFL's dues. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website: www.iiflhome.com

Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property / Secured Asset	Date of Symbolic Possession	Reserve Price	Date of Inspection of property
1. Technodillers, 2, Aditya Bore Wells, 3, Mr. Utkay Jain, 4, Mr. Rahul Jain 5. Mrs. Veena Jain 6. Mrs. Chhaya Jain 7. Mr. Utkay Jain (Prospect Nos 95895 & 948598 & 948599 & 963400)	05-May-2022 Rs. 12,25,14,580/- (Rupees Twelve Crore Fifty Nine Lakh Fourteen Thousand Five Hundred & Eighty Only)	All that part and parcel of the property bearing Kharsa No. 199/15, area measuring 5625 sq. ft., Rakha 562, Ph. No. 105 Chandra Shekhar Azad Ward No. 52, Navdurga Nagar, Chourasia Colony, VIII, Mathpura, R.N.M. RAIPUR-2, Tehsil and District Raipur, 492001, Chhattisgarh, India	10-Sep-2024	Rs. 1,12,50,000/- (Rupees One Crore Twelve Lakh Fifty Thousand Only)	08-Nov-2024 (1100 hrs - 1400 hrs) EMD Last Date 11-Nov-2024 till 5 pm. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Rs. 11,25,000/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Only) 13-Nov-2024 (1100 hrs - 1300 hrs)

Mode of Payment : EMD payments are to be made vide online mode only. To make payments you have to visit https://www.iiflhome.com and pay through link available for the property/ Secured Asset only. Note: Payment link for each property/ Secured Asset is different. Ensure you are using link of the property/ Secured Asset you intend to buy vide public auction.

For Balance Payment - Login https://www.iiflhome.com - My Bid -> Pay Balance Amount.

Terms and Conditions:

- For participating in e-auction, intending bidders required to register their details with the Service Provider https://www.iiflhome.com well in advance and have to create the login account, login ID and password. Intending bidders have to submit / send their "Tender FORM" along with the payment details towards EMD, copy of the KYC and PAN card at the above mentioned Branch Office.
- The bidders shall improve their offer in multiple of amount mentioned under the column "Bid Increase Amount". In case bid is placed in the last 5 minutes of the closing time of the auction, the closing time will automatically get extended for 5 minutes.
- The successful bidder should deposit 25% of the bid amount (after adjusting EMD) within 24 hours of the acceptance of bid price by the AO and the balance 75% of the bid amount within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor. All deposit and payment shall be in the prescribed mode of payment.
- The purchaser has to bear the cess, applicable stamp duty, fees, and any other statutory dues or other dues like municipal tax, electricity charges, land and all other incidental costs, charges including all taxes and rates outgoings relating to the property.
- The purchaser has to pay TDS application to the transaction/payment of sale amount and submit the TDS certificate with IIFL HFL.
- Bidders are advised to go through the website https://www.iiflhome.com and https://www.iifl.com/home-loans/properties-for-auction for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale & auction application form before submitting their Bids for taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings.
- For details, help procedure and online training on e-auction prospective bidders may contact the service provider E mail ID:- care@iiflhome.com, Support Helpline Numbers @ 1800 2672 499.
- For any query related to Property details, Inspection of Property and Online bid etc. call IIFL HFL toll free no. 1800 2672 499 from 09:30 hrs to 18:00 hrs.
- Notice is hereby given to above said borrowers to collect the household articles, which were lying in the secured asset at the time of taking physical possession within 7 days, otherwise IIFL-HFL shall not be responsible for any loss of property under the circumstances.
- Further the notice is hereby given to the Borrowers, that in case they fail to collect the above said articles same shall be sold in accordance with Law.
- In case of default in payment at any stage by the successful bidder / auction purchaser within the above stipulated time, the sale will be cancelled and the amount already paid will be forfeited (including EMD) and the property will be again put to sale.
- AO reserves the rights to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and condition of tender/auction without assigning any reason thereof. In case of any dispute in tender/auction, the decision of AO of IIFL-HFL will be final.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8 (6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

The Borrower are hereby notified to pay the sum as mentioned above along with upto dated interest and ancillary expenses before the date of Tender/Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/sold and balance dues if any will be recovered with interest and cost.

Place : RAIPUR Date : 01.10.2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer, For IIFL Home Finance Limited.

We've players who will help India dominate cricket for 10 years: Laxman

PTI ■ BENGALURU

He accepted the job with trepidation but batting great VVS Laxman says he is now a content man as head of BCCI's Centre of Excellence, having played his part in creating a "supply chain" that will help India dominate world cricket across formats for at least the next decade. Laxman took over as the head of the erstwhile National Cricket Academy (NCA) in 2021 from his one-time teammate Rahul Dravid, and built on the excellent platform that was already laid out. NCA has been refurbished into a CoE by the Board and was inaugurated on Sunday. Laxman got a one-year extension into the position after his original tenure ended earlier this year. "I can say with a lot of confidence, barring a couple of skillsets, I think, for the next 10 years, we've got a lot

of players who will make our country proud. I'm not only talking about men's, but also women's (cricket) as well. We're blessed to have that kind of talent," Laxman told a select media gathering at the Centre of Excellence. He said India's dominance in world cricket is a perfect reflection of its steady "supply chain." "We won the (T20) World Cup (2024) in the West Indies which was a great result. But if you see all the three formats, we have dominated. Not only the rankings, we have dominated (other aspects too). "There is a supply chain as far as cricket is concerned. That means the amount of players we have at our disposal, it is a real blessing." The 49-year-old said grooming the players without tinkering with their natural game, was essential to maintain that supply chain.