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INSIDE

SPORTS
VIVAAN WINS SILVER MEDAL IN SHOOTING WORLD CUP FINAL



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Extradite Bishnoi gangsters: India to Canada

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid ongoing diplomatic tensions between the two countries, India on Thursday said it had sought extradition of Lawrence Bishnoi gang members from Canada a few years back but it has not yet responded. Making this assertion here, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal also said similar extradition requests of syndicates linked to the Bishnoi gang were made recently as well, but did not get any response

from Canada. He also informed there are 26 extradition requests from India pending with the Canadian side for a decade or so. The MEA gave names of Gurjit Singh, Gurbinder Singh, Arshdeep Singh Gill, Lakhbir Singh Landa, Gurpreet Singh for extradition, saying that the members of the Bishnoi gang were among them. "We informed Canada about the Lawrence Bishnoi gang and its syndicates and requested their provisional arrest and extradition some years back, and also recently. However, there has been no response from Canada so far", he said during a media

briefing. "We had shared some requests with the Canadian side for the arrest of those from Lawrence Bishnoi's gang. They haven't taken any action on our core concerns. There is a political motive also behind this," Jaiswal said. He also reiterated that Canada did not share any evidence in connection with the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. "We have made our position very clear on this particular matter. You would have seen that several press releases have been issued in the last two days



putting out our position. Since September 2023, the Canadian government has not shared any shred of information with us", he

asserted. The Ministry also said Canada always brought forth 'freedom of speech' as their argument whenever India sought action against anti-India and separatist elements. The government's statement came a day after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau named gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, who was earlier mentioned by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for being allegedly involved in Nijjar's murder in September last year. Trudeau alleged that Indian diplomats were collecting

information on Canadians and passing it to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. Trudeau, who testified before the country's foreign interference inquiry, claimed that the Canadian agencies tried to work behind the scenes with India before he went public with the allegations in the Nijjar killing. Jaiswal also said the current diplomatic row with Canada has been precipitated by the Trudeau government's "baseless" allegations, and reiterated that "no evidence" has been shared in support of Ottawa's serious allegations against New Delhi.



15 bomb hoax threats received in a day

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The pattern of domestic airlines receiving bomb threats to their flights continued for the fourth consecutive day as Air India got a threat for five flights - Mumbai-London (AI 129), Delhi - New York JFK (AI 119), a Chennai-Singapore and two domestic - IndiGo and Vistara threats for two flights each, were targeted in the similar manner on Thursday. Air India Express is also learnt to have got similar messages for six flights but a confirmation is awaited from the airline. Four of these flights were still on the ground, while three were airborne at the time when the threats were received. This number of flights that have received such threats is now close to around three dozen since Monday, forcing flight diversions and delays, piling up massive operational costs.

On Thursday a Mumbai-bound Vistara flight from Frankfurt with 147 persons on board was immediately taken to security checks on its arrival from Frankfurt following the Boeing 787 aircraft receiving a bomb threat. The flight, UK 28, was over Pakistan when it transmitted the code 7700, having 134 passengers and 13 crew onboard indicating a general emergency at around 6 am (IST) on Thursday, landed in Mumbai at approximately 7.45 am. At the same time, an IndiGo flight operating from Istanbul in Turkey for Mumbai also received a bomb threat and was taken to an isolation bay here for the security agencies to carry out a comprehensive security check. "The Vistara flight UK 028 operating from Frankfurt to Mumbai on October 16, 2024 was subject to a security threat received on social media," the airline said.



Hooch returns to haunt Bihar, leaves 25 dead in its wake

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA

In one of the biggest hooch tragedies in Bihar since the state went dry in 2016, at least 25 people have died after consuming spurious liquor in the adjoining districts of Siwan and Saran, a top officer said on Thursday. Director General of Police Alok Raj said that while the Siwan accounted for 20 fatalities, five deaths have been reported from Saran even as 12 people have been arrested for allegedly selling spurious liquor and they were likely to be "tried under the most stringent laws and punished by the court". Chief Minister Nitish Kumar chaired a high-level meeting to review the situation where he instructed officials concerned to visit the site and ensure strongest possible



action against those found guilty. Kumar, who is the state's longest-serving CM, also made an impassioned appeal to the people of the state to "be on guard against elements who are trying to encourage consumption of liquor which plays havoc with people's lives and disrupts peace in families". Notably, the state government had confirmed more than 150 deaths on account of hooch since the ban on liquor came into force. Police said two special investigating teams have also been set up in the aftermath of the incident.

Police shoot at, arrest Bahraich prime accused

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Sarfaraz alias Rinku, the sprime accused in the murder of 22-year-old Ram Gopal Mishra, was reportedly injured in a police encounter near the Nepal border. Alongside Sarfaraz, another suspect, Talib, sustained bullet injuries during the exchange of fire. Both suspects were shot in the legs and were admitted to a State-run hospital for treatment. No fatalities have been reported as of now. They were among the five suspects arrested in this case. Additional director general (ADG) Law and Order, Amitabh Yash, confirmed the encounter, stating, "The police have arrested five suspects. Two were injured in an encounter." Yash, who also leads the Special Task Force (STF) of the Uttar Pradesh Police, said that the Bahraich police, which is investigating the murder and subsequent violence, has established a link involving one of the accused in Nepal. Bahraich Superintendent of Police Vrinda Shukla said the suspects were attempting to flee to Nepal when the Special Task Force (STF) and Bahraich police received a tip-off regarding their whereabouts. Acting on this information, the police intercepted the suspects near the Handa Basehari canal in the Nanpara Kotwali area.

Team India gifts match to NZ



(L-R) Virat Kohli, Sarfaraz Khan, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja and R Ashwin walking off the ground after being dismissed for a duck during the second day of the first Test cricket match between India and New Zealand, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, in Bengaluru, Thursday PTI

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

Taking the sparkle out of the Diwali mood, team India was bowled out for just 46 runs in a span of the first session of day's play on Thursday. India after winning the toss missed the opportunity to give their bowlers a crack against New Zealand in overcast conditions after day one got washed out due to rain, which bamboozled their batting strength on day two in Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru.

India's total of 46 has now become the lowest team score at home after 75 all out against West Indies in Delhi (1987). India who were riding sky high in ICC world Test Championship (2023-2025) got stunned by Kiwi bowlers. Matt Henry and William O'Rourke were the star performers under the grey sky. Indian Skipper Rohit Sharma was the first wicket down by Tim Southee, Virat Kohli who came after one down which usually is not his position to bat on test

matches on unfriendly conditions for batters, this move shifted KL Rahul to number six. However both Virat and Rahul went scoreless and were dismissed by William O'Rourke. Matt Henry who achieved a five wicket haul against India's batting lineup dismissed Sarfaraz Khan, R.Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja on ducks and William O'Rourke took four wickets. India's scorecard includes five ducks which were the talking point of debaters in India's innings.

Work for national development: PM to NDA allies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

All the 13 Chief Ministers and 16 Deputy CMs of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies such as Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Janata Dal (United), Shiv Sena viz chief ministers of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Sikkim, Nagaland, and Meghalaya vowed to work together for national development during the meeting of the National Democratic Alliance Chief Ministers' Council in Chandigarh, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The meeting was called to discuss national development issues. The meeting schedule holds significance as it has come ahead of the Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly polls, and soon after the historic victory in Haryana and formation of a new government in Jammu and Kashmir. Twenty CMs of the NDA, and their deputies engaged in the half-day conclave, the first of its kind after many years. "Chaired a meeting of NDA Chief Ministers and Deputy Chief Ministers. We had extensive discussions on aspects of good governance and ways to improve people's lives. Our



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Health Minister JP Nadda with NDA Chief Ministers during National Democratic Alliance Chief Ministers' Council Meeting, in Chandigarh, Thursday PTI

alliance is committed to furthering national progress and empowering the poor and downtrodden," Modi said on his social media handle soon after the meeting. The proceedings of conclave commenced immediately after the swearing-in ceremony of newly-elected Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP National President J P Nadda, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu were present in the meeting. According to sources, the deliberations in this meeting covered a structured agenda covering all aspects of national development. "It also discussed subjects like observance of Sanvidhan Ka Amrut Mahotsav and

the Year of 50th anniversary of the attempt to murder democracy," sources said. Sources added that the PM also emphasised that people should find solutions to their problems from governance, and the administration's basic concept depends on how we address the grievances of the people. "This is why there should be an attempt to focus on P2G2 - pro-people, proactive, good governance. Today, 17 CMs and 18 Deputy CMs of the NDA attended the meeting," BJP chief JP Nadda said at a press conference on NDA Chief Ministers' council meeting. "Six proposals were discussed upon in today's meeting and all six proposals were unanimously passed..." Nadda added.



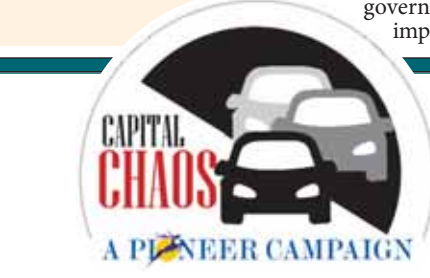
J and K politics in peace, terror groups to target forces

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

With the peaceful culmination of the Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan-based terrorist groups, operating in the Pir Panjal region, are once again planning to target security forces in the area. Late Wednesday night, alert troops after observing suspicious movement of a group of heavily armed terrorists challenged them in the thickly forested area of Gursai top in Poonch. Taking advantage of the pitch-dark conditions and undulating hostile terrain the group of terrorists may have managed to flee the area. To track down their footprints, the security forces swiftly launched a massive search operation at Mohri Shahstar in the Gursai top area of Poonch district.



Nayab Singh Saini takes oath as the Chief Minister of Haryana for the second time during the swearing-in ceremony, in Panchkula, Thursday PTI



New flyovers, underpasses are pretty, but useless

Central Road Research Institute report suggests these add to the problem

BY RAJESH KUMAR

As Delhi is grappling with congested roads and the increasing volume of traffic, the Central Road Research Institute (CRR) in one of its reports had suggested that construction of flyovers and underpasses, and widening roads or right of way are not better approaches and solutions to deal with congestion and heavy road traffic. The report found that new infrastructure projects like flyovers and underpasses can actually increase the number of cars on the road and worsen sustainability. The report, titled: "Gradual sustainability approach for urban transport through subtle measures", highlights that within a few years of construction, such approaches have increased the number of personal vehicles on roads and worsened sustainability without reducing

congestion. The report was based on a study conducted at five key Metro stations in Delhi. To understand the traffic situation on the ground, the CRR selected five key Metro stations - Karol Bagh, Laxmi Nagar, Kailash Colony, Lajpat Nagar and Inderlok - in the most crowded locations in the city that always see heavy traffic outside the premises. These are also stations where not only vehicle users face problems, but Metro users as well as pedestrians complain of discomfort in movement and safety issues. The study has clearly demonstrated that parking related policies (including segregated parking lanes for cycle rickshaws and electric-rickshaws) can result in improvement in vehicular speed by two to six km/h in the influence zone of the selected metro stations for all categories of motorised vehicles.



This is expected to result in total daily savings of 593 litres of petrol, 103 litres diesel and 643 kg CNG, and total CO2e (equivalent) reduction of 3.5 tonne/day in all the five metro stations. It is evident that the sustainable scenarios (viz. segregation/shifting of on-street parking, signal design, etc.) or similar to those that have been suggested, would result in

significant reduction in fuel consumption and corresponding CO2e (equivalent) emissions. This report also shows that minor corrections on roads like improving facilities for sustainable modes, no new construction for vehicle users, implementing on-street parking, lane and segregated parking for cycles and e-rickshaws and better crossing facilities for pedestrians can reduce congestion. Further, it is also suggested that for effective improvement measures (covered through alternate scenarios), the following areas need to be addressed while preparing traffic circulation plans: (i) On-street parking needs to be channelised and preferably on minor roads. (ii) Segregated parking lanes for cycle rickshaws and e-rickshaws. (iii) Redesign of signals, including 'no free left' turn and 'all red' phase around metro stations. (iv) Pedestrian crossing at-grade as

well as through metro stations. (v) Alternative bus stops locations suited to traffic and road users. (vi) Providing bus stops with 'bus bays' only for roads with less than two-lane carriageway. (vii) Possibility to provide segregated pick-up/drop off zones underneath metro stations for taxis, private vehicles and autos. (viii) Explore potential spaces for utilisation of different road users, metro commuters. The Unified Traffic and Transportation Infrastructure (Planning & Engineering) Centre, the nodal agency for traffic planning for the National Capital has specific guidelines for road construction including desirable aspects such as drainage and pedestrian and cycling tracks. But frequently, footpaths, where they exist, turn into parking lots or are encroached upon, while the roads themselves have no consistency in terms of lanes, width or signage.

Traffic advisory issued for Sunday Half Marathon

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Traffic in south and central Delhi will be affected and regulated for more than six hours till 11 am on Sunday in view of the Half Marathon. Moreover, the Delhi metro will begin from early morning to facilitate the travel of the participants.

Traffic movement will be regulated on the above roads from 04:45 AM to 11:00 AM. However, uninterrupted movement of emergency vehicles will be facilitated. Cross traffic movement at junctions located along the route will be allowed depending upon the location and density of participants," the traffic advisory said. According to the advisory, more than 35,000 participants are expected to compete in the Delhi Half Marathon which will be flagged off from the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium around 4.45 am. The Half Marathon open and police cup 21.09 kilometres will start from the JLN Stadium from 5 am. Elite Athlete Men and Women



(Indian and international) - Half Marathon 21.09 km will start from the JLN Stadium Complex from 6.50 am. Open 10 km will start from 7.30 am from the Jeevan Deep Building on Sansad Marg, the advisory said. Traffic will be diverted as per the requirement on fourth Avenue-Bhisham Pitamaha Marg junction under Sewa Nagar flyover, Kotla traffic signal, Sewa Nagar traffic signal, Jor Bagh Colony Road, Aurobindo Marg-Lodhi Road junction, Subramaniam

Bharti Marg-Max Mueller Marg junction, Lala Lajpat Rai Marg, Mathura Road-Bhairon Road junction, round about Man Singh Road, Janpath-Maulana Azad Road junction, round Gurudwara Rakabganj, Sansad Marg-Outer Circle junction, Tilak Marg-C Hexagon junction, etc. It added that commuters are requested to cooperate in this celebration of fitness and said, "The citizens of Delhi are requested to cooperate in this celebration of fitness by avoiding the roads and junctions in the vicinity of Delhi Half Marathon and travelling via suggested routes mentioned above. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring smooth traffic management. Additionally, in a statement, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation said, "In order to facilitate the participants of upcoming Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon to be held on Sunday at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, the Delhi Metro train services will begin from 03.15 AM from terminal stations of all Lines except the

Airport Express Line and Grey Line i.e, Dhansa Bus Stand to Dwarka." Services on the lines will be available between 3:15 am to 4 am in an interval of 15 minutes and 4 am to 6 am in an interval of 20 minutes apart from the normal schedule followed from 6 am at the metro stations. "For the convenience and guidance of the participants, the organizers of the Marathon will also be deploying volunteers at specific Metro stations which include JLN Stadium, Jor Bagh, Janpath, Jangpura and Rajiv Chowk," it added. The event organizer is sponsoring the cost of travel for to and fro moment to the event venue for the participants of Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon 2024. "For this DMRC has provided the required number of QR tickets as per the applicable Metro fare. For runners, to and fro Metro ride is free. Runners are advised to collect the wrist bands with special QR code along with their bibs from the organizers," it stated.

Elephant being gifted to temple known for its animal care

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A temple in south Delhi known for its animal care initiatives is gearing up to bring an elephant gifted by an Assam resident, which will join over two-dozen horses and hundreds of cats and dogs sheltered at a facility spread across 1.5-acre of land in the Sainik Farms area.

The 40-year-old female elephant has been gifted to the Maa Baglamukhi temple located on the top floor of a four-storey residential building in Greater Kailash-II by a devotee from Assam named Siba Nath Doley, Shiv Kumar 'Guruji', officiating priest of the shrine, said. "The temple is dedicated to animal care, a mission deeply rooted in our religious and spiritual traditions" Shiv Kumar said. When she reaches Delhi, the elephant named 'Ranjita' will be kept in the Sainik Farms facility along with other animals, a temple representative said.

The temple is now awaiting final approval for moving in the elephant as all formalities at its



end have been completed. "We have obtained all necessary permissions and made arrangements for sheltering the elephant after it reaches Delhi. A site inspection has also been conducted by the forest officials," he added.

"A transfer request has been forwarded by a high-powered committee on elephant welfare to the Assam chief wildlife warden," a senior forest official said.

Formed by the Supreme Court in 2023, the committee oversees the rehabilitation of captive elephants across India.

In April this year, Doley sought permission from the forest department in Assam to gift the elephant to the temple expecting that she will be well taken care of in Delhi. The temple employees already take care of 300 cats, 28 horses, more than 200 dogs, and a camel at the Sainik Farms facility, Shiv Kumar said.

"Our temple has long been committed to the service of animals, especially the older ones. We have ensured all necessary facilities for them such as food, sanitation and veterinary care," he added.

Procession taken out on Balmiki Jayanti from Red Fort to Panchkuian Road

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A procession on the occasion of Balmiki Jayanti was taken out on Thursday from Red Fort to Panchkuian Road and leaders cutting across party lines paid floral tributes. The procession was organized under the aegis of Valmiki Chaudhary Sarpanch Committee and Valmiki Pragat Divas Janam Utsav Committee. Jagad Guru Shankaracharya Ji, Valmiki Temple, Panchkuian Road, paid floral tribute to the feet of Maharshi and extended his best wishes to the society. The procession was organized under the supervision of patron of the procession former MLA Jai Kishan. Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva and state Congress President Devendra Yadav besides Haroon Yusuf paid floral tributes. Delhi leaders Praveen



Khandelwal, Jai Prakash Agarwal, Sanjeev Sharma of Vishva Hindu Parishad, dozens of Congress and BJP leaders were present. The procession with tableaux based on the life of Maharshi Valmiki started from Red Fort and passed through various routes and ended at the historic Valmiki Temple, Panchkuian Road. In his speech, Jai Kishan said Maharshi Valmiki is the idol of all of us. And by composing a book like Ramayana, he has given us the message of

victory of good over evil. AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday participated in Valmiki Jayanti celebrations at various locations across Delhi and emphasised his government's efforts to uplift the Valmiki community. Addressing a gathering in the Shobha Yatra organised at the Red Fort, Kejriwal claimed that the AAP government has taken many decisions in the interest of the Valmiki community ever since it was formed.

DDA's UER-II Project set to be fully operational by December

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA)'s ambitious Urban Extension Road (UER)-II Project, being constructed at a cost of Rs 3,600 Crore provided by it, is set to fully become operational by December this year.

While of the total of 75.71 kms of the total length, 54.21 kms falls in Delhi, 21.50 kms falls in Haryana. National Highway Authority of India (NHAI), is implementing the project and Haryana Government, UP Government and GNCTD are other stakeholders, DDA said here on Thursday.

Giving details, officials said Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena on Wednesday reviewed the progress of the project along with Delhi Chief Secretary and top officers of DDA, NHAI, MCD, PWD, I&FC Department and Delhi Cantonment Board.

Package Details:

Pkg	Description	Length (Kms)	Status
I	NH 1 Intersection to Karala Kanjhawala Road	15.70	99.00 %
II	From Karala Kanjhawala Road till Nangloi - Najafgarh Road	13.45	83.70 %
III	From Nangloi - Najafgarh Road till Sector 24 Dwarka	9.66	Completed
IV	Spur to Sonapat Bypass	29.6	Substantially Completed
V	Spur to Bahadurgarh by-pass from UER-II at Chhagne 26-100 near Ditchaon Kalan	7.269	Substantially Completed
Total		75.679	

Stressing upon the need of seamless coordination since there were multiple departments / agencies as also the Government of India, GNCTD and Government of Haryana involved, Saxena directed that the remaining portion of the project should be completed at the earliest. UER-II was conceptualized

will dramatically improve commuting in outer, west and south-west Delhi, apart from providing direct access between Sonapat and Gurugram in Haryana.

The project, which connects NH-44 (Delhi-Chandigarh Highway) to NH-48 in South Delhi through the entire stretch between Bawana, Narela-Kanjhawala, Mundka and Dwarka, etc. in Delhi, has a spur in North-West going to Sonapat / Jind, a spur from Najafgarh going to Bahadurgarh and also connects with the Dwarka Expressway from Gurugram in Haryana.

It further connects to the Eastern and Western Peripheral Expressways aimed at providing lasting solution to traffic congestion, easy transit and pollution control in Delhi, Haryana and UP.

Once fully operational, this project is expected to bring about a sea-change in the

socio-economic and infra-structural landscape of North, North-West, West and South-West areas of Delhi.

The LG discussed the existing bottlenecks and the way ahead. When informed of the ongoing works of construction of overhead road over the Mangeshpur Drain, Saxena instructed that no pillar supporting the road should be constructed in the Right of Way of the Drain.

Drawing from his recent experience with drains in Delhi - especially the Barapulla and KushakNallahs, which he had recently visited and got cleaned, Saxena informed that construction of pillars in these drains had substantially blocked their flow, in the process causing over flooding during heavy rains. He accordingly instructed that any future exercise in the city, this factor should be taken into consideration.

Rai calls an emergency meeting amid rising levels of pollution in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising levels of pollution in the national Capital, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai called an emergency meeting on Friday with officials from relevant departments.

The departments will include Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Public Works Department (PWD), Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), Environment department, Transport department, and Traffic Police. Rai on Thursday stated that the AAP government had announced its Winter Action Plan on 25 September, focusing on 21 key points to combat winter pollution and departments have already started implementing the plan. The Minister instructed immediate action and the launch of special campaigns in the affected areas. Sharing the preparations to tackle the rising pollution in Delhi, the senior AAP leader



said, "A War Room has been set up to monitor pollution activities, and bio-decomposer spraying has commenced to manage crop stubble. An anti-dust campaign has also been initiated at construction sites to control dust pollution."

Claiming that Delhi's air quality has been consistently improving due to strict measures taken by the government, he said, "In the last nine

years, air pollution in Delhi has decreased by 34.6%. To bring further improvement, the government launched an anti-dust campaign on October 7, which will run for a month as part of the Winter Action Plan."

The minister emphasised that all construction sites must adhere to 14 specific regulations related to dust control. "Teams will take strict action in case of violations, and reg-

ular monitoring of construction sites has been ordered. To further improve air quality, 523 teams have been deployed, along with 500 water sprinklers and 85 mechanical road sweeping (MRS) machines across Delhi," he added.

Further, Rai further shared that the Green War Room is keeping a close watch on all 13 hotspots. "Instructions are being issued to concerned departments from the War Room, and DPCC teams are conducting frequent visits to these areas," he added. The Minister stated that various agencies are working together to address Delhi's pollution problem, and the Green War Room has been established to coordinate these efforts. "The War Room is also responsible for forwarding pollution-related complaints received via the Green Delhi App to the 33 relevant departments and monitoring the resolution of these complaints," he said.

AAP kicks-off first Jansampark Abhiyan in Greater Kailash, Bharadwaj 'warns' people of BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Delhi elections slated to be held early next year, AAP kicked off its first 'Jansampark Abhiyan' in Greater Kailash where senior AAP leader and Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj warned the public of BJP, claiming that it will end all of AAP's welfare schemes if it comes to power.

As part of the campaign, Bharadwaj also distributed Kejriwal's letter to the residents claiming that his arrests were politically motivated and it is the BJP's larger plan to derail Delhi's progress. Bharadwaj stated that the former CM Arvind Kejriwal has addressed the questions that were on every Delhiite's mind through his letter: Why was he jailed under false charges? Why was his insulin withheld for months? Why was his life put in danger by the BJP? He claimed, "The reason is clear, after Arvind Kejriwal was jailed, Delhi came to a stand-



still." The senior AAP leader said that the BJP's plan was to paralyse Delhi in the absence of Arvind Kejriwal. "Medicine supply in hospitals were halted, tests were stopped at Mohalla Clinics, pensions for the elderly were delayed for four months, doctors' salaries were withheld, water and sewage projects were paused, and road construction came to a stop," he alleged.

"Now that Arvind Kejriwal is out, work has resumed, and the

public understands this well. The BJP's latest conspiracy is to take control of Delhi and dismantle the Delhi model," said Bharadwaj.

He claimed that the people living in the states governed by the BJP are not being provided the services that Delhi residents enjoy. "The BJP has no answers to these questions. To silence them, they plotted Arvind Kejriwal's arrest to weaken the AAP government. We are taking Arvind Kejriwal's letter to the public to expose

this plot," he added. "People are already aware of the BJP's tactics, and this letter further exposes them. In Haryana, the people wanted to oust the BJP, but the party used caste politics to stay in power. They push a narrative of Jats versus other castes. The Jats in Delhi should understand that while the BJP may pretend to support them here, they are clearly against the Jats in Haryana," the Delhi Minister stated.

Meanwhile, the Delhi BJP attacked the AAP leader and said, "People of Haryana have just rejected the deceptive development model of AAP as did the people of Gujarat, Goa and Himachal Pradesh in state elections as well as in Lok Sabha elections." Delhi BJP Spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said that people of Delhi have made up their mind to free Delhi of misgovernance and corruption of AAP. "Whatever gimmicks AAP leaders may play, Delhiites will not support them," he said.

Prices of staple onions and tomatoes likely to fall ahead of festive season

VIBHU JOSHI ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the festive season, the pockets of the Delhi households will take a sigh of relief as the prices of staple onions and tomatoes is likely to fall with certain measures in place by the government to arrest the price. Prices of onion which are currently ranging between rupees 80 to 120 per kg and tomato prices at rupees 100 to 130 per kg depending upon locality, are going to come down, said a vegetable trader.

Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare announced 'Kanda Express' which will be transporting 1,600 tonnes of buffer stock of onion via railways from Maharashtra to Delhi. Kanda express will depart from Maharashtra's Lasalgaon

Railway Station and it is expected to reach Delhi's Kishanganj Railway Station on October 20.

"Additionally, onions will be transported through rail rakes to the northeastern regions as well as key cities in Uttar Pradesh, including Lucknow and Varanasi. This move is expected to help stabilize prices amid increased demand during the festive season," Khare said.

The government is currently selling the buffer stock of onions at the subsidised rate of Rs 35 per kg. They will continue selling tomatoes at a subsidised rate of Rs 65 per kg in Delhi-NCR. Since October 7, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India (NCCF) has sold around 10,000 kg of tomatoes through mobile



vans, NAFED outlets, e-commerce platforms like Otopy and Zepto, Mother Dairy's Safal outlets, and Kendriya Bhandar in Delhi and Mumbai at a subsidised rate. To further help the common folks, the number of mobile vans will be increased from 600 to 1,000 ahead of Diwali. The decision of transporting onion via rail is more cost effective as one rake (equivalent to 56 trucks) from Nasik to Delhi costs Rs 70.20 lakh compared to Rs 84 lakh by road. There is an expected weekly supply of tomato from Maharashtra to stabilise the prices in the capital. The government's market intervention this time has extended beyond a week, reflecting the severity of the price surge and the adminis-

tration's commitment to providing relief to consumers during the festive season.

As of October 16 tomato cost Rs 80 and onion cost Rs 70 per KG in East Delhi, in North Delhi and West Delhi it cost Rs 90 for a KG of onion and for a kilo of tomato it cost Rs 100, in South Delhi onion is being sold at Rs 70 per KG and tomato at 110 rupees per KG.

Khare said relief may be in sight for Delhi-NCR residents reeling under soaring tomato prices, which have crossed Rs 100 per kg mark, with increased supplies expected from Maharashtra in the coming days. The price surge comes as supplies from key southern states Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have been disrupted due to retreating monsoon

rains causing crop damage and pest infestation.

This supply crunch, coupled with festive season demand, has pushed prices northward. "While weekly arrivals have been impacted, we expect supplies from Maharashtra to improve shortly, which should help stabilise prices in the national capital," Khare said, adding that the government is maintaining strict vigilance on price movements. Since October 7, the government has sold around 10,000 kg of tomatoes through mobile vans and outlets in Delhi and Mumbai at a subsidised rate.

"The retail intervention will continue until we see a meaningful impact on prices," Khare said, noting that similar measures had helped control prices last year.

Jailed IAS officer Ranu Sahu arrested in DMF scam

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested jailed IAS officer Ranu Sahu in the alleged District Mineral Fund (DMF) scam in Chhattisgarh. It is the second arrest after Maya Varier, the then Assistant Commissioner, Tribal Development Department at Korba. She was arrested in the case on Wednesday. Sahu was produced before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court which granted her ED custody till October 22. Varier was also in ED custody till October 22. A 2010 batch IAS officer, Sahu is in jail in an alleged coal levy scam money laundering case. The ED initiated investigation on the basis of three FIRs registered by



Chhattisgarh Police for siphoning money from the exchequer by DMF contractors in collusion with officials of the state government and political executives. This case is related to corruption and misuse of funds from the DMF in Chhattisgarh. DMF is a trust funded by miners set up in all districts of Chhattisgarh with an aim to work for the benefit of those affected by mining related projects and activities. Sahu was the district collector of Korba between May 2021 and June 2022 while Varier was posted in Korba from August 2021 to March 2023. During their tenure in Korba, an organised system of collection of illegal commissions from the vendors and contractors was operated. The contractors allegedly

It is the second arrest after Maya Varier, the then Assistant Commissioner, Tribal Development Department at Korba. paid huge amounts to officials. ED investigation revealed that DMF Fund allocated only to Korba district was more than Rs. 1,000 crore from its inception till FY 2022-23.

Masked men loot Rs 20L in Raipur



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Two bike-borne masked robbers on Thursday robbed a supervisor of a real estate company of around Rs

20 lakh on the outskirts of Raipur. The incident took place around 10 am at Sector 15 in Kaushalya Mata Vihaar when Manoj Kumar Dhruv was going to his office, Mujgahan

The incident took place around 10 am at Sector 15 in Kaushalya Mata Vihaar. Station House Officer Ashish Singh Rajput told The Pioneer. The two robbers turned up on a motorcycle from behind and snatched the bag with money from Dhruv. They sped away.



Three girl cricketers from tribal-dominated Jashpur region in Chhattisgarh have been selected in the Under-17 National Women's Cricket team. The girls are Angel Lakra, Jhumur Tirki and Varsha Kumari.

Jal Jeevan caters drinking water needs of remote villages

STAFF REPORTER ■ MAHASAMUND

Village Kachhardih in Chhattisgarh's Mahasamund has overcome a long-standing water crisis with the construction of an overhead water tank and the laying of a pipeline under the Jal Jeevan Mission. Recently the village Kachhardih received the 'Har Ghar Jal' certification as the Jal Jeevan Mission has solved the need of drinking water in the village. Kachhardih, 70 km from Mahasamund town, has been grappling with drinking water issues for years. Although the village had access to four hand and two power pumps, these sources often ran dry in the summer. Many families lacked private water arrangements, forcing them to fetch water



from ponds and wells. This placed a heavy burden on women and children, who had to trek long distances for water. Schools and Anganwadi centers also suffered from inadequate drinking water facilities. A turning point for Kachhardih came when a Gram Sabha was organized under the Jal Jeevan Mission, raising awareness

among villagers about the scheme's objectives and benefits. A 'Gram Jal Swachhata Samiti' was formed, ensuring 50 per cent women participation, with the Gram Sarpanch appointed as chairperson and the Panchayat Secretary serving as Secretary. Under the Jal Jeevan Mission, a 40-kilolitre water tank was

constructed at a cost of Rs 66.09 lakh. Approximately 635 meters of pipeline was laid, enabling tap water supply to every household. Today, every household in Kachhardih receives water, alleviating the struggle for this vital resource. The availability of clean drinking water has led to a decline in waterborne diseases.

How India is fighting against lymphatic filariasis

AGENCIES ■

Mass drug administration (MDA), social mobilisation via self-help groups (SHS), and public health workers like ASHAs are playing a significant role in reducing lymphatic filariasis cases in India, experts said on Thursday. Lymphatic filariasis (LF), commonly known as elephantiasis (Haatipaon), is a debilitating disease transmitted by the bite of a Culex mosquito that breeds in dirty or polluted water. It is one of the world's leading causes of long-term disability. While not fatal, it significantly impairs quality of life, leading to severe physical debility and imposing substantial social and economic burdens on affected individuals, their families, and entire communities. To fight the disease, endemic to the country, the government has taken an extensive measure to combat and control the disease by running a massive MDA campaign. Launched nationwide in 2004, to help control and eliminate neglected tropical diseases, the MDA achieved a remarkable 82.5 per cent coverage in 2023. It involves a door-to-door administration of preventive medications in endemic areas. "Lymphatic filariasis (LF) is a complex disease that has multifaceted social, environmental, and economic determinants. We cannot eliminate it by working in silos; it requires a collaborative effort from various sectors working together seamlessly. Acknowledging this, the government has made inter-sectoral convergence a central part of its strategy to eliminate LF," Rajshree Das, Senior Director, PCI India, told IANS. PCI works as a technical assistance partner to the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP), of the Ministry of

Health & Family Welfare. In March 2023, then Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandavaya called for eliminating lymphatic filariasis three years ahead of the global target through the five-pronged roadmap by 2027. The global target is 2030. In August this year, the government launched the second phase of the bi-annual nationwide MDA campaign for lymphatic filariasis elimination. It targets 63 endemic districts in Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Odisha, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. Das noted that if LF is left untreated, it can progress to chronic symptoms including lymphoedema (tissue swelling) or elephantiasis (skin/tissue thickening) of limbs and hydrocele (scrotal swelling) leading to disability. "Lymphatic filariasis is the second most disabling disease in the world after leprosy. In India, till 2023, 6.19 lakh cases of lymphoedema and 1.26 lakh cases of hydrocele were reported from endemic districts," Dr Aruna Sharma, practitioner development economist and retired GOI secretary, told IANS. Sharma, who worked extensively on panchayat-level governance models and across ministries, also called for using technology and inclusive education to spread awareness about the disease to make a holistic approach towards disease elimination. Meanwhile, the experts noted another major component of India's strategy to eliminate LF -- Morbidity Management and Disability Prevention (MMDP). "India's MMDP strategy involves distributing MMDP kits for home-based morbidity management of lymphoedema, providing hydrocele surgeries in CHCs, district hospitals and medical colleges, as well as distributing disability certificates to eligible patients," Das said, adding that these facilities are available free of cost.

HNLU launches Lex Osmose course series

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU), Nava Raipur, is going to launch the seventh edition of its prestigious 'Lex Osmose' courses. The courses will start from October 22 and end on December 31. Building on the success of the previous six editions, this latest offering presents six specialized courses including, among other things, cyber laws, cyber crime investigation and digital forensics, international trade in services as well as banking law and finance. This edition features a distinguished panel of instructors including Md. Irfan, System Analyst at NALSAR; Sumanta Chaudhary, retired IAS officer; and Anish Ghose, Senior Legal Counsel at Infosys Ltd.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता. लो.नि.वि.. संभाग क्र-0-3. डी-1/17, सेक्टर-17, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर (छ.ग.)

प्रथम निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

NIT-16/2024-2025/ व ले लि दिनांक: 20-09-2024

निविदा प्राप्त करके हेतु आवेदन प्रस्तुत - 24/10/2024 अपराह्न 5.30 बजे तक करने की अंतिम तिथि

उपरोक्त कार्य प्रस्तुत निविदाएं प्राप्त :- 30/10/2024 अपराह्न 5.30 बजे तक करने की अंतिम तिथि

निविदा खोलने की तिथि :- 04/11/2024 पूर्वाह्न 11.30 बजे तक

निविदाकारों की श्रेणी:- ई-पंजीयन के अंतर्गत श्रेणी "द" से "अ" तक

निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की अनुमानित लागत (लाख में) अमानत राशि (रु.में) बैंक सार्वेक्षी (रु.में)
1	2	3
T0079	स्वामी विवेकानंद स्टेडियम कोर्टा रायपुर में संघारण मरम्मत कार्य हेतु पेटी बाजार सामग्री प्रदाय कार्य	5000.00 75000.00
T0080	सेक्टर 18 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में पेटी बाजार सामग्री प्रदाय कार्य	5000.00 75000.00
T0081	राज्य निर्वाचन आयोग सेक्टर 19 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर के चारों ओर जाली फेंसिंग बाड़ड़ी एवं विल गेट का निर्माण	380.00 4000.00 60000.00
T0082	सेक्टर 18 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में उच्च अधिकारियों के निवास (बंगलो बी-1 / 12) में परिवर्तन/परिवर्तन कार्य	500.00 5000.00 75000.00
T0083	सेक्टर 18 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में उच्च अधिकारियों के निवास (बंगलो बी-1 / 13) में परिवर्तन/परिवर्तन कार्य	500.00 5000.00 75000.00
T0084	प्रमुख अभियंता कार्यालय एवं सफ्टिक हाउस सेक्टर 24 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर में फर्नीचर कार्य	4.95.00 5000.00 75000.00

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रायपुर

G-242503265/3

AXIS BANK A.C.Market, 4th Floor, 1, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata- 700071 Public Notice for – E-Auction of pledged assets being Gold

The Borrowers, in specific and the public in general are here by notified that public auction of the gold ornaments pledge in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted by the Axis Bank at the below mentioned Branch.

The mentioned Borrowers has availed the credit facility from the Axis Bank Limited against the pledge of gold ornaments ("Gold Loan Facility") in favour of the Bank towards the security. The Demand notices were issued to the Borrowers/Guarantors calling up the Borrowers/Guarantors to pay their outstanding amount towards the Gold loan facility availed. As the Borrowers/Guarantors have failed to repay the outstanding loan amount, the bank is constrained to invoke the pledge and proposed to conduct an e-auction sale of pledged gold ornaments more particularly described in schedule of property hereunder on 28-10-2024 (dated) at 12.30 PM-3.30PM (time of e-auction) on "As In Where Is", "As Is What Is", "Whatever There Is" and "No Recourse Basis".

Details of Borrowers and outstanding amount.

Branch Name	Customer Name	Loan A/c No.	Amount Outstanding	Date of Demand Notice	Gross Weight Grams	Net weight grams.
AMBIKAPUR [CT]	ANJU SAHU	XXXXXXXXXX8360	822255	18-Jun-24	21.300	20.800
AMBIKAPUR [CT]	ABHIROUP ROY	XXXXXXXXXX1892	0612	7-Sep-24	13.100	13.000
ARANG C0226 CT	ASHISH KUMAR BHARDWAJ	XXXXXXXXXX9689	81957	7-Sep-24	23.800	23.400
ARANG C0226 CT	SABHWAGY KUMAR SHARMA	XXXXXXXXXX1317	53000	7-Sep-24	12.900	12.800
BAIKUNTHPUR CT	GEETA PRASAD RAJWADE	XXXXXXXXXX9527	24627	4-Aug-24	10.200	8.620
BAIKUNTHPUR CT	SHEKH SAIDUL ISLAM	XXXXXXXXXX7622	100405	7-Jun-24	30.400	26.000
BALODA BAZAR BALO CT	TULSI RAM BARLE	XXXXXXXXXX2894	44280	4-Aug-24	10.600	10.500
BSASNA CT	SEBATI BAI KAIBARTA	XXXXXXXXXX9768	58924	4-Aug-24	14.100	13.900
BEMETARA C0697 CT	KIRAN DHUV	XXXXXXXXXX6822	136168	7-Sep-24	34.470	29.000
BHATAPARA [CT]	TAWESHVAR LAHRE	XXXXXXXXXX4877	45472	7-Sep-24	9.400	9.200
BHILAI CHARODA C1759 CT	AJAY SAHANI	XXXXXXXXXX5646	135325	7-Sep-24	34.300	30.300
BIJAPUR CT	KRISHNA RAO KE BI	XXXXXXXXXX4051	120525	4-Aug-24	31.700	30.700
BIJAPUR CT	RITA DHALI	XXXXXXXXXX7811	102623	7-Sep-24	24.100	24.100
BIJAPUR CT	DANESHVAR SVAMI	XXXXXXXXXX3368	120716	29-Sep-23	24.900	24.900
BIJAPUR CT	REENA GUPTA	XXXXXXXXXX9875	45610	7-Sep-24	12.500	12.150
BIJAPUR CT	DANESHVAR SVAMI	XXXXXXXXXX3145	39581	15-Feb-24	8.800	8.800
DANTEWADA C1443 CT	GOGULA SRIRAMULU	XXXXXXXXXX9759	74003	20-Jul-24	17.500	17.500
DHARAMPUR JAD CT	LAHSHESHWAR .	XXXXXXXXXX3124	120901	7-Sep-24	27.700	27.000
DIPKA BRANCH KORB CT	BIKKI SINGH	XXXXXXXXXX6234	61906	7-Sep-24	15.600	15.400
DONGARGAON C1718 CT	SHEKH RAMJAN	XXXXXXXXXX1005	74557	4-Aug-24	19.200	18.400
DURG [CT]	PINKI VERMA	XXXXXXXXXX7386	119508	7-Sep-24	28.060	27.300
JAGDALPUR [CT]	MUKESH SETHIYA	XXXXXXXXXX9569	96881	7-Sep-24	23.500	23.000
JAGDALPUR [CT]	MOHAMMED HUSSIN	XXXXXXXXXX4461	82882	7-Sep-24	19.600	19.000
JAGDALPUR [CT]	SUKHMATI BAGHEL	XXXXXXXXXX9387	82605	7-Sep-24	20.000	17.500
KONDAGAON C6079 CT	MOHAMMAD IRFAN RIZVI	XXXXXXXXXX6624	67906	2-Apr-24	16.900	16.800
KONDAGAON C6079 CT	ANIL KUMAR SALAM	XXXXXXXXXX6194	123090	22-Mar-24	34.200	28.800
MANENDRAGARH [CT]	KISHAN RAJAK	XXXXXXXXXX3584	51149	5-Dec-23	14.200	14.200
MANENDRAGARH [CT]	SACHIN SINGH	XXXXXXXXXX9849	83044	15-Feb-24	27.100	20.900
MUNGELI MGE CT	ANITA SINGH	XXXXXXXXXX5478	96549	4-Aug-24	25.100	24.800
NARAYANPUR CT	SOMA SARKAR	XXXXXXXXXX7396	141450	2-Apr-24	42.380	39.300
NARAYANPUR CT	KIRAN KUMAR DEVNATH	XXXXXXXXXX9011	92131	5-Aug-24	21.840	21.500
NEHRU NAGAR SQUARE, BHILAI [CT]	ASHISH YADAV	XXXXXXXXXX6452	84364	20-Nov-23	24.000	23.800
PENDRA CT	ABAHY SINGH	XXXXXXXXXX0064	38621	7-Sep-24	9.900	9.100
RAJENDRA NAGAR, BILA CT	PRABHA CHANDRVANSHI	XXXXXXXXXX5379	77113	2-Apr-24	22.000	21.000
SARANGARH C4585 CT	ROOP PATEL	XXXXXXXXXX3757	44269	7-Sep-24	11.900	11.540
SEEPAT ROAD, BILASPUR [CT]	MOHAN KUMAR VASTRAKAR	XXXXXXXXXX9122	100108	6-Sep-24	23.900	23.000
SUKMA C7099 CT	HANUMANT SINGH THAKUR	XXXXXXXXXX9673	31107	5-Dec-23	11.000	9.800
TAGORE NAGAR [CT]	AJAY BHAGWANI	XXXXXXXXXX6516	245767	7-Sep-24	63.300	59.100
URLA, RAIPUR [CT]	ANKIT DEWANGAN	XXXXXXXXXX5312	42053	7-Sep-24	13.500	13.000

Axis Bank Ltd. has the authority to remove account/change the auction date without any prior notice. Auction will be held online <https://gold.samil.in> (website of online vendor) between 12.30 pm-3.30pm (time). For detailed Terms and conditions, please log into given website <https://gold.samil.in> (website of online vendor)

Date: 18.10.2024
Place: Kolkata

Authorized Officer
Axis Bank LTD

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PM criticises Congress for neglecting India's culture, urges embracing of Buddha's teachings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Days after India recognised Pali as a classical language, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday criticised past Congress Governments for neglecting the country's cultural legacy after Independence and urged the global community to embrace Buddha's teachings to promote peace amid current geopolitical tensions.

In his address at an event held here to mark the International Abhidharma Divas, he also referred to the current geopolitical scenario and called upon the whole world, "to learn from Buddha, keep the war away, and forge a path for peace". Modi said conferring the status of a classical language on Pali by the government recently, makes this occasion even more special. The prime minister said while every nation associates its heritage with its identity, India was left far behind.



Invaders tried to erase India's identity before its Independence, and those suffering from "slave mindset" did so afterwards, he said, adding that an ecosystem captured the country which took it in a direction opposite to its heritage. Modi said his government's policies and programmes have been guided by the teachings of Lord Buddha, reiterating that the world plagued by instability and insecurity can find

solutions to its problems in his teachings. The entire world can find solutions not in "yuddh" (war) but in Buddha, and it should learn from his teachings to pave the way for peace, he said. Buddha is not only relevant but also a necessity, he said, referring to the current geopolitical situations. "With a lot of faith, I call upon the whole world to learn from Buddha, keep the war away, and forge a path for peace,"

Modi said. In his address, he also quoted some lines from the teachings of Lord Buddha, and said, strife and discord do not lead to peace, and that there is no bigger happiness than peace. "Welfare for everyone this is the message of Lord Buddha," the prime minister told the audience which included a large number of monks, some diplomats and others. Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs said Minority Affairs Kiren Rijju, besides a few monks were also present on the dais. Modi underlined that Buddha is both 'bodh' (consciousness) and 'shodh' (research) subject, and his government was laying emphasis on both academics and research in this area. "I am happy that we have had the privilege of giving the status of a classical language to the Pali language in which the teachings of Lord Buddha have been inherited by the world," Modi said, adding, the honour

accorded to Pali "honours the great heritage of Lord Buddha". He lamented that this ancient language is not in use today, and said to preserve Pali is "the responsibility of all of us". Languages are the soul of a civilisation and culture and this step for honouring Pali is a "humble endeavour" of the government. Modi rued that Pali language took seven decades after Independence to get this status. Lord Buddha, he said, resides in India's soul, and his teachings will "guide us in this Amrit Kaal". He also said that "every language of ours, including Pali, has played an important role in nation building. Our new National Education Policy is becoming a medium for their preservation". Modi also paid tributes to B R Ambedkar, an iconic figure who hailed from Dalit community and converted to Buddhism later, noting that his government has been developing places associated with him and Buddhism.

SC upholds Section 6A of Citizenship Act



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a majority verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act which grants Indian citizenship to immigrants who came to Assam between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971. Section 6A was inserted into the Citizenship Act as a special provision to deal with the citizenship of people covered under the Assam Accord. A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the Assam Accord was a political

solution to the problem of illegal migration. The CJ, writing for himself, upheld the validity and said the magnitude of influx of migrants in Assam is higher as compared to other states considering the smaller land size and the detection of foreigner is an elaborate process. Besides, Justice Surya Kant, who wrote for himself and Justices MM Sundresh and Manoj Misra, concurred with the CJ and held that Parliament had the legislative competence to enact such a provision. Justice JB Pardiwala, however, dissented and held Section 6A as unconstitutional.

The majority verdict held that cut off date of March 25, 1971 for entry into Assam and granting citizenship is correct. Mere presence of different ethnic groups in a state does not mean infringement of Article 29(1), it added. The bench rejected the petitions questioning the constitutional validity of Section 6A. Section 6A of the Citizenship Act grants Indian citizenship benefits to illegal immigrants - mostly from Bangladesh, who entered Assam between January 1, 1966, and March 25, 1971. The provision was incorporated in 1985 following the signing of the Assam Accord between the Rajiv Gandhi government at the Centre and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU). It says those who came to Assam on or after January 1, 1966, but before March 25, 1971, from specified territories, including Bangladesh, in accordance with the Citizenship Act amended in 1985, and since then are residents of the north-eastern state, must register themselves under Section 18 for acquiring Indian citizenship. As a result, the provision fixes March 25, 1971, as the cut-off date for granting citizenship to migrants, particularly those from Bangladesh, residing in Assam.

CDS launches framework for trustworthy AI in defence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Thursday here artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionising warfare and stressed the need to ensure trustworthy AI defence systems are resilient to adversary attacks. He made this assertion while launching Evaluating Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (ETAI) Framework and Guidelines for the Armed Forces alongwith Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chief Samir V Kamat. The ETAI Framework and Guidelines mark a pivotal role in the country's approach to integrate Trustworthy AI into critical defence operations. In his address, the Chief of Defence Staff underscored the urgent need to incorporate trustworthy AI, pointing out



that recent global conflicts have demonstrated how AI is revolutionising modern warfare. He stressed that it is essential to ensure these systems not only work as intended but are also resilient to attacks from adversaries. He congratulated Scientific Analysis Group for developing the ETAI Framework and praised their efforts in advancing the trustworthiness of AI in defence applications. The DRDO Chairman pointed

out that reliability and robustness are no longer optional, but are essential to prevent mission failures and unintended consequences. He highlighted that AI applications are required to be reliable, robust, transparent and safe for the success of future operations. Distinguished Scientist & Director General, Micro Electronic Devices, Computational Systems & Cyber Systems Suma Varughese stated that the ETAI

Framework is a risk-based assessment framework developed specifically for the defence sector. Its principles, criteria and measures are equally applicable to other sectors as well. She affirmed that DRDO will play a key role in implementing the framework and assured that all necessary support will be provided to ensure its success. The ETAI Framework focuses on five broad principles: Reliability & Robustness, Safety & Security, Transparency, Fairness and Privacy. It further defines a comprehensive set of criteria for evaluating trustworthy AI. Complementing the framework, the ETAI Guidelines provide specific measures to be implemented in the AI pipeline to meet these criteria. The framework and guidelines offer developers & evaluators, a structured approach to build and assess Trustworthy AI.

Justice Sanjiv Khanna recommended as next CJ

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has set in motion the process of appointment of his successor by recommending to the Centre the name of senior-most Supreme Court judge Justice Sanjiv Khanna. CJ Chandrachud had on Wednesday handed over the letter of his recommendation to Justice Khanna. Justice Khanna is set to become the 51st Chief Justice of India on November 11. Justice Khanna will have a tenure of little over six months. Elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on January 18, 2019, Justice Khanna will superannuate on May 13, 2025. He was elevated as an additional judge of the Delhi High Court in 2005 and was made a permanent judge in 2006. Born on May 14, 1960, Justice Khanna studied law at the



CJI DY Chandrachud shows Justice Sanjiv Khanna the letter recommending Justice Khanna as next Chief Justice of India. Justice BR Gavai looks on.

Campus Law Centre of Delhi University. Some of the notable judgments of Justice Khanna in the Supreme Court include upholding the use of EVMs in elections, saying the devices were secure which eliminates booth capturing and bogus voting. He was also part of the five-judge bench which

declared the electoral bond scheme, meant for funding of political parties as unconstitutional. Justice Khanna was also part of the five-judge bench which upheld the Centre's 2019 decision abrogating Article 370 of the Constitution which gave special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Youth can register for Yuva Sangam initiative

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Youth from across the country stand a chance to represent their respective states and Union Territories by participating in the "Yuva Sangam", an initiative of the Ministry of Education under the "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" programme, officials said on Thursday. Online registration for the fifth edition of Yuva Sangam is open till October 21. Interested candidates in the age group of 18-30 years, including students, NSS and NYKS volunteers, and employed or self-employed persons, may register through the Yuva Sangam portal before the deadline. Off campus youth, including those enrolled in online courses in different skilling institutions, can also register for the event.

US holds meeting with officials of India Enquiry Committee

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States had a "productive meeting" with visiting officials of the India Enquiry Committee, a State Department official said on Wednesday, adding they were satisfied with the cooperation from the Indian side. "We are satisfied with the cooperation. It continues to be an ongoing process. We continue to work with them on that, but we do appreciate the cooperation and we appreciate them updating us on their investigation as we update them on ours," State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference. He was responding to a question on the visit of officials from the India Enquiry Committee, which is investigating the American allegations of



involvement of an Indian official in the assassination plot of a Sikh separatist, who is also an American citizen. "The meeting that occurred yesterday we updated we being the US government broadly updated members of the Committee of Inquiry about the investigation that the United States has been conducting.

We've received an update from them on the investigation that they have been conducting. It was a productive meeting and I will leave it at that," Miller said. "They did inform us that the individual, who was named in the Justice Department indictment is no longer an employee of the Indian government," he said in response to a question.

Researchers develop nasal delivery for TB drugs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A team of Indian researchers have developed a unique way to deliver Tuberculosis (TB) drugs directly to the brain bypassing the challenging blood-brain barrier (BBB) that limits the effectiveness of many brain TB medicines. This innovative drug delivery method can effectively treat brain TB, a life-threatening condition with a high mortality rate. TB that affects the brain, called Central Nervous System Tuberculosis (CNS-TB), is one of the most dangerous forms of TB, often leading to severe complications or death. One of the biggest challenges in treating CNS-TB is that the drugs used to treat TB struggle to reach the brain because of a protective barrier known as the blood-brain barrier (BBB). This barrier prevents many medicines from entering the



brain, limiting their effectiveness. Scientists at Institute of Nano Science and Technology (INST), Mohali, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) used tiny particles made of a natural material called chitosan, to deliver TB medicines directly to the brain through the nose, bypassing the BBB. These tiny particles, known as nanoparticles, were then made into slightly larger clusters called nano-aggregates, designed for easy nasal delivery. They can hold TB drugs like

isoniazid (INH) and rifampicin (RIF). The drug delivery technology used was nose-to-brain (N2B) drug delivery, which utilizes the olfactory and trigeminal nerve pathways in the nasal cavity to bypass the BBB. By delivering the drug through the nasal route, the nano-aggregates can transport the drugs directly into the brain, significantly improving drug bioavailability at the infection site. Besides, chitosan is known for its mucoadhesive properties, and sticks to the nasal mucosa, which helps the nano-aggregates stay in place and

prolongs the time they can release the drug, enhancing its therapeutic effectiveness. When tested in the lab, these particles stuck well to the inside of the nose and were able to deliver much more medicine into the cells compared to regular TB drugs. When the new treatment was tested on mice infected with TB, the nasal delivery of these nano-aggregates reduced the number of bacteria in the brain by nearly 1,000 times more than in untreated mice. The new treatment could be applied to treat other brain infections, neurodegenerative diseases (like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's), brain tumours, and epilepsy by enabling efficient drug delivery to the brain. This study published in the journal Nanoscale (Royal Society of Chemistry), is the first to show that delivering TB drugs through the nose using these advanced particles can effectively treat brain TB.

CBI charges Congress MP Karti Chidambaram in visa bribery case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed a charge sheet against Congress MP Karti Chidambaram and others in connection with alleged bribery in facilitating visas of Chinese nationals for a power company in 2011 when his father P Chidambaram was the Union Home Minister. In its charge sheet submitted before a special court here, the CBI has named Karti Chidambaram, the Lok Sabha MP from Sivaganga, his close associate S Bhaskaram, company Talawandi Sabo Power Ltd (TSPL), a subsidiary of Vedanta and Mumbai-based Bell Tools, through which bribes were routed. The CBI has invoked charges of criminal conspiracy, cheating, and forgery under the

Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. Other charge-sheeted accused include Viral Mehta, Anup Agarwal, Mansoor Siddiqui and Chetan Shrivastava, said CBI. The agency has filed the charge sheet after two years of probe into its FIR registered in 2022 where it had alleged that the Punjab-based TSPL was setting up a 1980 MW thermal power plant and the work was outsourced to a Chinese company Shandong Electric Power Construction Corp (SEPCO). The project was running behind its schedule and the company was allegedly facing prospects of penalty. "In order to avoid penal actions for the delay, the said private company (TSPL) of Mansa was trying to bring more and more Chinese persons and professionals for their site at district



Mansa (Punjab) and needed project visas over and above the ceiling imposed by the Ministry of Home Affairs," the CBI said in a statement in 2022.

The CBI FIR, which contained findings of the investigating officer who probed the preliminary enquiry, alleged that an executive of TSPL approached Karti

Chidambaram through his "close associate/front man" Bhaskaram. "They devised a back-door way to defeat the purpose of the ceiling (maximum of project visas permissible to the company's plant) by granting permission to re-use 263 project visas allotted to the said Chinese company's officials," the agency had said after the registration of FIR and searches. Project visas were a special type of visa introduced in 2010 for the power and steel sector for which detailed guidelines were issued during Chidambaram's tenure as home minister but there was no provision for the re-issue of project visas, the FIR had alleged. "As per prevalent guidelines, deviation in rare and exceptional cases could be considered and granted only with the approval of the Home

Secretary. However, in view of the above circumstances, the deviation in terms of re-use of project visas is likely to be approved by the then Home Minister..." said CBI. A TSPL executive allegedly submitted a letter to the home ministry on July 30, 2011, seeking approval to reuse the project visas allotted to his company, which was approved within a month and permission was issued, the FIR had alleged. "On August 17, 2011, the executive, on being directed by Bhaskaram, sent a copy of the above a letter dated July 30, 2011 to him through e-mail which was forwarded to Karti... Bhaskaram after discussion with P Chidambaram, the then Home Minister, demanded an illegal gratification of Rs 50 lakh for ensuring the approval," said CBI.

The FIR had alleged that the payment of said bribe was routed from TSP to Karti Chidambaram and Bhaskaram through Mumbai-based Bell Tools Ltd with payments camouflaged under two invoices raised for consultancy and out-of-pocket expenses for Chinese visas-related works, the CBI FIR said, adding that the TSPL executive had later thanked Karti Chidambaram and Bhaskaram on email. Payment against the invoices was made by TSPL to Bell Tools Limited through cheque and then the said amount was paid in cash to Bhaskaram, it had alleged. "... Whereas the private company based at Mumbai was never in any kind of work relating to visas rather it was in an entirely different business of industrial knives," the

agency had said in a statement. "Information exists that Chidambaram had been on the board of Vedanta Group whereas his son Karti had taken financial favour from Sterlite Optical Technologies Limited, Mumbai (a Vedanta Group Company), which had lent Rs 1.5 crore in November 2003 to his company namely Meltraack India Limited, Chennai and the interest thereupon was waived off in August 2004 (when... P Chidambaram sworn as the Finance Minister," said the FIR of CBI. CBI charged that Karti Chidambaram and his frontman Bhaskaram indulged in the collection of undue payments for settling the issues pending with the offices under the influence of P Chidambaram as minister in various Ministries.

Nayab Singh Saini returns as Haryana CM for second time

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

Senior BJP leader Nayab Singh Saini was sworn in as chief minister of Haryana for a second time on Thursday in a grand ceremony attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a galaxy of NDA leaders. Thousands of people packed into the Dussehra Ground to watch Governor Bandaru Dattatreya administer the oath of office to the low profile OBC leader and 13 others. For the BJP, the messaging was not just in its show of strength with a power packed dais seating its chief ministers, ministers and NDA partners but also in its choice of the day – Valmiki Jayanti. “For the third time with full majority, the BJP government will work with full energy for good governance, equality and welfare of the poor,” Saini said in a social media post after being sworn in for the second time as chief minister. Among those present were Union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari and BJP president J P Nadda. Chief ministers of several BJP-ruled states, including Uttar Pradesh’s Yogi Adityanath, Assam’s Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chhattisgarh’s Vishnu Deo Sai, Gujarat’s Bhupendra Patel and Uttarakhand’s Pushkar Singh Dhami. NDA partner, TDP leader and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, was there too. The 54-year-old, who was the surprise pick to replace strongman M L Khattar as chief minister ahead of the assembly elections, proved his naysayers wrong by steering the BJP to a win in an election many thought would go to the Congress. Saini is heading the BJP’s third consecutive government in the state, a strategic victory after the Lok Sabha elections that many party leaders hope sets the pace for next month’s crucial assembly polls in Maharashtra and Jharkhand. The BJP won 48 seats in the 90-member assembly. Three Independents, including



Hisar MLA Savitri Jindal, also extended support to the party. Haryana can have a maximum of 14 ministers, including the chief minister. The 13-member council of ministers includes the party’s most senior leader Anil Vij, Ahir leader Rao Narbir Singh and Jat leader Mahipal Dhandha. It also has two women – former Congress leader Shrutti Choudhary, daughter of Rajya Sabha MP Kiran Choudhary, and first time MLA Arti Singh, the daughter of Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh. Rajesh Nagar and Gaurav Gautam took oath as state ministers (independent charge).

But in 2019, the party did not give him a ticket. This time too, when there were talks of his ticket being cut, he announced to contest the elections. However, later he also met the Union Home Minister Amit Shah and got the ticket. Singh is one of the big leaders of the Ahirwal belt in Haryana. He is said to have a good hold in the Badshahpur area, which has the highest number of voters. He also has direct links with the high command. The biggest victory in the area is also registered in his name. In Haryana Assembly

SWEARING IN CEREMONY

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

After Nayab Singh Saini, Rao Narbir Singh (55), MLA from Haryana’s largest assembly seat Badshahpur, also took the oath. Rao Narbir Singh has become the state minister for the fourth consecutive time. Rao Narbir has become MLA from Badshahpur for the second time. In the year 2014, he was the one who made the lotus bloom for the first time in Badshahpur. Singh represented Jatusana, Sohna and Badshahpur constituencies in Haryana in 1987, 1996 and 2014 respectively. Singh held several ministries, including Public Works, Public Health Engineering, Architecture and Forest in the first Manohar Lal Khattar government from 2014 to 2019. In the 2014 Haryana polls, Narbir Singh won the Badshahpur seat by defeating independent candidate Rakesh Daultabad. Rao Narbir has inherited politics. His father and grandfather have been MLAs in the past. After Rao Inderjit Singh, Rao Narbir is considered the biggest leader of Ahirwal. He was also a minister in the Manohar Lal Khattar government in 2014.



Elections 2024, Rao Narbir Singh Singh was the only leader who got a ticket directly from the BJP high command. Singh won the Badshahpur seat in the Haryana Assembly elections. Singh defeated Congress candidate Vardhan Yadav by a huge margin. Rao Narbir got a total of 1,45,503 votes in the election. He defeated Vardhan Yadav by 60,705 votes. As soon as the counting of votes for the assembly elections started, Rao Narbir Singh took the lead and then he kept increasing this margin and won.

BJP top brass present during Nayab’s Oath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEWS DELHI

With the top brass of BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, descending, the oath-taking ceremony of Nayab Singh Saini assumed the air of a grand event. All roads leading to Dussehra ground were choc-o-block as thousands of BJP supporters from across Haryana made their way to the ceremony. Saini, 54, an OBC face of the party in the state, on Thursday, took oath as the chief minister of Haryana in Panchkula. A total of 13 ministers also swore beside him. While the BJP formed the government for a third time in a row, Saini became the chief minister of Haryana for the second time. Ahead of the BJP’s estimate of over 50,000 people turning up at the ‘Shaphat Grahana Samaroh’, arrangements were made on a grand scale. After Saini took his oath, his supporters chanted ‘Nayab Saini ko Jai Shri Ram’ and ‘Bharat Mata ki jai’. A huge multicolour ‘pandal’ was set up to accommodate VVIP guests, which included several Union ministers,

chief ministers, NDA partners and BJP workers. Outside the venue, artists clad in traditional attire played Haryanvi folk music, featuring ‘been’ (used by snake charmers), ‘chimta’, and ‘dhol’. Flex boards with welcome messages were set up all along the road leading to the venue in Panchkula. Besides Modi, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and J P Nadda attended the event amid heavy security. Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari, Chirag Paswan, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel, Goa CM Pramod Sawant, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio, Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai, Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma and Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Dhami were also present at the swearing-in. BJP leader Tarun Chugh termed the ceremony “historic”. Hari Ram, a Saini supporter, said he was excited at the BJP forming government for the third time.

Need for new collective quantified goal on climate finance: UN Executive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

At the upcoming UN climate conference in Baku, countries must establish a new international climate finance goal that effectively addresses the needs of developing nations, UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell said on Thursday. He emphasised that COP29 must be a “stand-and-deliver” conference, recognising the critical role of climate finance in protecting both the global economy and the livelihoods of billions affected by climate change. In a virtual event hosted by the Brookings Institution, Stiell stressed the necessity for a new goal that centers on public finance, with a



preference for grants or concessional funding to ensure accessibility for those in greatest need. During COP29, nations are expected to agree on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), which will

determine the annual amount developed countries need to mobilise starting in 2025 to support climate initiatives in developing nations. Historically, high-income countries have been responsible for providing

financial and technological support under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted in 1992. These developed nations, which include the US, UK, Canada, and members of the EU, pledged in 2009 at COP15 to provide USD 100 billion annually by 2020 to assist developing countries. However, this commitment has not been fully realized. While a report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) indicated that developed countries surpassed the USD 100 billion target in 2022, with nearly 70% of funding coming in the form of loans, concerns remain about the adequacy and structure of this financial

support. Stiell pointed out that at COP29, nations will have the opportunity to decide on contributions, but he cautioned against renegotiating the Paris Agreement. Some developed nations propose broadening the list of contributors to include emerging economies like China and certain Gulf states, a move that developing countries argue undermines equity principles and shifts responsibility away from those historically responsible for emissions. “More work also has to be done to rapidly ramp up funding for adaptation and get international carbon markets working for everyone. We must fund a new generation of national climate plans,” he added.



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajya Sabha Dy. Chairperson Harivansh and Indian Parliamentary delegates on the sidelines of 149th Assembly of IPU in Geneva on Thursday.

Omar Abdullah met fire victims families in Kistwar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday flew to the remote area of Marwah in Kishtwar district to meet those families whose houses were ravaged in a massive fire incident on Monday. According to initial reports, over 70 houses were gutted leaving numerous families homeless. Omar’s deputy Surinder Choudhary also accompanied him. Before taking off from Srinagar, Omar chaired the maiden cabinet meeting in the civil secretariat complex. On his arrival in Kishtwar, Omar took stock of the relief and rehabilitation efforts completed so far by

the district administration and other relief agencies working on the ground to help the devastated families. During his visit, Omar Abdullah directed officials to expedite the rehabilitation process, ensuring food, shelter, and other necessities are promptly delivered. Briefing media persons, Omar said the government will approach the union government to get compensation for the affected families from the Prime Minister’s relief fund. He assured all help from the state government to rebuild their lives and homes. Meanwhile, during the inaugural cabinet meeting, key administrative issues were discussed, and the government’s immediate priorities were outlined.



The newly formed cabinet reviewed significant governance challenges, focusing on streamlining processes, addressing public grievances, and promoting transparency within the bureaucracy. The team also evaluated the

progress of ongoing development projects. The new government’s top priorities include bolstering infrastructure, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Intelligence failure and planned conspiracy cited in Bahaich communal clash: Probe Report

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

A preliminary investigation into the recent communal violence in Bahaich, which resulted in one death and significant property damage, has pointed to intelligence failures and evidence of a planned conspiracy as key factors behind the unrest. The report, now under review at the DGP headquarters, highlights major lapses by the Local Intelligence Unit (LIU) and Mahsi Circle Officer Rupendra Kumar Gaur. As a result, Gaur has been temporarily relieved of his duties, with Ravi Khokhar appointed as the new Circle Officer of Mahsi.

Sources involved in the probe revealed that Gaur was initially unaware of the rising tensions when a group carrying idols for immersion arrived at Maharajganj market, sparking an altercation. By the time he reached the scene, the situation had already escalated into violence. The report further criticizes the Bahaich LIU for failing to anticipate the potential for unrest on both Sunday and Monday. A separate, detailed report on the LIU’s shortcomings has been submitted to the state intelligence headquarters. It points out that the LIU lacked connections with key local figures in the affected areas

and was unable to gauge the area’s sensitivity. A senior official noted that the rapid assembly of sticks, tridents, bricks, and stones indicated a coordinated effort to incite violence and disrupt communal harmony. CCTV footage reviewed so far has shown the presence of certain individuals at the immersion site who were later seen engaging in acts of arson and vandalism. Investigations are also underway into several social media accounts that spread misleading videos and audio clips during the violence, further escalating tensions. Post-mortem confirms gunshot wound: The police have confirmed

that Ramgopal’s death resulted from a gunshot wound. They emphasized that there is no evidence of him being electrocuted or attacked with a sword before or after being shot. Additionally, there is no indication that his toenails were pulled out or damaged. According to departmental sources, the post-mortem report reveals that Ramgopal Mishra’s body had 30 to 35 pellets embedded, with most found in his face, neck, and chest. This suggests that he was shot with at least three or more country-made cartridges. Additionally, a shot was fired below his shoulders to confirm his death.

Taiwan inaugurates Taipei Economic and Cultural Center in India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI

Taiwan on Wednesday opened its third office in country in Mumbai after having been operated as Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in New Delhi and Chennai. In his opening remarks TECC Representative Amb Baushuan Ger said this will be third mission in India-Taiwan relations. “In the 1995, Taiwan and India established representations, namely India Taipei Association in Taipei and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center in New Delhi. The two offices have served as platforms for various collaborations between our



two countries, mainly on trade and investment, education and culture as well as science and technology,” Ger said. The opening of the third Mission of Taiwan in India

add momentum to cordial relations between two sides and will especially boost cooperation between Taiwan and Maharashtra and the neighboring states in west India in the years ahead.

In 2012, Taiwan set up its second mission in southern India TECC in Chennai to benefit Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh which attracted huge Taiwanese

investment, especially some key manufacturing industries to their shore. “More than 60 percent of Taiwanese investment has concentrated in these four southern States,” the Ambassador said. “Like President Lai Ching-te of Taiwan emphasized in his National Day Address on October 10th this year, Taiwan is a force for regional peace, stability and prosperity. Taiwan will more vigorously develop its five trusted sectors, namely semiconductors, AI, defense, security and surveillance and next generation communications and help expand their global presence,” added Baushuan Ger in an august presence of top dignitaries in Mumbai.

Existing time limit for advance reservation will be reduced: Railway Board

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Railway Board has reduced the advance reservation period of seats from existing 120 days to 60 days with effect from November 1, 2024. “It has been decided that from 01.11.2024, the existing time limit for advance reservation by trains will be reduced from 120 days to 60 days (excluding the date of journey),” a Railway Board’s circular, dated Oct 16, 2024, said. All bookings done up to October 31 under the ARP (Advance Reservation Period) of 120 days will remain intact, it added. The



circular did not cite any reason for the reduction in ARP. According to the Board, cancellation of the booking made beyond the ARP of 60 days will, however, be permitted. “There will be no change in the case of certain day time express trains like Taj Express, Gomti Express etc

where lower time limits for advance reservation are, at present in force,” the Board’s circular said. There will also be no change in the case of a limit of 365 days for foreign tourists, it said. On March 25, 2015, the Ministry of Railways had increased the ARP from 60 days to 120 days.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Jaishankar holds a mirror

At the SCO Summit, S Jaishankar urges regional powers to tackle terrorism, extremism and separatism

At the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit held in Islamabad, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar took the opportunity to deliver a pointed message to China and Pakistan, highlighting the erosion of trust in the region. His address focused on the principles outlined in the SCO Charter, underscoring the need for genuine cooperation, respect for sovereignty and an uncompromising stance against the 'three evils' of terrorism, extremism and separatism. Jaishankar's remarks came at a time when India's relations with China and Pakistan have reached a nadir. The minister subtly pointed out the prevailing trust deficit, stating, "If trust is lacking or cooperation inadequate, if friendship has fallen short and good neighbourliness is missing somewhere, there are surely reasons to introspect and causes to address." His words alluded to China's unilateral border violations along the Line of Actual Control and Pakistan's use of cross-border terrorism as state policy. A central theme of Jaishankar's address was the urgent need to combat terrorism, extremism and separatism—the 'three evils' that, according to him, have plagued the region. He argued that these threats undermine peace and stability, which are prerequisites for development. Without addressing these issues, the prospects for economic growth, trade, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges remain bleak. Jaishankar's participation at the Islamabad summit marked a significant moment in India's diplomatic strategy.



Despite the strained relations, his address indicated India's willingness to engage in dialogue—provided that the foundational issues of trust and security are addressed. The summit showcased the growing rift between India's expectations for regional conduct and the policies pursued by some of its neighbours. It remains to be seen whether China and Pakistan will introspect on Jaishankar's remarks or continue to pursue policies that hinder regional integration. India's position remains clear: trust must be restored through actions that respect the sovereignty and security of all nations. The ball is now in the court of its neighbours to demonstrate a commitment to peace and stability. In his address, Jaishankar effectively used the SCO platform to hold a mirror up to China's border aggressions and Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism, laying bare the challenges to regional cooperation. His words served not just as a critique but as a call for renewed commitment to the principles of the SCO Charter, signalling India's firm stance on upholding peace and good neighbourliness. The question now is whether China's and Pakistan's leaders will see the reflection and act accordingly, or if the region will continue to grapple with a status quo marked by distrust and discord.

PICTALK



A Royal Bengal tiger yawns at the National Zoological Park, in New Delhi

AI: Redefining learning in the 21st Century



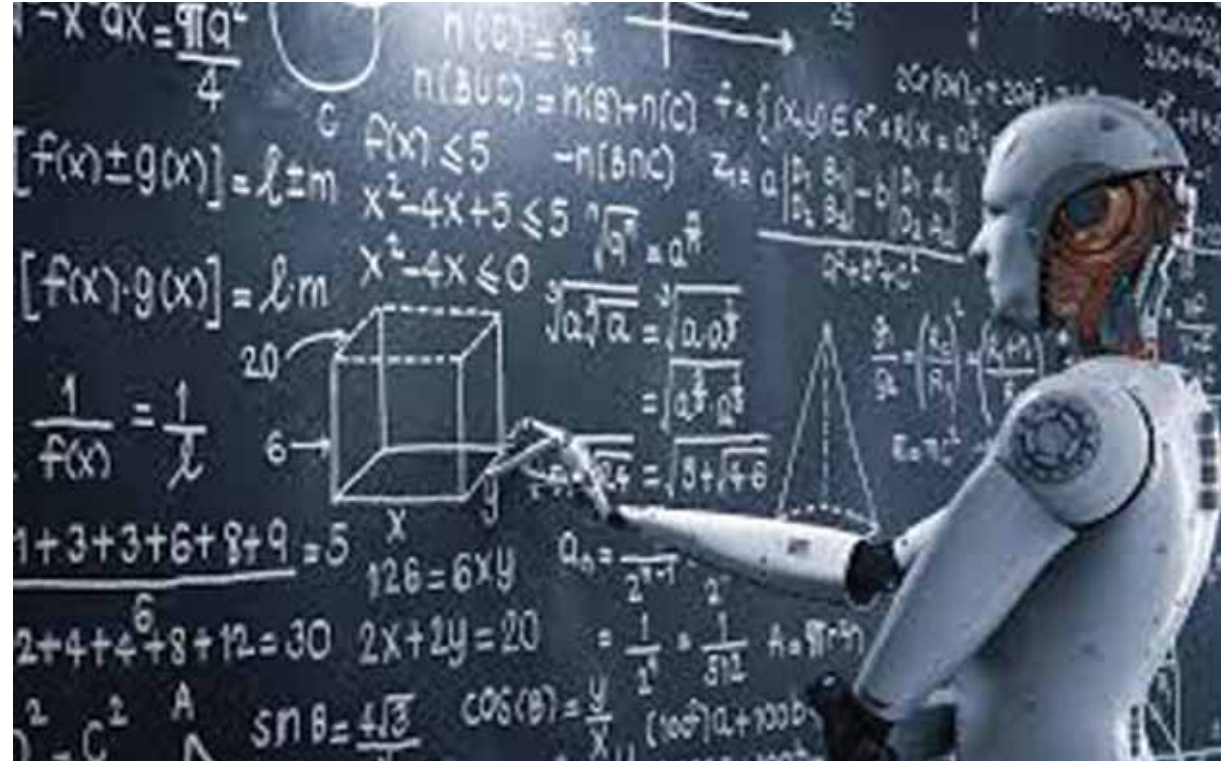
VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Teaching methods and workplace demands are evolving rapidly, pushing educational institutions to adopt new paradigms that keep pace with the changing times

It is now being increasingly recognised that artificial intelligence and technology use are going to alter the nature of learning, as few things have in the last 100 years. The fundamental nature of change and its pace is nothing new if one goes back over six or seven decades ago. The digitisation process altered the nature of learning numerals. The use of calculators rendered memorising multiplication tables substantially irrelevant. There was a sea change that has only increased its reach and depth with each passing decade. From calculators to the computerisation and successive upward scaling of computerisation competencies rendered not only the tables and the algorithms only marginally relevant, but even the log tables became a matter of history.

After some initial reluctance to allow a mechanical instrument into the classroom and the examination hall, the nature of learning was adjusted to the new realities. The machine-added reality became the new paradigm. The nature of learning changed slowly but surely from working through one's memory to getting used to machines and their algorithm. The orientation changed from falling back on mental collaborations to machine-led solutions. Changes in technology also needed learning but of a different order.

The dualism of specialisation was more in demand for staying current in the employment market. Indeed, machines started competing with each other in a manner of speaking and a classical example would be the different technology modes used in the manufacture of a jet plane (Ilyushin) in Russia and the technology used in a Boeing aircraft. The new realities required a new approach to what could be termed as 'new learning'. The nature of teaching arithmetic, mathematics, and more all underwent a change, and a revolution bigger than many had hit the classroom. The nature of this revolution was significant because it was a



continuing revolution, and today, it confronts the learner through various forms of artificial intelligence, also. The notions of mechanical search have not only revolutionised the search for information but even rendered encyclopedias decoration pieces in fancy drawing rooms. They have now, perhaps, become a showcase of how learning used to be not so long ago. All this has implications not only for the classroom but also for the workplace. The exact manifestation of this is not clear, but the rumblings go on. Whereas earlier on, learning organisations used to pay equal focus on how to teach. Now the focus is equally on what and how to teach. The pressure in both the classroom and the workplace is equally intense, calling for a paradigm shift. The real challenge for learning organisations lies in embodying the paradigm shift. It will be useful to remind oneself that learning



TODAY, LEARNING REQUIRES THE COMPETENCE TO APPRECIATE THE NEW AND EMERGING PATTERNS OF TECHNOLOGY. NOT SO LONG AGO, LITERACY WAS IMPORTANT TO THE USE OF A MACHINE BECAUSE ONE HAD TO PUNCH THROUGH THE ALPHABET

organisations is nothing new. As a proposition, the need to keep reinventing oneself has been commonplace. Not so long ago, the focus was on keeping the mind open. Much of that has now metamorphosed into almost a new paradigm: keeping the mind growing. Enhancing of skills and competencies continues to be a defining trait of a learning organisation. It is simply not possible to confine oneself just to 'keeping the mind open'. Today, learning requires the competence to appreciate the new and emerging patterns of technology. Not so long ago, literacy was important to the use of a machine because one had to punch through the alphabet. Now the situation has reached a context where even if one does not have the competence to punch into a machine and the machine will comply. At the moment, this process is at an early stage, but the problems that it means to tackle are

expanding every day. The change in the gamut of learning is important because if one can solve problems without being able to write, there indeed is a revolution in the entire paradigm of learning. The proposition, therefore of a learning organisation is undergoing several fundamental reformulations. There was a time in the 20th century when technology altered the nature of distance, and now there seems to be an emerging approach to technology that can alter the nature of time itself. Time present and time future are ready to merge into each other through technological interventions, allowing one to pass through a time machine, even if only temporarily. These are fundamental postulates and need rethinking far more deeply than what we have been able to do at present (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute; The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INDIA-CANADA TENSIONS RISE

Madam — The Indian government has once again officially denied the allegations of the murder of Khalistani supporter Hardeep Singh Nijar levelled by the Canadian government. Not only this, it has also taken diplomatic revenge by ordering the Canadian ambassador in India and other officials to leave the country. Have we reached the lowest point in diplomatic history in our relations with Canada? Is it possible that all diplomatic relations between India and Canada come to an end? In some circles of India, even senior journalists of international affairs believe that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is playing all these games to save his chair. Is it really true that the Canadian Prime Minister, due to his lust for power, is hell-bent on ending diplomatic, political and business relations with India? I think this story is not so simple that it will remain just a story of the chair. Because many Sikhs have been murdered in the same way all over the world, for which the governments there have blamed India. For example, in Lahore, Pakistan, on 6 May last year, Parmjeet Panjwar was shot dead, and the Indian government was also blamed for it. Okay, let's assume that Pakistan is our enemy, so it can make false allegations against us. But the United States of America is our friend. It has also made a similar allegation against us. It had alleged that an Indian citizen was involved in the conspiracy to murder Khalistani separatist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun in New York. Therefore, the Canadian government should also present evidence if it has it in the International Court of Justice and not just raise the issue by holding press conferences.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

EMPOWERING INDIA'S YOUTH

Madam — The government in its Budget this year had proposed to launch a scheme to provide internship opportunities to 10 million youths in the top 500

Tackle mental health challenges



The most admirable and analytical article 'The invisible battle for mental health in India' (October 16), encourages us to evaluate and recognise our mental wellness and seek counselling for physical illness. The worst part is that we are vitiating and spoiling our mental health despite warnings of being too much glued to our mobile phones, social media, late-night lifestyle, and orientation of ourselves, isolation and so many

other factors. Women suffer more from social and family pressures and they don't speak out. The major enemies are mobile phones and social media platforms, anxiety of getting too much in too little time, gaining public attention all the time, competition with the peers and us, working from home for longer hours, fear of failures, loss of family members, sensory issues and marital discord. The obvious symptoms are anxiety attacks, anger, depression, anger, misbehaviour and violence. However, many easily overcome these symptoms in public posture, delaying the solution and treatment. The work from home should be restricted to prescribed working hours only as scheduled. Yoga is the best option for mental wellness. Vacationing, holidaying, playing games, music, bhajans and romanticism with hobbies and passion are the self-healing methods to keep us happy and tranquil, cheerful and bubbly.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

companies over a span of five years. This helps youth to gain exposure to real-life business environments in different areas for a year. Internship schemes are as old as industrialisation as the means to perpetuate skill sets. With rapid mechanisation, it was losing impetus and formalisation.

A pilot for the scheme in 2024-25 was kicked off last week with internship opportunities in 24 sectors, including energy, hospitality, auto, and banking and financial services. Companies are expected to bear the cost of training and 10 per cent of internship costs from their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds. Major corporations over the years have been focusing on health, education and women empowerment. This new internship scheme hopefully should not affect their continued funding.

R Narayanan | Mumbai

PRIYANKA'S POLITICAL DEBUT

Madam — The bypoll for Wayanad has been announced by the Election Commission and the Congress leader

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is likely to make her debut for Lok Sabha. The seat went vacant when her brother Rahul Gandhi got elected to Lok Sabha also from Raebareilly in Uttar Pradesh in the general elections. When the elected members who hail from the same place have not used to visit their constituencies, where is the question of Priyanka serving the people of Wayanad once she gets elected? One should recall the promise of the Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi that he vowed that the Congress would construct 100 houses for those who lost their dwellings in the landslides at Chooralmala and Mundakkai during his visit on August 2, 2024. Winning elections matters most for the leaders and by consolidating the dynastic politics, the Congress can increase their numbers on the floor by wooing the voters but there is no justification to serve the people of the constituency in a real sense.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Pinarayi Vijayan: A tale of U-turns and controversies

CM Pinarayi's U-turn on sensitive data disclosures, coupled with the BJP's election triumph in Thrissur suggests a shifting balance of power

Man, woman and Child was a novel by best-selling author Erich Segal (1937-2010) which has been translated into many languages. It was made into a movie in English as well as in many languages. Our own Shekhar Kapur shot the movie *Masoom* based on the same novel.

Well, Masoom, and "Man, Woman and Child" came to mind after seeing the plight of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the last fortnight. Vijayan, known for his determination, decisiveness and dictatorial tendencies, was a pale shadow of his old self during the last few weeks. Though he was seen laughing at flippant questions put to him by some of the journalists "studying to become Kerala's own Lutyens media", it was visible that Vijayan had lost most of his demeanour which in the past had silenced his detractors and rivals alike. The U-turn made by him viz-a-viz the data about the seizure of smuggled gold and hawala cash from Malappuram had shocked even his critics. Various Islamist organisations expressed their displeasure



over the quantity of gold and amount of illegal money seized from Malappuram which houses the Calicut International Airport. Though the Chief Minister had disclosed these figures in the 140-minute long press meet held on September 21 at Thiruvananthapuram, newspapers and TV channels did carry it in their reports. The present controversy in Kerala had its roots in the meetings held by M R Ajith Kumar, Additional Director General of Police with two senior RSS leaders in 2023 and the fiasco of the 2024 edition of Thrissur Pooram, Kerala's mega cultural extravaganza, the impressive victory scored by the BJP candidate Suresh Gopi in the Lok Sabha poll from Thrissur constituency and the unprecedented increase in gold smuggling and hawala dealings in Malappuram dis-

trict are much ado about nothing. The ADGP has every authority to meet the people of his choice as part of his policing job is known to one and all. Many IPS officers and intelligence officers with whom this issue was taken up were unanimous in their view that there was nothing wrong with the ADGP calling on RSS leaders.

One of the severe critics of the meeting between Ajith Kumar and RSS bosses is Binoy Viswam, the CPI Kerala secretary, who has been crying for the ADGP's blood for violating the Lakshman Rekha (or is it the Lenin Rekha?). But what is left unsaid is that Surya Binoy, daughter of Binoy Viswam, is a standing counsel of the BJP Government the Centre, yet another branch of the RSS! Binoy Viswam, who considers himself the global face of Communism and a stickler for propriety should openly admit that his criticism of RSS is with an eye on the minority vote bank. The Congress, CPI and the Muslim League allege that the CPI(M) had a tacit under-

standing with the Sangh Parivar to ensure the victory of Suresh Gopi in the Lok Sabha election. How is it possible for the CPI(M) to make Suresh Gopi emerge as a winner in a high pitch election which saw about 11 lakh voters turning out to cast their votes? The internal fights in Congress and the ire among the Christians over the CPI(M) bending backwards to placate the Muslims are seen as the factors that led to Gopi's win. What made Vijayan disown what he had said on September 21 press meet and which was used by the reporter of the Chennai-based daily on September 30 is yet another proof of the Islamists tightening their control over Kerala. P Jayarajan, a CPI(M) strongman, had told in a TV interview last month that the dreaded IS and Islamist extremists have made Kerala into a hub for recruiting jihadis to fight in Syria and Kashmir. This too was blacked out by the secular and liberal media in the State. Who is calling the kettle black? (The writer is South India bureau chief of the Pioneer; views are personal)



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN



FIRST COLUMN

UNDERSTANDING THE BIG PICTURE

By living according to dharma, we can strive for a higher quality of life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

What is this Big Picture, that finds mention in spiritual talks? Simply stated, it means to know something in its totality. For example, we wish to know about ourselves in great detail, i.e. who we are; where have we come from; where are we going; and so forth. These and many more questions can be answered if we go to the source of everything, i.e. God, who is everything. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 7.19) We, souls, are His parts (15.15); we exist eternally; we are presently in material bodies. This happened because that is all we qualified for. There are superior planets like Heaven and, of course, the Vaikuntha – God's planet (15.6). How are we judged? It is purely based on 'karmas' (our acts), both material and spiritual. Most of us are engaged mainly in material acts. We may have a slight percentage of spiritual acts like occasional visits to a temple, hearing a spiritual talk, etc. These count but are not enough to go to the highest planet, i.e. the Vaikuntha. We keep on getting born on the earth's planet with an occasional visit to Heaven.

What is the role of God in all these? God is the creator of all that we see; He is its controller also. Logically, God must know the Big Picture. He does; God is omniscient. He knows past, present and future also. Just as our present is the result of our past, our future will be the result of our present. God is aware of how we will use our free will because that is influenced by our nature – part of our fate. As the Creation is to last for a very long time, control must be exercised to ensure its continuity. God does that. He uses the



Divine Authority to assist Him; it works under His superintendence. (9.10) They in turn reward and punish us based on our karma. There is nothing like chance, whatever happens to us is already preordained. In short, there are three levels of control. God is the head. Then comes the Divine Authority and, lastly, it is the material nature, which has been set in motion by God.

That is how we have seasons, rains, etc. We must live in synchronisation with it to have a healthy life. Our all acts must be 'yukta', i.e. appropriate according to the highest principles known as 'dharma'. These rules have been formulated by God Himself. The Big Picture won't be complete without a detailed description of our souls and how we can get help from God to improve our lives. We are many, eight billion plus on the earth planet itself. Surely, we are small and need help all the time, especially from God, who only knows the Big Picture. We are relocated after the present lifespan is over, which is preordained. Quality of life is all-important for all of us.

Unfortunately, we seek it from material objects, which are never satisfied. We must serve other souls to be served in turn by others. How can we improve the quality of our lives? We must begin by accepting the reality. This is where the Big Picture enters our lives, whatever we can know with our limitations.

This includes accepting the Cosmic Design, and having faith in God and His System. We should try to be good in whatever we do; we generally know what that is. We must be useful to others, otherwise the world would not have any use for us. We need to be tolerant, because the earth planet is no heaven, but is not a concentration camp either. One can have a reasonably good life.

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

Empower urban local bodies for climate resilience

Despite their economic importance, most urban areas are ill-prepared for the growing risks of climate change; these local bodies must be trained to fight climate changes



SONAL SINGH



Cities are centres of economic growth, contributing around 63 per cent to India's GDP while housing approximately 36 per cent of its population. This urban population is expected to reach 50 per cent by 2050, further intensifying the challenges cities face from extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, and droughts as recently witnessed in Wayanad, Chennai, New Delhi and other cities. According to a study by IIT Gandhinagar, the proportion of urban areas exposed to extreme weather events is set to increase significantly as global temperatures rise beyond 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. While the growing vulnerability is felt across rural and urban centres, the multiplier effect of damage caused to urban infrastructure, lives and livelihood on the larger socio-economic conditions as cities drive national GDP. Moreover, most of the cities are ill-equipped to tackle these climate risks. A lack of clearly mandated roles in climate response, insufficient financial allocations, and limited institutional capacities exacerbate this challenge. To enable transformative, city-led climate action, it is essential to align Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the specific needs and capacities of cities. This requires designing enabling frameworks to help urban areas build climate resilience. Without such frameworks, cities may struggle to cope with mounting climate risks. India has played a very proactive role in shaping policy and strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The country's early adoption of environmental policies can be traced back to the Environmental Protection Act of 1986, a direct result of the United Nations Conference on Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in 1972. This laid the foundation for key initiatives such as the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008 and the National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC) in 2015. India has also spearheaded international efforts, including the establishment of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the Coalition for

Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

At the sub-national level, 34 States and Union Territories have prepared State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCC) to address state-specific vulnerabilities in line with the NAPCC framework. Although the concept of city-level Climate Action Plans (CAPs) is relatively new in India, cities are developing these plans to address local risks such as heatwaves, water scarcity, and flooding for example, Mumbai, Coimbatore, Rajkot, Siliguri, and Udaipur.

These climate action plans are often in collaboration with international networks like C40 cities supported by global donor agencies. However, a major limitation remains: Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) do not have a clear mandate to respond to climate challenges. While the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 assigns ULBs certain responsibilities, such as urban forestry and environmental protection, "climate change" is not explicitly mentioned among the 18 functions designated to ULBs. This creates a significant governance gap at the local level. Although the National Mission for Sustainable Habitat (NMSH) 2.0 encourages ULBs to design action plans as one of the key strategies, it falls short of providing concrete guidelines, financial assistance, or incentives to assist city governments in these efforts.

The absence of a designated decision-making authority at the city level further compounds the problem.

While the SAPCC guidelines call for establishing climate cells at the state level, there is no similar provision for cities. Even when ULBs do develop climate action strategies, their implementation is hampered by overlapping mandates across multiple agencies and

parastatals, with no centralised body to oversee or coordinate these efforts.

Additionally, national climate policies such as the Net Zero by 2070 target and NDCs do not mandate the collection of city-level greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions data, limiting the ability to undertake data-driven climate actions. As India transitions towards a more urban future, with 50 per cent of the population estimated to live in cities by 2050, amid rising climate risks, the devolution of powers to ULBs for climate governance becomes crucial. Empowering local governments through the principle of "climate subsidiarity"—which ensures that climate action is undertaken at the most appropriate level by adequately resourced and empowered agencies—can be a key step toward achieving climate resilience and national climate goals. One such long-term measure often suggested by experts involves amending the Constitution to include "climate action" as one of the functions of ULBs.

While constitutional amendments may be a long-term goal, an immediate step could involve making a comprehensive central law on climate mitigation and adaptation with the city as a unit of governance. Also, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) could update NMSH 2.0 with detailed guidelines for city-level Climate Action Plans. Such guidelines would ensure a standardised approach across cities while allowing for localized strategies aligned with national goals. Additionally, providing financial incentives—such as climate finance or additional transfers from the State Finance Commission (SFC) or Central Finance Commission (CFC)—would encourage ULBs to initiate climate risk assessments, imple-

ment green mobility projects, and undertake other climate-resilient initiatives.

Institutionalising climate governance at the local level is only the first step. Local governments must also be given clear and measurable targets, necessitating the localisation of NDCs and SDGs. Incorporating cities into future updates of the NAPCC and SAPCC would allow for a more bottom-up approach to planning adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Furthermore, establishing a centralised decision-making body at the city level would facilitate better collaboration among city agencies, ensuring a more coordinated response to climate risks.

As global and national conversations on climate action gain momentum, it is imperative to build a similar focus at the sub-national level to ensure tangible results. The dynamism seen at the national level must be replicated in cities, towns, and districts, which are at the frontline of climate impacts. This will require a realignment of governance structures and a re-evaluation of climate strategies to bring the focus to the smallest units of governance—cities and ULBs.

A blend of long-term strategies and short-term action plans must be developed with sub-national governments to ensure accountability and cohesion in how cities perceive and address climate change. By empowering ULBs with the necessary resources, mandates, and institutional support, India can ensure that its urban centres are not just engines of economic growth but also pillars of climate resilience. This is essential if the country is to meet its ambitious goal of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2070.

(The writer is Research Associate, TERI; views are personal)



MOST OF THE CITIES ARE ILL-EQUIPPED TO TACKLE THESE CLIMATE RISKS. A LACK OF CLEARLY MANDATED ROLES IN CLIMATE RESPONSE, INSUFFICIENT FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS, AND LIMITED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES EXACERBATE THIS CHALLENGE

Aurangzeb: A contested legacy shaping India's political discourse

The portrayal of Aurangzeb as a ruthless oppressor reflects a blend of folk tales and myth rather than a verified account of his reign

The figure of Aurangzeb remains deeply embedded in India's contemporary political and cultural landscape, reflecting a blend of historical memory, myth and modern political rhetoric. His name frequently surfaces in electoral campaigns and public debates, evoking emotions and controversies centuries after his reign.

When leaders criticise each other with references to Aurangzeb, it signifies how his legacy continues to shape national politics. In the modern narrative, Aurangzeb is often depicted as a ruthless tyrant—a figure equated with notorious symbols of intolerance, such as Hitler or extremist ideologies. This perception paints him as someone who dedicated his life to eradicat-



NIHARIKA DWIVEDI

ing Hinduism and oppressing Hindus. Consequently, there's a prevalent notion that contemporary Indian Muslims are somehow connected, either by ancestry or ideology, to the Mughal emperor's legacy, which is accused of inflicting harm on India's cultural and religious heritage.

This view draws heavily on VS Naipaul's concept of India as a "wounded civilisation," enduring centuries of subjugation by

foreign invaders, including Muslim rulers who allegedly dismantled the country's glorious past. Yet, the belief in deliberate, systematic destruction by Muslim conquerors is not a continuous historical memory nor entirely grounded in verified historical records. Instead, it reflects deep emotional and cultural wounds, often fueled by present-day anti-Muslim sentiments.

Historically, Aurangzeb was the last significant Mughal ruler, governing much of the Indian subcontinent for nearly five decades. His reign is marked by controversies, such as imprisoning his father, Shah Jahan, his perceived orthodoxy, and the inability to consolidate the Deccan region into the Mughal Empire.

Central to the debates on Aurangzeb is the question of his motivations and policies. Some historians, such as Sir Jadunath Sarkar, argue that his primary aim was to establish an Islamic state in India by enforcing Sharia law and converting the population. Pakistani historian Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi asserts that Aurangzeb's policies were intended to preserve Muslim dominance and to maintain the empire's unity. This included discouraging religious pluralism that could undermine Muslim hegemony in a state where they were responsible for defence and administration. However, Aurangzeb's actions were not always consistent with the idea of enforcing an Islamic state. For example, while he did



destroy certain Hindu temples, including the Vishwanath temple in Banaras, there is little evidence supporting the claim of a widespread, systematic campaign of temple destruction. Many temples, like those in Vrindavan, continued to receive royal patronage. The destruction of some temples appeared more politically motivated than religiously driven, often tied to punitive

actions against local rebellions or defiant rulers. Aurangzeb's revival of the jizya tax in 1679, a levy on non-Muslims, further complicates the interpretation of his policies. While some scholars, like Sarkar, view this as an attempt to pressure Hindus into conversion, others argue that the tax was intended more as a political tool to rally support from conservative Muslim factions. Its reinstatement after two decades of the rule suggests it was not a priority-driven solely by religious zeal but rather a measure aimed at consolidating power during times of conflict, particularly against the Rajputs and Marathas. Qureshi contends that Aurangzeb sought to reverse the damages caused by Akbar's more liberal policies, which

had integrated Hindus into administrative roles. Ironically, the number of Hindus in government service increased during Aurangzeb's reign, reaching 33 per cent by 1689, despite the emperor's reputation for religious intolerance. Dr RP Tripathi view Aurangzeb's actions as primarily politically motivated, aimed at consolidating power in a diverse and vast empire. His policies, while sometimes harsh, were not necessarily born from a deep-seated animosity toward Hindus. Instead, they reflected the complexities of ruling an expansive and multi-ethnic empire where shifting political, social, and military factors required adaptable strategies. Modern scholarship increasingly emphasises the need to

view Aurangzeb beyond simplistic labels of heroism or villainy. His reign is better understood within the broader context of socio-economic, cultural, and political dynamics of the time. While his orthodox leanings and authoritarian tendencies shaped some of his policies, his actions also mirrored the challenges of ruling a fragmented and turbulent subcontinent. Aurangzeb's legacy, thus, remains a complex and contested chapter in Indian history. It serves as a reminder of the intricate interplay between history and politics, and how the past is continuously invoked to influence the present.

(The author is a freelance writer and a documentary filmmaker; views are personal)

US stealth bombers target underground bunkers of Yemen's Houthi rebels

US long-range B-2 stealth bombers launched airstrikes early Thursday morning targeting underground bunkers used by Yemen's Houthi rebels, officials said. It wasn't immediately clear what damage was done in the strikes. However, there are no previous reports of the B-2 Spirit being used in the strikes targeting the Houthis, who have been attacking ships for months in the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. The Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel reported airstrikes around Yemen's capital, Sanaa, which the group has held since 2014. They also reported strikes around the Houthi stronghold of Saada. They offered no immediate information on damage or casualties. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in a statement that the B-2 bombers targeted "five

hardened underground weapons storage locations in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen." The strike also appeared to be an indirect warning to Iran, the Houthis' main benefactor, which has targeted Israel with ballistic missile attacks twice over the past year. The B-2 would be used in any American attack on hardened Iranian nuclear facilities like Natanz or Fordo given it is the only aircraft in service that can drop the GBU-57, known as the "Massive Ordnance Penetrator." "This was a unique demonstration of the United States' ability to target facilities that our adversaries seek to keep out of reach, no matter how deeply buried underground, hardened, or fortified," Austin said. Austin and the US military's Central Command offered no immediate assessment on the damage done. However, Central Command said in a statement that initial assessments suggested no civilians

had been killed. The Red Sea has become a battlefield for shippers since the Houthis began their campaign targeting ships traveling through the waterway, which once saw \$1 trillion of cargo pass through it yearly. Houthis have targeted more than 80 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October 2023. They have seized one vessel and sunk two in the campaign that has also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a US-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have included Western military vessels. The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the US or the United Kingdom to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran.

The Houthis also continue to launch missiles targeting Israel and have shot down a number of US military MQ-9 Reaper drones. The rebels have threatened new attacks in response to Israel's ground invasion of Lebanon and its killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. The description and locations named by the Houthis on Thursday correspond to known underground bases operated by the rebels, who have been locked into a stalemate war with a Saudi-led coalition since 2015 that's decimated the Arab world's poorest nation. The Houthis have refurbished tunnels that once held Scud missiles for Yemen when it was ruled by strongman Ali Abdullah Saleh during his 33-year reign, according to an analysis in April by the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Those sites include the al-Hafa and Jabal Attan military bases, the former Presidential House and the

Yemen state television compound in Sanaa, analyst Fabian Hinz wrote. The Houthis have built what appears to be their own large-scale tunnel network near Saada as well, Hinz added. "The fact that the Houthis began constructing major new installations after the agreement of the cease-fire with the Saudi-led coalition suggests that the group is focused on entrenching themselves and bolstering their military capabilities," he wrote. Iran similarly relies on a network of underground missile bases. The nuclear-capable B-2, which first saw action in 1999 in the Kosovo War, is rarely used by the US military in combat as each aircraft is worth some \$1 billion. It has dropped bombs in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya as well. The aircraft are based at Whiteman Air Base in Missouri and typically conduct long-range strikes from there, though some B-2s were in Australia in September.

I represent a new generation of leadership: Kamala Harris

PTI ■ WASHINGTON



US Vice President Kamala Harris on Wednesday said she represents the next generation of leadership and her presidency would be different from that of her boss President Joe Biden and Republican rival Donald Trump. "My presidency will not be a continuation of Joe Biden's presidency. Like every new president that comes in to office, I will bring my life experiences, my professional experiences, and fresh and new ideas. I represent a new generation of leadership," Harris said in an interview for Fox news channel. "I, for example, am someone who has not spent the majority of my career in Washington, D.C. I invite ideas, whether it be from the Republicans who are supporting me, who were just on stage with me minutes ago, and the business sector and others, who can contribute to the decisions that I make about," she said. "You've been vice president for three and a half years. So, what

are you turning the page from?" she was asked. "Well, first of all, turning the page from the last decade in which we have been burdened with the kind of rhetoric coming from Donald Trump that has been designed and implemented to divide our country and have Americans literally point fingers at each other; rhetoric and an approach to leadership that suggests that the strength of a leader is based on who you beat down instead of what we all know. The strength of leadership is based on who you lift up," Harris asserted.

"The strength of an American president which is one who understands that the vast majority of us have more in common than what separates us. That is turning the page on rhetoric that People are frankly exhausted of," she said. Harris slammed her Republican rival Trump and said he is unfit to run for presidency. "If he's as bad as you say, that half of this country is now supporting this person who could be the 47th president of the United States? Why is that happening?" she was asked. "This is an election for president of the United States. It's not supposed to be easy. It is not supposed to be a cakewalk for anyone... If you listen to Donald Trump, if you watch any of his rallies, he's the one who tends to demean and belittle and diminish the American people. He's the one who talks about an enemy within, an enemy within, talking about the American people suggesting he would turn the American military on the American people," Harris said.

Israeli Army says it may have killed Hamas chief Sinwar

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said Thursday it was looking into whether Hamas' top leader Yahya Sinwar was killed in a military operation in Gaza, while an Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians killed at least 15 people, including five children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The military said in a statement that three militants were killed during operations in Gaza, without specifying where or elaborating further. It said the identities of the three were so far not confirmed, but it was "checking the possibility" that one of the three was Sinwar. Sinwar was one of the chief architects of Hamas' attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and Israel has vowed to kill him since the beginning of its retaliatory campaign in Gaza. Throughout the war, Sinwar has been in hiding. For years Hamas' top figure in Hamas, Sinwar was chosen as its top leader following the assassination of Ismael Haniyeh in July in an apparent Israeli strike in the Iranian capital

Tehran. Israel has also claimed to have killed the head of Hamas' military wing Mohammed Deif in an airstrike, but the group has said he survived. The report came as Israeli forces continued a more than week-old major air and ground assault in the Jabalya refugee camp in northern Gaza, where the Abu Hussein school was hit Thursday. Fares Abu Hamza, head of Gaza Health Ministry's local emergency unit, confirmed the toll from the strike and said dozens of people were wounded. He said the nearby Kamal Adwan Hospital was struggling to treat the casualties. "Many women and children are in critical condition," he said. The Israeli military said it targeted a command center run by Hamas and Islamic Jihad inside the school. It provided a list of around a dozen names of people it identified as militants who were present when the strike was called in. It was not immediately possible to verify the names. Israel has repeatedly struck tent camps and schools sheltering displaced people in Gaza. The Israeli military says it car-

ries out precise strikes on militants and tries to avoid harming civilians, but its strikes often kill women and children. Israel launched its campaign in Gaza to eliminate Hamas after the militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250 others. Some 100 captives are still inside Gaza, about a third of whom are believed to be dead. Israel's offensive has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It does not differentiate between civilians and combatants but says women and children make up a little more than half of the fatalities. Northern Gaza was the first target of Israel's ground invasion nearly a year ago and has suffered the heaviest destruction of the war, with entire neighborhoods in Gaza City and other towns reduced to rubble. Most of the population fled after Israel issued evacuation orders in the opening days of the war, but about 400,000 are believed to have remained despite the harsh conditions.

China prefers Harris over Trump as US president, says top official

PTI ■ BEIJING

China will prefer Kamala Harris to Donald Trump as the next US presidential candidate, a senior member of the Chinese national advisory body said on Thursday. The Chinese government prefers not to comment on the US presidential election because it doesn't want to be accused of interfering in American domestic politics, Jia Qingguo, member of the Standing Committee of the national advisory body CPPCC said. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is a key component of the state governance system and a distinctively Chinese political institution. The views of the Chinese general public are divided over Harris and Trump, but "I would prefer Harris because of the bad experience with Trump. We don't want to have that experience again," he told BBC in a rare comment voicing Beijing's preferred choice in the US presidential election. During Trump's presidency, the relations declined sharply and the two countries ended up in seri-

ous confrontation. "From China's point of view, US Vice President Kamala Harris, who has worked under President Biden, represents the continuity," he said. Trump, during his Presidency, was quite emotional and spread a lot of bad information about China, said Jia, who is also the Director of the Institute of Global Cooperation and Understanding of the Peking University. "We have problems with the Biden administration too," but Biden inherited a lot of tough measures initiated by Trump against China for the reasons of domestic politics and perhaps out of his ideological conviction, he said, adding, "Under Biden, the US policy towards China is more stable, predictable." "We are re-engaging with each other. Officials are meeting with each other, talking about issues," which he said is stabilising the relations. While following a tough policy towards China, including firming up US policy to challenge Beijing's claims over the disputed South China Sea and Taiwan, and restricting China's ambitious move to export its electric vehicles, Biden, however, has maintained regular dialogue with President Xi Jinping to keep the tensions under control.

'Broken immigration system needs to be repaired'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The United States has a broken immigration system that needs to be repaired, Vice President Kamala Harris said on Wednesday in a rare interview with the Republican-leaning news channel during which she sparred with its popular host. Harris made these remarks in an interview with Fox News anchor Bret Baier. Baier repeatedly pressed the Democratic presidential nominee on illegal immigration, taxpayer support for gender transition surgery and other areas that closely aligned with former President Donald Trump's regular attacks against her. With 20 days before the election, Harris tried to defend her record on immigration and the economy. On being asked how many undocumented immigrants have illegally entered the US under the Biden-Harris administration, Harris did not give a number. Harris responded: "Bret, let's just get to the point, OK? The point is that we have a broken immigration system that needs to be repaired." "So, your Homeland Security Secretary said that 85 per cent of

apprehensions," Baier interjected. "I'm not finished. We have an immigration system," Harris tried to continue with her answer. "It's a rough estimate that 6 million people have been released into the country," the Fox News anchor interrupted again. "And let me just finish. I'll get to the question. I promise you. I was beginning to answer," the vice president pleaded. "When you came into office, your administration immediately reversed a number of Trump border policies. Most significantly, the policy required illegal immigrants to be detained through deportation, either in the US or in Mexico. And you switched that policy. They were... released from custody awaiting trial. So instead, included in those were a large number of single men, adult men, who went on to commit heinous crimes. So looking back, do you regret the decision to terminate Remain in Mexico at the beginning of your administration?" Baier asked again. "At the beginning of our administration, within practically hours of taking the oath, the first bill, practically within hours of taking the oath, was a bill to fix our

immigration system," Harris said as Baier kept on interjecting in between. "We recognised from day one that this is your first question. It is a priority for us as a nation and for the American people. Our focus has been on fixing a problem. From day one, then, we have done a number of things, including addressing our asylum system and putting more resources, getting more judges, what we needed to do to tighten up penalties and increase penalties for illegal crossings, and what we needed to do to deal with points of entry between border, entry points," she said. "We worked on supporting what was a bipartisan effort, including some of the most conservative members of the United States Congress, to actually strengthen the border. That border bill would have put 1,500 more border agents at the border, which is why I believe the Border Patrol agents supported the bill. It would have allowed us to stem the flow of fentanyl coming into the United States, which is a scourge affecting people of every background, every geographic location in our country, killing people," she said.

Secret Service needs fundamental reform, says panel probing attack on Trump

AP ■ WASHINGTON

An independent panel investigating the attempted assassination of Donald Trump at a Pennsylvania campaign rally faulted the Secret Service for poor communications that day and failing to secure the building where the gunman took his shots. The review also found more systemic issues at the agency such as a failure to understand the unique risks facing Trump and a culture of doing "more with less". The 52-page report issued on Thursday took the Secret Service to task for specific problems leading up to the July 13 rally in Butler as well as deeper one within the agency's culture. It recommended bringing in new, outside leadership and refocusing on its protective mission. "The Secret Service as an agency requires fundamental reform to carry out its mission," the authors

wrote Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas of the Homeland Security Department, the Secret Service's parent agency, in a letter accompanying their report. "Without that reform, the Independent Review Panel believes another Butler can and will happen again." One rallygoer was killed and two others wounded when Thomas Michael Crooks climbed onto the roof of a nearby building and opened fire as Trump spoke. The former president was wounded in the ear before being rushed off the stage by Secret Service agents. That shooting, along with another incident in Florida when Trump was golfing — a gunman there never got a line of sight on the president or fired a shot — has led to a crisis in confidence in the agency. The report by a panel of four former law enforcement officials from national and state government follows investigations by

members of Congress, the agency's own investigators and by Homeland Security's oversight body. The panel echoed previous reports that have zeroed in on the failure to secure the building near the rally that had a clear line of sight to where Trump was speaking and the multiple communications problems that hindered the ability of the Secret Service and local and state law enforcement to talk to each other. "The failure to secure a complex of buildings, portions of which were within approximately 130 yards of the protectee and containing numerous positions carrying high-angle line of sight risk, represents a critical security failure," the report said. The panel faulted the planning during Secret Service and the local law enforcement, and said the Secret Service failed to ask about what was being done to secure the building: "Relying on

a general understanding that the locals have that area covered" is simply not good enough and, in fact, at Butler this attitude contributed to the security failure." The panel also cited the fact that there were two separated command posts at the Butler rally: one with various local law enforcement and another with the Secret Service. "This created, at the highest level, a structural divide in the flow of communications." There were other communications problems. The Secret Service had to switch radio channels because radio traffic of agents protecting first lady Jill Biden at an event in Pittsburgh was popping up on the channels of agents covering the Butler rally. The panel also noted that all the law enforcement personnel on the ground were using a "chaotic mixture" of radio, cell phone, text, and e-mail throughout the day to communicate.

UN seeks probe into attack on Afghan migrants by Iranian border forces

AP ■ DUBAI

A United Nations expert is calling for an investigation into reports that an attack by Iranian security forces on the border with Afghanistan killed and wounded migrants. Iran has denied any shooting took place Sunday near Saravan, a town in the country's restive southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan, which borders Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. However, anti-Afghan migrant rhetoric has escalated in Iran in recent months as Western sanctions grind down its economy, with the country's police chief claiming some 2 million migrants would be deported in the next six months. The Taliban said on Thursday they will provide updates once their investigation into the reported attack is complete. Their chief spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said earlier that rumours were circulating

about the deaths and injuries of Afghans on the Iran border. "The information has not yet been confirmed. The necessary decision will be taken after clarification of the matter," he said on social media platform X. HalVash, an advocacy group for the Baluch people that is broadly focused on Iran, has issued a series of reports over the shooting, citing two unnamed witnesses to the attack and others claiming a death toll that ran at least into the dozens, with more wounded. It published images of what appeared to be several corpses and others with gunshot wounds. HalVash alleged Iranian security forces used both firearms and rocket-propelled grenades in the attack. The Associated Press has been unable to independently confirm the attack. Verifying information remains difficult in Sistan and Baluchistan, which for decades has been home to cross-border

insurgency and violence involving heroin traffickers. However, Richard Bennett, the United Nations' special rapporteur on human rights in Afghanistan, has called for a probe into the reports, saying he was "seriously concerned". "I call for authorities to investigate transparently. Clarity is urgently needed," he wrote on X. "These reports don't stand in isolation. More dignity and safety is needed for Afghans worldwide." On Wednesday, Iran began to push back on the reports. Gen. Reza Shojaei, a commander of the provincial border guard, called the reports of a shooting "basically false". Hassan Kazemi Ghomi, the Iranian president's special representative for Afghanistan affairs, also called the claims "not true" on X and blaming the story's spread on "the frenzy of the lying media". Large numbers of Afghans have called Iran home for decades, from the

1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, through the first rule of the Taliban, the 2001 US-led invasion and the 2021 Taliban takeover. The United Nations' refugee agency estimates 3.8 million displaced people live in Iran, the vast majority of them Afghans. Some in Iran suggest the number of Afghans is even higher. Police and authorities are signalling they want to deport more Afghans. Iranian police chief Ahmad Reza Radan earlier this month signalled the country planned to deport 2 million undocumented migrants in the next six months, though he stopped short of identifying them as Afghans. He said some 500,000 already had been deported. "We cannot allow individuals to enter the country illegally, reside, and work," he said. "Citizens and business owners should know that employing these individuals and housing illegal foreign nationals is a crime."

Zelenskyy heads to EU, NATO seeking support for his 'victory plan'

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Thursday that support from his embattled nation's Western allies is key to his "victory plan" to end the country's devastating war with Russia as he laid out details of the plan to European Union leaders. He told reporters the plan aims "to strengthen Ukraine" and pave the way for a diplomatic solution to end the conflict on Europe's eastern flank. "I think that this plan doesn't depend on Russian will, only on the will of our partners," he said before addressing leaders at an EU summit. Zelenskyy was later shut-

ting across Brussels to meet with NATO defence ministers. The EU is a key supporter of Ukraine, a candidate member of the 27-nation bloc, as it fights Russia's invasion that began more than 2 1/2 years ago. Zelenskyy outlined the five-point plan to Ukraine's parliament on Wednesday without disclosing confidential elements that have been presented in private to key allies, including the United States. The Institute for the Study of War in Washington said that Russian President Vladimir Putin is seeking to draw out the war and he believes "that Russian forces can outlast Western support for Ukraine

and collapse Ukrainian resistance by winning a war of attrition." NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte was muted in his response to the plan on Wednesday. On Thursday he said that Kyiv can rest "absolutely assured that 32 allies are united in making sure that collectively, we will do whatever is needed to make sure that Ukraine can prevail, that (Russian President Vladimir) Putin will not get his way." Rutte reiterated that Ukraine's place is among NATO's ranks, but he would not say when it might join. Zelenskyy insists that a membership invitation is central to

his "victory plan" and would provide his country with the ultimate security guarantee to protect it from Russia. "Ukraine will be a member of NATO in the future," Rutte said. "The question is exactly about the when. I cannot answer that now." However, Rutte said, Putin must understand that "we are in this, if necessary, for the long haul. And obviously we want to be in a place where Zelenskyy and Ukraine, from a position of strength, is able to start talks with Russia." Major points of the plan include an invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western-supplied longer-range missiles to

strike military targets deep inside Russia, steps that have been met with reluctance by Kyiv's allies so far. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz downplayed the chances of Berlin changing its opposition to the use of long-range weapons against Russian targets. "You know Germany's position on the questions that are touched on here; nothing will change about this," he said. Zelenskyy said he needs to "move some partners forward" on the issue. "And I think only with the unity in EU we can move and can move not only EU leaders, we can move other leaders." A draft copy of EU summit

conclusions — a text that will likely be tweaked before publication at the end of Thursday's meeting — reaffirms the bloc's "unwavering commitment to providing continued political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes and as intensely as needed. Russia must not prevail". Thursday's talks in Brussels come as Ukrainian troops are struggling to hold off better-equipped Russian forces, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where they are gradually being pushed back. Kyiv is surviving with Western help, but Ukraine says it is coming too slowly.

Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda criticized slow Western decision-making over Ukraine and said it "would be a great mistake to think that our hesitance is the best way to de-escalation". If Western allies bolstered support to Kyiv, leading to gains on the ground for Ukrainian forces, "then I think Putin would be pressed to go to negotiations table. Right now, he thinks he is prevailing," he said when entering the EU summit. Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo said EU leaders "have to give a strong signal and unified signal that we continue to support Ukraine as much and as long as needed".

At their summit in Washington in July, the 32 NATO members declared Ukraine on an "irreversible" path to membership. But for now, NATO is in a holding pattern. Its biggest and most powerful member, the United States, is facing a presidential election. European allies expect little movement on Ukraine until a new president takes office in January. Beyond that, the United States and European heavy-weight Germany remain deeply concerned about being dragged into a wider war with nuclear-armed Russia, and they lead a group of countries that oppose allowing Ukraine to join NATO until the conflict ends.

India's logistics cost will come down to single-digit in two years: Nitin Gadkari

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Thursday said India's logistics cost will come down to single-digit within the next two years. Addressing an event organised by NITI Aayog, Gadkari said the ministry is constructing several highways and expressways, which will help reduce India's logistics cost. "Within two years, we are going to reduce our logistics cost to 9 per cent," he added. According to quick estimates of the economic think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), logistics costs in

India ranged between 7.8 per cent to 8.9 per cent of GDP for the fiscal 2021-22. Gadkari said there is huge potential for India to export alternative fuels and biofuels. He also pointed out that low-quality coal is useful for making methanol. The minister added that India is making significant strides in the biofuel sector, especially in methanol. Further, Gadkari said he aimed to make the Indian automobile industry number one in the world. Last year, India had overtaken Japan to become the third-largest automobile market in the world, only behind the US and China, he said.



The size of India's automobile industry rose from Rs 7.5 lakh crore in 2014 to Rs 18 lakh crore in 2024 and this industry is creating a maximum number of jobs, Gadkari added. Gadkari highlighted that materials like recycled tyre powder and plastic are being utilised in road construction, which helps in the reduction of bitumen import. He also emphasised how the

initiative of using crop waste is helping to increase the incomes of farmers across the country. Gadkari spoke about the stubble-burning problem in Punjab and Haryana. He said that right now, "we can process one-fifth of the Parali, but with better planning, we can reduce the seasonal air pollution from stubble-burning by using parali as raw material for alternative fuels." The minister said that India needs to move ahead with a policy which is cost-effective, indigenous, import substitute and employment-generating to address the major issues of rising pollution and fossil fuel imports.

Hyundai Motor India records ₹27,870 cr fully subscribed IPO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The initial public offer of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the Indian arm of South Korean automaker Hyundai, got fully subscribed on the third day of the bidding on Thursday. The Rs 27,870 crore initial share sale got bids for 14,07,68,187 shares against 9,97,69,810 shares on offer, translating into 1.41 times subscription, as per NSE data till 13:21 hours. The quota for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) got 3.88 times subscription while the portion meant for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) received 44 per cent subscription. The non-institutional investors part fetched 39 per cent subscription. Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) on Monday raised Rs



8,315 crore from anchor investors. This is the largest IPO in the country, surpassing LIC's initial share sale of Rs 21,000 crore. The IPO has a price band of Rs 1,865-1,960 per share. The IPO is entirely an offer for sale (OFS) of 14,21,94,700 equity shares by promoter Hyundai Motor Company (HMC), with no fresh issue component. This is the first initial share sale by an automaker in over two decades, following Japanese carmaker Maruti Suzuki's listing in 2003. Since the public issue is

completely an OFS, Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the second largest carmaker in India after Maruti Suzuki, will not receive any proceeds from the IPO. HMIL stated that it expects that the listing of the equity shares will enhance its visibility and brand image, and provide liquidity and a public market for the shares. At the upper end of the price band, the IPO size has been pegged at Rs 27,870 crore (USD 3.3 billion), and the company's market valuation at around Rs 1.6 lakh crore (about USD 19 billion) post-issue. HMIL commenced operations in India in 1996 and currently, sells 13 models across segments. Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Ltd, Citigroup Global Markets India Private Ltd, HSBC Securities and Capital Markets (India) Private Ltd, J P Morgan India Private.

Andhra eyes Rs 10 lakh cr investment in clean energy, net zero by 2047

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh is eyeing Rs 10 lakh crore investment in the clean energy sector in the state as it unveiled a new policy that incentivises investments across solar, wind and round-the-clock renewable energy projects to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2047. Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu unveiled the AP Integrated Clean Energy (ICE) Policy that envisages incentives ranging from hassle-free land acquisition at reasonable price to power subsidy to certain sectors. The ICE Policy will involve a proposed investment outlay of Rs 10 lakh crore, creating direct and indirect employment for 7,50,000 workers, the policy document said.



The policy looks to leverage the state's vast renewable energy potential across wind, solar and hybrid sources, storage capabilities through pumped storage projects, a long coastline, six operational ports (with four under development) and skilled manpower availability as it pivots energy transition. The Andhra Pradesh government is committed to promoting generation from renewables by creating a more conducive policy and investment framework to spur competition and private participation in the sector while maintaining a balance in the interests of all stakeholders, it said. The policy will aid in setting up of projects that generate electricity from abundant sunlight and wind energy as well from pump-storage projects on water bodies. Andhra Pradesh is targeting 78.5 gigawatts of solar capacity, 35 GW of wind energy, 22 GW of pumped storage and 1.5 million tonnes per annum of green hydrogen manufacturing capacity. It is also looking to set up 25 GWh of battery energy storage as well as projects to manufacture ethanol and biogas from biomass and 5,000 EV charging stations. It is also looking at 25-30 GW of cleantech manufacturing

DGCA releases 2024 domestic winter flight schedule

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Thursday released Domestic Winter Schedule 2024, in which Indian carriers will operate 25,007 flights every week to and from 124 airports in the winter schedule starting October 27, higher by three per cent, than the flights operated during summer period this year. In comparison to the winter schedule 2023, the number of flights has increased by 5.37 per cent. As per Winter Schedule 2024 (effective from 27th October 2024 till 29th March 2025) of the scheduled domestic airlines has been finalized after the slot conference meeting held in September 2024. "Out of these 124 airports, Pondicherry airport is proposed by the scheduled airlines whereas operations



from Pakyong and Tezpur airport were suspended in the winter schedule 2024," the DGCA said in a release. More than half of the total 25,007 domestic departures per week during the winter schedule will be handled by IndiGo. The Gurugram-headquartered airline will see

13,691 departures per week, up 4.91 per cent from 13,050 departures per week in the on-going summer schedule. Also, Tata Group, which currently has three airlines -- Air India, its subsidiary Air India Express and, its JV airline with SIA Vistara -- will have a total of 7,611 departures per week during

this winter, as per the DGCA. Of this, Air India will handle 2,586 departures per week, 13.52 per cent more compared to 2,278 departures per week in the summer schedule of this year, while Air India Express (which saw the merger of AIX connect with it this month) will see 2,832 departures per week

during the winter schedule, up 16.21 per cent from 2,437 departures per week in the summer schedule of 2024. Vistara, however, will see 5.64 per cent less departures per week at 2,193 from 2,324 departures per week in the summer of this year, it said. Budget carrier SpiceJet will also handle less number of departures at 1,297 per week from 1,657 departures per week in the summer schedule of this year, a drop of 21.73 per cent, according to the DGCA. Akasa Air, as per the DGCA, has filed for 989 departures per week for the winter schedule of 2024, which would be an increase of 9.52 per cent compared to the summer schedule. Out of these 124 airports, Pondicherry airport is proposed by the scheduled airlines whereas operations from Pakyong and Tezpur airport were suspended in the Winter Schedule 2024.

Nestle India Q2 profit dips on high costs, soft demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

FMCG major Nestle India Ltd on Thursday reported a marginal decline of 0.94 per cent in its net profit at Rs 899.49 crore for the second quarter that ended September 2024 as some of its key brands faced softer consumer demand and high commodity prices. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 908.08 crore in the July-September period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Nestle India. However, Nestle India's revenue from the sale of products was up 1.3 per cent to Rs 5,074.76 crore in the September quarter. It was at Rs 5,009.52 crore in the corresponding period of last fiscal. Commenting on the results Chairman and Managing Director Suresh Narayanan said, "Despite a challenging external environment with muted consumer demand and high commodity prices, especially for coffee and cocoa, we remained resilient in our pursuit to deliver growth."

"This quarter, 5 of our top 12 brands grew at double-digit. However, some key brands witnessed pressure due to softer consumer demand and we focus on them and have in place robust action plans," he said. Nestle India's domestic sales were up 1.23 per cent to Rs 4,883.14 crore, as against Rs 4,823.72 crore in the corresponding July-September period. In the domestic market, Nestle India delivered growth in organised trade, which includes retail chains, hypermarkets etc "spurred by noodles, beverages and overall premiumisation," according to an earnings statement by the company, which includes brands like Maggi, Nescafe, KitKat and Milkmaid etc. Similarly in the Out of Home (OOH) segment, Nestle India has a "robust growth" helped by portfolio transformation, premiumisation, new customer acquisition and driving reach beyond metros. "Our Out-of-Home business continues to be one of our fastest growing businesses with strong double-digit growth," said Nestle India



adding that while in e-commerce, Nestle India has accelerated growth by almost 38 per cent. This was "primarily driven by Quick Commerce and fueled by brands such as Kitkat, Nescafe, Maggi and Milkmaid." "E-commerce delivered high double-digit growth, which was the highest in the last seven quarters contributing to 8.3 per cent of domestic sales," it said. Growth on this new age channel was also supported by premiumisation, new user acquisition, festive participation and targeted digital communications. Its petcare business Purina

also witnessed a strong e-commerce momentum, it added. "Felix and Friskies cat food continued to receive positive feedback from trade and cat parents. Building on the superpremium pillar, Pro Plan dog food witnessed strong growth," said Nestle India. Its revenue from exports was also up 3.13 per cent to Rs 191.62 crore in the September quarter. Its export business "continued to expand its footprint by introducing new SKUs across categories to Canada, Middle East, Maldives and Papua New Guinea," it said.

Infosys Q2 net profit rises 4.7 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Infosys Ltd on Thursday reported a 4.7 per cent rise in the September quarter net profit and raised revenue guidance after broadbased growth. Net profit of Rs 6,506 crore in July-September was up 4.7 per cent when compared to Rs 6,212 crore earnings in the same period last year. It was 2.2 per cent higher quarter-on-year, according to a company statement. Revenue was up 4.2 per cent at Rs 40,986 crore. Infosys for the second consecutive quarter raised the 2024-25 fiscal year revenue guidance. It now anticipates a growth of 3.75 to 4.50 per cent in revenue in the fiscal year April 2024 to March 2025, up from 3-4 per cent band it had given in the previous quarter. The company had in July raised the revenue guidance for the fiscal from 1-3 per cent anticipated previously.

Sarla Aviation, Bengaluru airport launch electric flying taxis

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport is set to be a key hub for cutting-edge urban air mobility solutions with Sarla Aviation joining hands with the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) to launch electric flying taxis. Last month, the two entities signed a statement of collaboration to explore sustainable air mobility, specifically electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. This initiative, developed in Karnataka, aims to revolutionise air travel by introducing seven-seater electric flying taxis, which promise faster, cleaner, and more efficient transportation. While operations may still be two to three years away, Sarla



Aviation's electric taxis promise a cleaner, quieter, and more cost-effective alternative to traditional helicopter services previously offered in Bengaluru. The Bengaluru-based company, co-founded by Adrian Schmidt, Rakesh Gaonkar and Shivram Chauhan, is at the forefront of this transformation. Sarla Aviation plans to focus on four of India's most congested cities-Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi, and Pune -- bringing affordable electric aerial taxis to the public. The

company's proposed taxi from Bengaluru Airport to Electronics City would take just 19 minutes, compared to the 152 minutes required by road, with a fare of Rs 1,700. "We aim to redefine urban air transport with operational efficiency, reduced carbon emissions, and scalable infrastructure. Our electric flying taxis will set new benchmarks in reliability and performance, aligning with global standards for sustainable aviation," said Schmidt, Sarla Aviation co-founder and CEO.

Collective responsibility to improve corporate governance, follow global standards: NFRA Chief

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) Chairperson Ajay Bhushan Prasad Pandey on Thursday underscored the need for improving corporate governance and aligning Indian auditing with global standards to attract investors. Observing that there is a need to continue to take cognizance of corporate governance reforms, he said company management, independent directors and audit committee, statutory auditors, shareholders, and regulators constitute five lines of defence to improve corporate governance. "It is our collective responsibility...We should continue to create trust. Improve the corporate governance, and we should work in that direction," he



said, addressing an event organised by industry chamber ASSOCHAM here. Adopting global auditing standards would improve the trust of global investors in the Indian economy, which is on its way to becoming the third largest from the present fifth position, he said. Making a pitch to align Indian audit practices with the global standards, Pandey said it is in the interest of corporates. Adopting global audit norms

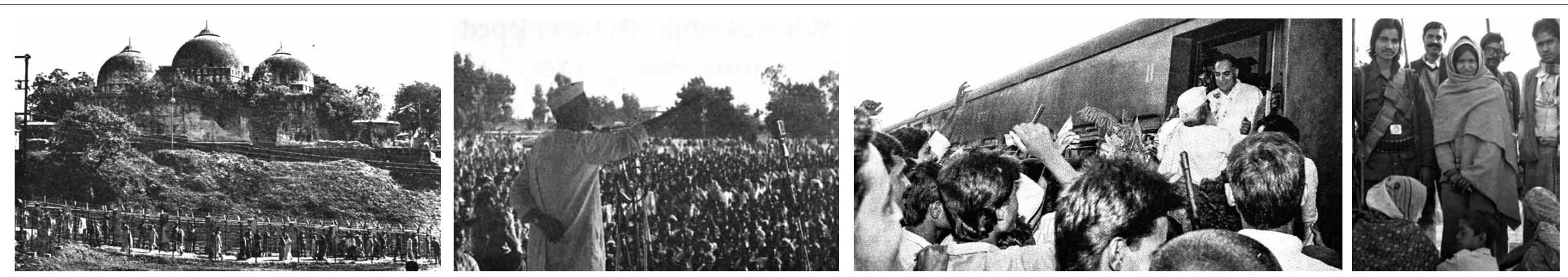
is easier as "we have global precedents", he said. "We cannot have Indian accounting standards in isolation while not adhering to global standards...Some big corporate failures have been due to related party transactions and subsidiaries siphoning off funds...We must take corrective action like new Standard of Quality Management, changes in the auditing standard SA 600 to reduce the probability of frauds via subsidiaries," he said. These will lead to early detection of frauds, he said, emphasising that India cannot be a developed economy by 2047 without audit reforms. He expressed confidence that Indian accountants and CAs can dominate the world with adherence to global standards.

INBRIEF

TATA AUTOCOMP SYSTEMS ACHIEVES DOUBLE DEMING RECOGNITION
NEW DELHI: A leading automotive components conglomerate serving Indian and global OEMs, announced today that two of its entities— Tata AutoComp Composites Division & Tata Fico—have been awarded the prestigious Deming Prize for 2024.

GNU A-ZONE YOUTH FESTIVAL INAUGURATED
AMRITSAR: The A-Zone (Amritsar District Colleges) Youth Festival of Guru Nanak Dev University was inaugurated here today in the Dasmesh Auditorium of the University/Monday to Saturday, 8 AM to 2 PM.

POWERGRID ACQUIRES THREE ISTS PROJECTS
HARYANA: – a Maharatna CPSU under Ministry of Power has on 15th October 2024 acquired three (03) Project Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) to execute Inter-State Transmission Projects related to transmission of renewable energy.



A PHOTO JOURNALIST'S JOURNEY LIFE BEHIND THE LENS

In 'Viewfinder' by veteran photojournalist *Jagdish Yadav*, readers are taken through the life of a photojournalist, uncovering the challenges and achievements that shaped his career. The book offers an extensive look into the power and ethics of photojournalism in capturing the truth behind the headlines, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



In today's society, where we are constantly bombarded with photographs and visuals, the deeper meaning and impact of photography can sometimes be lost or overlooked. With the fast-paced nature of digital media, where images are produced and consumed at lightning speed, it's easy for the essence of what a photograph conveys to fade into the background.

In contrast, *Viewfinder* by *Jagdish Yadav* offers a thoughtful examination of photojournalism, urging readers to consider how powerful storytelling can be when captured through photography. It highlights the importance of understanding not just the technical aspects of taking a photo, but also the stories and emotions behind the images. Essentially, it positions photography as a vital medium for narrative and expression in a visually saturated world.

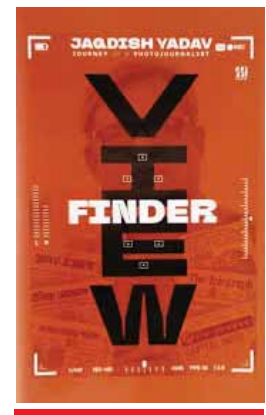
Yadav begins with a compelling analogy, describing photojournalism as the "writing of stories through light." This powerful concept resonates throughout the book, drawing readers into the essence of photography as a universal language capable of going beyond barriers. His unique perspective highlights the intricate relationship between light, structure and narrative, an often-overlooked aspect that enriches the understanding of both seasoned photographers

and novices. By establishing this foundation, *Yadav* encourages a deeper appreciation for the medium that conveys emotions and narratives that words alone cannot capture.

The personal narrative work with professional insights makes *Viewfinder* particularly impactful. *Yadav* candidly recounts his rural upbringing in Uttar Pradesh, revealing the stark contrast between his humble beginnings and his eventual success in journalism. He details the struggles he faced, including language barriers and educational hurdles, creating a relatable picture for readers who may have encountered similar challenges. His resilience in the face of adversity serves as a source of inspiration, proving that determination can lead to remarkable outcomes.

The author also provides a timely commentary on the evolution of journalism, particularly the impact of digital media. He argues that, in today's fast-paced world, where attention spans are fleeting, the importance of powerful imagery has never been greater. A striking photograph, he asserts, can convey emotions and narratives that text alone fails to articulate. This reflection on contemporary relevance makes *Viewfinder* not only a recounting of the past but a significant contribution to discussions about the future of photojournalism.

A standout point *Yadav* makes is how



ABOUT THE BOOK
Book: VIEWFINDER
by JAGDISH YADAV
Publication: IIP ACADEMY
in association with
MANAK Publication
₹1200.00

a gateway for readers to dive deeper into the article, establishing a connection that pure text might struggle to create.

The book explores the technical and ethical responsibilities of photojournalists. *Yadav* highlights the importance of collaboration between reporters and photographers to ensure that images not only match the narrative but also enhance it. The photojournalist, he argues, must make real-time decisions about how to frame a story visually, often needing to act independently of the editorial team. *Yadav* offers a technical breakdown of how photo composition, whether horizontal or vertical, parallels the structure of a well-crafted article, ensuring that the image tells a complete and coherent story.

Through a mix of anecdotal experiences and professional insight, *Yadav* stresses the need for photojournalists to remain vigilant, especially in today's fast-paced media environment where the public's attention span has shrunk. In this context, a well-timed, well-composed photograph can convey the news in a fraction of the time required to read an article.

Viewfinder is a thoughtful reflection on the role of photography in journalism. *Yadav* shows how photojournalists not only document events but also interpret them, offering the public a lens through which to see the

unfiltered reality. His accounts, often humorous and always candid, bring to light the challenges and triumphs of a profession that is crucial but often overlooked.

Jagdish Yadav's Viewfinder is a must-read for anyone interested in the power of images in media. For those interested in photojournalism or seeking an inspiring life story, this book offers a window into the experiences of someone who has spent decades capturing the world through their lens. *Yadav's* reflections on the evolving landscape of photography create a compelling narrative that resonates long after the final page is turned.



Festive Reads!

HarperCollins Picks for Your Festive Reads!



The Forest of Enchantments
By CHITRA BANERJEE DIVAKARUNI (PRICE: ₹799, PAGES: 372)

In *The Forest of Enchantments*, *Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni* offers a captivating retelling of the Ramayana, centering the narrative around Sita and other often-overlooked women of the epic, such as Kaikeyi, Surpanakha, and Mandodari. This powerful novel explores themes of duty, betrayal and the quest for autonomy in a patriarchal society. Through Sita's eyes, *Divakaruni* poses vital questions about women's rights and treatment in relationships, transforming an ancient story into a contemporary tale of resilience and empowerment.

In The Footsteps Of Rama: Travels with the Ramayana
By VIKRANT PANDE and NEELESH KULKARNI (Price: ₹599, Pages: 272)

In *In The Footsteps Of Rama*, *Vikrant Pande* and *Neelesh Kulkarni* embark on an enlightening journey to retrace Rama's travels during his exile. Beginning with their quest to locate Chitrakoot, they explore significant sites mentioned in the Ramayana, traveling from Ayodhya through the Dandakaranya forest, Panchavati, Kishkindhya, Rameshwaram, and even Sri Lanka. Along their adventure, they uncover the deep connections between the epic's narrative and local folklore, revealing how the stories of the Ramayana continue to resonate with the people of the land. This book is a delightful read for both armchair travelers and enthusiasts of epic tales.

Sita: Warrior of Mithila (Ram Chandra Series Book 2)
By AMISH TRIPATHI (PRICE: ₹399, PAGES: 376)

In *Sita: Warrior of Mithila*, set in 3400 BCE India, chaos reigns as the nation grapples with division, resentment, and corruption. The demon king Raavan of Lanka grows ever more powerful, exploiting the vulnerabilities of the Sapt Sindhu. In this tumultuous time, two tribes seek a savior and discover an abandoned baby, protected by a vulture from a pack of wolves. Adopted by the ruler of Mithila, this seemingly ordinary child is destined for greatness. This thrilling sequel in the Ram Chandra Series chronicles the rise of Sita, an orphan who evolves into a prime minister and ultimately becomes a goddess.

Faith and Morals of Hinduism

A Clear Path for the Curious Mind

In 'Quintessence of Hinduism' by *Girdhari Lal Chaturvedi* explores the core beliefs and moral principles of Hinduism, providing an insightful guide for young readers to rediscover and understand their faith.

ABHISHEK SONKAR

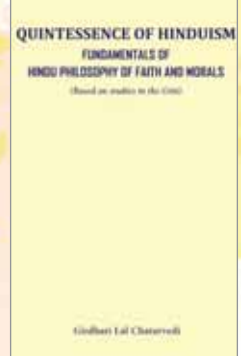
The Book offers a concise, comprehensive and insightful exploration of the core beliefs and moral principles that define Hinduism. The book, authored by *Girdhari Lal Chaturvedi*, is divided into 14 chapters, beginning with a historical overview of Hinduism and delving into the significance of the Bhagavad Gita as a philosophical text on faith. The author's aim is to create a guide for Hindu youth, who are often misinformed about their own faith, while also making the book a valuable resource for beginners and those familiar with Hinduism who wish to deepen their understanding.

However, the book struggles to fully achieve its purpose. The author emphasises that Hinduism, unlike many other religions, does not have a single founder or a rigid doctrinal structure. Instead, he describes it as a "bipolar faith." This term is problematic, as it can be misinterpreted to suggest conflicting or mutually exclusive aspects within Hinduism. In reality, Hinduism is a pluralistic tradition that has evolved through diverse paths and perspectives. Describing it as bipolar oversimplifies its inherently multifaceted nature.

The book extensively addresses critics of Hinduism, particularly from other religious backgrounds, who present Hinduism as a religion lacking in moral values. Yet, Hinduism is unique in that it has a long history of self-reflection and reform, with many philosophers and movements challenging established norms. This quality of self-critique is one of the aspects that sets Hinduism apart from other world religions.

Chaturvedi provides readers with a deeper understanding of the fundamental aspects of Hindu philosophy, including faith, morality and spirituality, and explains how these elements shape the daily lives of Hindus. The book also explores central texts such as the Bhagavad Gita, Vedas and Upanishads, offering summaries and interpretations of these works. The author does an admirable job of breaking down complex Sanskrit verses and ideas from the Bhagavad Gita into simple, relatable language without diluting their essence. This is one of the book's major strengths.

The author also discusses key Hindu concepts such as dharma (moral duty), karma (the law of cause and effect), and the nature of the atma (soul) and Brahman (universal consciousness), illustrating how these concepts are interconnected and central to Hindu philosophy. One of the book's main strengths is its ability to explain complex philosophical ideas in



ABOUT THE BOOK
Book: Quintessence of Hinduism: Fundamentals of Hindu Philosophy of Faith and Morals
by GIRDHARI LAL CHATURVEDI
Pages: 383
₹600.00
Availability: Amazon

an accessible manner while retaining their depth and significance. The clear and well-researched writing style makes the book a valuable resource for readers with little prior knowledge of Hinduism.

Chaturvedi highlights the accommodating nature of Hinduism, which encompasses a wide variety of beliefs, practices, and paths to spiritual realisation. Whether one follows a path of devotion (bhakti), knowledge (jnana), or selfless service (karma), all are considered valid approaches within the Hindu framework. However, there are limitations. Readers without prior knowledge of Sanskrit may find some sections challenging and those seeking a more detailed and nuanced exploration of specific texts or schools of thought may not find the depth they are looking for. These aspects could be viewed as potential shortcomings of the book.

'Quintessence of Hinduism' provides a useful introduction to Hindu philosophy and its moral framework. While it may not satisfy those looking for an in-depth scholarly analysis, it serves as a helpful starting point for anyone interested in exploring Hindu philosophy and is particularly recommended for readers who already have some familiarity with Hinduism.

HINDUISM, UNLIKE MANY OTHER RELIGIONS, DOES NOT HAVE A SINGLE FOUNDER OR A RIGID DOCTRINAL STRUCTURE. INSTEAD, HE DESCRIBES IT AS A "BIPOLAR FAITH"

BUOYANT NEW ZEALAND FACE UPBEAT WEST INDIES IN T20 WORLD CUP SEMIFINAL

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Buoyant New Zealand will seek to continue their inspirational run in the women's T20 World Cup when they face the West Indies in the second semifinal here on Friday.

New Zealand has undoubtedly been the story of the tournament so far in which they got the better of Asian sides India and Sri Lanka to make the final four from Group A, putting behind their 10-match losing streak before the competition.

With her towering presence, Sophie Devine has rallied the Kiwis troops impressively. Their success story features solid contributions at the top from Georgia Plimmer and veteran Suzie Bates, along with the all-round threat posed by Amelia Kerr further down the order.

Kerr has been at the forefront of the Kiwis attack with 10 wickets and 85 runs in what has been a largely low-scoring tournament, providing New Zealand with a lot of impetus. Rosemary Mair has also been



at the helm of New Zealand's success in this World Cup with seven wickets on slow pitches of the UAE.

Eden Carson set up the tone for New Zealand's high profile clash against India and the Kiwis will hope that the right-arm spinner is at the top of her game against the West Indies, who are coming off a huge win over England.

Hayley Matthews' West Indies topped Group B and like New Zealand they also lost one game in the group stage, but

overall the winners of the 2016 edition have put together robust performances.

The West Indies have qualified for their first semifinal since hosting the tournament in their back yard in 2018, while the biggest moment for the Caribbean side arrived in this edition when they pipped England in their last group stage match.

The West Indies had lost 13 matches in a row against England before the two teams met in their last Group B

fixture, but their run-chase of 142 showed no signs of mental fatigue against this opponent.

Matthews teamed up with the young Qiana Joseph to shut England out of the tournament with a rapid 102-run stand in which both the batters brought up their respective half-centuries.

While Matthews is the only Caribbean batter to have crossed the 100-run mark in the competition, Sarah Taylor and Deandra Dottin remain vital cogs in their batting.

Spinners Afy Fletcher (8 wickets) and Karishma Ramharack (5 wickets) have been the most successful bowlers for the Caribbean side.

New Zealand hold upperhand against the West Indies when it comes to bilateral record, having won 15 out of 23 matches so far with two tied games and one without a result.

The winner of this contest will take on the triumphant team from the first semifinal, to be played in Dubai on Thursday between the six-time winner and defending champions Australia and South Africa.



Vivaan wins silver medal, Naruka claims bronze in Shooting World Cup Final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vivaan Kapoor claimed silver in men's trap event after compatriot Anant Jeet Singh Naruka's bronze in the men's skeet competition, taking India's tally to four medals at the ISSF World Cup Final here on Thursday.

Vivaan shot 44 in the final to finish behind gold medal winner Ying Qi of China. Turkey's Tolga N Tuncer won the bronze medal with a score of 35.

Vivaan had come up with a score of 120 out of 125 in the qualification round to enter the six-man final.

Earlier, Naruka, the 26-year-old from Rajasthan, shot 43 in the six-man final, earning third place, while Italy's Tammaro Cassandro and Gabriele Rossetti took home the gold and silver with scores of 57 and 56, respectively.

Naruka made it to the finals by scoring 121 out of 125 in the qualification round.

Sonam Maskar had won a silver in the women's 10m air rifle on Tuesday and Akhil Sheoran clinched a bronze in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions on Wednesday.

Naruka and Maheshwari Chauhan had settled for a fourth-place finish in the skeet mixed team event at the Paris Olympics after losing the bronze medal match to China.



Nadal-Alcaraz and Djokovic-Sinner are the Six Kings Slam exhibition matches in Saudi Arabia

AP ■ RIYADH

Rafael Nadal starts his pre-retirement farewell tour against Carlos Alcaraz on Thursday at the Six Kings Slam, and Novak Djokovic faces Jannik Sinner at an exhibition event that awards money but no ATP ranking points and is Saudi Arabia's latest foray into tennis.

Riyadh will host the WTA Finals next month to open a three-year deal as the kingdom continues to invest in various sports, despite concerns about LGBTQ+ and women's rights

there raised by Hall of Famers Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova and others.

In Wednesday's matches at the Six Kings Slam, the top-ranked Sinner — who was cleared in a doping case shortly before winning the U.S. Open last month, although the World Anti-Doping Agency has appealed that exoneration — beat Daniil Medvedev 6-0, 6-3, and Alcaraz defeated Holger Rune 6-4, 6-2.

Nadal, an ambassador for the Saudi Tennis Federation, and Djokovic were given byes into the semifinals.

Davis Cup.

Looking ahead to Thursday's exhibition, Alcaraz called Nadal a "legend" and "a really important person for my life, for my career."

Djokovic and Sinner met for real on Sunday: Sinner won in straight sets to earn the trophy at the Shanghai Masters.

After a day off on Friday, the winners of Thursday's two matches in Riyadh will meet in the event's final on Saturday.

Nadal, 38, owns 22 Grand Slam titles; Djokovic, 37, has won 24, a record for the Open era.

the match up against Alcaraz would be the first contest for Nadal since his exit at the Paris Olympics in July — and his first match since he announced last week that he would be retiring after playing for Spain in the Davis Cup next month.

Nadal and Alcaraz played doubles together at the Paris Games and could team up again for

Ganguly named director of cricket at JSW Sports

ROLE TO COVER IPL, WPL AND SA20

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly was on Thursday appointed Director of Cricket for JSW Sports, his role covering all its cricketing properties including the Delhi team in the IPL and the WPL along with the Pretoria Capitals franchise in SA20.

JSW Sports and GMR Group co-own Delhi Capitals in the IPL and WPL (Women's Premier League) while Pretoria Capitals is owned solely by JSW Sports.

"In his role, Ganguly will spearhead all cricketing properties owned by JSW Sports, including the Delhi Capitals men's IPL and women's WPL teams, and the Pretoria Capitals that plays in the SA20 League in South

Africa," said JSW Sports in a statement.

Ganguly joined Delhi Capitals in 2019 as an advisor, where he worked alongside coach Ricky Ponting, and later returned to the franchise as Director of Cricket after his stint as BCCI president.

Ganguly's appointment came soon after it was decided that the management of cricket operations for Delhi Capitals' teams in the IPL and the WPL will be handled in a two-year rotation policy between GMR Group and JSW Group.

The GMR Group will handle the operations of the Delhi Capitals in the IPL for the next two years, while JSW Sports will handle the franchise's team in the WPL.

Former India batter Hemang Badani is expected to be named head coach ahead of

Pogba ready to give up money to play for Juventus again after doping ban

AP ■ MILAN

Paul Pogba says he's ready to give up money to play for Juventus again. The Serie A club may not want him, though, or need him.

Pogba recently had his four-year ban for doping reduced to 18 months after appealing to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, meaning the France World Cup winner will be free to resume his career in March 2025.

Juventus has not been overly enthusiastic about welcoming him back but Pogba says that is the only club he is thinking about playing for.

"I am ready to even give up money so that I can still play for Juve," he said in an

interview with Italian sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport. "I want to return."

Juventus sporting director Cristiano Giuntoli and new coach Thiago Motta are dubious about whether Pogba can return to the top level after being out for so long since testing positive for testosterone in August last year.

But the 31-year-old Pogba, who said he "felt like a caged lion" for the past year, has been training hard on his own and is ready to prove them wrong.

"I am a Juve player now. That is all I have in my mind today," he said. "I don't have to talk. What I do on the pitch will do my talking and then Thiago

Motta will judge with his own eyes, based on what he sees. "Talk is nice, but I want to play and I want to be the best one at Juve and in the France team." But not only has Juventus changed coach since Pogba was banned, it has also changed strategy.

It has brought in fresh new faces, including bright talents who progressed through its youth team, and got rid of the — costly — old guard with the offseason departures of Federico Chiesa, Wojciech Szczesny, Alex Sandro and Adrien Rabiot.

Nationality matters less than it used to in international soccer

AP ■ LONDON

The question was inevitable.

At his first news conference as England's newly appointed head coach, Thomas Tuchel — a German — was asked on Wednesday what message he had for fans who would have preferred an Englishman in charge of their beloved national team.

"I'm sorry, I just have a German passport," he said, laughing, and went on to profess his love for English football and the country itself. "I will do everything to show respect to this role and to this country."

The soccer rivalry between England and Germany runs deep and it's likely Tuchel's passport will be used against him if he doesn't deliver results for a nation that hasn't lifted a men's trophy since 1966. But his appointment as England's third foreign coach shows that, increasingly, even the top countries in the sport are abandoning the long-held belief that the national team must be led by one of their own.

Four of the top nine teams in the FIFA world rankings now have foreign coaches. Even in Germany, a four-time World Cup winner which has never

had a foreign coach, candidates such as Dutchman Louis van Gaal and Austrian Oliver Glasner were considered serious contenders for the top job before the country's soccer federation last year settled on Julian Nagelsmann, who is German.

"The coaching methods are universal and there for everyone to apply," said German author and soccer researcher and author Christoph Wagner, whose recent book "Crossing the Line?" historically addresses Anglo-German rivalry. "It's more the personality that counts and not the nationality. You could be a great coach, and work with a group of players who aren't perceptive enough to get your methods."

Not everyone agrees.

English soccer author and journalist Jonathan Wilson said it was "an admission of failure" for a major soccer nation to have a coach from a different country.

"Personally, I think it should be the best of one country versus the best of another country, and that would probably extend to coaches as well as players," said Wilson, whose books include "Inverting The Pyramid: The History of Football Tactics."

A GERMAN IN CHARGE OF ENGLAND?



09 and went on to lead the national teams of Nigeria, Iceland and Norway.

"I couldn't say I felt any big difference," Lagerback told The Associated Press. "I felt they were my teams and the people's teams."

For Lagerback, the obvious disadvantages of coaching a foreign country were any language difficulties and having to adapt to a new culture, which he particularly felt during his brief time with Nigeria in 2010 when he led the African country at the World Cup.

Otherwise, he said, "it depends on the results" — and Lagerback is remembered with fondness in Iceland, especially, after leading the country to Euro 2016 for its first ever international tournament, where it knocked out England in the round of 16.

Lagerback pointed to the strong education and sheer number of coaches available in soccer powers like Spain and Italy to explain why they haven't needed to turn to an overseas coach.

At this year's European Championship, five of the coaches were from Italy and the winning coach was Luis de la Fuente, who was promoted to Spain's senior team after being in charge of the youth teams.

PNB Housing Finance Limited

Regd. Office: 9th Floor, Aniriksh Bhawan, 22, K.G Marg, New Delhi-110001
Ph: 011-23574141, 23374172, 23705414, Website: www.pnbhousing.com

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF CHAPTER III OF SECURITIZATION & RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002, READ WITH RULE 3(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002 AMENDED AS ON DATE WE, THE PNB HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS "PNBHF")

Loan Account No.	Name/ Address of Borrower and Co-Borrower/s	Address of Guarantor/s	Property (ies) Mortgaged	Date of Demand Notice	Amount D/s as on date Demand Notice
HOU/ RDI/05 22/95 047	Borrower M Ratanjeet & Co-Borrower Akanksha Soni-103 Heramb Heights, Phase 1, Near JSFM College, Narhe, Pune, Maharashtra, India-411041; Also At- SOM Vijay Kumar, C/O R Sharma Ward 20, Charoda Swar Bhawan, Adarsh Nagar, Charoda, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India 490025; Also At- Ambit Finvest Pvt.Ltd, office No 303, blue Venture, FC Rd opp Vaishali Hotel Shivaji Chowk, Pune, Maharashtra, India, 411004.	NA	Flat No 710, 7th Floor, Building C/ 38 Park Majestic Phase II Col Operative Housing Society Ltd, Undari, Pune, Maharashtra, 411080.	08-10-2024	Rs.37,22,604.99 (Rupees Thirty Seven Lakhs Twenty Two Thousand Six Hundred Four and Ninety Nine Paise Only)

Place: Kharadi, Dated: 18.10.2024
Authorized Officer, (M/s PNB Housing Finance Ltd.)

शेन्ट बैंक होम फायनेन्स लिमिटेड
Cent Bank Home Finance Limited

संयुक्त बैंक और फिन्सा की संयुक्त Subsidary of Central Bank of India

APPENDIX-IV-A [Rule 8(6)] TENDER CUM AUCTION SALE NOTICE-04.11.2024

Auction sale notice for sale of immovable assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the Possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd. Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" Basis on 04.11.2024 for recovery of amount mentioned against each property due to the Secured Creditor from the Borrower. The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit, description of the property are as mentioned in the table below:

Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower & Account No.	Details of the Properties	Amount Outstanding as on date of Demand Notice (₹)	Date of Demand Notice		Reserve Price (₹)
			Possession	Earnest Money Deposit (₹ 10%)	
Mr. Aditya Tiwari, And Mrs. Sapna, Tiwari LAN : 00302070002816	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. LIG - 655, Block No. 41, 3rd Floor, Housing Board Colony, Boryakala, Raipur (C.G.) Area 467 Sq. Ft., Bounded, East: LIG - 653, West: LIG - 689, North: LIG 656, South: Road	5,73,559/- + interest and other charges	28.06.2018	4,00,000/-	40,000/-

TERMS & CONDITIONS: (1) The Auction is being held on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" Basis. (2) The secured asset will not be sold below the Reserve Price. (3) The intending purchaser/bidder should submit their bids in the prescribed tender form in a closed envelope separately for each property, with the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount (not below the 10% of Reserve Price) by means of Demand Draft (Nationalized Bank)/ RTGS / Online Transfer drawn in favour of Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd. payable at Raipur on or before 04.11.2024 up to 4.00 PM at above address of Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd. Raipur Branch. (4) The sealed envelope will be opened by the Authorized Officer at Raipur Branch on 04.11.2024 at 5.00 PM in the presence of eligible/ available intending Bidders who have deposited EMD amount Through Demand Draft (Nationalized Bank)/ RTGS/ ONLINE TRANSFER to participate in Auction sale on 04.11.2024 upto 4.00 PM (5) To the best of knowledge and information of the Authorized Officer, there is no encumbrance on the properties under sale. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims/ rights/ dues/ claims/ effecting the properties, prior to submitting their bid. The Auction advertisement does not constitute and will not be deemed to constitute any commitment or any representation of the Company. The property is being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the Company. The Authorized Officer/ Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/ rights/ dues. (6) It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the asset and specification before submitting the bid. The inspection of properties put on auction will be permitted to interested bidders at sites on 23.10.2024 to 24.10.2024 between 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM (7) The Earnest Money Deposit(EMD) of the successful bidder/ highest bidder shall be retained towards part sale consideration and the EMD of unsuccessful bidders shall be refunded. The Earnest Money Deposit shall not bear any interest. The sale shall be confirmed in favour of the purchaser who has offered the highest sale price in his bid or tender to the Authorized Officer and shall be subject to confirmation by the Secured Creditor. The highest bid will be subject to approval of the secured creditor/ Authorized Officer. (8) The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale price, (inclusive of EMD paid), on the same day or within 24 Hours. 75% of the sale price will be paid to the Authorized Officer on or before 15th day of confirmation of sale by the Secured Creditor. In case of default of payment within the period mentioned above all the amount deposited till then shall be forfeited including Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount and the property shall be resold and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all the claim to the property or any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold. (9) The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/ additional stamp duty/ transfer charges, fee etc. and also all the statutory dues, taxes, rates, assessment charges, fees etc. owing to anybody. (10) The Authorized Officer is not bound to accept the highest offer and the Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any or all offer(s) or adjourn/ postpone/ cancel the Auction without assigning any reason thereof. (11) This is also a notice to the Borrower/Guarantor/Property owner of the aforesaid loan in respect of the sale of the above mentioned secured Asset/under SARFAESI Act 2002 (under Rule 8(6)).

Place : Raipur, Date : 17.10.2024
Authorized Officer, Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd.
House No A -54, Beside Gupta Dental Hospital, Street No 1, Near Netaji Hotel Chowk, Katora Talab, Raipur-492001
Ph. No. 0771-2225088