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SHAMI'S ABSENCE BIG LOSS FOR INDIA, BUT WON'T UNDERESTIMATE RESERVE PACERS: MCDONALD



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## Yamuna froths, Delhi's taps run dry

**RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI**

More than half of the population in Delhi is currently facing disruption in the drinking water supply by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) due to presence of high level of ammonia and froth in Yamuna and curtailing of raw water supply from the upper Ganga canal. This disruption of water supply will continue till November 1. It is estimated that there has been a reduction of 200-225 Million Gallon per Day (MGD) due to

ammonia levels at the Chandrawal, Sonia Vihar and Bhagirathi Water Treatment Plants. While officially, only Sonia Vihar WTP is working at 15 percent below its daily capacity of 140 MGD. DJB's overall average water production capacity is 990-1,000 million gallons per day (MGD), including from tubewells. Toxic foam accumulation in the Yamuna has forced the shutdown of the Sonia Vihar Water Treatment Plant, impacting potable water availability in south, north and east Delhi and New Delhi's Lutyens areas



including Jor Bagh, Lodhi Colony, Golf Links, Pandara Road, the High Court vicinity, East and West Kidwai Nagar, Tughlaq Crescent, Ravinder Nagar, Khan Market, Lodhi Estate, Akbar Road, Amrita Shergill Marg, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Road, Prithvi Raj Road, and Tees January Road, among others. The high ammonia levels, exceeding 1.5 ppm (parts per million), present a substantial treatment challenge, leading to a reduction in operational capacity by up to 30 per cent. The increasing ammonia level in the Yamuna has been a persistent

problem for Delhiites. Every winter season, people in Delhi have to endure scarcity of drinking water due to the elevated level of ammonia in the Yamuna. Normally, the Bhagirathi and Sonia Vihar water treatment plants, which have a combined capacity of 250 million gallons per day (MGD) - 140 MGD from Sonia Vihar and 110 MGD from Bhagirathi - get their water from the Ganga. However, due to the annual maintenance and repair works being carried out by the UP Irrigation Department and UP Jal Nigam, the Ganga water supply has been halted from

October 21 onwards. Subsequently, Ganga water supply to these WTPs has been stopped. Due to high ammonia content i.e. above 1.5 ppm in raw water at River Yamuna, it is difficult to treat the Yamuna raw water. Hence, the production at Bhagirathi and Sonia Vihar has been curtailed up to 30 percent of the capacity. Further, the production would depend entirely upon the quality of Raw water at River Yamuna and production from these plants shall vary accordingly.

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## There is no such thing as 'digital arrests': PM

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday cautioned citizens about fraudsters indulging in the cyber crime of so-called "digital arrests". He urged people to adopt the mantra of "stop, think and take action" when faced with such a scam, asserting that these steps will provide digital security to them. In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast, he said probe agencies are working with states to deal with the issue but added that awareness is essential in protecting oneself from this crime. During his broadcast, he also shared a conversation between a victim and a fraudster to highlight the cyber crime. "The fraudsters of digital arrest phone calls, at times, impersonate police, CBI, Narcotics; at times RBI... Using such various labels, they converse as fake officers with a lot of

confidence. Many listeners of 'Mann Ki Baat' have wished that we must discuss that," the PM said. "Let me tell you how these fraud gangs work. What is this dangerous game? It is very important for you to understand this," he said. Explaining the modus operandi of such fraudsters, he said they collect personal information as their first

move and then in their second move create an atmosphere of fear. "You went to Goa last month, didn't you? Your daughter studies in Delhi, right? They collect so much information about you that you will be surprised. The second move - create an atmosphere of fear... Uniform, Government office set-up, legal sections. They will scare you so much on the phone. In the midst of the conversation you will not be able to even think," the PM said. He added that the third move of such fraudsters is the pressure of time. "You have to decide now or else you will be arrested..." These people create so much psychological pressure on the victim that one gets scared. People from every class and age group fall victim to digital arrest," he said, adding that people have lost lakhs of rupees earned through their hard work, out of sheer fear.

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## Bandra Terminus stampede leaves 10 injured

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**



At least 10 passengers were injured, two of whom severely, in a stampede that took place when scores of passengers rushed to board an unreserved compartment of the Gorakhpur-bound Antyodaya Express platform number-one of Bandra Terminus (BDTS) Railway Station in the small hours of Sunday. The incident took place at around 2.45 am, when the 22921 Antyodaya Express was slowly moving onto platform no 1 from the yard to head to Gorakhpur. A large number of passengers made headway into one of the unreserved compartments, leading to utter chaos and consequent stampede. "On 27.10.2024 at about 02.45 hrs, passenger train number 22921 Antyodaya Express was slowly being placed on platform number 01 from the BDTS yard, when some passengers present on the platform tried to board the moving train and 02 passengers fell and got injured," the Western Railway said in a statement issued here.

Of the ten injured passengers, two severely passengers - identified as Noor Shaikh Mohammed (18) and Indrajit Sahani (19), who were initially rushed to the nearby Bhabha Hospital, have been shifted to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)-run KEM Hospital. "Both of them have suffered multiple injuries. Noor Mohammed is on Oxygen support. His condition is critical,"

an official from the BMC's disaster control room said. The authorities identified the remaining eight injured passengers as Shabir Abdul Rehman (40), Parmeshwar Sukhdar Gupta (28), Ravindra Harihar Chuma (30), Ramsevak Ravindra Prasad Prajapati (29), Sanjay Tilakram Kangay (27), Divyanshu Yogendra Yadav (18), Mohammad Shareef Shaikh (25)

and Sameer Shaikh (22) Of them, five are undergoing treatment at the Bhabha Hospital, while three have been discharged from the hospital after treatment. A 51-second video clip shot minutes before the stampede showed a huge crowd of passengers waiting platform number one to board the train at the Bandra railway platform. As the train was moving onto the platform passengers surged and jostled with one another to board an unreserved compartment. What followed was a stampede. Some videos circulating on social media showed people running helter skelter and shouting. One of the videos showed a man with blood oozing out of his wounds, while another injured passenger lay next to him. One video showed a Railway Protection Force (RPF) constable carrying an injured passenger on his shoulder, while another personnel was seen taking a passenger to the hospital in a make-shift cloth stretcher.

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## Over 350 hoax bomb threat calls, only two arrests? Begging for a smartphone? Professionals are at it already!

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**



Hoax bomb callers have continued to target commercial flights and premium hotels across the country, causing significant financial losses and delays. At least 50 flights belonging to Akasa Air, IndiGo, and Vistara received bomb threats on Sunday. So far, more than 350 flights have received hoax bomb threats in the last 14 days. In some cases, the threats were issued to flights that had already been operated for the day or were not scheduled to operate. Besides, dozens of premium hotels in four states- West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh have also received threat messages in the past three days, prompting the security agencies to launch search operations. Most of the threats were issued through social media. In the backdrop of worrying trends of hoax threat messages to airlines, the government is taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence

Bureau to prevent these fake threats. Intelligence sources said there is an attempt to hit the economy via the aviation sector and the hospitality sector during the festive season. Meanwhile, airlines and passengers remain in a state of uncertainty due to these hoax call messages. According to sources, IndiGo received threats for 18 flights and Vistara for 17 flights. Akasa Air received threats for 15 flights. At least two IndiGo flights were diverted

following threats. Its flight 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur) was diverted to Ahmedabad and 6E 87 (Kozhikode to Dammam) was diverted to Mumbai. According to an IndiGo statement, the flights that received security-related alerts include 6E 11 (Delhi-Istanbul), 6E 92 (Jeddah-Mumbai), 6E 112 (Goa-Ahmedabad), 6E 125 (Bengaluru-Jharsuguda), 6E 127 (Amritsar-Ahmedabad) and 6E 135 (Kolkata-Pune). Among others flights targeted were 6E 149 (Hyderabad to

Bagdogra), 6E 173 (Delhi to Bengaluru), 6E 175 (Bengaluru to Delhi), 6E 197 (Raipur to Hyderabad), 6E 248 (Mumbai to Kolkata), 6E 277 (Ahmedabad-Lucknow), 6E 312 (Bengaluru to Kolkata), 6E 235 (Kolkata-Bengaluru) and 6E 74 (Riyadh-Mumbai). Akasa Air issued a statement, confirming in a brief that its Emergency Response Team is actively monitoring the situation and is in contact with security and regulatory authorities. "We are following all safety and security

procedures in coordination with local authorities, and the Akasa Air teams on ground are prepared to assist passengers to ensure their safety and comfort," read Akasa Air's statement posted on X. This has created a panic among air passengers amid the ongoing festive season. According to Akasa Air, on Sunday, a bomb threat was reported on a flight enroute from Bengaluru to Delhi via Gorakhpur, which was found to be a hoax after inspection. During a thorough inspection at the Gorakhpur airport, no suspicious item was found, Gorakhpur Airport director RK Parasher said. The flight landed in Gorakhpur at 1.33 pm and the door opened at 1.50 pm. The aircraft was carrying 174 passengers and three infants. The inspection of the aircraft and the passengers continued till 2.42 pm and the flight took off at 3.43 pm for Delhi, Parasher said. Ahead of the plane's arrival, the airport saw a high-security response, with police, Indian Air Force, Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad, fire brigade, and medical teams arriving on the site.

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In a surprising discovery, a recent survey by the District Urban Development Authority (DUDA), the Municipal Corporation, and the Social Welfare Department has revealed that many beggars in Lucknow are financially better off than several professionals. Some even possess smartphones and PAN cards, challenging common perceptions about the economic conditions of the city's beggars. The survey found a total of 5,312 beggars in the city, including individuals whose monthly earnings can reach up to ₹80,000-90,000 - especially pregnant women. The survey is part of a broader campaign to identify beggars and connect them with government welfare schemes. Authorities are documenting their details and registering them for Aadhaar cards to help integrate them into mainstream society. The data collected has brought several startling facts to light.

Initiated under the direction of Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob, the survey aims to understand the backgrounds and living conditions of beggars with a focus on rehabilitation. Findings reveal that many of these individuals originate from nearby districts such as Barabanki, Sitapur, Hardoi, Rae Bareilly, Unnao, and Bahraich. Despite owning homes in their villages, many choose to live on the streets of Lucknow, adopting begging as a way of life. Reports suggest that certain groups encourage women to have multiple children, believing that pregnancy attracts more donations from the public. As a result, many female beggars have as many as eight or nine children. Based on these findings, officials estimate that with an average daily earning of ₹1,200 per beggar, residents of Lucknow collectively distribute over ₹63 lakh in alms each day.

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## Fumes, crowds, blaring horns, Diwali shopping is now a challenge

Lajpat Nagar and Sarojini Nagar get a footfall of thousands each day during the festive season

**BY SAUMYA SHUKLA**

Shoppers splurging on clothes, gifts and other items ahead of Diwali, have been making a beeline to markets across the National Capital, the most popular ones include Lajpat Nagar and Sarojini Nagar in south Delhi. Lakhs arrive here as soon as the market opens around 11 am, and the footfalls continue till the closing time of 9 pm. Their cars, motorcycles, auto rickshaws, and taxis add a heavy load on the already busy roads leading to massive jams at all hours. There is also a possible threat to life in case a stampede like situation arises. The markets of Sarojini Nagar and Lajpat Nagar are bustling with shoppers coming to buy for the festivities ahead. However, with vehicles including cars, motorcycles and autos the spaces become cramped leaving restricted movement. It also leads to a potential threat to

lives with stampede-like situations arising. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police has amped up their security for the festivities and also in light of a blast near a Central Reserves Police Forces (CRPF) public school in Rohini Sector 14. In Lajpat Nagar, one can see that there is no free flow of traffic as vehicles are parked on both sides of the road creating massive inconvenience to the public, despite a Delhi police booth right outside the market and heightened police patrolling. People also fear that in a case of emergency, ambulances wouldn't be available on time due to the jams and very limited space for the movement of vehicles. A frustrated shopper said, "Whole Lajpat Nagar is facing huge traffic. People have parked their cars and vehicles here and there on the roads which are completely filled leaving little space for any movement. Why is



the Delhi Police not taking any action? What if there is any emergency, how can even an ambulance reach?" Another resident of the area claimed that selective restriction won't work in the area while she blamed the mismanagement of traffic as a reason for such congestion near the market area. "Restriction on all sorts of vehicular movements shall be a solution, not selective ones. As a person who has lived in Lajpat Nagar, I can vouch for the fact that this situation stems from unscientific parking and poor traffic management," she stated. Similar situations also exist in Sarojini Nagar even as several auto-rickshaws create a menace on the road. "There is a traffic jam created by autos at Sarojini Nagar market entry opposite to the post office in Vinay nagar. Delhi Police, please send some traffic personnel who can manage the situation. If such a situation persists at

the peak season, it can inevitably result in a scenario where people find it hard to move out despite an emergency," a commuter said. However, the Delhi Police told The Pioneer that the police have heightened its security and encroachments are also removed to make more space for the free flow of traffic as well as the shoppers to avoid any stampede like situation in the market. In Sarojini Nagar, a police officer said there 30 local police personnel, 24 paramilitary officers and five machans in light of the security situation ahead of festivities. "We have carried out anti-encroachment drives as well to provide more spaces on the road and police officers are stationed on all the five entry and exit points in the market. In case of a medical emergency, there is a fire tender and ambulance stationed as well," he added.

# BJP will win Maharashtra, Jharkhand before big target Bengal: HM Shah

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The BJP will drive away Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress from Bengal in 2026 before that it will do a 'Haryana' and 'Odisha' in Maharashtra and Jharkhand (State elections) where it will shatter Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's dream of a la Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said. Shah who launched a membership drive in the State to set the "next big target" of winning Bengal in 2026 for the party's state unit said that I have come to tell the youth of Bengal that if you want to end the rule of cut money, corruption and savor Rabindra Sangeet instead of cracking sound of bombs and establish the rule of law then the only way is to end the TMC's syndicate raj and bring BJP to power in 2026... that is our next big target." Attacking the Mamata Banerjee Government for the incidents like Sandeshkhali and RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, Shah said that "there is no respect for



women in Bengal... that the mothers and sisters cannot live with honour in this State is proved by the incidents of RG Kar and Sandeshkhali." An lady doctor was on August 9, brutally raped and murdered inside the RGMCH triggering a nationwide upheaval. Taking a dig at the Congress leadership, particularly Rahul Gandhi he said, "like it happened before the MP, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan elections Rahul Baba was dreaming of defeating BJP ...

he also was daydreaming of winning Haryana and Odisha but in both the States the Congress suffered defeat," iterating "this time also I announce that like in Haryana, MP and Odisha the BJP will emphatically win both Jharkhand and Maharashtra." Saying that the BJP was a proud party because "Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the only such person to form a Government for the third consecutive time," he wondered why Gandhi was

going to town claiming the BJP had been defeated in the parliamentary elections. "Rahul Baba is saying that the BJP has been defeated in the elections but he doesn't seem to understand that a winner always forms the Government and the loser like them sits in the Opposition... they are telling that the BJP has won only 240 seats but they tend to forget that the Congress has not won that many seats together in the past three elections." Attacking Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for unleashing a violent rule in Bengal he said that, after winning in 2024 Parliamentary elections "she was thinking that the BJP has been obliterated from Bengal but she does not that we are a party that started from two seats to win 370 and went on to abolish (Article) 370... we work for a goal --- which in this case is to win Bengal in 2026 --- we don't work to make our nephew a next Chief Minister." Dismissing Banerjee's claims that the Centre had been depriving Bengal of its legiti-

mate funds Shah said that unlike during the UPA Government of which she was a partner, the NDA had given her more funds. "Mamata didi is misleading the people about central allocation of funds... she is telling that the Centre is not giving her funds... but in reality the INDIA (formerly UPA) alliance when it was in power had given Bengal Rs 1.09 lakh crore between 2004 and 2014 whereas the NDA Government has given Bengal Rs 7.74 lakh crore between 2014 and 2024... similarly for MNREGA UPA gave Bengal Rs 15,000 crore whereas NDA gave Rs 54,000 crore... In PMA Y the NDA Government gave Bengal Rs 50,000 crore whereas the UPA Government only Rs 4,500 crore... and still she is misleading the people by peddling lies," he said adding asking the people to bring a second Parivartan (change) in Bengal "to end cut money and syndicate raj... to see that the farmers' and poor men's allocations that are released by the Centre do not go into the pockets of any TMC leader."

# Stop infiltration to bring peace: Shah at Bangla border

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ PETRAPOLE/BONGAON

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday inaugurated a massive newly constructed passenger terminal and cargo gate at the Indo-Bangla border point at Petrapole in North 24 Parganas said that peace will return to Bengal only when trans-border infiltration is stopped and that can only be ensured with the fall of the Trinamool Congress Government. Addressing a gathering at Petrapole in North 24 Parganas where he Shah said "in establishing peace in the region, land ports play an important role... Illegal movement of people across the border disturbs peace... and peace in Bengal can only be restored when there is no infiltration which again can be

ensured only if the BJP come to power in 2026 throwing away the TMC from power," he said. The new facility at the border is likely to end the miseries of the passengers crossing to and from India. Besides being the eighth largest international immigration port of India that handles more than 23.5 lakh passengers annually between India and Bangladesh the Petrapole crossing is the largest land port in South Asia. While Petrapole is in India, Benapole is situated on the corresponding side in Bangladesh. Apart from handling passenger traffic a large portion of which accounts for medical tourism nearly 70 per cent of land-based trade (by value) between the two countries take place through this point which is controlled by the Land Ports Authority of

India, which functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Shah alleged during a subsequent meeting in Kolkata that the TMC Government in Bengal was the biggest facilitators of the infiltrators. "I have come to tell the youth of Bengal that State-sponsored infiltration in Bengal has to be stopped and for that to happen then the only way is to form BJP Government in 2026," the Home Minister said. Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari too attacked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for "perpetrating a mafia raj and allowing infiltration in Bengal." Vowing that the BJP would "never allow Bengal to become a second Bangladesh," he said in 2026 Assembly elections his party would do whatever that was required to be done to oust the TMC from power.

# Delhi court to pronounce order on Engineer Rashid's bail on Monday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court is likely to pronounce on Monday its order on a regular bail plea of Engineer Rashid, the Lok Sabha MP from J-K's Baramulla, in a terror funding case. Additional Sessions Judge Chandler Jit Singh, who on September 10 granted interim bail to Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popular as Engineer Rashid, to enable him to campaign for the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, had earlier deferred the order on his regular bail application. The judge had extended Rashid's interim bail till October 28 on the grounds of his father's health. The NIA had said it had verified the documents and it



was not opposing the bail application of the accused due to the health condition of his father. Rashid had been lodged in Tihar jail since 2019 after he was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a 2017

terror funding case. Elections to the 90-member J-K Assembly were held in three phases from September 18 to October 1. The results were declared on October 8 in which the National Conference-Congress alliance attained a clear majority with 48 seats.

# Waqf Board demand sets tone for secessionist movement in south India

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Mission Malabar, a project to carve out an Islamic State incorporating Muslim majority regions in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu is in full swing, according to political leaders and former intelligence professionals. Mustafa Mundupara, leader of Samasta Youth Sangham had called for carving out a separate Malabar State while addressing a public meeting in the month of June 2024. "With the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution by the BJP-led Government at the Centre, the extremist and terrorist organizations operating out of Kashmir have shifted their bases to Kerala and Karnataka. The present Waqf Board controversy is part of the mission to drive out infidels from Muslim dominated regions in these States," Kevin Peter, founder president,

Christian Alliance and Association for Social Action (CAASA), told The Pioneer. According to the Ministry of Minority Affairs, the word Waqf means properties dedicated exclusively for religious or charitable purposes under Islamic Law and any other use or sale of the property is prohibited. In India, Waqf Board controls 8.7 lakh properties spanning 9.4 lakh acres with an estimated value of Rs 1.2 lakh crore. India has the largest Waqf holding in the world. Waqf Board is the largest land owner in India after the Armed Forces and Indian Railways. In neighboring Karnataka, the Congress-ruled Government has asked the Revenue Officials to transfer 15,000 acres of land belonging to the farmers in Vijayapura district to the Waqf Board which would throw out thousands of poor people from their land where

they have been staying for more than six decades with valid documents. "Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his minister for minority affairs Zameer Ahmed Khan are trying to convert Karnataka into another Pakistan," said Tejasvi Surya, MP and president of BJP's National Youth. Situation is no different in Tamil Nadu where the Waqf Board has claimed hectares of this temple land and properties owned by non-Muslims. Rajagopal in Thiruchenthurai, a poor farmer who is struggling to sell his land to clear his debts is heart rending. Since the Waqf Board refuses to issue NOC to the sale, the farmer is caught between devil and deep sea. Kevin Peter told this paper after visiting Munambam-Cherai, the coastal village along the sea shore in Ernakulam district from where 600 families have been

asked to vacate by the local revenue officials. They had told the residents that the 450 acres of land where they are staying for more than six decades belong to Waqf Board. Philip Joseph of Cherai who struggled for decades in West Asia and was a senior official to the Prime Minister of Kuwait returned to India with dreams of providing livelihood to the youths in this fishing hamlet. Taken aback by the Waqf Board stance, he is planning to return to Kuwait. The laity that congregates at the Velankanni Church during every October say the rosaries with tears in their eyes. "Our only request to the Holy Mother is to save us from eviction and not to make us roofless," Jesna Sanal, member of Cherai Panchayath. Decades ago, B Raman, former additional secretary in the Cabinet

Secretariat has written in one of his research papers that the hardcore Islamists are scheming to establish a corridor of Muslim majority regions in the three States linking them with former princely State of Hyderabad. The Waqf Board is executing the mission that was forecast by Raman, said Anantha Narayanan of Bhartiya Vidy Bhavan. The BJP is the only political outfit to condemn the Waqf Board move. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan while releasing a book authored by P Jayarajan, state committee member of the CPI(M) said that though he was attending the function he was not in agreement with many views expressed by the author. The Congress too is silent on the Waqf Board demand though top leader of the party (the chief minister in waiting) asked the Christians to call off the agitation against the Waqf Board.

# Bandra Terminus stampede leaves...

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All the 10 persons injured were taken initially to the nearby Bhabha Hospital from where two severely injured persons were shifted to the KEM Hospital. There was a tremendous pre-

Diwali rush at the Bandra railway station when the mishap took place. The migrants, who have come to Mumbai for jobs, return to their native places in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the run-up to Diwali and Chhath by trains every year.

In a statement issued here, the Western Railway said that 130 festival special trains were being run to various destinations, especially in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, in view of the upcoming Diwali and Chhath festivals."

These special trains will make 2,300 trips from Mumbai Central and Bandra in the metropolis, as well as Valsad and Udhna in neighbouring Gujarat," the WR statement added. Sunday's incident brought back the horrific memories

of a massive stampede that had taken place on a narrow foot-over-bridge (FoB) connecting the Parel and Elphinstone Railway stations in south-central Mumbai that took place on September 29, 2017, in which 22 commuters were killed and

39 others injured. Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and former minister Aadiya Thackeray on Sunday dubbed Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw as "incapable" and said that he wished "the reel minister was a reel minister for once"

Aadiya wrote on micro-blogging site "X": "Wish the reel minister was a reel minister for once. The incident at Bandra only reflects how incapable the current Railways Minister is." "The BJP has made Ashwini

Vaishnaw ji, a prabhari for BJP Maharashtra for elections, but every week there are some incidents and accidents that occur with the railways. Such a shame that our country has been forced under such incapable ministers," Aadiya stated.

# Yamuna froths, Delhi's taps...

From page 1

The issue of high ammoniacal nitrogen concentrations in the Yamuna during the winter is not new. Between December and March each year, treatment plants have to either shut down or operate at reduced capacity several times, as the system can handle ammonia only up to 1 part per million (ppm). However, the level of ammonia has spiked up to 5 ppm, resulting in a challenge for a key water treatment plant in the national capital, which supplies water to several parts of south Delhi. According to DJB, water supply will be affected till 1st November, 2024 in East Delhi, North East Delhi, part of South Delhi and part of NDMC area, such as Gokulpuri, Sonia Vihar, Karawal Nagar, Babarpur, Tahirpur, Dilshad Garden, Nandnagari, Shahdara, Laxmi Nagar, Geeta Colony, Mayur Vihar, Kondli, Dallupura, Yamuna Vihar, Karawal Nagar, Jaffrabad, Jhilmil, Mandawali, Laxmi Nagar, Shakarpur, Vivek Vihar, Karkardooma, Jagatpuri, Shalimar Park, Krishna Nagar, Patparganj, Preet Vihar, Vishwakarma Park, Lalita Park, Seelampur, Shastrji Park, Brahmপুরi, Kailash Nagar, Sarai Kale Khan, Jal Vihar, Lajpat Nagar, Moolchand Hospital, Greater Kailash, Vasant Kunj, Devli, Ambedkar Nagar, Okhla, Kalkaji, Kalkaji Extn., Govindpuri, G.B. Pant polytechnic, Shyam Nagar Colony, Okhla Sabzimandi, Amar Colony, Dakshin Puri, Panchsheel Park, Shahpur Jat, Kotla Mubarakpur, Sarita

Vihar, Sidhartha Nagar, Apollo, G.K. North, Malviya Nagar, Deer Park, Gitanjali, Srinivaspuri, G.K. South, Chhatarpur, part of NDMC and their adjoining areas, and adjoining areas. Meanwhile, Delhi Jal Board (DJB) Vice-President Vinay Mishra conducted an urgent inspection at Sonia Vihar and Bhagirathi Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) on Sunday, and held the BJP ruled Haryana government responsible for high levels of ammonia in Yamuna river. After the inspection, Mishra shared a few snippets on his 'X' handle, stating: "After becoming the Vice President of Delhi Jal Board, I inspected the water treatment plant today. Ammonia is increasing in the water due to industrial waste coming from Haryana. The Delhi government will soon talk to the Haryana government and resolve this issue so that Delhiites can get clean water. Also, appropriate instructions were given to the officers to ensure that when the quality of water improves, the water treatment plant works at 100% capacity." "Since last year, DJB has raised concerns about increasing ammonia levels in the Yamuna, mainly attributed to industrial waste discharged from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Ammonia spikes have been repeatedly detected, most notably in January and February this year, impacting production, especially at the Wazirabad WTP. Recently, ammonia content reached 0.9 ppm, rendering the water unsuitable for treatment and further limiting WTP operations," he added.

# Begging for a smartphone? The professionals have...

From page 1

One case highlighted by a project officer involved a pregnant woman with six children, whose earnings significantly increased during pregnancy, reaching as high as ₹80,000-90,000 per month. Among the survey's findings, a concerning trend has emerged in areas like Charbagh, where many beggars have been identified as drug addicts. These individuals were reluctant to reveal information about their drug suppliers, raising suspicions of potential drug syndicate operations in the area. The survey also uncovered the existence of organised begging syndicates, where begging appears to be a coordinated activity rather than an act of individual desperation. From compulsion to

profession What may begin as a means of survival has evolved into a lucrative profession for many. DUDA Project Officer Saurabh Tripathi pointed out that only a small percentage of beggars in Lucknow beg out of genuine need. Approximately 10 percent have been identified as professional beggars, travelling to Lucknow from nearby districts like Hardoi, Barabanki, Sitapur, and Rae Bareilly for this purpose. "Our aim is to understand the identity of the beggars, their origins, and whether any groups are coercing them into begging. We want to assess if they would be willing to abandon begging, if provided with work opportunities," Tripathi explained. Municipal Commissioner Inderjit Singh emphasised the importance of the survey,

stating, "Let's wait for the final report. This survey focuses on five main crossings in the state capital. Our objective is to eradicate begging in Lucknow, but we cannot formulate effective strategies without solid facts and figures. We aim to address the root causes of begging, which is why this survey is crucial. Once we analyse the report, we will develop a targeted strategy to combat the issue." This revelation has sparked discussions among officials and citizens alike, raising questions about the dynamics of begging in the city and the need for more focused social welfare initiatives. While authorities work to integrate these individuals into government programs, the findings shed light on a complex reality underlying daily life in Lucknow.

# There is no such thing...

From page 1

"Whenever you receive such a call, don't be scared. You should be aware that no investigative agency inquires like this through a phone call or a video call. I am enumerating the three steps to digital security. These three steps are - 'stop' ? think ? take action," he said. "As soon as you get a call, stop... - don't panic, stay calm, don't take any hasty steps, don't give away your personal information to anyone; if possible take a screenshot and record it for sure." The first step was 'stop' and the second step was 'think'. No government agency threatens you on the phone like this, neither inquires nor demands money on a video call like this," he said. The third step is 'take action', he said and urged victims to dial the national cyber

helpline 1930 and report such incidents on cybercrime.Gov.In. He also urged people to inform family and police, and preserve evidence by recording the fraud call. "Stop, then 'think', and then 'take action'; these three steps will become the protector of your digital security," the PM said. The Prime Minister reiterated that there is no system like "digital arrest" in the law and this is just a fraud, deceit and a lie. The gang of criminals and those who are doing this are enemies of society", Modi said. To deal with the fraud that is going on in the name of digital arrest, all probe agencies are working together with the state governments, he said, adding that for synchronisation among these agencies, a National Cyber

Coordination Centre has been set up. "Thousands of such fraudulent video calling IDs have been blocked by the agencies. Lakhs of SIM cards, mobile phones and bank accounts have also been blocked. Agencies are doing their job, but for protection from scams in the name of digital arrest, it is very important that everyone is aware, every citizen is aware," he said. Those who are victims of this kind of cyber fraud should let as many people as possible know about it, the PM said and urged people to use the hashtag #SafeDigitalIndia for spreading awareness. He also urged schools and colleges to involve students in the campaign against cyber scams. "We can fight this challenge only with the collective efforts of society," he said.

# Over 350 hoax bomb threat calls, only two arrests?

From page 1

Senior officials also rushed to the scene to manage the situation, he said. Passengers were safely evacuated, and a thorough inspection of the aircraft was conducted, revealing no suspicious items. Following the all-clear, the flight continued its journey to Delhi. Responding to a query after formally inaugurating two flights Visakhapatnam-Vijayawada, Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on

Sunday said the government is taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these fake threats. "The investigation is going on," he added. Meanwhile, a total 35 hotels and a temple also received bomb threat messages, these include 10 premium hotels in Lucknow, 10 hotels in Rajkot, 10 in Kolkata and several hotels and a temple in Tirupati. These hoax threats were made in the past three days. An email sent to a hotel

threatened that explosions would take place if a ransom demand of USD 55,000 (Rs 4,624,288) was not met. "Bombs are hidden in black bags on the grounds of your hotel. I want USD 55,000, or I will detonate the explosives and blood will spill everywhere. Any attempt at defusing the bombs will detonate them," read the threat email. Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and

promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules. Meanwhile, the civil aviation ministry is looking to take legislative actions to tackle the menace of the hoax bomb threats to airlines. On Saturday, Delhi police had arrested a 25-year-old unemployed man for making hoax bomb threats, marking only the second arrest since a spate of such threats began being issued to airlines last week. According to police, the

man admitted to making the threats to draw attention to himself after seeing reports of similar calls on television. A case was registered and investigations revealed that the account belonged to Shubham Upadhyay from Rajapuri in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar area. Upadhyay was arrested and, on being questioned, revealed that he had made the threats to garner attention after seeing reports of similar calls on TV. On October 16, the Mumbai

Police had taken a 17-year-old school dropout from Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh into custody for threats made to four flights on October 14. After a dispute with a friend over money, the teenager had allegedly created an X handle in his name and made threats to frame him. Of the four flights to which the boy had issued the threats, two were delayed - including Air India flight AI 119 from Mumbai to New York, which was diverted to New Delhi - and one had to be cancelled.

# Congress to stage protest over custodial death



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Congress in Chhattisgarh will stage a sit-in protest in all district headquarters on November 3 against the custodial death of a man in Balrampur district.

State Congress chief Deepak Baij on Sunday sought a probe under the supervision of a High Court judge, action against the Superintendent of

Police and a Sub-Divisional Officer of Police as well as re-post-mortem of the deceased by another set of doctors.

Addressing the media here, Baij also demanded a compensation of Rs 1 crore for the kin of the deceased.

Guruchand Mandal allegedly hanged himself with a scarf inside the toilet of the Balrampur police station on Thursday.

Mandal was summoned to

the police station and was being interrogated based on suspicion in connection with his missing wife.

After Mandal's death, a large number of people reached the police station and ransacked vehicles parked there. The police used force to disperse them.

The next day, Balrampur police station in-charge Pramod Ruisya and constable Ajay Yadav were suspended.

# CM kicks off 'Gram-Chikitsalaya' web series shoot

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Sunday gave the clap for the inaugural shot of the web series 'Gram-Chikitsalaya' to be filmed in Rajnandgaon district.

The team behind the famous web series 'Panchayat' is making this series.



The team said they have cast local talents in the series — particularly those associated with theatre.

Sai said his government was taking steps to promote film production and to transform Chhattisgarh into a film hub.

He said the government had made many provisions to encourage this under the New Film Policy and a film city would come up here.

# Ophthalmologist suspended



STAFF REPORTER ■ DANTEWADA

The Chhattisgarh government on Sunday suspended an ophthalmologist in Dantewada district on charges of negligence and dereliction of duty.

Dr Geeta Netam, posted at the District Hospital in Dantewada, was suspended with immediate effect, an order said. The action was taken following a report submitted by an

The action was taken following a report submitted by an investigation team after a botched cataract surgery carried out on October 22 in the hospital.

investigation team after a botched cataract surgery carried out on October 22 in the hospital. The report said the protocol for surgery was not followed appropriately.

During the suspension, she will be attached to the office of the Chief Medical and Health Officer in Dantewada.

# Maoist injured in gunfight, hospitalized

STAFF REPORTER ■ BIJAPUR

A Maoist was injured on Sunday in a gunfight with security personnel in Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh.

The gunfight broke out in the forest of Kummameta village with the District Reserve Guard, Bijapur Additional Superintendent of Police Chandrakant Governa said.

The operation was launched based on inputs about the presence of Matwada Local Organization Squad commander Anil Punem and 10-12 armed cadres in the forest of Matwada in the area.

After the exchange of fire stopped, a Maoist, identified as Rakesh Kumar Oyam, was found injured at the site.

The wounded Naxalite was taken to



the Bijapur district hospital where he was given preliminary treatment and later shifted to a hospital in Jagdalpur.

Oyam was a member of the Belchar Revolutionary Party Committee of the Maoists and four cases were registered against him in the district.

# PM to lay foundation stone of Yoga, Naturopathy research institute

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually lay the foundation stone of a Central Research Institute of Yoga and Naturopathy (CRIYN) — to come up in Raipur — on October 29.

The 100-bed research institute will be built in two years at a cost of about Rs 90 crore.

This will be Chhattisgarh's



first yoga and naturopathy research centre and hospital. It will also conduct training courses in wellness therapy and fellowship courses in research.

On this day, Modi will also virtually inaugurate a multi-specialty hospital of the Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences in Bilaspur district.

A huge 10-floor hospital has been built there at a cost of about Rs 200 crore. It will have six super specialities.

# 2,216 children immunised

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Ahead of the National Ayurveda Day, the Narayan Prasad Awasthi Government Ayurvedic College in Raipur administered an immunity booster called Suvarnaprashan to 2,216 children under the age of 16.

An official communiqué said on Sunday that the organisers also distributed the Bal Raksha Kits, made up of five



medicines, to 300 children. This raises the tally to a total of 17,477 children who have received the medicine this year.

The medicine is highly beneficial for the overall growth of children, and it also protects them from respiratory diseases and boosts their concentration and memory.

Under the National Ayush Mission, the college holds these camps on every Pushya Nakshatra date. The future camps are scheduled for November 20 and December 18. The 9th National Ayurveda Day will be observed on October 29.



A glimpse of the awareness activities held in Raipur on Sunday to inspire youngsters to vote in the Raipur City South Assembly byelection on November 13.

# 65 pc Indian doctors call for safer tobacco alternatives to save lives

AGENCIES ■

Amidst India's escalating tobacco epidemic, where four out of 10 households grapple with smoking addiction, a new report revealed that 65 percent of healthcare professionals in the country call for safer novel tobacco alternatives to save lives.

The report from the Doctors Against Addiction (DAAD) survey, in collaboration with Saizen Global Insights and Consulting, revealed a pivotal shift in the perspectives of healthcare professionals with 65 per cent of doctors supporting integrating safer cessation alternatives, such as nicotine replacement therapies and heat-not-burn products, into smoking cessation efforts. They emphasised the need for further efficacy research of these alternatives.

The finding marks a significant moment in India's ongoing battle against tobacco addiction, which contributes to over 930,000 deaths annually — equating to more than 2,500 lives lost every day due to smoking-related diseases.

"Tobacco addiction is India's most pressing public health challenge. To combat this, we must prioritise scientifically permitted alternatives for tobacco cessation. As healthcare professionals, guiding patients toward



safer options is crucial to saving lives and mitigating tobacco's devastating impact," said Dr Mohsin Wali, Padma Shri Awardee and Senior Consultant at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

"India's tobacco crisis is a national emergency, requiring immediate intervention. While innovative cessation technologies have potential, concerns remain over the lack of structured support for transitioning to novel safer alternatives. Urgent statutory recommendations of scientifically-proven cessation solutions," added Dr Manish Sharma, Chief

Coordinator of DAAD.

In the survey involving 300 healthcare professionals, over 70 per cent of doctors cited addiction severity and low motivation, and 60 per cent pointed to a lack of cessation resources as key barriers to quitting.

It revealed that smoking cessation in India is hindered by inadequate follow-up care and poor implementation of evidence-based methods. Only 7.4 per cent of healthcare providers consistently offer cessation advice, and just 56.4 per cent arrange follow-up consultations, highlighting significant gaps.

"Tobacco addiction needs multifaceted solutions. The rise of safer novel alternative products for cessation provides an opportunity to rethink our strategies. By integrating these cessation strategies and enhancing public knowledge about this, and around digital platforms and resources, we can drastically improve our intervention outcomes," Dr Pawan Gupta, Senior Consultant in Pulmonary Medicine at BLK-MAX Super Specialty Hospital, New Delhi.

The findings highlight a critical need for policy reform, increased public awareness, the integration of modern technologies, and safer novel alternatives to support those struggling with addiction.

# New weight loss drugs can cause decline in skeletal muscle mass

AGENCIES ■

Amid the growing use of weight loss medications, a new study has raised concerns about declining skeletal muscle health caused by the popular drugs.

In a recent commentary published in The Lancet journal, researchers from the US and Canada highlighted the critical importance of skeletal muscle mass in the context of medically induced weight loss, particularly with the widespread use of GLP-1 receptor agonists.

While the drugs have shown extreme potential in treating

obesity -- a precursor for many diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and cancer -- they can also lead to substantial muscle loss as part of the weight loss process, argued researchers from Pennington Biomedical Research Center in the US, Universities of Alberta and McMaster in Canada.

They noted that muscle loss -- measured by decreases in fat-free mass -- can account for 25 to 39 per cent of total weight lost through the 36 to 72 weeks. The role of skeletal muscle is not only for maintaining physical strength and function but it is also crucial for metabolic health and regulation of the body's

immune system.

The team found that GLP-1 receptor agonists lead to significantly larger muscle decline than with a non-pharmacological caloric restriction diet or normal ageing. This, the researchers said, "could lead to unintended negative health consequences".

People with poor muscle mass have decreased immunity, and are at increased risk of infections, poor glucose regulation, and other health risks.

Further, the researchers noted that muscle loss caused by weight reduction can also worsen sarcopenic obesity -- prevalent

among individuals with obesity, and contributes to cardiovascular disease and higher mortality rates.

Dr. Steven Heymsfield, professor of metabolism and body composition at Pennington, called on people going for weight loss drugs to be "mindful of the side effects". He added that, while on the medications people are "eating less and not getting the appropriate amount of dietary vitamins and minerals".

An adequate amount of protein along with an optimum amount of exercise should be explored along with the medications, suggested the researchers.

**MOTILAL OSWAL HOME FINANCE LIMITED**  
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**POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY/IES)**  
 (UNDER RULE 8 (1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002)

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

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

Sr No.	Loan Agreement No. / Name of the Borrower/ Co Borrower/Guarantor	Date of Demand Notice and Outstanding	Date of Possession Taken	Description of the Immovable Property
1	LXRAI00116-17004879 & LXMOHF220-210554503 & LXHOF04919-200076190 Vijaykumar Mahesh Kumar Sarthi & Hemlata Vijay Sarthi	07-12-2020 for Rs. 947604/-	22-10-2024	Plot Kh. No. - 201/1, Khata No. - 1133, PH No. - 105/49, R.N.M. Raipur - 1, Dr. Khubchand Baghel Ward- 67, Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 492001
2	LXNORAIIPUR721-220622798 Jitendra Ashok Sen & Nirmala Sen	12-09-2023 for Rs. 1299807/-	26-10-2024	Part Of Khasra No. 154/39, New Khasra No. 154/288, Patwari Halika No. 101/29, Dr. Radhakrishnan Ward No.22, (Kandika- 02), Parsahi Talab, Mouje- Birgan, R.N.M. Dharisra -1, Tehsil & Dist Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492001

The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the Charge of Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited for an amount mentioned herein above and interest thereon.

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

Place : Chhattisgarh Date : 28.10.2024

Authorized Officer (Motilal Oswal Home Finance Limited)

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# PM Modi envisions India as global animation powerhouse

# SC seeks Uttarakhand government's response on plea for Madhumita Shukla murder convict

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Citing the popularity of Indian animated series such as 'Chhota Bheem', 'Hanuman' and 'Motu-Patlu', Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said India is on the way to ushering in a new revolution in the world of animation and urged the people to take the resolve of making the country a global animation powerhouse.

In his monthly Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast, he said India's animation characters and movies, on account of content and creativity, are being loved all over the world.

"You must remember the days when 'Chhota Bheem' started airing on TV. Children can never forget that; there was so much excitement about 'Chhota Bheem'! You would be surprised that today 'Dholakpur ka Dhol' attracts children not only in India but also in other countries. Similarly, our other animated series such as 'Krishna', 'Hanuman', 'Motu-Patlu' also have a fan-following all over the world," the prime minister said.

"You might have noticed that from the smartphone to the cinema screen, gaming console to virtual reality, animation is omnipresent. India is on the way to ushering in a new revolution in the world of animation," Modi asserted.

He also pointed out that the gaming space of India is also expanding rapidly and Indian games are also gaining popularity all over the world.

"When I met leading gamers of India a few months ago... I got an opportunity to know



and understand the amazing creativity and quality of Indian games. Indeed, in the country, there's a constant wave of creative energy," he said.

In the world of animation, 'Made in India' and 'Made by Indians' can be noticed everywhere, Modi said.

"You will be happy to know that today India's talent is also a significant part of foreign productions. Be it the present day Spider-Man or Transformers, in both these movies, Harinarayan Rajeev's contribution has been highly appreciated by people," he said.

Animation studios of India, are working with world famous production companies such as Disney and Warner Brothers, Modi noted.

"Today our youth are creating original Indian content, which reflects glimpses of our culture. These are being watched all over the world," he said.

Modi stressed that today, the animation sector has donned the form of an industry that

is powering other industries, just as VR Tourism is getting famous these days.

"Through a virtual tour you can view the Ajanta caves, take a stroll through the Konark temple corridor or enjoy the ghats of Varanasi. All these VR animation marvels have been made by Indian creators. After seeing these places through VR, many people want to visit these tourist places in reality, i.e. Virtual tour of a tourist destination has become a medium of creating curiosity in the minds of people," he said.

Today in this sector, along with animators, the demand for storytellers, writers, voice-over experts, musicians, game developers, VR and AR experts is also constantly rising, he said.

"Therefore, I would like to tell the youth of India - expand your creativity. Who knows, the world's next super hit animation might emerge out of your computer! The next viral game could be your creation! Your innovation in educational animations can

achieve great success," he said.

Noting that the 'World Animation Day' will be celebrated on October 28, he called on the people to take the resolve of making India a global animation powerhouse.

Recalling Swami Vivekananda's mantra of success - 'Take an idea, Make that one idea your life', Modi said the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is also riding on this mantra of success, and noted this campaign has become a part of our collective consciousness.

"It has become our inspiration at every step. Self-reliance has become not only our policy, but our passion as well. Not that long ago... Just 10 years ago, if someone had said then, that some complex technology was to develop in India, many people would not believe it and many would ridicule it - but today the same people are amazed to see the success of the country," Modi said.

Becoming self-reliant, India is doing wonders in every sector, he asserted.

"Just think, India, which used to import mobile phones once upon a time, is the world's second largest manufacturer today. India, which once was the biggest buyer of defence equipment in the world, is now also exporting to 85 countries. Today, in space technology, India has become the first country to reach the South Pole of the Moon," he said.

He said this campaign of self-reliance is no longer just a government campaign now and the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan is becoming a people's campaign with success in every field, the

prime minister said.

"Just as this month, we inaugurated Asia's largest 'Imaging Telescope MACE' in Hanle, Ladakh. It is situated at a height of 4300 metres. Do you know what is special about it as well? It is 'Made in India'. Imagine, the place where the cold dips to minus 30 degrees, where there is a shortage of even oxygen, it is there that our scientists have achieved something that no other nation in Asia has done," he said.

Even though the Hanle Telescope is watching a distant world, it is also showing us something more - the capabilities of self-reliant India, Modi said.

He urged people to share as many examples of India becoming self-reliant as possible.

"What new innovation have you noticed in your neighbourhood? Which Local Start-up has impressed you the most? Along with hashtag A a t m a n i r b h a r Innovation, write down this information on social media and celebrate Atmanirbhar Bharat," Modi said.

In this festive season, Modi urged people to strengthen this campaign of Atmanirbhar Bharat and asked them to do their shopping with the mantra of Vocal for Local.

"This is the new India where the impossible is just a challenge... Where Make in India has now turned into Make for the world, where every citizen is an innovator, where every challenge is an opportunity," Modi said.

"We not only have to make India self-reliant, but also strengthen our country as a global powerhouse of innovation," he said.

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court has sought the Uttarakhand government's response on a plea seeking the premature release of one of the convicts in the 2003 murder case of 26-year-old poet Madhumita Shukla.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih issued notice to the Uttarakhand government on a plea by Rohit Chaturvedi seeking direction to a competent authority for ordering his premature release.

Additional Advocate General Garima Prasad, appearing for the Uttar Pradesh government referred to earlier judgements of the apex court passed in the Bilkis Bano case on January 8 and May 13, 2022 and said that the competent authority in this case will be the Uttarakhand government.

She submitted that this court has held on January 8 that the state in which trial of a criminal case has taken place will be the competent authority to deal with a premature release of convicts as per state's policy.

"Since the case was transferred to Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh on the orders of this court, in this case the competent authority will be the Uttarakhand government," Prasad submitted.

The bench agreed to issue a fresh notice to the Uttarakhand government and posted the matter for further hearing on November 14.

Earlier, the Uttar Pradesh government moved the top court seeking a recall of an order that has asked it to consider a premature release of Chaturvedi.

The UP government has contended that in view of the second Bilkis Bano judgement of January 8 this year, the state has sought a recall or modification of the December 15, 2023 order passed in the case of Chaturvedi.

On January 8, the top court quashed the Gujarat government's remission granted to 11 convicts in a case involving the gangrape of Bilkis Bano and murder of her seven family members during the 2002 Godhra riots.

It had said the Gujarat government was not the appropriate authority to pass the remission order and clarified that the state in which an offender is tried and sentenced is competent to decide a remission plea of the convict.



The convicts in the Bilkis Bano case were tried in Maharashtra.

In the process, the bench had nullified a May 13, 2022 judgement of another apex court bench that had directed the Gujarat government to consider the remission applications of the 11 convicts, saying it was obtained by "playing fraud on court".

On May 13, 2022, a bench comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi (now retired) and Vikram Nath asked the Gujarat government to consider the plea of convict Radheshyam Shah for a premature release in terms of its remission policy of July 9, 1992, holding that the government of the state where the offence had taken place has the jurisdiction to decide the application.

In the present case, on December 15, 2023, a bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose (now retired) and Masih, relying on the May 13, 2022 judgment, asked the Uttar Pradesh government to consider the remission plea of Chaturvedi, who was tried for murder in a court in Uttarakhand.

"We, accordingly, direct that the remission plea which was filed by the petitioner-convict (Chaturvedi) be sent to the home secretary, state of Uttar Pradesh by the state of Uttarakhand.

This shall be done within a period of three weeks from date.

Thereafter, the state of Uttar Pradesh shall examine the question and take a decision in that regard within a further period of eight weeks," it had directed on December 15, 2023.

The UP government has sought a recall of the order that has asked it to decide the convict's remission plea on the ground that the apex court, in the subsequent judgment in the Bilkis Bano case, has held that the state where the convicts were tried is the requisite authority to decide such a plea for premature release.

Shukla was shot dead on May 9, 2003 in Lucknow's Paper Mill Colony while she was pregnant.

Former UP minister Amarmani Tripathi was arrested in September 2003 in connection with the killing of the poet with whom he was allegedly in a relationship. Subsequently, other accused were also arrested in connection with a conspiracy to kill Shukla.

On October 24, 2007, a trial court in Uttarakhand convicted Amarmani Tripathi, his wife Madhumani Tripathi, nephew Rohit Chaturvedi and associate Santosh Kumar Rai for Shukla's murder and sentenced them to life imprisonment.

Amarmani Tripathi, who was elected from the Nautanwa constituency, was a minister in the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh in 2001 and also in the BSP government formed in 2002. He has also been associated with the Samajwadi Party.

On June 17, 2003, the probe was transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The trial was shifted from Uttar Pradesh to Uttarakhand by the Supreme Court on February 8, 2007.

On July 16, 2012, the Uttarakhand High Court upheld their conviction and sentence. The order was upheld by the apex court on November 19, 2013.

On August 24, 2023, the Uttar Pradesh prisons department issued an order for a premature release of Amarmani Tripathi and his wife Madhumani Tripathi, citing the state's 2018 policy on remission and also the fact that they had completed 16 years of their sentences.

Chaturvedi, who was convicted for criminal conspiracy and murder, had applied for a premature release to the Uttarakhand government but his plea was rejected.

Thereafter, citing the first Bilkis Bano case judgement on remission (of May 13, 2022), he sought a direction from the apex court to the Uttar Pradesh government for his premature release.

## Satcom industry urges Government to protect key frequency bands for satellite communication

## PM Modi to inaugurate C-295 aircraft at Vadodara

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The satellite-communication industry has urged the government to protect the key frequency bands used by them, particularly the Ka and Ku bands, from being allocated to terrestrial services.

The Satcom Industry Association of India has also asked the government to reserve the 27.5-28.5 GHz band exclusively for satellite services, instead of transferring it to IMT (International Mobile Telecommunications) for flexible use, in line with global practices.

"Any reduction in satellite bandwidth will not only double the gateway requirements but also increase operational costs for satellite operators, ultimately affecting end-users. We must prioritise the preservation of these frequency bands for satellite-communication services to avoid unnecessary financial burdens," Subba Rao Pavuluri, president, SIA-India, said in a statement.

The industry body has also proposed specific frequency ranges in the Ku and Ka bands for the NSO-based Fixed Satellite Services (FSS). SIA-India represents major

satellite providers, including Inmarsat, Viasat, SES, Intelsat, Telesat, Omnispace, Amazon, AsiaSat and Hughes Communications.

The association has also called for clear guidelines on the authorisation process for instances, such as when a single satellite operator seeks to provide both a gateway earth station and user terminal services.

"Establishing these guidelines is essential to ensure a streamlined and efficient framework that supports the growth and reliability of satellite communication services," Anil Prakash, director general, SIA-India, said.

The association has also advocated for long-term spectrum assignments and proposed a maximum assignment period of 20 years with renewal rights, as seen in several international regimes. Such an approach will provide satellite operators with the necessary confidence to invest in their infrastructure and services over an extended timeframe, they have said.

Additionally, SIA-India has also suggested that a single licence should suffice for multiple antennas located at one site to streamline operations.



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Ahead of the inauguration of a manufacturing facility for C-295 planes in Vadodara, officials sources on Sunday said of the 40 aircraft to be made in India, the first C-295 is likely to roll out of the plant in September 2026.

Prime Minister Modi and his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez will inaugurate the Final Assembly Line plant of C-295 aircraft at Vadodara on Monday, the first private sector final assembly line for military aircraft in India, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had said in a statement on Saturday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone of the Final Assembly Line (FAL) plant of C-295 aircraft in Vadodara in October 2022.

The Ministry of Defence in September 2021 signed a Rs 21,935-crore contract with Airbus Defense and Space SA, Spain for supply of 56 aircraft. Of these 56 aircraft, a total of 16 will be brought in flyaway condition directly from Spain, and 40 will be built in India by

Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL). First C-295 medium tactical transport aircraft was delivered in September 2023.

As on date, the IAF has "already inducted six C-295 aircraft" in its Vadodara-based 11 Squadron. The last of the 16 flyaway aircraft will be delivered by August 2025, an official source said.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez is scheduled to visit India from October 28-30, during which he will visit the Vadodara facility on Monday.

"Of the 40 aircraft to be made in India, the first C-295 will roll out of the Vadodara facility in September 2026 and the remaining 39 aircraft by August 2031," the source added.

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The emergency arbitrator appointed will conduct proceedings in the manner as may be specified by the (arbitration) council.

At the same time, the draft bill also omits some of the clauses of the present law.

One of the clauses omitted relates to laying of notifications proposed issued, in both Houses of Parliament when it is in session.

The omitted clause read: "A copy of every notification proposed to be issued... Shall be laid in draft before each House of Parliament, while it

is in session, for a total period of 30 days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in disapproving the issue of the notification or both Houses agree in making any modification in the notification, the notification shall not be issued or, as the case may be, shall be issued only in such modified form as may be agreed upon by the

both Houses of Parliament". Addressing an event here last year, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar had lamented that retired judges have kept the arbitral system of the country in a tight fist grip, denying chance to other qualified minds. He said India is known for its rich human resources, but they are not picked up to adjudicate arbitral process.

Successive governments have been pushing to make India a hub of international arbitration on the lines of London and Singapore, with limited success.

## Government seeks public input on draft arbitration and conciliation

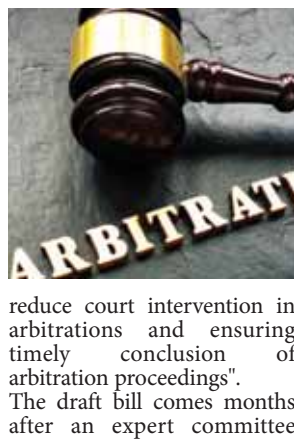
**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Seeking to provide "further boost" to institutional arbitration and reduce court intervention in such cases, the government has come out with a draft bill seeking views on the proposed amendments.

The Department of Legal Affairs in the law ministry has invited comments on the draft Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2024, saying "the aim and purpose is to provide further boost to institutional arbitration,

reduce court intervention in arbitrations and ensuring timely conclusion of arbitration proceedings".

The draft bill comes months after an expert committee



headed by former law secretary and former Lok Sabha secretary general T K Vishwanathan submitted its report on proposed reforms in the arbitration sector to the law ministry.

The draft bill proposes the concept of 'emergency arbitration'.

The proposed amendment says arbitral institutions may, for the purpose of grant of interim measures, provide for appointment of 'emergency arbitrator' prior to the constitution of an arbitral tribunal.

delivered, it is either counterfeit or completely different from what was advertised.

To con people using "fake charity appeal scams", scammers create convincing websites or social media profiles asking for donations for fake causes like disaster relief or health initiatives and use such images or stories that provoke sympathy or urgency.

"Mistaken money-transfer scams" are those in which fraudsters contact a victim via e-mail or social media, claiming that money has been mistakenly sent to his account as they use fake transaction receipts to ask the person to return the funds immediately to avoid legal issues.

"Phone scams" are those where victims receive calls or messages under the fake name of a telecom regulatory body, saying there is an "issue" in their

service as they urgently seek one-time passwords (OTPs) and banking information for identity verification.

"Parcel scams" are like "digital arrest" where victims are informed over a call or message that they are under probe as their drugs-laden parcel has been seized and they will be arrested or may have to face legal consequences if they do not pay a fine.

As part of the "loan or cards scam", fraudsters offer loans with low interest rates, coupled with quick approval, and "disappear" after the victims transfer an upfront fee for securing the loan.

The advisory suggested a host of best practices and counter-measures to stay vigilant against such crimes and not give into the "pressure tactics" deployed by cyber criminals, who seek quick action by creating "a sense of urgency".

## Cyber criminals take advantage of user's lack of technical knowledge: CERT-In

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Indian cyber-security agency CERT-In on Sunday shared a list that talks about more than a dozen ways in which online scams are being perpetrated by fraudsters in the country, including "digital arrest" to dupe people by stealing their money and private data.

The public advisory has been accessed by PTI and it came on a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi too cautioned people against such frauds in his monthly "Mann ki Baat" radio broadcast.

The Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In) advisory said "digital arrest" is an online scam as "government agencies do not use platforms like WhatsApp or Skype for official communication".

"Verify their identity by directly contacting the relevant agency," it



recommended.

The advisory said in a case of "digital arrest", victims receive a phone call, e-mail or message claiming that they are under investigation for illegal activities, such as

identity theft or money laundering.

The scammer threatens the victim with arrest or legal consequences unless he takes immediate action.

They often create a sense of

panic to prevent rational thinking, the advisory said.

Under the guise of "clearing their name", "assisting with the investigation" or "refundable security deposit/escrow account", individuals are coerced into transferring large sums of money to specified bank accounts or UPI IDs, it added.

The advisory asked people, who get contacted by such cyber criminals, to "not panic as scammers use fear and urgency to manipulate victims".

"Take a moment to assess the situation calmly before responding.

Avoid sharing personal information and never disclose sensitive personal or financial details over the phone or video calls, especially to unknown numbers," the CERT-In said.

It stressed that people should not transfer money "under pressure" as legitimate law-

enforcement agencies "will never pressure you into sending money immediately".

"If someone demands money over the phone or online, it's most likely a scam," it said.

The advisory said staying "vigilant and informed" is crucial to protect oneself from this "emerging cyber threat".

The advisory also spoke about other online cons like "phishing scams", in which scammers create e-mails or messages that appear legitimate, often using logos and branding from trusted organisations; "lottery and prize scams" where victims receive notifications claiming that they have won a huge amount of money and to claim the prize, they are asked to pay a processing fee or taxes.

It said scammers exploit "hope and greed" to carry out lottery scams.

"Emotional manipulation

scams" are perpetrated online dating communication apps where scammers build emotional connections and then solicit money for emergencies like medical treatment and request that funds be sent via crypto currency.

"Job scams" are meant to con fresh graduates by posting about fake work listings on legitimate hiring portals or social media.

As part of "tech support scams", cyber criminals take advantage of a user's lack of technical knowledge and stealthily gain access to his computer by warning about a virus and then steal sensitive personal data.

"Investment scams" cash on a person's desire to earn quick money as they promise "unrealistic" returns via Ponzi or pyramid schemes and in "cash-on-delivery scams", criminals set up fake online stores accepting CoD orders. When the product is

delivered, it is either counterfeit or completely different from what was advertised.

To con people using "fake charity appeal scams", scammers create convincing websites or social media profiles asking for donations for fake causes like disaster relief or health initiatives and use such images or stories that provoke sympathy or urgency.

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# BJP delegation urges Punjab Governor to address paddy procurement issues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

A delegation of Punjab BJP leaders on Sunday met Governor Gulab Chand Kataria and submitted a memorandum alleging inefficiency on part of the AAP government in the state for "tardy" paddy lifting. The delegation urged the governor to intervene and ensure the complete lifting of paddy from mandis as a "gift" to the farmers of the state so that they can "celebrate Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas with their families".

The memorandum said, "Due to inefficiency on the part of the Punjab government, even after 26 days of official commencement of paddy procurement, the Punjab government has failed to lift most of the paddy from the mandis across the state."

Paddy procurement for Kharif Marketing Season 2024-25 commenced in Punjab from October one, according to the BJP delegation that included Avinash Rai Khanna, Preet Kaur, Harjit Singh Grewal, Rana Gurmeet Singh Sodhi, Vijay Sampla, Vineet Joshi and Fateh Jang Bajwa.

"Before the commencement of the season, in the last week of September, Punjab government got Rs 44,000



crore for the purchase of paddy on MSP from the central government," the memorandum said. The BJP's memorandum further alleged that the Punjab government has miserably failed to make all the necessary arrangements on time to ensure the smooth purchase of paddy: be it the purchase of gunny bags, tarpaulin or notification of custom milling policy or notification of FRK (fortified rice kernels) milling policy or awarding of labour contracts or transportation contracts, etc.

The state government has also failed to ensure proper

drinking water, toilet facilities, and compulsory medical facilities at mandis, the memorandum said. The biggest failure of the government is its inability to enter into an agreement with 5,500 rice millers for the indefinite period to protest the "tardy" paddy procurement and lifting and other issues. Protests were held at Badarukhan on Sangrur-Bathinda highway in Sangrur, Dargu on Moga-Ferozpur highway in Moga, Satali Phul on Gurdasour-Tanda highway in Gurdasur and Batala railway station, farmers said.

great inconvenience to the people of Punjab during the festive season," it said. Notably, farmers under the banner of Kisan Mazdoor Morcha on Saturday held road blockades at a few places in Punjab for an indefinite period to protest the "tardy" paddy procurement and lifting and other issues. Protests were held at Badarukhan on Sangrur-Bathinda highway in Sangrur, Dargu on Moga-Ferozpur highway in Moga, Satali Phul on Gurdasour-Tanda highway in Gurdasur and Batala railway station, farmers said.

Seeking the governor's intervention to end the "tardy" paddy procurement, the BJP delegation's memorandum said, "We request your good self to intervene and ensure the complete lifting of paddy from mandis and gift farmers of Punjab happiness to celebrate the Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas with their families. The BJP urged the governor to ask the Punjab government to take all steps to ensure proper supply of DAP and urea for the next sowing season "as this is the next impending disaster Punjab will face".

Notably, paddy lifting from mandis (wholesale markets) in Punjab has been hit after the state rice millers refused to mill the paddy till their demands were met. Rice millers have expressed concern over the out-turn ratio (post-milling yield) of the PR-126 variety and other hybrid varieties, claiming that it will cause them huge losses.

BJP leader and former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh had on Friday lashed out at Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over the "tardy" paddy procurement in the state, alleging the latter "turned his back on the farmers" facing hardships in the mandis.

# Karhal by-election: intense rivalry between political kin

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW



The Karhal assembly seat in Mainpuri, known for its complex political dynamics, is witnessing a fierce contest this by-election season. The battle has garnered significant attention, as the sons-in-law of two political stalwarts are going head-to-head in this high-stakes election. The Samajwadi Party (SP) has fielded Tej Pratap Yadav, the son-in-law of former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav. In response, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has chosen Anuj Yadav, the son-in-law of the late Mulayam Singh Yadav, SP founder and former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, as its candidate. This adds a unique twist to the by-election, as both candidates have close familial ties to the legacy of the SP.

Since the formation of the Samajwadi Party, Karhal has remained a stronghold for the party, except for a brief period in 2002 when Sobran Singh Yadav won the seat as a BJP candidate. He later joined the SP and successfully represented Karhal three times in subsequent elections. In the 2022 assembly elections, SP President Akhilesh Yadav chose to contest from Karhal, securing a victory over BJP candidate and Union Minister Dr. S.P. Singh Baghel. After Akhilesh's victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from Kannauj, he vacated the Karhal seat, necessitating the

acknowledged the family ties during his campaign visit to Barnahal on October 25. Referring to Anuj's BJP candidacy, Akhilesh remarked, "When BJP couldn't find any other strategy, they fielded our relative." The political narrative is further complicated by past family tensions. After Anuj Yadav joined the BJP in 2019, his brother-in-law, MP Dharmendra Yadav, severed ties with him, publicly stating that he would not maintain relations with any BJP leader. However, Akhilesh's recent acceptance of Anuj as a relative has added a twist to the dynamics. The relationship between the two candidates goes beyond mere rivalry. Anuj Yadav's wife, Bharatkund, is Tej Pratap Yadav's aunt, making Anuj and Tej Pratap nephew and uncle. Yet, despite these familial ties, both candidates have emphasized that party loyalty supersedes family connections in this electoral contest. The Karhal by-election has become a battle not just for political victory but also for the legacy and prestige of two powerful political families. The result will have significant implications for both the SP and BJP, influencing their strategies in the region and potentially impacting the political landscape of Uttar Pradesh. With the entire state watching closely, this contest promises to be one of the most intriguing by-elections in recent times.

# Hina Shahab and son rejoin RJD ahead of Bihar assembly polls



PTI ■ PATNA

Former RJD MP Mohd Shahabuddin's wife Hina Shahab, who had contested the recent Lok Sabha polls as an Independent candidate from Bihar's Siwan, on Sunday joined the party along with her son Osama Shahab. Party supremo Lalu Prasad's heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav welcomed them and described Shahabuddin as "a founding member" of the RJD. Yadav claimed that induction of the late leader's family members will "help us in our fight against communal forces represented by BJP and RSS". Both, Hina and her son, joined the RJD at 10 Circular Road, the official residence of former Bihar CM Rabri Devi, in the state capital. Lalu Prasad, Yadav and several other senior leaders of the party were present on the occasion. Prasad said, "Late Shahabuddin's family was always part of the RJD. They have come closer and will further strengthen the party." Arguably, the most dreaded gangster-turned-politician of Bihar, Shahabuddin, had remained unbeaten in his stronghold of Siwan until his conviction in a murder case in 2007, which led to his disqualification. Shahabuddin died in 2021 in

Delhi's Tihar jail where he was serving a life sentence. Hina unsuccessfully contested the Siwan seat on RJD tickets several times. She contested elections on an RJD ticket in 2019 for the last time and after that, her relations with the party soured. It was widely believed that she was being given a wide berth by Yadav who was keen on giving an image makeover to the party which had faced accusations of patronising "babubalis". Yadav is understood to have been forced to do a rethink after the recent Lok Sabha polls, in which the RJD performed below par, winning only four seats, despite his spirited campaign that saw the young leader addressing over 200 rallies. Moreover, in Siwan, Hina finished runner-up, losing to JD(U)'s Vijay Lakshmi Kushwaha by less than one lakh votes, while RJD candidate Awadh Bhari Chaudhary, a former assembly Speaker, finished a distant third, barely avoiding forfeiture of deposit. The move also underscores RJD's "anxieties", ahead of the Bihar assembly polls due next year, with its junior allies like the Congress and the Left having notched up much better strike rates in the Lok Sabha elections, a political analyst said.

# Ayodhya's grand Deepotsav festival begins tomorrow

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

As the four-day Deepotsav festival commences tomorrow in Ayodhya, the city is poised to host a grand celebration blending spirituality, tradition, and culture. This year's Deepotsav carries special significance, being the first in the presence of Ramlala, adding a profound spiritual dimension to the festivities. A spectacular display awaits with the lighting of 25 lakh lamps across Ayodhya, aiming to set a new record and envelop the city in a dazzling glow. On October 30, Ramkatha Park will be the center of cultural activities, featuring the Ramlila from

Uttarakhand alongside performances by artists from six countries, including Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Indonesia, celebrating the global resonance of the Ramayana. The festival will also include a mesmerizing Hanuman Chalisa dance drama, performed on the main stage, offering a spiritual experience for the attendees. The lineup at Ramkatha Park on October 30 features performances by Ranjana Nev from Saharanpur, who will present a dance-based narrative of the Ramayana, and Preeti Singh from Agra, known as "Preeti Ke Parindey", who will bring her unique Hanuman Chalisa



dance drama to life. Maitreya Pahari and his

Delhi-based team will present "Shri Ramcharitmanas Nari

Shakti," celebrating the strength of women in Ramayanic tales. Additionally, Aparna Yadav from Lucknow will sing devotional bhajans, adding a melodic touch to the Deepotsav celebrations. These cultural events will begin at 7 pm, blending devotion and artistic expression. From October 28 to 30, a grand Shobha Yatra procession will take place, led by 11 Ramlila groups under the Culture Department's guidance, featuring the Shri Maruti Nandan Hanuman Adarsh Ramlila Mandal and other prominent troupes. Folk artist groups will also participate, showcasing unique performances,

including Awadhi folk, Mayur dance from Mathura, and Vantangiya dance from Gorakhpur. The Yogi government has prepared 10 major stages across Ayodhya to host this cultural spectacle, with venues including Guptar Ghat, Badi Devkali, Rama Ghat, Bharatkund, and Ram Katha Park. Performances will run from 5 pm to 9 pm daily, ensuring that each corner of Ayodhya resonates with the spirit of the festival. The Agnihotri brothers, famous for their devotional performances, will take the stage at Ram Ghat, while artists from every district of Uttar Pradesh will contribute to making this Deepotsav a truly statewide celebration.

# Cyclone Dana affects 35.95 lakh in Odisha

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

A total of 35.95 lakh people in Odisha have been impacted by cyclone Dana and subsequent flooding in 14 districts, the state's Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said on Sunday. Pujari also said as many as 8,10,896 people were evacuated to 6,210 cyclone relief centres. The worst-hit districts include Kendrapara, Balasore and Bhadrak, while the human casualty "still stands at zero", he told reporters here. "By 10.30 am of Sunday, evacuated people were sheltered in 1,178 cyclone relief centres and they are being provided cooked food and other essential items," the minister said. Polythene sheets are being given to people who lost their houses in the calamity. He said cyclone Dana, which



struck early Friday, has affected people in 1,671 gram panchayats under 108 blocks spread over 14 districts. According to preliminary reports, around 5,840 houses have been fully or partially damaged due to the cyclone and subsequent flooding, Pujari said. "Whenever there is a disaster, people lose their houses and get compensation. This time, we want to bring a permanent solution to the problem and provide pucca houses to them in a phased manner," he said. The Odisha government was also planning to undertake a survey of kutcha houses located in cyclone and flood-

prone areas of the state. Pujari also said there has been "huge crop loss" in the aftermath of the cyclone, which hit the eastern coast early on Friday, triggering torrential rain and high-speed winds. Referring to the swollen Budhabalang river, which has mostly affected Balasore district, he said the water level in the river has remained static and below the danger level, "but above the warning sign". "As the rainfall has reduced in the region and the upper catchment area, the water level in Budhabalang will not increase further. We hope the situation will improve by this evening," Pujari said. The minister said river Kansabansa in Balasore district is also in spate and affected some villages under the Soro block. A central team is likely to visit Odisha to assess the damages, he said.

# Tripura to extend successful rubber mission

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Buoyed by the successful implementation of the "Chief Minister's Rubber Mission" in Tripura, the state government is contemplating extending the programme for another five years, an official said on Sunday. The livelihood generation initiative, launched in 2021-22, is set to be completed by 2025-25. A total of 56,400 families have been brought under the programme, while rubber plantation was carried out across 46,086 hectares of land during the first four years of the mission, he said. The Automated Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) supplied saplings to the selected beneficiaries free of cost, and the Tripura Welfare Department extended additional assistance such as encompassing fencing and



providing fertiliser, the official said. Under the programme, the Rubber Board ensured quality supply of plants, pre-plantation and post-plantation training in different districts, he said. "The mission has become very popular among the tribals living in hilly regions," Director of Tribal Welfare, Subhashish Das, told PTI.

The department is mulling extending the programme for another five years in view of its financial viability and popularity, he said. "We are planning to bring another 60,000 hectares of land under rubber plantation for 60,000 families once the first phase of the mission is completed. It has been seen that even militants who have surrendered are keen on rubber plantation because it is a promising livelihood option," Das said. Steps have been taken for construction of integrated rubber processing centres of varying size for supporting the production of high-grade rubber latex, he said. Initiatives have also been taken to conduct skill development programmes in rubber tapping for ensuring quality in latex collection, the official added. Tripura is the second-largest rubber producer in India.

# Udhayanidhi Stalin breaks DMK tradition with deepavali greetings

PTI ■ CHENNAI

In a rare departure from the DMK's traditions, party leader and Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin has extended his Deepavali greetings to those "who have faith", remarks that drew sarcastic response from opposition BJP. The BJP has been targeting the DMK for not wishing people on Hindu festivals, including Deepavali and Vinayaka Chaturthi. DMK leaders including its late president and former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi have not greeted people on Deepavali, in line



with their rational beliefs. However, at a party event here on Saturday, while extending his greetings to supporters for the party's platinum jubilee celebrations, Udhayanidhi also greeted people for "Deepa oli thirunaal" much to

the surprise of many. "I extend my greetings on our (DMK) platinum jubilee celebrations; Deepa oli thirunaal greetings to those having belief and celebrating it," he said. Deepa oli thirunaal roughly translates to the Day of the Light of lamp. While Deepavali in the north signifies the return of Lord Rama and Sita Devi to Ayodhya from exile, in south the festival marks the victory of Lord Krishna and his consort Sathyabhama over the demon king Narakasura. TN BJP leader Narayanan Thirupathi took a swipe at Udhayanidhi. In a cryptic post on 'X,' he

referred to the deputy CM's comments and said, "for those who don't have belief, greetings to live like Narakasura." Further, in a veiled attack on Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi, Udhayanidhi said he is "allergic" to the very word "Dravidam," and thinks it can be finished off by not taking its name. The Governor also had a problem with the name "Tamil Nadu," he claimed. "Nobody can even touch Dravidam. Tamil Nadu will remain Tamil Nadu. As long as our black and red (DMK) flag and the DMK workers are there, none can even touch Tamil Nadu and Dravidam," the deputy CM asserted.

# Cocaine seized in police raid on BRS leader's brother-in-law farmhouse

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ HYDERABAD

Police raided a farmhouse allegedly belonging to a senior BRS leader's brother-in-law and booked one person, who tested positive for cocaine at the party organised there. Leaders of the ruling Congress in Telangana on Sunday said the farmhouse was held at the farmhouse of Raj Pakala, brother-in-law of the BRS leader, and demanded a thorough investigation over the matter. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar alleged that the

Congress Government in Telangana is just "pretending" to enforce the law but is actually "protecting the BRS bigwigs". According to police, following input that a party was going on at the farmhouse in Janwada, with "drugs and liquor unauthorisedly", a team of Cyberabad Police and Excise officials raided the place on the intervening night of October 26 and 27 and found 21 men and 14 women participants. All the male participants were subjected to drug tests and one person in the gathering tested positive for cocaine and a case under relevant sections

of the NDPS Act was registered, said police officials. During the raid, police found foreign liquor beyond the permitted quantity and that no permission was taken for the event. Pakala hosted the event and since he did not obtain an Excise license, a case was registered against him under relevant sections of the Excise Act by the Excise Task Force besides another case was booked against him under the Telangana Gaming Act, police said. Asked about ownership of the farmhouse, they said it appears that it belongs to him (Raj Pakala) but the ownership details have to be

verified, the official said. An Excise official told the media that the party was organised without event permission and foreign liquor was also found. Seven foreign and 10 Indian liquor bottles were found besides other gaming related items, police said, adding further investigation was on. BJP leader Sanjay Kumar in a post on 'X' said "The raid at Janwada farmhouse is merely tip of the iceberg. Congress govt should not dilute the case - by giving a predictable statements. It's becoming obvious that Congress and BRS are playing a 'give and take' game, protecting each other's interests."



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PAPER WITH PASSION

# Clouds of doom

As the US push for de-escalation, the risk of a multi-front war looms large, threatening to destabilise West Asia

The recent Israeli airstrikes on Iran and the subsequent retaliatory measures have intensified the long-standing conflict between the two nations, raising fears of a broader war in West Asia. The airstrikes, which targeted Iranian military installations and reportedly resulted in the deaths of four Iranian soldiers, were framed as a response to Iranian aggression. Iran's ally, Hezbollah, quickly reacted with rocket salvos targeting residential areas in northern Israel, signalling the potential for the conflict to spread. The current episode of hostilities began after Israeli warplanes allegedly used Iraqi airspace to conduct strikes on military and radar installations in Tehran. These actions were framed by Israel as necessary measures to neutralise threats posed by Iran and its regional proxies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon. Iran has condemned the strikes as a violation of its sovereignty, insisting on its right to retaliate. As expected the United States has firmly backed Israel, reiterating its "ironclad" support and cautioning Iran against further retaliation. Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, expressing concern about the potential for the violence to escalate uncontrollably. The conflict's spillover into Lebanon, where Hezbollah's rocket attacks targeted northern Israel, highlights the interconnected nature of West Asia politics. Hezbollah, a powerful militia with close ties to Tehran, represents Iran's most prominent proxy in the region. Its involvement indicates that the conflict could easily escalate beyond a bilateral confrontation between Israel and Iran, drawing in other state and non-state actors. The conflict's potential to involve additional countries is significant. Lebanon, already grappling with a fragile political and economic situation, could become a battlefield, destabilising the broader Levant. Similarly, Iraq's alleged involvement in providing airspace for Israeli operations could trigger responses from Shia militias in the country. Besides, Iran's network of proxies, including militias in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, could engage in coordinated retaliatory strikes against Israel or the US interests in the region. This would complicate efforts to contain the conflict and could lead to an asymmetric, multi-front war. It goes without saying that diplomatic efforts are urgently needed to prevent the situation from deteriorating further. One country that could convince Israel for ceasefire is the US. It could leverage its influence over Israel and its regional allies to push for restraint, while simultaneously deterring Iranian retaliation through diplomatic channels. In fact even the US does not want the war to spill over. Direct communication between Washington and Tehran could prevent misunderstandings that might trigger further escalation. Besides, international neutral actors such as India, Russia, or regional mediators like Oman could facilitate backchannel negotiations aimed at establishing a ceasefire. The war must be stopped at any cost now else it could be a free-for-all, making it precursor to the World War III.



Further retaliation. Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, expressing concern about the potential for the violence to escalate uncontrollably. The conflict's spillover into Lebanon, where Hezbollah's rocket attacks targeted northern Israel, highlights the interconnected nature of West Asia politics. Hezbollah, a powerful militia with close ties to Tehran, represents Iran's most prominent proxy in the region. Its involvement indicates that the conflict could easily escalate beyond a bilateral confrontation between Israel and Iran, drawing in other state and non-state actors. The conflict's potential to involve additional countries is significant. Lebanon, already grappling with a fragile political and economic situation, could become a battlefield, destabilising the broader Levant. Similarly, Iraq's alleged involvement in providing airspace for Israeli operations could trigger responses from Shia militias in the country. Besides, Iran's network of proxies, including militias in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, could engage in coordinated retaliatory strikes against Israel or the US interests in the region. This would complicate efforts to contain the conflict and could lead to an asymmetric, multi-front war. It goes without saying that diplomatic efforts are urgently needed to prevent the situation from deteriorating further. One country that could convince Israel for ceasefire is the US. It could leverage its influence over Israel and its regional allies to push for restraint, while simultaneously deterring Iranian retaliation through diplomatic channels. In fact even the US does not want the war to spill over. Direct communication between Washington and Tehran could prevent misunderstandings that might trigger further escalation. Besides, international neutral actors such as India, Russia, or regional mediators like Oman could facilitate backchannel negotiations aimed at establishing a ceasefire. The war must be stopped at any cost now else it could be a free-for-all, making it precursor to the World War III.

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## PICTALK



People buy decorative items at a market ahead of the Diwali festival, in Amritsar

# Come winter, Delhi chokes again

Despite the implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan, including stricter dust control and bans on open burning, smog continues to blanket the city

Every year, an estimated 4.2 million deaths are linked to ambient air pollution worldwide, as nearly 91 per cent of the global population resides in areas where air quality exceeds the safe limits set by the World Health Organisation (WHO). In Asia's largest metropolitan regions, rapid urbanisation, unchecked industrialisation, population growth, and the surge in automobiles and construction activities have exacerbated air pollution levels, posing severe health risks. Delhi, one of the most polluted cities in the world, exemplifies this crisis, with its air quality frequently plummeting to hazardous levels, especially during the winter months, making it a focal point in the battle against air pollution in the region. On the morning of October 19, 2024, the Air Quality Index (AQI) reached concerning levels in various parts of the Capital City, particularly in Anand Vihar and Akshardham, where it climbed to 334, placing it in the "very poor" category. The worsening air quality in Delhi can be attributed to several key factors. First, as easterly winds set in, dust pollution across the National Capital Region (NCR) has become a primary cause of the declining AQI. The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), a series of measures aimed at addressing Delhi's air pollution, was implemented on October 15 as the situation began to worsen. These measures include frequent cleaning of roads and restrictions on diesel generators. However, despite these efforts, the problem continues to escalate. One of the most significant contributors to Delhi's declining air quality is stubble burning in neighbouring states, primarily Punjab and Haryana. The Early Warning System (EWS) for Delhi predicts that the contribution of stubble burning to the city's pollution levels is expected to increase significantly over a few weeks. The seasonal practice of burning crop residue adds large amounts of particulate matter (PM2.5) to the air, exacerbating the already poor conditions in the city. As air quality continues to worsen, there are reports of residents



complaining of increasing health issues. Many are experiencing respiratory problems, including difficulty breathing, coughing, and throat irritation. According to media reports, the smog and particulate matter have caused inflammation of the airways and irritation in the eyes. These symptoms are consistent with high levels of pollution, which contribute to various respiratory illnesses to the extent that doctors have been receiving patients with skin issues too. Moreover, ENT specialists have noted a surge in cases involving nasal irritation, throat inflammation, and persistent dry coughs. These symptoms are affecting children and adults too with complaints of inflammation, and gastrointestinal problems, such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and dyspepsia, which have also been linked to pollution. In this regard, 'climate change' is another factor worsening this situation in Delhi. With changing weather patterns, temperature inversions at regular intervals, and extreme weather conditions even during summer and winter, in this season, pollutants become trapped near the ground, creating a layer of smog. Delhi's minimum temperature of 19.2 degrees Celsius, slightly above the sea-



THE WORSENING AIR QUALITY IN DELHI CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO SEVERAL KEY FACTORS. FIRST, AS EASTERLY WINDS SET IN, DUST POLLUTION ACROSS THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION HAS BECOME A PRIMARY CAUSE OF THE DECLINING AQI

sonal average, contributes to these conditions. Moreover, climate change also aggravates the effects of vehicular emissions by reducing the frequency of rainfall, which would otherwise help to clear particulate matter from the air. The government has taken several measures to curb the rising pollution, including implementing the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) restrictions – which include different stages I-IV – besides imposing fines for open burning. Additionally, authorities have been tasked with identifying local sources contributing to the worsening air quality. To tackle the immediate crises that have engulfed the Capital City, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has implemented Stage 1 of the Graded Response Action Plan across Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan, in response to air quality data and weather forecasts provided by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), with a series of stringent measures, aimed at mitigating air pollution. Key restrictions include enhanced dust control protocols at construction sites, improved waste management practices, and rigorous checks on polluting vehicles and industrial emissions, particularly from power plants and brick kilns. Additionally, open waste burning and the use of diesel generators are prohibited, along with a ban on coal and firewood in eateries. Construction and demolition activities exceeding 500 square meters face severe limitations, and diesel/petrol vehicles older than 10-15 years, as well as the use of firecrackers, are banned until January 1, 2025. Not only this, traffic management is also prioritised, with increased deployment of police in congested areas to reduce vehicular idling, while visibly polluting vehicles face strict penalties and possible impoundment. These measures form part of a broader strategy to curtail air pollution and improve public health. The situation is also a stark reminder of the need for collective action to address the underlying causes of air pollution, including vehicular emissions, waste burning, and industrial activities, in addition to climate mitigation efforts. What authorities must also look at is the underutilisation of the 'smog tower', which was introduced as a major intervention. (The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BRICS PRIORITISES DEVELOPMENT

Madam — The power of diplomacy is writ large in the recently concluded bilateral meeting between India and China on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Russia. It also broke some ice ever since the deadly clash in 2020. However, notwithstanding a new deal settled on the disengagement of troops, both remain deeply suspicious of each other. That BRICS has a greater relevance in a multipolar and multidimensional context at a time when the world faces multiple challenges like the ongoing wars, economic uncertainty, climate change, terrorism, east-west and north-south divide as the forum reflects the Global South's deeper concerns, with many more countries queuing up to join or partner with the grouping. The first ever attendance of new member countries like the UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia and Iran opposing the unilateral sanctions by the west on other nations underscores their challenges confronting them and encourages them to unite for a fairer international order. Another case in point is the creation of the New Development Bank, which has emerged as a significant platform for the needs of such countries. Greater use of local currency finds mention in the Kazan declaration rather than supporting a yuan anchored BRICS against the U.S. dollar. India favours greater use of local currencies for cross border payment system. Increasing use of UPI, which has been adopted by many countries including the UAE acts as a bulwark against the west. The development of the global south remains the top priority of the BRICS Summit in contrast to portraying the grouping as only a gang up against the US-led west. Other initiatives include start-up forums, workforce skilling initiatives, and digital public infrastructure providing low-cost solutions for developing countries. Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

### IMPROVE RURAL HEALTHCARE

Madam — There should be the government's special focus on public health, particularly in tribal areas in this season. The

### Glaciers are melting fast



The rapid melting of all 900 glaciers in Uttarakhand, along with 9,575 others across the Himalayas, has reached a critical level due to global warming. Alarming factors like deforestation, black carbon deposits, and greenhouse gas emissions are accelerating this decline, leading to water scarcity, impacting hydropower generation,

and threatening the extinction of many aquatic species. To protect our nation and environment from these apocalyptic consequences, immediate and decisive action is essential. According to the Global Forest Watch report, "From 2001-2023, Uttarakhand lost 20.7 thousand hectares of tree cover, representing 0.89% of the global total." This tree loss is unacceptable, and measures like afforestation, preserving green areas around glaciers, and strengthening forest protection are crucial. Furthermore, it is imperative to establish research and development projects to study and preserve glaciers and to limit black carbon emissions. Acting now is essential to safeguarding our natural resources and the future of our environment. Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

### KIWIS WINS PUNE TEST

Madam — Kudos to the Kiwis for their marvellous victory at the Pune Test and a series win since 1955 on Indian soil for the first time. Batters winning matches has been proven again when Kiwis Mitchell Santner put India off the backfoot in the Pune test. Chasing a target of 359 to win the test, the only batter who played with intent was Jaiswal and, in the end, there was some resistance from Ravindra Jadeja, but it was not good enough. The Indian top order can't rest on the old laurels of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, and both of them failed to deliver. Full credit goes to Washington Sundar and Ashwin for fighting despite the fact that this was the most humiliating defeat for India while beaten in our own backyard very convincingly by the Kiwis. It's high time for the head coach Gautam Gambhir to realise that this team calls for a revamp and to bring in those who are hungry for runs and wickets. AP Thiruvadi | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

# Leveraging folklores to educate the new generation

The ancient art of storytelling remains a vital medium for teaching values and fostering cultural understanding

Folklores, the traditional stories, myths, and legends passed down through generations, have long been a source of fascination, serving as much more than mere entertainment. Folklores often centre on ordinary people who face adversity yet find ways to overcome it, reflecting everyday life's common struggles and aspirations. This relatability comforts those who feel isolated in their struggles, showing that they are not alone and that their challenges are shared across time and place. One of folklore's most significant aspects is its inherent simplicity, which makes it a powerful tool for education across generations. Folklores are often crafted to be relatable, encapsulating moral lessons or practical wisdom in a format accessible to children and adults alike. This accessibility makes folklore an effective educational medium, especially in regions where formal education might be limited. Through memorable characters, narratives, and



morals, folklores teach honesty, bravery, kindness, and empathy lessons crucial to shaping young minds. Folklore holds a unique power: it reflects past wisdom, inspires critical thinking, and provides a mirror for self-reflection. Indian folklore is a repository of India's diverse cultural heritage. They act as a unifying force in a country as diverse as India, with numerous languages, religions, and social norms. They capture the essence of various regional traditions, dialects, and beliefs, weaving together the vast and varied ethos of the country. Every region, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, has tales that embody local wisdom, rituals, and social customs. Stories like those from the

Panchatantra and Jataka Tales have transcended regions, becoming staples of Indian storytelling that educate on universal values while highlighting India's unique cultural tapestry. Indian folklore frequently addresses social issues, challenging established norms and encouraging reflection on societal practices. For instance, the folktales of Tenali Rama, the witty advisor in the Vijayanagara Empire, often question the elite's excesses and promote justice for the common man. Similarly, Birbal, a wise minister in the Mughal court, features in numerous tales that promote intellectual equality. These stories teach Indians to value wit, intelligence, and fairness, subtly questioning the authority of those in power. By embedding reformist ideas within entertaining narratives, Indian folklores provide a soft yet powerful critique of societal hierarchies, encouraging progressive thinking. Many Indian folklore emphasize the bond between humans and

nature, imparting lessons on environmental stewardship that resonate with India's agrarian roots. Stories about sacred rivers, protective spirits, or revered animals highlight the belief that natural entities are to be respected and cared for. These tales often highlight shared human experiences, bridging cultural gaps and fostering a sense of collective identity. Folklore serves as a reservoir of collective wisdom, transcending time and geography to educate and reform society. Its remarkable ability to touch hearts, prompt reflection, and inspire action makes it indispensable in both formal and informal education. In an era dominated by digital technology, folklore may seem antiquated, yet its relevance has only deepened. Modern storytellers, educators, and social reformers can adapt folklore for contemporary audiences, harnessing its emotive power to foster empathy and awareness. (The writer, is the Dean, academic affairs, at Garden City University, views are personal)



BIJU DHARAMAPALAN

## FIRST COLUMN

### UNLOCKING THE DIVINE ENERGIE

According to yogic traditions, each day is linked to a specific shakti and Diwali happens to be a special day



ASHWININI GURUJI

The universe operates under the influence of various *shaktis* (divine energies). As one advances in yogic practice (*sadhana*), these energies can be experienced directly. Each of the 365 days is associated with a specific shakti, which is why maintaining discipline and consistent daily practice in yoga is crucial. Missing even a single day can disrupt the connection with that day's *shakti*, potentially setting back the entire year's *sadhana*. In the cosmos, every element is interconnected, so when one aspect is neglected, it affects everything—our body, the Earth, and even other planets and stars. Each *shakti* is associated with a day, but accessing these energies does not require rituals. In yogic and tantric traditions, *sadhana* alone is the key to connecting with shakti. Understanding the form (*swarup*) of each *shakti* is essential. While every form has a specific name, names are revealed only after the body is prepared through particular *sadhanas*. At a basic level, when you meditate (*dhyana*) with your guru, you may see different forms manifesting in them, such as the sun or the moon. Have you ever wondered what these forms signify?

Many practitioners have reported seeing the sun during meditation. What makes the sun so significant? If you observe the sun at sunrise or sunset while focusing on the Manipura chakra (navel centre) and chanting the mantra "Ram," you will notice a glow emerging in your body. Within a month, you may begin to look noticeably different. However, a word of caution—any yogic practice should be undertaken under the guidance of a *guru* who can adapt it to your capacity. Similarly, the moon is a fascinating energy source. It merely reflects the sun's light, yet it can influence tides and even the Earth's surface during a full moon. Have



you ever considered what makes the moon special? On full moon nights, animals may behave aggressively, and incidents of accidents and conflicts tend to rise. These are just basic observations that hint at something deeper about these celestial forms. Understanding their true nature requires direct experience, which is attainable through the proper practice of *Sanatan Kriya*. The moon may appear calm and peaceful, but it is actually more volatile than the sun. When you observe the moon under a guru's guidance, you can perceive the mantras embedded within its form. Some *shaktis* are not directly visible and can only be accessed through other *shaktis*. These experiences form the foundation of yoga. Without direct experience, yoga remains incomplete. Nature, with all its wonders—from flowers of various colors to the sky above—contains the hidden forms of *shaktis*. If you observe these elements without blinking, under the guidance of a *guru*, you may find that your physical and mental imbalances begin to dissipate. However, discipline (*niyam*) is essential. The practice must be continuous, and disruptions will occur if one lacks the capacity for the *shakti* or does not have a *guru* to guide them. Everything around us contains the essence of *shakti*, and these energies are easily accessible. When one becomes steady and focused on a particular *shakti*, it starts to follow them, empowering their life. The nine days leading up to Diwali hold special significance because of the congregation of specific *shaktis* during this period. Our ancestors advised observing celibacy (*brahmacharya*) during these days to strengthen the body and prepare it to receive these energies. During this time, keep your mind centred within yourself, as the *sadhana* performed during these nine days is equivalent to months of practice. As Diwali approaches, especially on *Amavasya* (the new moon night), when we light *diyas*, it is an opportune time for *shakti sadhana*. Even a layperson who is not an experienced practitioner can perceive the swarup of shakti by sitting with closed eyes in meditation. With a pure heart, one can experience these divine energies without any elaborate rituals. Let this Diwali be a time to connect with the powerful *shaktis*, embracing their presence to enrich your spiritual journey.

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

# Rising import reliance amid regulatory challenge



UTTAM GUPTA

## Despite Government efforts to boost domestic production, policy constraints and pricing caps continue to stifle the energy sector's growth



According to the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MPNG), during the first six months of the current financial year (FY) September 2024, India's consumption of natural gas (NG) increased by almost 12 per cent to 36.850 billion metric standard cubic meters (bmscm) over the corresponding period last FY. However, the import of NG (it is imported in a liquefied form commonly known as LNG) increased by 23 per cent to 18.975 bmscm during this period. Taken as a proportion of consumption, imports were 51.5 per cent during April-September 2024 up from 46.8 per cent during April-September 2023.

The country's production of NG registered a marginal increase of around 2 per cent during April-September 2024. The State-owned major Oil and Natural Gas Corporation or ONGC (it contributes about 84 per cent of total domestic output) produced 9.407 bmscm of NG during this period, which was 4 per cent less than during the same period of last FY. However, Oil India Limited (it has 8 per cent share) produced 4 per cent more NG at 1.577 bmscm during this period. The share of production in consumption was 48.5 per cent. Delivering the 75th Independence Day address on 15th August 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowed to achieve self-reliance in energy production by boosting the gas-based economy. He had then wished the share of NG in the total energy mix to go up from subsisting around 6 per cent to 15 per cent. Pertinently, even to comply with the 6 per cent share, India had to import more than 50 per cent of its NG requirement.

The position hasn't changed even today. Increasing the share of NG in the total energy mix to 15 per cent would require its consumption to increase from its current annual of 73.689 bmscm to 184.222 bmscm (73.689x2.5). The current consumption includes domestic production of 35.739 bmscm. If domestic production stagnates at the current level (in sync with the trend of the last few years) then, to achieve the 15 per cent target, the import of LNG will have to be 148.483 bmscm (184.222-35.739) which means India's import dependence will have to increase to over 80 per cent. The above calculation assumes no



THERE IS AN URGENT NEED FOR A 'PREDICTABLE' AND 'ATTRACTIVE' POLICY ENVIRONMENT TO GIVE A FILLIP TO THE EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION OF NG

increase in total energy consumption. But, it is increasing at a rapid pace. The country's power demand alone is projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 7 per cent during the next five years (as per an estimate by the Central Electricity Authority or CEA).

In that scenario, compliance with the 15 per cent target for NG would mean still higher reliance on imports. What is coming in the way of increasing production? Natural resource endowment is not a problem. India has 26 sedimentary basins (SBs) covering an area of 3.4 million sq km that could be searched for hydrocarbon resources. However, only six of the SBs are under commercial exploitation; these too are sub-optimally utilised. Hydrocarbon exploration is a highly capital-intensive and technology-intensive business involving a long gestation period. It is risky, especially when drilling in deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature (D/UD/HP/HT) fields in offshore areas such as the Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin.

However, these areas offer maximum promise in terms of reserves. Multinational companies (MNCs) such as ExxonMobil, Chevron, Total etc. which have the technology and resources can be enthused to take long-term bets in the Indian hydrocarbon sector provided the government offers them an opportunity to earn an attractive return on their investment in a 'sustained' basis.

This, in turn, requires that their efforts in the discovery and development of NG fields don't face regulatory hurdles and that they can sell the gas 'freely' at a 'remunerative' price. Modi - The government has made a lot of efforts to remove regulatory hurdles. Until recently, of 1.73 million sq km SB area lying offshore, 0.69 million sq km was a 'No go' area, courtesy of security reasons.

The Centre has released almost all of this for exploration and produc-

tion (E&P) activity. Now, it is granting lease rights over the entire economic life of the allotted fields (this could extend up to 30 years, even beyond depending on the available reserves) instead of the extant system of short tenure with extensions.

It has also made amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act to enable prompt access to forest areas for exploration of hydrocarbon resources. Under the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP), also known as the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) launched in 2017, E&P firms are allowed to pick up a block of their choice unlike the earlier New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) (launched in 1999) wherein they had to accept what the government offered. Besides, under OALP, an operator gets a composite license to search for hydrocarbon in whatever form viz NG, 'shale gas', CBM (coal bed methane) etc. For long, E&P efforts were hamstrung by cumbersome procedures, multiple approvals and bureaucratic red tape. Approvals were needed at every stage.

As many as 37 procedures were required to be followed by a firm-awarded block under NELP. Team Modi has substantially liberalised and de-bureaucratized approvals by providing for self-certification of documents and pre-approved clearance of blocks. While the above helps, without freedom of marketing and the ability to secure a good price, E&P firms won't get enthused. Of the domestic gas, on around two-thirds of supplies (mostly from so-called 'legacy fields' given on nomination to ONGC and OIL and from fields given under NELP), the Centre has full control over 'whom' the supplies will be made and at 'what price'. From April 1, 2023, based on the recommendations of the Kirit Parikh committee, this price expressed on a per million British thermal units (Btu) basis is arrived at by taking 10 per cent

of the monthly average of the Indian crude basket in the preceding month and notified every month. The price thus calculated is subject to a ceiling of US\$ 6.50 per mBtu which makes the formula redundant.

Now, the bureaucrats have come up with a 20 per cent premium on supplies by ONGC and OIL only from the so-called 'new wells' or 'well interventions'. If their intent is to give a good price why put a cap in the first place? Moreover, which fields get the benefit of 'new wells' or 'interventions', will also be solely at their discretion. Even the pricing of the remaining one-third of domestic NG supplied from the so-called deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature fields (KG-D6 operated by Reliance Industries and neighbouring KG-DWN-98/2 operated by ONGC in Krishna-Godavari basin off the Andhra Pradesh coast fall in this category) isn't free from 'control' discretion and 'arbitrariness'. Technically though, the firms can go for competitive bidding to determine the price for such supplies (referred to as a 'premium' price), this too is subject to a ceiling linked to the prices of alternate fuels including fuel oil, naphtha, and LNG. There is an urgent need for a 'predictable' and 'attractive' policy environment to give a fillip to the exploration and production of NG. The Kirit Parikh committee was conscious of this when it recommended de-regulating difficult gas fields' prices by January 1, 2026, and the price on supplies from legacy fields by January 1, 2027. The government should implement these recommendations. Meanwhile, it should prepare the ground for giving subsidies directly to major users such as fertilizers, power, CNG, PNG etc instead of creating distortions in the supply chain by controlling the price of basic inputs such as NG.

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

# Ayurveda Day 2024: Celebrating innovations for global health and wellness

## This year's celebration aims to highlight the transformative potential of Ayurveda in addressing modern health challenges

Over the last decade, the Ayush sector has undergone a significant transformation, largely due to the initiatives led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This revolution in traditional Indian medicine has created new opportunities for various stakeholders, including industry professionals, traders, and healthcare practitioners. Since its establishment in 2014, the Ministry of Ayush has successfully integrated Ayush into mainstream healthcare, driving innovation, research, and gaining global recognition. The ministry's strategic focus encompasses public health, technology, education, globalisation, and quality control, ensuring that Ayush products and services are safe and of high quality.



RAJESH KOTECHA

This comprehensive approach aligns with the goals of universal health coverage and sustainability, contributing to the sector's growth, increased public awareness, and a rising demand for Ayush healthcare systems worldwide. Ayurveda Day is celebrated on the occasion of Dhanteras to honor Lord Dhanvantari, the deity revered as the physician

of the gods and the God of Ayurveda. This year, Ayurveda Day will be observed on October 29, 2024, with a renewed focus on the theme "Ayurveda Innovations for Global Health." Since the Ministry of Ayush initiated Ayurveda Day in 2016, the event has expanded into a global celebration. The emphasis this year is on showcasing Ayurveda's potential to improve global health through innovative practices and natural treatment methods.

Ayurveda's core strength lies in its holistic approach to health, which emphasizes prevention, health promotion, and natural healing. With the growing global demand for integrative healthcare solutions, Ayurveda is gaining recognition as a viable and sustainable alterna-

tive. Recent advancements, supported by scientific research, have increased the global reach and acceptance of Ayurvedic practices. One of the most notable contributions of Ayurveda to modern healthcare is the innovative use of herbal medicine. It is reported that over 95% of Ayurvedic interventions are based on herbal treatments, utilizing the healing properties of nature. As scientific research continues to validate the effectiveness of Ayurvedic herbs and therapies, the demand for these natural solutions is rapidly increasing worldwide. The rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, and cancer has highlighted the need for natural, preventive healthcare solutions.



Ayurved, with its focus on holistic well-being, offers a unique approach to managing these conditions. Additionally, the growing problem of antimicrobial resistance requires alternative treatment methods, and Ayurvedic remedies, rooted in herbal medicine, present sustainable options. As climate change exacerbates health risks,

Ayurveda's emphasis on lifestyle management, mental health, and care for the elderly provides resilient solutions for vulnerable populations. Moreover, as societies face challenges like nutritional disorders and mental health crises, Ayurveda's approach to balancing the body and mind becomes increasingly relevant. Ayurveda is not a static system; it evolves continually through ongoing research and innovation. Recent advancements in fields such as genome sequencing and nanotechnology have revealed parallels with traditional Ayurvedic concepts like Prakriti (body constitution) and Bhasma (herbal-mineral formulations). These modern innovations help bridge the gap between traditional practices and contemporary

healthcare, making Ayurvedic treatments more accessible and scientifically validated. Ayurveda as a proactive health strategy that can boost immunity, mental clarity, and overall well-being. The alignment of Ayurvedic innovations with the SDGs and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) underscores its potential to provide accessible, affordable, and inclusive healthcare. The 2024 Ayurveda Day will mark several important milestones that reflect the growth and integration of Ayurveda into mainstream healthcare. The Ministry of Ayush is accelerating this progress through the construction of Phase II of the All India Institute of Ayurveda in New Delhi and the establishment of six new Centers of Excellence to promote innova-

tion and research in traditional medicine. Plans to develop the Central Research Institute of Yoga and Naturopathy (CRIYN) in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh aim to enhance the promotion of holistic health practices. The celebrations for Ayurveda Day 2024 will include a variety of engaging activities, such as creative exhibitions, Ayurveda quizzes, medical camps, and Prakriti Parikshan (body constitution analysis). Initiatives like "Ayurveda in My Kitchen" and "Ayurveda in My Vatika" will emphasize the practical application of Ayurvedic principles in daily life.

(The writer is Secretary Ministry of Ayush; views are personal)

Apparent truck attack on bus stop near Mossad HQ in Israel wounds dozens

A truck rammed into a bus stop near the Israeli city of Tel Aviv, wounding 35 people, according to first responders. Israeli police described it as an

attack and said the assailant was an Arab citizen of Israel. The ramming occurred near the headquarters of Israel's Mossad spy agency. In the city of Ramat Hasharon, northeast of Tel Aviv, the truck slammed into a bus at a stop as Israelis were returning to work after a weeklong holiday, leaving some people stuck under the vehicles. In addition to being near the Mossad headquarters and a military base, the bus stop is also close to a central highway junction. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said six of the wounded were in serious condition. Asi Aharoni, an Israeli police spokesperson,

'Israeli strikes kill 22 in northern Gaza'

Israeli strikes on northern Gaza have killed at least 22 people, mostly women and children, Palestinian officials said Sunday, as its offensive in the hard-hit and isolated north entered a third week and aid groups described a humanitarian catastrophe. In a separate development, a truck rammed into a bus stop near Tel Aviv, injuring dozens of people, according to Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service. The circumstances were not immediately clear, but Palestinians have carried out dozens of vehicle-ramming attacks over the years. The Gaza Health Ministry's emergency service said that 11 women and two children were among those killed in the strikes late Saturday on several homes and buildings in the northern town of Beit Lahiya. It said another 15 people were wounded and that the death toll could rise. It listed the names of those killed, who mostly came from three families. The Israeli military said it carried out a precise strike on militants in a structure in Beit Lahiya and took steps to avoid harming civilians. It disputed what it said were "numbers published by the media," without elaborating or providing evidence for its own account. Israel is still carrying out daily strikes across Gaza, even as it wages an air and ground war with the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon. Two people were wounded after an explosive drone launched from Lebanon slammed into a building in an industrial area of northern Israel, authorities said. An Israeli airstrike on a southern neighbourhood of Beirut set flames and smoke climbing into the air. On Saturday, Israeli warplanes attacked military targets in Iran — which backs both the Hamas and Hezbollah — in response to an Iranian ballistic missile attack earlier this month. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Sunday that Israel's attack "should not be exaggerated nor downplayed," while stopping short of calling for retaliation. His remarks are the latest suggesting Iran is carefully weighing its response to the attack. "It is up to the authorities to determine how to convey the power and will of the Iranian people to the Israeli regime and to take actions that serve the interests of this nation and country," said Khamenei, who has the final say over all major decisions in Iran. The cascading conflicts have raised fears of an all-out regional war pitting Israel and the United States against Iran and its militant proxies, which also include the Houthi rebels in Yemen and armed groups in Syria and Iraq. Red Cross describes 'horrific circumstances' in northern Gaza Israel has been waging a massive air and ground offensive in northern Gaza since October 6, after saying that Hamas militants had regrouped there. Hundreds of people have been killed and tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled to Gaza City in the latest wave of displacement in the yearlong war. Israel says its strikes on Gaza only target militants, and it blames Hamas for civilian casualties because the militants fight in densely populated areas. The military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children. Aid groups have warned of a catastrophic situation in northern Gaza, which was the first target of Israel's ground offensive and had already suffered the heaviest destruction of the war. Israel has severely limited the entry of basic humanitarian aid in recent weeks, and the three remaining hospitals in the north — one of which was raided over the weekend — say they have been overwhelmed by waves of wounded people. The International Committee of the Red Cross on Saturday said that ongoing Israeli evacuation orders and restrictions on the entry of essential supplies to the north had left the civilian population in "horrific circumstances." "Many civilians are currently unable to move, trapped by fighting, destruction or physical constraint and now lack access to even basic medical care," it said. Hospitals reeled after Israeli raid detains dozens of medics Israeli troops raided the Kamal Adwan Hospital in the north on Friday, detaining dozens of medical staff and causing heavy damage, according to the Health Ministry. Footage circulated online showing the courtyard bulldozed and the wards ransacked. Israeli troops withdrew on Saturday. The head of the World Health Organisation said 44 male staff members were detained at the hospital. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said only female staff, the hospital director and one male doctor were left to care for almost 200 patients. Among those detained and taken away was Dr. Mohamed Obeid, head of the orthopedics department at nearby Al-Awda Hospital, according to Al-Awda Hospital. His whereabouts are unknown. Throughout the yearlong Israel-Hamas war, Israeli forces have stormed and bombed a number of hospitals including the strip's largest medical facility, Shifa Hospital. Israel accuses Hamas of using medical facilities across Gaza for military purposes, allegations denied by hospital staff, who say the raids have recklessly endangered sick and wounded civilians. The war began when Hamas-led militants blew holes in Israel's border wall and stormed into southern Israel in a surprise attack on October 7, 2023.

EAST BOUND FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2024

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during Deepawali and Chhath Puja Festivals, Northern Railway has planned to run the following East Bound Festival Special Trains from 28.10.2024 to 30.10.2024 in addition to normal regular trains as per schedule given below:-

Table with columns: Spl. Train No., Station From, Dept. Time, Station to, Arr. Time, Accommodation, Stoppages. Rows include train numbers like 04032, 04096, 04078, etc.

EAST BOUND TRAINS FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 29.10.2024 (TUESDAY)

Table with columns: Spl. Train No., Station From, Dept. Time, Station to, Arr. Time, Accommodation, Stoppages. Rows include train numbers like 04032, 04060, 04044, etc.

EAST BOUND TRAINS FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 30.10.2024 (WEDNESDAY)

Table with columns: Spl. Train No., Station From, Dept. Time, Station to, Arr. Time, Accommodation, Stoppages. Rows include train numbers like 04022, 04096, 05220, etc.

During the Rail journey never travel with inflammable objects like Crackers, Petrol, Kerosene, Gas Cylinder etc. For any kind of information, such as seat availability and time-table etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

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LOST & FOUND

LOST ALLOTMENT LETTER OF FLAT NO. 1505, TOWER 6, EMAAR PALM GARDEN, SECTOR-83, GURGAON-122004. Lost Dated: 16.06.2024 Report Dated: 02.10.2024 With LR No.: 2170674 / 2024

Notice is hereby given to the general public on behalf of our client that Mr. Vinod Kumar is claiming to be owner of Residential Property bearing No. 24, area measuring 56 sq. yds., out of Rect. No. 38, Killa No. 13, situated at abadi Sarojini Park, Shastri Nagar, in the area of Village Kurukh Khos, Tilaga Shabdara, Delhi-110031 vide G.P.A. AT&S Will dated 26.08.1996, executed by Mr. Khushal Chand. All persons are hereby notified to present their objections, if any, to the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 7 days of the present.

PUBLIC NOTICE This Notice is hereby given to general public that Mrs. Kumaree Dhanamti who claimed to be owners and in possession of the Plot on area measuring 299 Sq. Yds. Khirsa no.487, Sitauli Viji Chhokra, Merigola, Pargana & Toshi Dadr Distt Gauram Bardi Nagar (U.P) by virtue of Sale Deed Dated 17/09/2024, Doc No 49408. Now Mrs. Kumaree Dhanamti is Selling said property to Amit Kumar and same approached to Bank of India for financial assistance and therefore shall be mortgaged with the said Bank. We give this public notice that if any person having any claim/objection regarding ownership and/or creating mortgage of the said property or any part of the said property in favour of Bandhan Bank Ltd is/are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to undersigned with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which any claim, if any, of such persons will be considered to have been waived and/or, abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan to the said property and subsequent creation of Mortgage in respect thereof. For Juris NextGen Law Offices E-56, LGF Greater Kailash Enclave Part-I, New Delhi-48

PUBLIC NOTICE This is to inform the Public at large that Smt. Ramesh Jhington W/o. Late Sh. P.N. Jhington (Alias Pran Nath Jhington) is the Title Holder in the undivided share of the property of the late Sh. Prashant Property Bearing Flat No. A-52, Retreat Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd., Plot No. 20, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, New Delhi-110092 measuring 83.60 sq. mtrs, hereinafter referred to as 'Schedule Property' vide Conveyance Deed dated 7th March, 2018 duly registered as Regn. No.2814, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 6951, pg. 111-113 on 07/03/2018 in the Office of the Sub Registrar-VII, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi (Smt. Ramesh Jhington is described as a Mutatee therein). The Schedule Property was originally allotted by the Society to Sh. P.N. Jhington and consequent to his death on 13/08/2010, on the basis of submission of original Relinquishment Deed dated 29/08/2017 (Regn. No. 4305), the Delhi Development Authority mutated the Schedule Property in favour of Smt. Ramesh Jhington. That Late Sh. P.N. Jhington did not leave behind any other Legal Heirs except Smt. Ramesh Jhington (Wife), Sh. Somesh Nath Jhington (Son), Smt. Shikha Jhington (Daughter) and Sh. Shantiendra Jhington (Son). Further, the original documents w.r.t. the Schedule Property i.e. (i) Confirmation of Draw of Lots Letter, (ii) Physical Possession Letter dated 21.03.1992 and (iii) Mutation Letter issued by D.D.A. in the name of Smt. Ramesh Jhington have all been lost/misplaced and are untraceable as on date, in lieu of which Information Report dated 27.10.2024 bearing LR No. 2248541/2024 has been filed with Delhi Police. This notice is thus issued to the Public at large, i.e. any Person(s), Company(ies), Authority(ies), Society(ies), Organisation(s), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s), HUF(s) etc. having any knowledge, custody or possession of the above mentioned lost/misplaced/untraceable original documents or otherwise having any claims, rights, title, interests, possession etc. in the Schedule Property, by way of Ownership, Succession, Inheritance, Sale, Mortgage, Exchange, Charge, Lien, Gift, Trust, Encumbrance etc., may come forward with supporting documents, to be delivered to the undersigned within 30 days from the date of this Publication, post expiration of which, any claim(s) or objection(s), if raised or received, shall be treated as null and void and as waived and the Title Holder shall continue to sell the Schedule Property, as is currently intended. Joti Kashyap, Advocate Address: Chamber No. 8, Block-E, Karkardooma Court, New Delhi-110032. Contact No. +91 99116 26467

Immigration: A key issue in US election campaign

With just nine days left for Election Day, immigration remained one of the contentious issues in the US presidential campaign, with many immigrants, including from India and other South Asian nations, fearing a backlash if Republican hopeful Donald Trump wins the poll. In his campaign speeches, Trump promised a radical shift to tighten Washington's immigration policy and vowed to carry out the "largest" domestic deportation operation in American history of undocumented immigrants and review the existing refugee programmes if he is re-elected. The Republican leader has even vowed to end birthright citizenship for the children of immigrants living in the US illegally, triggering concerns among various diaspora communities, including from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Various pro-immigration advocacy groups have criticised Trump over his rhetoric on immigration, saying the discontinuation of birthright citizenship is legally questionable as it is enshrined in the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution. On her part, Vice President Kamala Harris has underlined the need for curtailing illegal immigration and that the US immigration system is broken and requires legislative measures to fix it. At a recent campaign rally, Trump accused Harris of bringing in "migrant gangs and illegal alien criminals" into the US, adding that "her policy of importing migrant gangs is a crime against our country." "This is a very sensitive issue and we are worried about the possible fallout of Trump's victory," said Mohammad Iqbal, a Bangladesh-origin green card holder living in Atlanta for over a decade. "Trump's policy is creating panic among various migrant societies and that is why they are supporting Vice President Kamala Harris," he noted. Vasudev Patel, general secretary of the Federation of Indian-Americans in Georgia, said the Republican leader is looking at welcoming "educated" and "peaceful" people to the US. A survey report by Pew Research has found that the supporters of Trump and Harris differ on mass deportations but favour border security. Nearly nine-in-ten Trump supporters (88 per cent) favour mass deportations of immigrants living in the country illegally, it said. In contrast, only 27 per cent of Harris supporters favour mass deportations while 72 per cent oppose it, the survey found. More than a third of Trump supporters (37 per cent) favour allowing undocumented immigrants to live and work in the US if they are married to an American citizen, compared with 80 per cent of Harris supporters who say the same, Pew Research found. About half of Trump supporters (49 per cent) support admitting more civilian refugees who are escaping war or violence, but a majority of Harris supporters (85 per cent) say the same, it said. Latanya, a student from Michigan, said immigration is a major issue in the election and she was upset with Trump over his policy on the matter. "I think, Harris is a much better choice than Trump in the election," she added. The US presidential race remained very tight with both Harris and Trump locked in a dead heat for the popular votes in most swing states. The final nationwide CNN poll found this week that 47 per cent of likely voters support Harris and an equal 47 would endorse Trump in the elections. In the final New York Times/Siena College national poll from October 20 to 23, the two aspirants are tied at 48 per cent. The remaining four per cent are yet to decide on their preference. A separate poll conducted by the Financial Times and the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business showed that 44 per cent of respondents trust Trump to handle the economy as opposed to 43 per cent for Harris.



# Georgia's pro-Western opposition disputes election result that could decide EU path

AP ■ TBILISI

Georgia's pro-Western opposition disputed the results of the parliamentary election after officials declared Sunday the ruling party led the crucial vote that could decide whether the country remains on the path to joining the European Union or comes under Russian sway. The Central Election Commission said Georgian Dream won 54.8 per cent of Saturday's vote with almost 100 per cent of ballots counted. Following a divisive pre-election campaign, initial figures suggested turnout is the highest since the ruling party was first elected in 2012.

Georgian electoral observers, who stationed thousands across the country to monitor the vote, reported multiple violations and said the results "do not correspond to the will of the Georgian people." Georgian Dream has become increasingly authoritarian, adopting laws similar to those used by Russia to crack down on freedom of speech. Brussels suspended Georgia's EU membership process indefinitely because of a "Russian law," passed in June. Bidzina Ivanishvili, the billionaire founder of Georgian Dream who made his fortune in Russia, claimed victory almost immediately after polls closed and said, "It is rare in the world for the same party to achieve such success in such a difficult situation." He had vowed ahead of the election to ban opposition parties should his party win.

Tina Bokuchava, the chair of the United National Movement opposition party accused the election commission of carrying out Ivanishvili's "dirty order" and said he "stole the victory from the Georgian people and thereby stole the European future." She indicated the opposition would not recognise the results and "will fight like never before to reclaim our European future."

The UNM party said its headquarters were attacked on Saturday while Georgian media reported two people were hospitalised after being attacked outside polling stations.

The pre-election campaign in the South Caucasus nation of 3.7 million people, which borders Russia, was dominated by foreign policy and marked by a bitter fight for votes and allegations of a smear campaign.

Some Georgians complained of intimidation and being pressured to vote for the governing party. Georgian Dream scored its highest share of the vote — polling almost 90 per cent — in the Javakheti region of southern Georgia, 135 kilometres west of the capital Tbilisi where it failed to get more than 44 per cent of the vote in any district. Before the election,

The Associated Press travelled to the region where many people are ethnic Armenians who speak Armenian, Russian and limited Georgian. Some voters suggested they were instructed how to vote by local officials while several questioned why Georgia needed a relationship with Europe and suggested it would be better off allied with Moscow.

Around 80 per cent of Georgians favour joining the EU, according to polls, and the country's constitution obliges its leaders to pursue membership in that bloc and NATO. Many fear that Georgian Dream is dragging the country toward authoritarianism and killing off hopes of becoming an EU member.

# Satellite reveals damage from Israeli attack at 2 bases in Iran

AP ■ DUBAI

An Israeli attack on Iran damaged facilities at a secretive military base southeast of the Iranian capital that experts in the past have linked to Tehran's onetime nuclear weapons programme and at another base tied to its ballistic missile programme, satellite photos analysed Sunday by The Associated Press show.

Some of the buildings damaged sat in Iran's Parchin military base, where the International Atomic Energy Agency suspects Iran in the past conducted tests of high explosives that could trigger a nuclear weapon. Iran long has insisted its nuclear programme is peaceful, though the IAEA, Western intelligence agencies and others say Tehran had an active weapons programme up until 2003. The other damage could be seen at the nearby Khojir military base, which analysts believe hides an underground tunnel system and missile production sites.

Iran's military has not acknowledged damage at either Khojir or Parchin from Israel's attack early Saturday, though it has said the assault killed four Iranian soldiers working in the country's air defence systems. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment, nor did the Israeli military.

However, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Sunday told an audience that the Israeli attack "should not be exaggerated nor downplayed," while stopping short of calling for an immediate retaliatory strike. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu separately said Sunday that Israel's strikes "severely harmed" Iran and that the barrage "achieved all its goals."

It remains unclear how many sites in total were targeted in the Israeli attack. There have been no images of damage so far released by Iran's military. Iranian officials have identified affected areas as being in Ilam, Khuzestan and Tehran provinces. Burned facilities could be seen in satellite images from Planet Labs PBC around Iran's Tange Bijar natural gas production site in Ilam province on Saturday, though it wasn't immediately clear if it was related to the attack. Ilam province sits on the Iran-Iraq border in western Iran.

The most telling damage could be seen in Planet Labs images of Parchin, some 40 kilometres southeast of downtown Tehran near the Mamalu Dam. There, one structure appeared to be totally destroyed while others looked damaged in the attack.

At Khojir, some 20 kilometres away from downtown Tehran, damage could be seen on at least two structures in satellite images.

# Indian Overseas Bank

**RO : NHPC Complex, Sector-33, 1st & 2nd Floor, Faridabad-121003, Telephone : 0129-2259544-50**

## E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE TO GENERAL PUBLIC

**Date & Time of & Mega Auction : 15.11.2024 (2nd Time Auction) From 11.00 AM to 01:00PM.**

### SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE AND MOVABLE PROPERTIES

Under Proviso to Rule 8(6) and Rule 6(2) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules E-Auction Sale for Sale of Immovable and Movable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso To Rule 8(6) and 6(2) 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/ Movable Property Mortgaged/ Hypothecated/ Pledged/ Charged to the Secured Creditor, the "Symbolic Possession" of which has taken by the Authorised Officer of the Indian Overseas Bank (Secured Officer), will be sold on "As is where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 15.11.2024 as per details mentioned hereunder.

Sr No.	NAME OF BORROWER	DATE OF DEMAND NOTICE AND DUES (WITH FURTHER INTEREST AT CONTRACTUAL RATES & REST. CHARGES ETC TILL DATE OF PAYMENT)	RESERVE PRICE (INCLUDING 1% INCOME TAX ON RESERVE PRICE OF PROPERTY ABOVE RS. 50.00 LAKH) EMD AMOUNT/ INCREMENTAL BID AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY ALONGWITH NAME OF MORTGAGOR (OWNER OF THE PROPERTY) (SYMBOLIC / PHYSICAL POSSESSION)	NAME OF BRANCH AND DETAILS OF CONTACT PERSON
1.	Mr. Amit Kumar Rawat & Mrs. Rinki	16.08.2023 Rs.12,94,327.31	Rs.13,58,000.00 Rs. 1,35,800.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Equitable Mortgage of All Piece and parcel of land & free hold residential property bearing No. E-49 (Plot no. E- 49 & Block-E) Pvt. Flat No FF-01 First Floor (without roof/Terrace right) Covered area measuring 55 sq. mtr. Or 592 sq. ft. total Plot area 256 sq yds out of Khalsa No. 1477 Situated in the area of village Raispur, new colony known as Balaji Enclave, Pargana-Dasna, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh, in name of Mr. Amit Kumar Rawat, Mrs. Rinki-Physical Possession	Arun Vihar Branch Mr. Ashok Nelli Contact No. 8925951445 7675066032 8925951445
2.	Mr. Prakash Pandey, Mrs. Aparna Pandey	Date: 17.06.2023 Rs. 33,54,708.40	Rs. 19,80,000.00 Rs. 1,98,000.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat No. 104, Tower A-1, First Floor, Avalon Rangoli, Village: Karampur, Sector – 65, Alwar By Pass Road, Bhiwadi Tehsil: Tijara, District: Alwar, Rajasthan – 301411. Measuring 1000.00 Sq. ft. Property is in name of Mr. Prakash Pandey-Symbolic Possession	
3.	Mr. Veeru Singh Rajput	Date: 02.05.2023 Rs. 33,28,506.50	Rs. 17,08,000.00 Rs. 1,70,800.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat No.806, 8th Floor, Tower A-4, at Avalon Rangoli, Alwar Bye Pass, Bhiwadi Opposite Suraj School, Mouja Karampura, Tehsil: Tijara, District: Alwar, Rajasthan – 301411. Measuring 1000.00 Sq. ft. Property is in name of Mr. Veeru Singh Rajput-Symbolic Possession	Gurgaon Branch Mr. Pankay Kumar Mohanty Contact No.9832796369 89259550403
4.	Mrs. Gurdev Kaur	Date: 02.05.2023 Rs. 15,93,496.99	Rs. 10,38,000.00 Rs. 1,03,800.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat No. C-001, Ground Floor, Tower C-1, Avalon Homes, Sector -106, Alwar By Pass Road, Bhiwadi Tehsil: Tijara, District: Alwar, Rajasthan – 301411. Measuring 460.00 Sq. feet. Property is in name of Mrs. Gurdev Kaur.–Symbolic Possession	
5.	Mr. Chainika R Chauhan, Ranjit Singh Chauhan	25.07.2022 Rs.38,72,104.72	Rs. 13,50,000.00 Rs.1,35,000.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Property 2 BHK Flat at "Avalon Rangoli" Flat No.1002, 10th Floor, Tower A2, Sector-24, Dharuhera, District: Rewari, Haryana-121105. Measuring 1300.00 Sq. feet. (Approx.). The property Allotment in the name of Mrs. Chainika R Chauhan (Land Owner/ Developer - M/s Avalon Projects (Unit of M/s GRJ Distributions & Developers Pvt. Ltd. Authorized Signatory -Mr. Ajay Singal and Mr. Ajay Kumar Gupta) - Physical Possession	
6.	Mr. Sunil	Date: 30.11.2023 Rs. 22,50,981.40	Rs. 3,73,000.00 Rs. 37,300.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat No.002, 2BHK, Ground Floor, Tower B -2, "Avalon Homes" Residential Society, Village Masit (Urban Area Bhiwadi), Alwar bypass Road, Sector 106, Bhiwadi, Tehsil: Tijara, District: Alwar -301019, Rajasthan, Measuring 650.00 Sq. feet. (super built up area), in the name of Mr. Sunil Kumar-Symbolic Possession	Retail Mart Gurgaon Branch Mr. Saraweshwar Tiwary Contact No.7080321928
7.	Mr. Vaibhav Tyagi	Date: 30.11.2023 Rs. 31,14,746.00	Rs. 2,41,000.00 Rs. 24,100.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential 1 BHK Flat No. 304, Third Floor, Tower C3 "Avalon Homes" Residential Society, Village Masit (Urban Area Bhiwadi), Alwar bypass Road, Sector 106, Bhiwadi, Tehsil: Tijara, District: Alwar -301019, Rajasthan, Measuring 460.00 Sq. feet. (super built up area), in name of Mr. Vaibhav Tyagi-Symbolic Possession	
8.	M/s Pavan Industries	Date: 24.07.2023 Rs. 20,46,898.00	Rs. 24,48,000.00 Rs. 2,44,800.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Property Kharsa No. 183 Situated at Mauza Seuppti Bangar Tehsil Mant Dist. Mathura-281202. Extent of sit-403.00 sq. mt. Property is in name of Mr. Sateesh S/O Girraj Singh-Symbolic Possession	Hasanpur Mathura Branch Mr. Manoj Kumar Contact No. 6362964604 8925951146
9.	Mr. Kamleshwar Ram	22.12.2022 Rs.7,43,324.77	Rs. 19,73,000/- Rs.1,97,300/- Rs. 25,000/-	Equitable Mortgage of residential Property situated at Kharsa No 279 old and 438ka New Mauza Goundpur within Govardhan Nagar Tehsil and District Mathura -281502, Uttar Pradesh, Measuring 83.00 Sq.meters. In the name of Mr. Kamleshwar Ram-Symbolic Possession	Jait Branch Mr. Jay Krishna Contact No. 8859508684 8925951207
10.	M/s MLTC ENERGY INDIA PVT LTD	Date: 30.09.2023 Rs. 4,11,58,570.67	Rs. 98,50,000.00 Rs. 9,85,000.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Office unit No. 711 measuring 1149.041 sq. ft./super area (106.7495 sq. mtr.) situated on 7th Floor "ILD Trade Centre" situated in the Revenue Estate of Village-Tikri Sector 47, Sohna Road, Gurgaon - 122018, Haryana. Boundaries: North: Unit No. 712, South: Unit No. 710, East: Entrance & Passage, West: Glazing Measuring 1149.041 sq. ft. The property is in the name of Mr. Virender Singh Hooda-Symbolic Possession	
			Rs. 92,12,000.00 Rs. 9,21,200.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Flat No. J-57 First Floor Measuring 1002.80 sq. ft. in the residential Colony Known as Mayfield Garden, Sector 50 Gurgaon 122002, Haryana. Boundaries: South - East: House No. J-58, North - West: House No. J-56 / North - East: 12.00-meter-wide Road, South-West: House No. J-15 & 16 Measuring 1002.80 sq. ft. The property is in the name of Mr. Rajinder Singh Hooda-Symbolic Possession	Manesar Branch Mr. Amit Mishra Contact No. 9601539735 8925951856
			Rs. 97,02,000.00 Rs. 9,70,200.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Land & Building measuring 288 sq. yds. On Municipal No. 682/8, Ward No. 13 (New) 7 (old), Kirpal Nagar, Rohtak City - 124001, Haryana Boundaries: North: Property of Shri Sat Prakash, South: Property of Shri Nafe Singh, East: Road 20' wide, West: Service Lane, Measuring 288.00 sq. yds. The property is in the name of Mr. Rajinder Singh Hooda-Symbolic Possession	
11.	M/s Vital Technologies	Date: 03.10.2023 Rs. 50,67,529.59	Rs. 1,80,47,000.00 Rs. 18,04,700.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat on Ground Floor, having covered area 159 sq. mtr. (1711.76 sq. ft.) in the residential colony known as plot no. 380 measuring 286 sq. mtr. in sector 5 Urban Estate Gurgaon Tehsil and Dist: Gurgaon - 122001, Haryana. Boundaries: North: Flat no. 381, South: Flat no. 379, East: 25' wide road, West: Flat No. 385. The property is in the name of Mr. Surender Singh Hooda-Symbolic Possession	
12.	M/s Shri Brajwasi Abhushan Bhandar	04.05.2022 Rs.53,22,841.76	Rs.61,28,000/- Rs.6,12,800/- 25,000/-	Residential Property at part of plot 58, Water tax No 197/A-58 Old & 197/A 58 New Sector -A, Govind Nagar, Mathura - 281004, Uttar Pradesh. Measured as 157.94 Sqm. The property in the name of Mr. Raju Garg & Mrs. Ganga Devi.-Symbolic Possession	Mathura Branch Mr. Hemant Kumar Jatav Contact- 9039763882 8925950372
13.	Mr. Surendra Kumar	16.08.2023 Rs.6,86,851.93	Rs.8,12,000/- Rs.81,200/- Rs.25,000/-	Equitable Mortgage of Residential Property at house Water Rate No. 1050/1140 (old) and 157/152 (New) situated at Mohalla Dhugar Pal, Matiya Gate Tehsil & District Mathura, 38.43 sq. mt. in name of Mr. Surendra Agarwal S/O Dwarika Prasad Agarwal-Symbolic Possession	
14.	Mr. Soyab Khan	Date: 13.07.2023 Rs. 10,43,641.00	Rs. 13,86,000.00 Rs. 1,38,600.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Land & Building on Mustil No.41, Killa NO- 8/2 (1-6), 13/1 (2-2), 18/2 (2-12), 19/1 (3-0), 22 (3-13), 23/1(21.01.20232-2), Kitta No-6, Basanti Vihar, Radha Colony), Palwal, Haryana-121102. Measuring 75 Sq. Yard (Approx.) The property is in the name of Late Mr. Soyab Khan-Symbolic Possession	Palwal Branch Mr. BHEEMESWAR PRASAD U V B Contact No. 9491821626 8925951667
15.	M/s Shri Shyam Trading Company	Date: 02.08.2023 Rs. 17,00,548.09	Rs. 74,81,000.00 Rs. 7,48,100.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Shop No. 13 Grain Market (New Anaj Mandi) Tehsil Hathin District Palwal Haryana-121102. Measuring 300.00 sq. yds. in name of Mrs. Maya Devi, Mr. Rajbir Singh and Mr. Krishan Mohan	
16.	Mr. Ram Karan Biddu	11.05.2022 Rs.17,26,199.00	Rs. 9,32,000/- Rs.93,200/- Rs. 25000/-	Residential Property Bearing Flat No.24, 4th Floor, Kartarpura, Indira Colony within limits of MC, Rohtak -124001, Haryana. Measuring 64.37 sq. yds. The property is in the name of Mrs. Meena Kumari W/o Ram Karan Biddu - Physical Possession	Rohtak Gohana Road Branch Mr. Heera Singh Meena Contact No. 8505087966 8925953293
17.	Mr. Sonu Kumar	Date: 27.07.2023 Rs. 11,29,589.18	Rs. 8,50,000.00 Rs. 85,000.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Flat No. 22 at 3rd Floor of Ashirwad Enclave Katarpura at Indra Colony Rohtak-124001 in the name of Mr. Sonu Kumar and Mrs. Ruchi Kumar-Symbolic Possession	
18.	Mr. Sanjay Kumar Rana, Mrs. Poonam Rani	17.04.2023 Rs.14,63,262.99	Rs. 31,18,000/- Rs.3,11,800/- Rs. 25,000/-	Residential House situated in the colony known as Surat Nagar, Phase 1, Gurgaon within the Municipal Corporation Gurgaon comprised in Kharsa No. 310, Gall No. 8 of the revenue estate of village Gurgaon, District: Gurgaon - 122006, Haryana. Measuring 100.00 Sq. yards. The property is in the name of Mr. Sanjay Kumar Rana-Symbolic Possession	Sohna Road, Gurgaon Branch Ms. Priyanka Singh Contact No.8709011097, 8925952447
19.	Mr. Anil Choudhary	30.07.2022 Rs.17,26,323.00	Rs. 9,08,000/- Rs.90,800/- Rs.25,000	Residential Flat No. 001, Ground Floor, Tower B 2, Avalaon Homes, Sector -106, Alwar by Pass Road, Bhiwadi, Rajasthan – 301019, Measuring 650 Sq. feet. The property Allotment in the name of Mr. Anil Choudhary (Land Owner/ Developer - M/s Ambition Builders Pvt. Ltd. Authorized Signatory -Shri Ajay Singal and Shri Ajay Kumar Gupta).	Sector 44 Gurgaon Branch Mr. Priyanak Kumari Contact No.7759810302 8925951804
20.	Mr. Akhilesh Vahisht	Date: 05.10.2023 Rs. 20,73,050.70	Rs. 9,36,000/- Rs.93,600/- Rs.25,000/-	B1103-11th Floor Tower B2 Avalon Homes Within revenue estate of Village Masit Alwar Bypass Road Tapukara Bhiwadi Rajasthan-301019, Measuring 650.00 sq. ft. in name of Mr. Akhilesh Vahisht	
21.	Maharaj Singh	01.07.2019 Rs.5,04,179.48	Rs. 6,42,000.00 Rs. 64,200.00 Rs.25,000.00	All that part and parcel of the Piece of Plot No.143, Part of Kharsa No.1143 situated at Mauja Maholi within Hare Krishna Dham Colony, Tehsil & District: Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Measuring 167.22 Sqm in name of Mrs. Sheela Devi -Symbolic Possession	
22.	Rakesh Saxena	01.07.2019 Rs.851663.00	Rs.14,89,000.00 Rs.1,48,900.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Commercial Property bearing Shop Water Rate No. 2/1038J, situated at Mohalla Askunda Bazar, Mathura Tehsil, Mathura District, Uttar Pradesh, Measuring 6.32 Sq. mtr. in name of Mr. Rakesh Saxena-Symbolic Possession	
23.	Pinki Devi, Digamber Singh	18.01.2018 Rs.5,60,454.00	Rs.15,21,000.00 Rs.1,52,100.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Property Bearing Water Rate No. 527 (Part), with all roof/terrace right, situated at Gall Gujrana Kotwali Road (Opp. H.No. 413 of Shri Yadav), Tehsil & District - Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. Measuring 70.20 Sq. Yds, in name of Mrs. Pinki Devi-Symbolic Possession	
24.	M/s Jhanvi Sales	29.07.2020 Rs.31,01,085.00	Rs.25,27,000.00 Rs.2,52,700.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Commercial Property Bearing Office Space No. 13B, Second Floor, Plot No. C-1 and C-2, Radhika Vihar, Phase-2, within Techman's City, nH-2, Tehsil & District : Mathura-281001, Uttar Pradesh. Measuring 28.76 Sq. Mtr, in name of Mr. Raj Kumar Shukla-Symbolic Possession	Mathura Veterinary College Branch Mr. Sagor Vanshi Contact No. 9952092177 8925951475
25.	Ritek Kumar Sharma	16.08.2018 Rs.20,40,816.00	Rs. 17,56,000.00 Rs. 1,75,600.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential Property bearing Villa No. 22, Situated at Block B, Kharsa No. 97/2 & 97/3, Mauza Koyala Alipur within Ganga City Colony, Tehsil & District, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. Measuring 99.28 Sq. Mtr. in name of Mr. Ritek Kumar-Symbolic Possession	
26.	Mr. Jitender Kumar, Mr. Edal Singh	01.06.2022 Rs.30,00,400.00	Rs. 23,95,000/- Rs. 2,39,500/- Rs. 25,000/-	Residential Property at Plot Plot No. 174 & 175, Kharsa No. 7,8,12,14,14a,14ba, Jamuna Enclave, Mauza Lohavan, Tehsil: Mahaban, District: Mathura - 281305, Uttar Pradesh. Measuring 115.43 Sq. meters. The property is in the name of Mr. Jeetendra Kumar.-Symbolic Possession	
27.	Mrs. Shivani Dhiman, Mr. Dinesh Dhiman	29.09.2022 Rs.22,45,602.00	Rs. 19,96,000/- Rs. 1,99,600/- Rs.25,000/-	Residential Property bearing Flat No. 503-B, (2 BHK), Situated at 5th floor, Mauja Ganeshra within Ashoka Heights, Tehsil & District: Mathura-281004, Uttar Pradesh. Measuring 66.22 Sq. meters. The property is in the name of Mrs. Shivani Dhiman.-Symbolic Possession	
28.	Mr. Bhagwan Das, Mrs. Kajal Das Sharma	Date: 26.07.2023 Rs. 10,19,230.70	Rs. 8,96,000.00 Rs. 89,600.00 Rs. 25,000.00	Residential property- Kharsa No. 51/2, Mauza Rajpur Khadar, Vrindavan, Tehsil & district Mathura-281121, Area: 83.61 sq. mtr, in name of Mr. Bhagwan Das Sharma and Mrs. Kajal Das-Symbolic Possession	Vrindavan Branch Mr. Sunran Singh Gurjar Contact No. 9517511537, 8925950443

**Outstanding Govt.Dues if any- Not Known, EMD Start Date: 11.11.2024,**

**Last Date of Deposit of EMD up to - 14.11.2024,**

**Date and Time of Inspection of Property- 11.11.2024 to 14.11.2024, 10.00 AM to 4:00 PM,**

**Date and Time of E-auction -15.11.2024 from 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM.**

#### Terms and conditions of e-auction

- The properties will be sold by e-auction through the Bank's approved service provider portal <https://ibapi.in> under the supervision of the Authorized Officer of the Bank.
- E-auction bid document containing online e-auction bid form, declaration, general terms and conditions of online auction sale are available in <https://ibapi.in>
- Intending bidders shall hold Valid email ID and Mobile No. to register their name / account by login to the website of the aforesaid service provider. They need to create log in with user id and password on the aforesaid service provider portal which should be used in the e-auction proceedings. For details please contact the service provider portal <https://ibapi.in>
- Bids in the prescribed formats shall be submitted "online" through the portal <https://ibapi.in> along with the detail of EMD & scanned copy of KYC documents including photo, PAN Card & address proof to the service provider and to the Authorised Officer **before 05.00 P.M on 14.11.2024** otherwise shall not be eligible for consideration.
- The EMD and other deposits shall be remitted through EFT / NEFT / RTGS to the Bank account as specified above and the amount of EMD paid by the interested bidder shall carry no interest. The amount of EMD paid by the successful bidder shall be adjusted towards the sale price.
- Bids without EMD shall be rejected summarily.
- Online auction sale will start automatically on and at the time as mentioned above. Auction / bidding will initially be for a period of 120 minutes with auto extension time of 10 minutes each till the sale is concluded.
- The property shall be sold to the successful bidder. The successful bidder (purchaser) as declared by the Authorised Officer shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of the EMD) immediately on the same day and not later than the next working day. The balance amount of sale price shall be paid within 15 days from the date of confirmation of auction sale. Failure to remit the entire amount of sale price within the stipulated period will result in forfeiture of deposit of 25% of the bid price to the secured creditor and forfeiture of all claims over the property by the purchaser and the property will be resold.
- The sale certificate will be issued in the name of the purchaser only, after payment of the entire sale price amount and other taxes/charges, if any.
- The purchaser shall bear the charges/fee payable for conveyance such as registration fee, stamp duty, etc., as applicable as per law.
- The Authorised Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or postpone or cancel the sale, as the case may be without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- The property is being sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is", and "Whatever there is" basis. The Bank has disclosed only the known encumbrances, statutory liabilities, if any, as above. However, the intending bidders should make their own independent inquiries at their own costs with concerned co-operative housing societies/SRO as well as the Revenue Records regarding the title, nature, description, condition, encumbrance, lien, charge, statutory dues, etc of properties put on auction and claims/rights/dues affecting to the properties, prior to submitting their bid. The properties are being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the bank. The Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues.
- Sale is subject to confirmation by the secured creditor.
- EMD of unsuccessful bidders will be returned through EFT / NEFT / RTGS to the bank account details provided by them in the bid form and intimated via their e-mail id.
- For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on Indian Overseas Bank's website i.e. [www.ioab.in](http://www.ioab.in) [[https://www.ioab.in/TenderDetails.aspx?Tendertype=E\\_Auction](https://www.ioab.in/TenderDetails.aspx?Tendertype=E_Auction)] or <https://ibapi.in>

**Date : 25.10.2024**

**Place : Delhi / NCR**

**Authorised Officer Indian Overseas Bank**

# Mcap of nine top-10 most valued firms drops as markets tumble

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nine of the top-10 most valued firms together lost a whopping Rs 2,09,952.26 crore from market valuation last week, in line with weak trends in equities, with Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries Limited taking the biggest hit. Last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 1,822.46 points or 2.24 per cent. "The dismal Q2 earnings so far have aggravated the investors' woes while persistent FII selling continued to create havoc in the market," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd. From the top-10 pack, HDFC Bank emerged as the only winner. The market valuation of



Hindustan Unilever eroded by Rs 44,195.81 crore to Rs 5,93,870.94 crore. Reliance Industries' valuation tumbled Rs 41,994.54 crore to Rs 17,96,726.60 crore. State Bank of India's market valuation plummeted by Rs 23,137.67 crore to Rs 14,68,183.73 crore. The valuation of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) diminished by Rs 19,797.24 crore to Rs 5,71,621.67 crore, and that of Infosys declined by Rs 10,629.49 crore to Rs 7,69,496.61 crore. ITC's mcap fell by Rs 5,690.96 crore to Rs 6,02,991.33 crore, and that of ICICI Bank went lower by Rs 5,280.11 crore to Rs 8,84,911.27 crore. However, the mcap of HDFC Bank jumped Rs 46,891.13 crore to Rs 13,29,739.43 crore. Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, ITC, Hindustan Unilever and LIC.

# Government plans to issue ALMM to push India's green energy transition

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is planning to introduce an Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (ALMM) for solar cells on the lines of module manufacturing to boost India's transition towards green energy. The government is aiming to make the second list (List II) under the ALMM for solar PV cells effective April 1, 2026. The government introduced the ALMM order (List I) in 2019 for solar modules to boost the manufacturing and usage of made-in-India solar panels. It was made mandatory to source PV modules from models and manufacturers included in the ALMM List I. According to an office memorandum of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the ALMM order dated January 2, 2019,



specified models and manufacturers of solar PV modules, whereas List-II will identify and include models and manufacturers of solar PV cells. However, to date, List II of solar PV cells has not been issued because the installed capacity of solar PV cells in the country was lower than the demand, the government document said. "With installed capacity of solar PV cells in the country expected to increase

substantially in the next two years, it has been proposed to issue List-II of solar PV cells under ALMM, which shall be effective from April 1, 2026," according to the draft amendment to ALMM order for implementation of ALMM for Solar PV cells. The draft paper also proposed that the solar PV modules -- which are presently enlisted in ALMM List-I (for solar PV modules) with an expiry date beyond March 31, 2026 -- will also have to use solar PV cells included in ALMM List-II (for solar PV cells) from April 1, 2026, onwards. If the modules don't have the cells included in List-II, they will be liable to be delisted from ALMM List-I, as per the draft. "All projects where the last date of bid submission is before the issuance of this order shall stand exempted from the mandatory requirement of using solar PV cells from ALMM List-II," the draft said. Sustainable Projects and Developers Association (SDPA) President Vineet Mittal said the introduction of an ALMM mechanism for solar cells will boost domestic manufacturing by ensuring that only approved, high-quality, and reliable products are used in government-backed projects. This will promote self-reliance in the sector and significantly reduce dependency on imports, which is crucial for achieving India's long-term renewable energy goals, he added. Yogesh Dua, co-founder of UTL Solar, said, "We welcome the efforts being taken by the government to make the industry more sustainable. It will not only push the vision of 500 GW but also meet our goals. The move will also benefit consumers with efficient solar projects."

# Festive sales: Buoyed by online offers, appliance makers expect growth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The appliance & consumer electronics industry expects around 30 per cent growth in the festive season sales this year after a double-digit booster from online sale events of leading e-tailers Flipkart and Amazon and an expected final thrust from offline channels during Dhanteras week. This festive season, premiumisation is the flavour, where consumers are willing to pay extra for features such as energy efficiency, higher capacity and larger size and even showing interest in the high-end AI & IOT Technology-driven products, industry leaders said. Companies such as LG Electronics, Panasonic, Sony, Godrej Appliances and Haier started festive sales with a good kick start from the Onam festival and expect to continue the momentum till the remaining week of the nearly 45-day festive period, which concludes after Diwali. To make the premium range as large screen TV panels above 51" screen size, higher load capacity washing machines and French door refrigerators (with two side-by-side doors), the manufacturers are incentivising with attractive

financing schemes, investing in branding and promotion on digital and traditional mediums. "There is good growth across all categories, especially in premium products like large-capacity washing machines and refrigerators. We are witnessing good demand for products featuring AI & IOT technology," said LG Electronics India, Senior VP-Home Appliances Sanjay Chitkara. He added that this festive season, demand for premium products has also increased even from the smaller tier II & III markets, which is encouraging. "Upcoming week is significant for festive sales as generally during Dhanteras there will be a high sell-out across India," said Chitkara. Moreover, this year's festive season sale also coincides with a strong wedding season this winter. "There were not many wedding dates in summer this year therefore wedding purchases are complimenting festival sell-out," he said. Godrej Appliances Business Head and EVP Kamal Nandi said helped by a good monsoon markets have picked up this festive season. The premium leading the charge this season, though



mass product segments also have shown significant growth. "At Godrej Appliances, we have seen a growth of close to 40 per cent since the start of Onam in September compared to last year. October, driven by a combination of Durga Puja /Navratri and the upcoming Diwali celebrations has delivered close to 45 per cent surge so far," he said. Over the festive season sales on e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart, Nandi said Godrej Appliances has overall "achieved an impressive 70 per cent-plus growth compared to last year". Panasonic India's e-commerce continued to grow in double digits and during Navratri, it witnessed over 20 per cent growth and hopes to continue momentum till Diwali. "Consumption remains bullish for premium appliances. Whether it is offline or, online consumers are opting for higher ASP (Average Selling Price) products" said Panasonic Marketing India Managing Director Fumiyasu Fujimori. Sony India is also witnessing a surge in demand for large screen televisions especially 55" and above, with 75" and 85" screen sizes gaining significant traction, said its Managing Director Sunil Nayyar. "We are offering lucrative bank offers and easy finance schemes to make the purchase easier for our customers both in the offline and online space," he said. Industry body CEAMA (Consumer Electronics and

Appliances Manufacturers Association) projects around 20 growth this festive season. Both e-commerce platforms and brick-and-mortar stores are witnessing this positive trend, underscoring the significance of the consumer electronics segment during the festive season, said its President Sunil Vachani. "During this festive season, both online and offline sales have seen a remarkable boost, where we have witnessed online marketplaces alone achieving high sales figures within a week-a 26% rise from 2023," he said. There has been a particularly strong demand for LED TVs, air conditioners, large refrigerators, microwaves, and washing machines, driven by the launch of new models and attractive offers, Vachani added. Haier India President Satish NS said its premium products are doing "extremely well" led by LED panels above 51-inch screen size and high-load washing machines. "People are willing to pay for premiumisation through the consumer financing schemes, which is a good sign for the industry. My expectation is that we should be doing about a minimum of 30-35 per cent growth in terms of value growth," he said.

Avneet Singh Marwah, CEO of Noida-based Super Plastronics Pvt Ltd (SPPL), a TV and appliance manufacturing company having licenses of several global brands including Thomson, Kodak, Blaupunkt, White-Westinghouse - said consumers are now shifting towards bigger screens. "This year the festive sales have been good, especially in the larger segment and we saw a 15 per cent growth in comparison to the last festive season. The segment which has really grown for us is 43-inch and 55-inch, there's been a triple-digit growth in 65-inch and 75-inch since last year," he said. BSH Home Appliances MD & CEO Saif Khan said with increased interest in home upgrades and real estate, demand for premium and luxury appliances-particularly front-loading washing machines, dishwashers, and built-in cooking ranges from Bosch and Siemens-continues to grow. "In the pre-festive period leading up to Dussehra, BSH experienced a remarkable 40 per cent growth in eCommerce sales, primarily fueled by an increased demand for higher-capacity appliances," he said.

# Turkiye's measures on polyester staple fibres impact exports: India seeks compensation



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has sought compensation from Turkiye as Ankara's decision to extend safeguard measures on polyester staple fibres has impacted the product's exports, an official said. India flagged concerns and impact from these measures during a recent bilateral consultations with Turkiye under the WTO's safeguard agreement. On October 14, India sought consultations with Turkiye under the agreement to extend safeguard measures on polyester staple fibres. "We have sought compensation as we have a loss of trade. India has the option to propose retaliatory customs duties equivalent to the value of export loss if the issue will not be resolved through consultations," the official said. India has exported these fibres worth USD 22.18 million during 2023-24. It was USD 23.55 million in 2022-23. In September, Turkiye decided to extend safeguard measures against imports of polyester staple fibres. "As a member having a substantial trade interest in the export of products concerned, India had requested for consultations with Turkiye on the extension of the measures," the official added. As per a provision of the Agreement on Safeguards, a WTO member country proposing to apply safeguard measures shall provide

adequate opportunity for prior consultations with those members having a substantial interest as exporters of the product concerned, with a view to reviewing the information provided, exchanging views on the measure, and reaching an understanding on ways to achieve the objective set out in the agreement. India's overall exports to Turkiye stood at USD 6.65 billion in 2023-24, while imports were USD 3.78 billion. An expert said that India has been "very proactive" in the recent past about trade remedy measures and is seeking consultations with its trading partners if its trade is getting affected. Last month, India proposed the imposition of retaliatory customs duties, under the WTO (World Trade Organisation) norms, on certain value of goods imported from the EU, as the two sides have failed to reach a consensus on the European Union's safeguard measures on some steel products. The EU has extended safeguard duties on imports of certain steel product categories with an out-of-quota duty of 25 per cent, for another two years till 2026. In 2022, India had also proposed to impose retaliatory customs duties under the WTO norms on about USD 250 million worth of goods imported from the UK against Britain's move to extend safeguard duty and quota restrictions on the import of certain steel products till 2024.

# Brewers oppose Karnataka beer tax hike

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Brewers Association of India (BAI) on Sunday requested the Karnataka Government to not go ahead with proposed amendments to reclassification of beer and restructuring of taxes, saying these would work against both the Government and the industry. BAI's submission is in response to a draft notification issued by the Karnataka government seeking stakeholders opinion on matters related to regulation of beer. In the draft notification the Government has sought to mandate declaration of malt and sugar content on the label of beer products, increase taxes on the strong beer, and raise the minimum price of beer in the state. The draft notification introduces a new definition of beer which, amongst others, limits the addition of sugar to 25% in beer and makes it mandatory for the beer products to display the content of malt and sugar on the label. Brewers in the state have objected to these proposals. Commenting on the matter, Vinod Giri, the Director general of the BAI said, "Beer has no sugar in it. There is a definition of beer set by the FSSAI which are followed by all states and we don't see the need to change them by one state. Having said that, our larger concern is regarding putting it up on the label. Beer labels are already cluttered with so much statutory information and warnings. Adding more



information, especially when it is not even relevant, will just make them more cluttered and unappealing." The draft notification also proposes to increase the excise duty on strong beer by 100% to Rs 20 per bulk litre, increases the minimum billing price for beer in the state to Rs 300 per case and increases Additional Excise Duty (AED) to 195% of the billing price or Rs 130 per bulk litre whichever is higher. On the proposed hike in minimum beer price of beer, Mr Giri said: "If implemented, it would be the third increase in tax on beer in the last 15 months. That's unheard of! It almost seems the direction of the policy is to make beer prices uncompetitive compared to hard liquor so as to shift consumers from a milder form of alcohol like beer to hard spirit like IMFL. That is something that health bodies such as the WHO do not recommend for public policy. Governments should not do that consciously." BAI has objected to these, saying that these proposals will hit the beer industry in the state very hard. BAI, in its letter to the Government states that the taxes on beer have already been increased twice in the last one year and one more tax increase will push the beer price amongst the highest in the country.

BAI has said that such increase may lead to drop in sales of beer in the state and encourage cross border unlawful imports, eventually leading to fall in tax collection of the Government. Vinod Giri added, "The proposed tax increases are going to hit consumers two ways. One, the price of strong beer, which accounts for 90% of beer sold in the state, will go up by Rs 10-15 per bottle making it amongst the most expensive in the country, and raise the minimum price of the beer from current Rs 95 per bottle to Rs 140 per bottle. Such a rapid and massive increase in tax on beer is surprising as it is third time in less than a year. Further, the Government is at the same time reducing taxes on liquor. Increasing beer prices and holding or reducing liquor prices will only encourage consumers to switch from mild form of alcohol to hard liquor, which is not what the World Health Organization recommends." The letter states: "Karnataka is recognized for its strong beer culture. It has 11 breweries with thousands of crores of investment, providing employment to 7500 people. It is home to two of India's largest beer makers. All this has been made possible by supportive and progressive policies by the Government. However, we are concerned that some proposed changes could hinder the growth of the industry, diminish the state's investment appeal, or drive future investments elsewhere.

# ONGC head should be chairman of subsidiary HPCL, says synergy panel

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The oil and Natural Gas Corporation Chairman and Managing Director should also be the chair of the firm's subsidiary Hindustan Petroleum Corporation in line with the universal practice of a corporate group having only one chairman, a panel appointed to work out synergies between the two firms said in its report. India's top oil and gas producer Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) had, in January 2018, bought the government's entire 51.11 per cent stake in HPCL for Rs 36,915 crore. The nation's third-biggest oil refining and fuel marketing company thereafter became a subsidiary of ONGC. But Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), which initially did not even recognise the new owner, continues to be headed by a chairman and managing director, who does not report to parent firm ONGC or its board. ONGC has got just one board position on HPCL following the acquisition. On a prod from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, ONGC appointed a three-member panel to work out synergies between ONGC and HPCL. The panel, which comprised former oil secretary GC Chaturvedi, former ONGC chairman Dinesh Kumar Sarraf, and former HPCL head MB Lal, a couple of months back submitted its report to ONGC, which forwarded it to the ministry for further action, two



sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. The panel in the report said the ONGC chairman and managing director should be the chair of the board of not just ONGC but also all its subsidiaries - ONGC Videsh Ltd, HPCL, Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd, and ONGC Petro additions Limited (OPAL). The subsidiaries should be headed by the CEO and Managing Directors, who would report to the ONGC chairman, they said citing the report. Except for HPCL, all other subsidiaries - OVL, MRPL and OPAL - are headed by CEO and Managing Director. The ONGC chairman heads the board of OVL, MRPL and OPAL. "ONGC and all its direct subsidiaries should have one chairman and the different units be run by a board and MD/CEO," a source aware of the report said. "The board of step-down subsidiaries should be headed by the MD/CEO of the immediate parent firm." The panel was formed to work out synergies between ONGC and HPCL and optimise processes and businesses.

Mukesh Kumar Surana, who was the chairman and managing director of HPCL when ONGC bought out the government stake in January 2018, retired on April 30, 2022. His successor, Pushp Kumar Joshi superannuated on August 31 this year. No one has so far been appointed as HPCL chairman till now. Another source said the government should use this opportunity to implement the panel report. It should appoint an MD and CEO of HPCL and make the ONGC chairman the head of its board. Even after the Union Cabinet approval and ONGC buying out the entire government stake, HPCL for over one and half years refused to recognise ONGC as its promoter. It listed ONGC's shareholding of 51.11 per cent as a 'public shareholder' in as many as six quarterly shareholding filings with stock exchanges post-January 2018. HPCL listed the President of India with nil shareholding as its promoter in those filings. This is despite the oil ministry's explicit advice, sources said, adding that HPCL delayed the eventual by seeking "clarifications" from various authorities.

## INBRIEF

**INDIAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY RECOGNIZES PROFESSOR**  
AMRITSAR: Professor Narpinder Singh, Vice Chancellor of Graphic Era Deemed to be University, has been selected for the prestigious Prof. Priyadarshan Ray Memorial Award 2023 by the Indian Chemical Society, founded in 1924, is India's premier professional organization dedicated to promoting chemical sciences through research, education, and industry collaboration.

**MORE FESTIVE SPECIAL TRAINS BY NFR**  
MALIGAON: In a bid to clear the additional rush of passengers during this ongoing festive season of 2024, it has been decided to operate six additional pairs of festive special trains.

**POWERGRID CELEBRATES ITS 35 TH RAISING DAY**  
GURUGRAM: TPower Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) - a Maharatna CPSU under Ministry of Power celebrated its 35th raising day across the country with great zeal and enthusiasm.



## DELHI'S AIR POLLUTION CRISIS

# LASTING SOLUTIONS FOR HEALTH AND GREENERY

Keep the windows closed, avoiding indoor burning of wood, and using a wet mop for cleaning can reduce dust exposure in this high AQI writes **GUFRAAN BEIG**

**W**ith the air quality in the national capital already in the "poor" category ahead of Diwali, the Delhi government has swung into action, coinciding with the Centre's directive to implement GRAP Stage 1 and other related initiatives. City residents are bracing themselves for, yet another long winter of air pollution and the health hazards it causes. Air Quality Index (AQI) is a measure of the quantum of harmful particles, fumes, chemicals, and oxides in the air. It gauges levels on a scale from 0 to 500 and plays a crucial role in understanding the scale of the air pollution crisis. While the AQI under 50 is ideal and under 100 is liveable, once it crosses this level, it progressively indicates that the air we breathe is getting more harmful. AQI levels (100-200) can lead to eye and throat irritation, while higher levels can have several serious health impacts. During the winter months, Delhi's AQI levels become hazardous, exceeding 200 resulting in prolonged exposure to unhealthy levels of PM2.5. Several medical studies show that such exposure can lead to a range of serious health issues, including reduced lung function and development, cancer, premature mortality, cardiovascular symptoms such as unusual chest pain, and hematological abnormalities like anemia, leukemia, thrombocytosis, and venous thromboembolism. To mitigate exposure, people are advised to limit outdoor activities, especially in the early morning and after sunset to

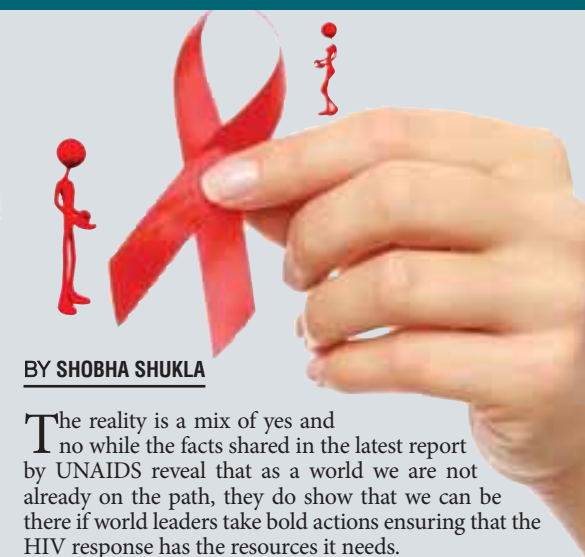
**TO MITIGATE EXPOSURE, PEOPLE ARE ADVISED TO LIMIT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, IN THE EARLY MORNING AND AFTER SUNSET. TO AVOID HEAVY EXERTION OPT FOR SHORT WALKS, AVOID JOGGING, AND TAKE FREQUENT BREAKS. IF UNUSUAL SYMPTOMS ARISE, SUCH AS COUGHING OR CHEST DISCOMFORT, STOP ALL ACTIVITIES**

avoid heavy exertion. You can opt for short walks, avoid jogging, and take frequent breaks. If unusual symptoms arise, such as coughing or chest discomfort, stop all activities. Keeping windows closed, avoiding indoor burning of wood or candles, and using wet mopping for cleaning can further reduce dust exposure. N95 or P100 masks may provide some protection when outside. Also, the reality is that the transportation sector is growing rapidly, fuelled by increased vehicle ownership and the need to modernise outdated engine technology. The Government is proactively promoting electric mobility, recognising its immense potential to transform air quality. While it can upscale its efforts with more

incentives and better infrastructure, citizens must also collaborate in this transition by embracing EVs more actively and making them their primary mode of personal transport. With the Delhi Metro and Delhi Transport Corporation already committed to using zero emission electric power trains for their trains and buses, it's time for residents of the Capital too to follow their lead and make a stronger collective effort to eliminate dangerous exhaust pollutants, significantly improving air quality and public health. We must create a cleaner and healthier future for Delhi residents. Controlling tailpipe emissions is critical for this. Mandating vehicle electrification, curtailing emissions from vehicles running on petrol and diesel, and retiring highly polluting older models where the emissions can't be reduced must be considered. While this will not be easy, the time for action is now or it may get too late. Concerns about the environmental impact of increased electricity demand for EVs will be addressed by transitioning to renewable energy sources. As India makes more strides in this direction, the growth of clean energy can mitigate the reliance on coal, ultimately benefiting the environment.

*The author is a chair professor of NIAS, IISc-Campus, Bengaluru and Founder, SAFAR.*

## ARE WE ON THE PATH TO END AIDS BY 2030?



BY SHOBHA SHUKLA

The reality is a mix of yes and no while the facts shared in the latest report by UNAIDS reveal that as a world we are not already on the path, they do show that we can be there if world leaders take bold actions ensuring that the HIV response has the resources it needs. Progress made in the past decade notwithstanding, there is still a huge gap between the targets set up to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. The UNAIDS report- The Urgency of Now: AIDS at a Crossroads- shows that globally, of the 39.9 million people living with HIV, nearly 25% (9.3 million), are not receiving life-saving treatment, including 660,000 children living with HIV. Globally, 4,000 young women and girls will become infected with HIV every week in 2022.

### DEVELOP NEW HIV PREVENTION OPTIONS AND DELIVER THEM EQUITABLY

"We have to fill the product introduction gap - accelerate time to regulatory approvals of product introduction to impact; demand creation and programme platforms for prevention; and differentiated and integrated service delivery for people. We must also fill the product development gap - long acting and event driven; user-friendly and developed with users; dual purpose and multi-purpose methods must be our top priority," says Mitchell Warren, Executive Director of AVAC. PrEP is one of the new HIV prevention options for HIV-negative people who can reduce the risk of HIV acquisition by taking an antiretroviral medication and the latest addition is the long acting injectable lenacapavir that has been found to be highly effective in preventing HIV in cisgender women as well as in gay, bisexual and transgender people.

### CHOICE MATTERS ON MULTIPLE LEVELS

Studies have proved that expanding testing and treating and then introducing PrEP has lowered the incidence of HIV in communities that had access to it. In Warren's opinion, "We should not forget that biomedical products- whether for prevention or for treatment- exist in behavioural and structural contexts. None of these methods can help if we do not address access and equity. While we develop biomedical products around the pathogen-around the HIV virus- we need to design the programmes around the people. That is what matters and that is how you get to impact.

### ROLLOUT OF NEW TOOLS

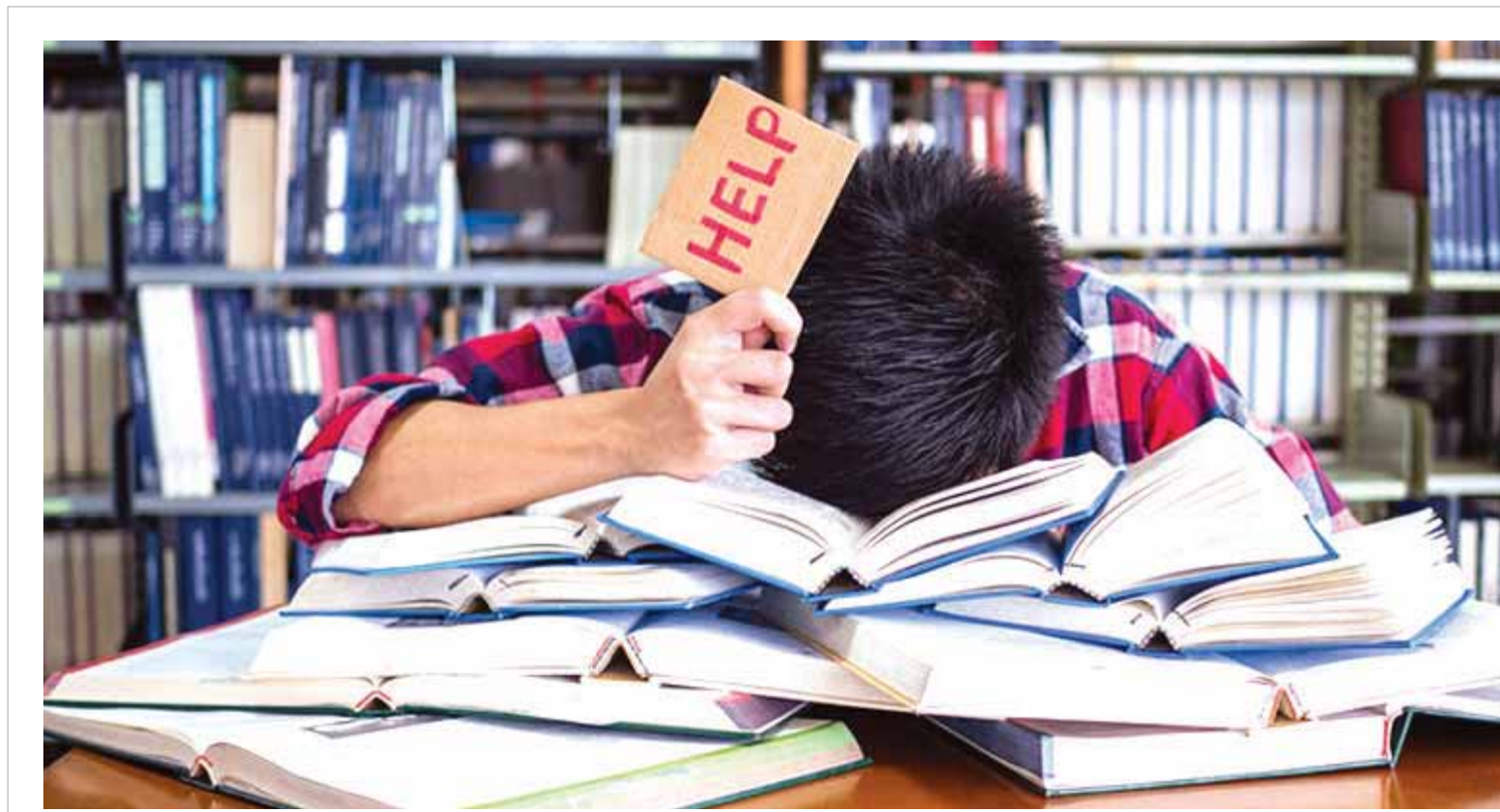
The deadly delays between developing path breaking health technologies and benefiting those for whom these were developed must end. We have to ensure vaccines convert into vaccinations of the 'last person in queue' first - without any delay. Same holds true for the full range of disease prevention, diagnostics, and treatments we have today. The 5th HIVR4P Conference to be convened in Lima, Peru will bring together around 1500 participants including representatives of key and affected populations in the HIV response to advance scientific knowledge, and enhance scientific and community collaborations to address the challenges and opportunities in HIV prevention. *The author is the award-winning founding Managing Editor and Executive Director of CNS (Citizen News Service)*

## IMPACTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

# Effect of Improper Sleep, Mental Health on Students' Performance

BY ARCHANA PADHYE

**A**s an educator, one tends to observe that sleep patterns are strongly linked to psychological well-being and academic performance. In today's fast-paced society, students are always undergoing pressure to maintain their social life, balance extracurricular activities, and be academically fit. Unfortunately, sleep is the most crucial component that is sometimes forgotten. In this article we will look at the connections between healthy sleep patterns, mental wellbeing, and academic success and discuss ways to support our students' general wellbeing. **The Role of Sleep in Academic Success** Rest is necessary for cognitive and emotional regulation. While asleep, the brain processes information learned during the day through consolidation of learning and memory. Thus, students learn better and pay better attention, leading to higher levels of academic performance when they are well rested. On the other hand, sleep deprivation leads to lack of focus and irritability. It can be much tougher for students to sit in class and complete tasks in hand when they are sleep deprived. Sleep timings can vary by age, when it comes to students. **Mental Health and Its Impact on Learning** Mental wellbeing contributes much to students' academic performance. Stress, anxiety, and even depression are increasing in school-going children. It



isn't self induced, it is normally facilitated by pressure related to academics. This leads to distraction, low motivation, and poor time management. The following suggestions have been

put into practice to help foster healthier sleeping habits and mental well-being for students so they can best be prepared: **Create a Consistent Sleep Schedule** - Encouraging students to go to bed and

wake up at the same time every day—even on weekends—helps regulate their internal body clock. This makes it easier to fall asleep and wake up refreshed. **Limit Screen Time Right Before**

**Sleep** - Radiation emitting through mobile phones, tablets, and computers interferes with the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone. Regulating the screens before bed time has to be a ritual.

**Promoting Relaxing Methods** - Engaging in relaxing activities such as deep breathing, meditation, listening to soulful music or reading a book before bed may ease the student into the spirit of sleeping. These methods also reduce levels of anxiety and stress, thus enhancing mental well-being. **Time Management** - Students often end up feeling extremely overwhelmed by the tasks in hand, exams, and extracurricular activities. Breaking down tasks into different elements, as well as a prioritisation of workloads, can actually ease the burden and reduce the stress associated with it. **Advocating Physical Activity** - Physical activities tire the body, thus improving the quality of sleep. In addition to that, regular physical activity reduces anxiety and depression, hence encouraging mental health. Balancing sleep, mental health, and academic performance can really impact the overall success of the student. So, educators and counselors should reinforce the importance of sleep in healthy mental habits and provide students with the tools to succeed not only in the classroom but also in their personal space. Together, schools can create this kind of school environment that works to make students shine in academics and emotionally as well.

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# INDIAN BATTERS WERE EXPOSED BY SANTNER; KOHLI'S FORM NOT A CONCERN: SIMON DOULL

PTI ■ PUNE

Former New Zealand pacer Simon Doull attributed India's shocking series defeat to their batsmen's inadequacies against spin bowling but he was not ready to write off underwhelming star batter Virat Kohli.

Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner grabbed 13 wickets as the Kiwis walloped India by 113 runs in the second Test here on Saturday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

"There's a misconception that Indian players are better players of spin. I think they've had better spinners and they've been able to expose the opposition batters. But in this Test (at Pune), their batters were exposed a little bit by a very, very good performance from Mitchell Santner," Doull told PTI Videos.

Even though Doull said negating spin is no longer a forte of many teams, he conceded that Indian batters' capitulation against "not a world-class spin bowling attack" of New Zealand offered some worrying signals.

"I think you get used to playing on such good wickets. And when it does turn, techniques get exposed a little bit. For a long time, when



India played on turning surfaces, they still had the best spinners in the world in Jadeja and Ashwin.

"So, they've been able to undo other sides. In this Test match, they were undone by a New Zealand side that, with all due respect, is not a world-class spin bowling attack. So, that will be a concern of some sort," he detailed.

Kohli's modest run in the ongoing series was one of the talking points, as the veteran batter succumbed to spin three times in four innings.

But Doull did not read too much into the former Indian captain's dismal form, and said it would not have an effect in the upcoming five-match Test series against Australia.

"There're issues against spin but he's not the only one. You're not going to find those (spin-friendly) conditions in Australia. He (Kohli) had a great series Down Under. He plays quick bowling as well as he has for the last four or five years. So, I don't think it's a concern," he noted.

The 55-year-old also defended Indian skipper Rohit Sharma for his defensive approach and placed veteran bowlers in the side as culpable for the series defeat.

"I think winning the toss is crucial. For Rohit, the wrong decision at Bangalore was crucial. He's admitted to that as well. New Zealand seamers took advantage of that," he said. Rohit elected to bat first in the opening Test under overcast conditions and his side got

bowled out for a pathetic 46, which eventually transpired into an eight-wicket defeat.

The second Test saw a different scenario as New Zealand skipper Tom Latham won the toss and smartly elected to bat first, realising that batting fourth on Pune pitch would be a tough task.

"Winning the toss in this Test (at Pune), when you knew, pitch was going to turn...it might not have looked like a big score, 259 in the (NZ) first innings.

"But it was made to look like a really big score because the ball was turning. So, I think Tom Latham's captaincy was outstanding for the most part."

Doull, who took 98 wickets from 32 Tests, said senior bowlers too should have taken more responsibility. "People say Rohit might have been a touch defensive, but that comes down to the bowlers. There're very, very senior spin bowlers in that side.

"If you can't trust an Ashwin or a Jadeja to set his own field, you can't blame Rohit for that all the time. I think the bowlers have to have some part to play in that as well," he explained.

Moving over to the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy, Doull said winning the third Test at Mumbai against the Kiwis will do a world of good

to their morale ahead of the marquee clash starting next month.

"They have to forget about this series. They could go out and win the third Test in Wankhede and go to Australia with a little bit more confidence. In Australia, quick bowlers will be required. India batters, I think, will be a lot better off on good surfaces. That's what you tend to get in Australia."

Doull said India have good enough players to tackle the Australian challenge.

"It'll come down to how they play the quick bowlers from Australia - the tall, slightly bouncier bowlers. But they've got the batters to do the job, I think, in good conditions. "And if later on in the Test matches, whether it be in Perth or whether it be in Sydney, it starts to turn and bounce a little bit, then their spinners will come into play."

New Zealand also became the first visiting side to win a Test series in India after 12 years, and Doull termed it remarkable. "I think it's one of the greatest moments in New Zealand cricket history. Teams don't come here and beat India once, let alone twice. And for a New Zealand team to do it without one of their star batters - Kane Williamson - it's just a phenomenal performance," he signed off.



## Shami's absence big loss for India, but won't underestimate reserve pacers: McDonald

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia head coach Andrew McDonald feels the absence of Mohammed Shami during the marquee Border Gavaskar Trophy next month is a huge loss for India, but stressed that the hosts won't underestimate the quicks stepping in for the seasoned pacer.

Shami, who had played a significant role in India's successful 2018 tour of Australia, has not played since the ODI World Cup final last November due to an ankle injury. He underwent surgery and was subsequently rehabilitating at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) but developed swelling in his knees which affected his rehabilitation.

"Mohammed Shami is a big loss," McDonald was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo on ABC's Offsiders. "The way our batters speak about his relentless nature, his line and lengths, the way he goes about his business, a real good complimenting skill set to Bumrah so think that one-two combo they'll lack a little bit, and they'll miss that."

India have handed maiden call ups to Delhi speedster Harshit Rana and Andhra seam bowling all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy while quicks Akash Deep and Prasidh Krishna have also

been selected for the marquee series. Jasprit Bumrah will lead the fast bowling department.

"But needless to say we saw what happened last time, they had reserves that came in and did the job as well so they cannot be underestimated at all," he added.

Australian teenager Sam Konstas, who announced himself with twin Sheffield Shield centuries for New South Wales earlier this month, is in the reckoning to partner Usman Khawaja at the top in the five-match series.

"I think we're picking the best team for here and now, and if that does encompass a younger player, then we'll head down that direction," he said.

McDonald stated that if the selectors believe the 19-year-old is the best option, he will receive a Test debut, regardless of his lack of first-class experience.

"I've heard people commentating 'do you protect the player?' If they're ready, they're ready in our mind, and if Sam's capable and we feel as though is capable to fill that spot I don't think that the opponent should come into the equation."

Australia will host India for the Border Gavaskar Trophy, starting November 22 in Perth.

## Sivarajan, Sukant shine as India wins 24 medals at Japan Para Badminton International

PTI ■ TOKYO

Sivarajan Solaimalai and Sukant Kadam delivered standout performances, helping India win an impressive 24 medals at the Japan Para Badminton International on Sunday. India won six gold, nine silver and as many bronze medals in the tournament.

Sivarajan enjoyed a double victory, clinching gold in the men's singles SH6 class and partnering with Sudarsan Saravanakumar Muthusamy to win the top prize in men's

doubles. Sukant also excelled, taking gold in men's singles (SL4) and silver in men's doubles (SL3-SL4) with partner Dinesh Rajaiah. He triumphed over fellow Indian Tarun in a thrilling singles final, winning 21-12, 21-10, while Naveen Sivakumar and Surya Kant Yadav secured bronze medals.

In the doubles final, Sukant and Dinesh fought valiantly but fell short against compatriots Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav, losing 5-21, 22-20, 16-21 to take home silver.



"Winning gold in singles and silver in doubles is incredibly special," Sukant said in a release.

"I thank my coaches, support team, and the entire para-badminton community for their unwavering support.

This victory fuels my motivation to keep pushing boundaries." In other events, reigning Paralympic champion Kumar Nitesh claimed silver after a close match against Japan's Daisuke Fujihara, losing 16-21, 21-18, 19-21 in the SL3 finals.

In women's SU5, Manisha Ramdass captured gold by defeating Japan's Mamiko Toyoda 21-12, 21-18, while Neeraj settled for silver in the women's SL3 category after falling to Coraline Bergeron. Neeraj also finished second

in mixed doubles with Surya Kant Yadav in the SL3-SU5 category. In men's doubles SU5, Hardik Makkar and Ruthick Ragupati won gold, while Dev Rathi and Indonesia's Bartlomiej Mroz secured silver. Hardik and Ruthick also earned silver and bronze in men's singles SU5.

In the men's doubles WH1-WH2 category, Abu Hubaida and Prem Kumar Ale took home bronze, while Alpha James bagged silver in the women's singles WH2 category.

## Move over Messi-Ronaldo, new generation of soccer stars lining up to win Ballon d'Or



AP ■ MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)

No Lionel Messi. No Cristiano Ronaldo. When the Ballon d'Or is presented at a gala ceremony in Paris on Monday, it will feel like the start of a new era in soccer. There is also a sense of void now that one of sport's most engrossing rivalries is likely over.

"It's interesting that as it starts to come to an end, we are sort of saying, what's the next equivalent rivalry going to be," soccer author Jonathan Wilson told The Associated Press. "As if that kind of rivalry was a natural state. But, there's never been a rivalry like that before." Messi and Ronaldo won soccer's most prestigious individual award a combined 13 times over 16 years of unprecedented dominance. Neither has been nominated this year. Instead Real Madrid winger Vinicius Junior is the favourite to be crowned the world's best player and become the first winner born in this century. He underlined his credentials this week with a stunning Champions League hat-trick against Borussia Dortmund.

"Vinicius had an incredible season where he was a key player... He proved he's the best player in the world," Madrid teammate Lucas Vazquez said.

But, rather than Vinicius spearheading a new era of dominance, it seems likely the award will revert to a time before Messi and Ronaldo when multiple winners were relatively rare.

France great Zinedine Zidane, for instance, only won it once. The same goes for Ronaldinho, Rivaldo, Luis Figo and George Best. Originally limited to European players, it was never won by Pele or Diego Maradona.

Before Messi, the last player to win back-to-back awards was Dutch striker Marco van Basten in 1988 and '89. Messi won a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or last year after leading Argentina to triumph at the World Cup in 2022. Wilson, who wrote about the history of Argentinian soccer in his book "Angels With Dirty Faces," sees no obvious successor to the Barcelona great, now at Inter Miami. "Messi's been phenomenal for 17, 18 years," he said. "It's not a pure tallying process, but in terms of greatness over a protracted period, Messi is the greatest there has ever been by quite some margin. "I don't think there's anybody in the world now who has anything remotely close to that talent."

Such was the dominance of Messi and Ronaldo, not only

would Vinicius Junior become the first winner born in this century, but there has never even been a recipient born in the '90s.

Vinicius Junior, whose goals helped Madrid to a record-extending 15th European Cup last season, is part of a new generation of stars that are flourishing as Messi and Ronaldo reach the final stages of their careers. Kylian Mbappe, Erling Haaland, Jude Bellingham and Lamine Yamal make up a field of contenders who could challenge for years to come.

Manchester City midfielder Rodri is the second favourite to win this year and would become the first player born in the '90s to take the award. Mbappe, who has long been seen as the heir to Messi and Ronaldo as the world's best player, was born in 1998, meaning it's likely there will eventually be a winner from that decade even if Rodri misses out. The only other winners since Ronaldo won his first Ballon d'Or in 2008 were Luka Modric in 2018 and Karim Benzema in 2022. Both were born in the 1980s. The award was cancelled in 2020 when Robert Lewandowski was widely regarded as the best player that year. He was also born in the '80s. Neymar, born in 1992, came third on two occasions.

## Lewandowski and Yamal spoil Mbappé's first clasico as Barcelona routs Real Madrid 4-0

AP ■ BARCELONA

Robert Lewandowski scored twice and Lamine Yamal piled on to ruin Kylian Mbappé's first clasico as Barcelona routed Real Madrid 4-0.

The lopsided victory in Spain's capital ended the host's unbeaten run in La Liga at 42 games, one shy of Barcelona's record streak in 2017-18. Carlo Ancelotti's side suffered its first loss since Sept. 23 last year.

And what a loss it was. Lewandowski got the visitors going from a superb pass by Barcelona's latest youth talent Marc Casadó in the 54th minute and rose up to head in a fine header three minutes later to silence Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Yamal made it a rout in the 77th when the teenage phenom rifled a shot from an angle over goalkeeper Andriy Lunin. That goal made him the youngest scorer in a clasico at 17 years, 105 days, surpassing teammate Ansu Fati, who was about 250 days older in October 2020. Raphinha then broke free with Madrid completely unhinged and chipped Lunin in the 84th.

The win came three days after Barcelona thumped Bayern Munich 4-1 in the Champions League. It has outscored its last five opponents 21-2. "We came here to do just this," Yamal said. "We had lots of confidence and when we scored the second goal, we wanted to score a third, and then a fourth, as many goals as possible. To win 4-0 at this ground and beat Bayern 4-1, we showed that we are ready for anything."

It is an understatement that Mbappé had a frustrating first game against Barcelona in a white shirt. The France star was caught eight times offside by Barcelona's synchronized



back four and failed to beat second-choice goalkeeper Iñaki Peña one-on-one with his team down two goals.

"We knew that they played with a high line, and we just couldn't take advantage of it," Ancelotti said. "Sometimes (Mbappé) fell offside, but he had three or four chances to score and needed a better finishing touch."

Hansi Flick, meanwhile, had a night to remember in the first clasico for the German coach. Barcelona still has financial troubles that cast doubt over its future but its youthful team has made huge steps forward since Flick replaced Barcelona great Xavi Hernández in the summer. "Today we made a fantastic match and it is all about the team. Everyone gave it 100%," said Flick, who Ancelotti called "a gentleman" for telling his bench to cool it when they effusively celebrated the fourth goal near Madrid's dugout.

After opening a six-point lead over Madrid at the top of La Liga, it is no longer a foregone conclusion that with Mbappé on board Madrid will waltz to a second straight domestic title.

Casadó was one of five homegrown players that Flick put in his starting lineup, the same 11 from the Bayern win. Six players under 22 years old started for Barcelona, led by 17-year-olds Yamal and Pau Cubarsi.

Casadó had flashes of the flawless ball control of a Sergi Busquets as he helped compensate for Madrid's extra man in the midfield before he cued up the game-changing pass to play Lewandowski clear to slot home.

Yamal upstaged Mbappé this summer when Spain beat France en route to winning the European Championship, and he did it again. To top it off, he scored with his supposedly "not as good"

right foot before flashing his new braces decorated with Barcelona's colors for the cameras. Mbappé ensnared by offside trap Mbappé was ruled offside five times in the first half hour, as Barcelona pressed high. Vinicius Júnior, who featured in a fascinating duel with Cubarsi, missed a golden chance in the 21st when he shot past the post from close. "When they scored those back-to-back goals it took the energy out of us," Ancelotti said. "This is a complicated moment for us. It hurts to lose a game and especially after going 42 games unbeaten, but we shouldn't just throw everything away because this team will play better."

Peña was questioned if he was up to the task of replacing Marc-Andre ter Stegen, out long term with a knee injury. His strong performance, which included two stops to deny Mbappé, was his first

great game in goal for Barcelona.

"Our coach said that playing a high defensive line was non-negotiable," Peña said. "It is risky to play with such a high defense line, but the effort and work of the entire team is reflected in the offside traps we are creating." Raphinha's goal confirmed his massive step forward under Flick. The Brazil forward, who acted as Barcelona captain, has 10 goals in this campaign. Lewandowski's goals 16th and 17th overall for the Poland striker this season, taking his league-best tally to 14. He also hit the post. Mbappé, by comparison, has eight goals in all competitions. Ayoze strikes again Ayoze Pérez scored his seventh goal since joining Villarreal this campaign to help it win 2-1 at Valladolid and lift his team into third place.