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# Marital rape not a crime, Centre tells Supreme Court

**Government says punitive measures in place**

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Thursday filed an affidavit before the Supreme Court opposing petitions that have called for the criminalisation of marital rape in India.

The affidavit filed by the Union Home Ministry said that in a marriage, there is a continuing expectation to have reasonable sexual access from one's spouse. It clarified that such expectations do not entitle a husband to coerce his wife to have sex against her will.

However, it may be excessive and disproportionate to punish a man under anti-rape laws for such an act, the Centre said. The affidavit further highlighted that the parliament has already provided different remedies to protect a married woman's consent within marriage.

In the counter-affidavit filed through advocate AK Sharma, the Union Home Ministry backed the existing Indian rape law that carves out an exception for sexual relations between a husband and wife.



asserted that the issue is more of a social than a legal one, which has a direct bearing on society in general. While so, even if 'marital rape' is to be criminalised, it is not up to the Supreme Court to do so, the Centre argued. "The (issue) cannot be decided without proper consultation with all the stakeholders or taking the views of all the States into consideration ... the act colloquially referred to as 'marital rape' ought to be illegal and criminalised. The Central Government asserts that a woman's consent is not

obliterated by marriage, and its violation should result in penal consequences. However, the consequences of such violations within marriage differ from those outside it," the affidavit stated. It added that a breach of consent should be punished differently, depending on whether such an act occurs within or outside a marriage. These remedies include laws punishing cruelty to married women (as it was under Section 498A under the Indian Penal Code then), laws punishing acts against the

modesty of women, and remedies under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. The Bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud with Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is currently seized of the matter. Marital rape is excluded from the ambit of "rape" by way of Exception 2 to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). A similar provision is also present in the newly enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) which replaced the IPC on July 1 this year. In 2022, the

Delhi High Court delivered a split verdict on whether marital rape should be a criminal offence. The matter then reached the Supreme Court in September that year. "The sexual aspect is but one of many facets of the relationship between husband and wife, on which the bedrock of their marriage rests ... Given the nature of the marital institution in our socio-legal milieu, if the legislature is of the view that, for preservation of the marital institution, the impugned Exception should be retained, it is submitted that it would not be appropriate for this Hon'ble Court to strike down the Exception," the latest affidavit added.

The counter-affidavit was filed in response to a batch of petitions that have called for the criminalisation of marital rape. The Centre criticised the petitioners' approach of treating the institution of marriage as a private institution, terming this view unidimensional. The case of a married woman and her own husband cannot be treated in the exact same manner as other cases, it said.

# West Asia war hits Sensex

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

An escalation in the West Asia conflict had a massive impact on the Indian market on Thursday. The Sensex tanked 1,769 points to slide to a three-week low on Thursday as a spiralling triggered selling in oil, banking and auto shares, wiping out Rs 9.78 lakh crore investor money in a single day.

The NSE Nifty slumped 546.80 points or 2.12 per cent to 25,250.10 with 48 of its constituents ending lower. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 5,579.35 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Falling for the fourth day, the BSE Sensex tumbled 1,769.19 points or 2.10 per cent to settle at 82,497.10, its lowest closing level since September 11. During the day, it plummeted 1,832.27 points or 2.17 per cent to 82,434.02. As many as 29 Sensex scrips closed in the red while only one stock ended in the green.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, Asian Paints, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Titan, Adani Ports and HDFC Bank were the major laggards. JSW Steel emerged as the only gainer. A total of 2,881 stocks declined while 1,107 advanced and 88 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies dropped by around Rs 9.78 lakh crore to Rs



# Israeli hits Hezbollah in southern Lebanon

BEIRUT: An Israeli airstrike on an apartment in central Beirut killed seven Hezbollah-affiliated civilian first responders. Israel has been pounding areas of the country where the militant group has a strong presence since late September, but has rarely struck in the heart of the capital.

There was no warning before the strike late Wednesday, which hit an apartment in central Beirut not far from the United Nations headquarters, the prime minister's office and

parliament. Hezbollah's civil defence unit said seven of its members were killed. The Lebanese Red Cross, meanwhile, said an Israeli strike wounded four of its paramedics and killed a Lebanese army soldier as they were evacuating wounded people from the south. It said the convoy near the village of Taybeh, which was accompanied by Lebanese troops, was targeted Thursday despite coordinating its movements with UN peacekeepers.

4,65,07,685.08 crore (USD 5.54 trillion). Continuous foreign fund outflows and rising crude oil prices dented investors' sentiment, analysts said. "The domestic market took a sharp downturn following Iran's launch of ballistic missiles at Israel, sparking fears of retaliation and escalation in the war," Vinod

Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. "New SEBI regulations for the F&O segment have raised concerns about reduced trading volumes in the broader market. Lastly, with attractive valuations in China, FIIs have redirected their funds, adding pressure on Indian stocks," Nair added.

# Delhi Police summons Elvish Yadav, Bharti

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has summoned YouTuber Elvish Yadav, comedian Bharti Singh and three others in an alleged app-based scam involving a fraud of Rs 500 crore, an officer said on Thursday.

Police received over 500 complaints alleging that many social media influencers and YouTubers promoted the HIBOX mobile application on their pages and lured people into investing through the app, the officer added. The main accused in the scam, Sivaram (30), a resident of Chennai, has been arrested, police said. As per the complaint, social media influencers and YouTubers including Saurov Joshi, Abhishek Malhan, Purav Jha, Elvish Yadav, Bharti Singh, Harsh Limbachiya, Lakshay Choudhary, Adarsh Singh, Amit, and Dilraj Singh Rawat promoted the application and lured people into investing through the app.

# Drug mastermind has Congress link, says BJP



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Tushar Goyal, the mastermind behind Delhi's biggest drug bust worth over Rs 5,640 crore allegedly has Congress connections. Sources in Delhi Police's Special Cell said that he admitted to having held office in the Congress's IT Cell.

Later, a war of words broke out between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress. The BJP claimed that the kingpin arrested in the case of seizure of drugs worth Rs 5,600 crore is the chairman of the Delhi Youth Congress' RTI cell. It asked if the money was brought in for the October 5 Haryana elections while a claim refuted by the opposition party as baseless.

According to sources, Goyal claimed during interrogation that he has been the chairman of the RTI cell of Delhi Pradesh Congress till 2022, Delhi Police sources said. Photos of the accused with many Congress leaders have also surfaced.

Delhi police special cell has arrested Goyal, the main accused following the recovery of more than 500 kg of cocaine and 40 kg of hydroponic marijuana worth over Rs 5,600 crore in a raid conducted in south Delhi on Wednesday.

Later, a war of words erupted between BJP and Congress on this issue. "Drugs worth Rs 5,600 crore have been recovered from Delhi. The main accused in this case is Tushar Goyal, who is the chief of the RTI cell of the Indian Youth Congress," BJP spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said addressing a press conference in the national capital on Thursday.

Trivedi sought explanation from the Congress, questioning if the party used drug money in its election campaign and if its association with Goyal extended to business as well. Was there an arrangement between the drug dealers and the Congress that they will be given a free run in Haryana if the party comes to power, he asked, alleging that the neighbouring state of Punjab is already in the grip of drugs.

# Revolving door in Haryana, Tanwar back in Congress

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ MAHENDRAGARH (HARYANA)/ NEW DELHI

The high-voltage campaign for a cut throat finish in Haryana for the October 5 Assembly polls came to an end on Thursday evening. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) suffered a major blow as its senior leader and former Member of Parliament Ashok Tanwar, who was the party's candidate from Sirsa for the Lok Sabha elections a few months ago, re-joined Congress at a rally of Rahul Gandhi in Mahendragarh district in Haryana on Thursday. Interestingly, shortly before joining the grand old party, the former Sirsa MP, who represented it as a Congress member, was campaigning for the BJP candidate in Safidon Assembly constituency. As Rahul Gandhi finished his speech, an announcement was made from the stage asking the audience to wait for a few minutes. To their surprise Tanwar walked on to the stage and greeted Rahul.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with former BJP leader Ashok Tanwar as the latter joins Congress during a public meeting ahead of Haryana Assembly elections, in Mahendragarh district. PTI

Tanwar, a former Haryana Congress president, shook hands with Rahul and greeted senior party leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Tanwar, who was considered close to Rahul and had left the Congress in 2019 following differences with senior party leader former Hooda and in the belief he had his stint with Trinamool Congress (TMC) as well as Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Leading the campaign for BJP Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the Congress stands for the "guarantee of corruption, casteism,

communalism and nepotism". The PM exhorted people to vote for the BJP, saying it is important that they elect a government which strengthens India at a time when the entire world is looking at the country with hope and expectations. In his last speech for the campaign in Haryana, Rahul said his party will not let the "hatred" being spread by the BJP on the basis of religion, language, and caste win and appealed to the people of Haryana to oust the ruling party in the Assembly polls. More than two crore voters are eligible to exercise their franchise in Haryana for 90 assembly seats. The key parties in fray are BJP, Congress, AAP, Indian National Lok Da-Bahujan Samaj Party (INLD-BSP) and Jannayak Janta Party-Azad Samaj Party. While BJP focused its election campaign on the works and performance of the "double-engine" government, while it targeted the Congress on reservation, corruption, appeasement and dynastic politics, Congress wooed by announcing seven guarantees, including the promises of a legal guarantee for MSP, a caste survey, and Rs 2,000 per month to women, if voted to power. On the last day of campaigning, Congress's Rahul Gandhi and Bhupinder Singh Hooda, BJP's Yogi Adityanath and Nayab Singh Saini, JJP's Dushyant Chautala and INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala were among the prominent leaders who canvassed for their respective parties. AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal also campaigned in Haryana for his party.



# Delhi's traffic needs divine intervention

**Navratri begins, and so does road congestion**

BY RAJESH KUMAR

From Mehrauli-Badarpur road to Vikas Marg and Jhandewalan, Najafgarh to Peeragarhi, commuters in Delhi had harrowing experiences during the peak hours on the first day of the Navratri festival in the national Capital. However, according to frequent road users, this traffic stagnation is a routine affair. Wrecked roads, potholes, breakdown of vehicles, high volume of traffic and poor maintenance of major stretches result in massive jams. On Thursday, the first day of the Navratri festivities, heavy traffic exacerbated congestion on all roads leading to prominent

temples including Jhandewalan, Kalkaji, Maa Katyani Devi mandir in the national capital. The situation worsens each year as according to experts, while road size and capacity remains the same, the number of vehicles has grown exponentially. The vehicle movement was also badly affected on Vikas Marg in the carriageway from Karkari Mor towards Preet Vihar and vice-versa, due to ongoing work being carried out by DJB at Old Pankha Road and Old Pankha Road in both the carriageways due to ongoing work being carried out by DJB at Old Pankha Road. Commuters had a harrowing



Photo: Ranjan Dimri

experience on GTK Road on both the carriageways from Jahangirpuri to Azadpur flyover as the entire traffic came to standstill for two-three hours due to heavy

vehicles movement in Azadpur Mandi. According to a traffic police advisory, traffic was affected on Maa Anandmai Marg in the carriageway from ESI

Hospital towards Govind Puri due to breakdown of a bus at Crown Plaza Red Light. Traffic was affected on Ring Road in the carriageway from DND

towards Ashram Chowk due to breakdown of a water tanker on Maharani Bagh Flyover. A loaded truck near Peeragarhi flyover broke down which led to massive jam on the Main Outer Ring Road in the carriageway from Madhuban Chowk towards Peeragarhi. Traffic was also affected on Rohtak Road in the carriageway from Nangloi towards Tikri Border and vice versa due to potholes and water logging. There was a traffic jam on the SSN Marg in the carriageway from Satbari towards Mehrauli due to drain work being carried out by civic agency. Commuters were advised to plan their journey accordingly. "Traffic

remained affected on Dwarka Palam Road in the carriageway from Palam Flyover towards IOC Red light due to breakdown of a bus on Palam flyover. Kindly plan your journey accordingly. Traffic was affected on Mathura Road in the carriageway from Badarpur towards Sarita Vihar due to breakdown of a truck near Aali Village", traffic police advisory stated. According to traffic police, breakdown of vehicles during peak hours on major roads is also an issue that leads to traffic jams. Roads leading to the Jhandewalan temple and Shri Adhya Katyayani Shaktipeeth temple witnessed heavy traffic flow on the first day of Navratri festival.



# Immersion ghats undergo intensive review: Safety, barricading, and lighting prioritized

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

In light of the upcoming Durga Puja festivities, an extensive inspection of key river ghats used for idol immersion was carried out by the Deputy Commissioner Ananya Mittal, along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kishore Kaushal. They were accompanied by City Superintendent of Police Rishabh Garg, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Dhalbhum Shatabdi Majumdar, along with officials from the municipal bodies, BDO Jamshedpur, Jusco representatives, and members of the local Durga Puja Committees. This inspection was aimed at ensuring the safety and preparedness of these vital locations during one of

the city's most significant festivals.

During the inspection, the officials visited several prominent ghats, including Swarn Rekha Ghat, Pandey Ghat, Naya Pul Ghat, Do Muhani Ghat, Sub Station Ghat, Sati Ghat, and Beli Bodhanwala Ghat.

One of the key concerns highlighted during the inspection was the condition of the access roads leading to the ghats. Several access points were found to be in need of urgent repairs to facilitate smooth movement for both devotees and immersion vehicles. The District Magistrate instructed the municipal body and Tata Steel UISL officials present to ensure that all necessary repairs are completed promptly.

Mittal also issued strict guidelines for barricading the ghats to manage crowd control effectively. "Proper barricading will ensure that devotees do not enter unsafe areas, particularly near the



lines for barricading the ghats to manage crowd control effectively. "Proper barricading will ensure that devotees do not enter unsafe areas, particularly near the

management, with particular attention to be given to peak times during the immersion.

Ensuring cleanliness at the immersion ghats was another major focus during the inspection. The District Magistrate directed the municipal bodies and Jusco to carry out timely cleaning of the ghats before and after the immersion ceremonies. He pointed out that the cleanliness of the ghats is not only important for maintaining hygiene but also for ensuring a pleasant experience for devotees who come to participate in the immersion rituals.

Mittal also highlighted the need for adequate electrification at all immersion sites, especially in the evenings when the majority of the immersions take place. He

stated that sufficient lighting will be essential for both safety and convenience. "Proper lighting is crucial to prevent accidents and maintain a sense of order during the immersion process," he said, adding that officials should make sure all electrical arrangements are completed well in advance of the festival.

Kaushal, the SSP, assured that sufficient police personnel would be deployed at each immersion site to maintain peace and prevent any untoward incidents. "A robust security plan will be in place, with officers stationed at strategic points to monitor the crowd and ensure that no one violates the safety protocols," he mentioned.

He also informed that drone cameras and videography would

be used to monitor the proceedings from above, providing real-time visuals of the crowd and traffic movements. The use of such technology will help in crowd control and ensure a quick response to any emergency situation.

The District Magistrate called for close cooperation between the district administration, police, and the local Durga Puja Committees. He requested that all committees adhere strictly to the scheduled time for immersions to ensure that there is no disruption in maintaining law and order. "Punctuality in the immersion schedule will allow the administration to manage the large crowds more effectively, ensuring that the festival is celebrated smoothly," Mittal added.

## NML felicitated Safai Mitras and Associate Members on Swachh Bharat Diwas

PNS : RANCHI

On October 2, 2024, Gandhi Jayanti and the 10th anniversary of Swachh Bharat Diwas was celebrated at NTPC Coal Mining/NTPC Mining Limited HQ in Ranchi.

On the occasion, Animesh Jain, Chief Executive Officer of NTPC Mining Limited and Regional Executive Director (Coal Mining), in the august presence of Rajnish Rastogi, CGM (HR) & other senior officials, administered the Swachhata Pledge to our dedicated contractual workers, including housekeeping staff, chauffeurs, Indian Coffee House employees,



security personnel, and office assistants etc. He said Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a transformative initiative aimed at fostering a cleaner nation, which is a crucial step towards a developed Bharat.

Following this, Jain felicitated Safai Mitras (Housekeeping Staff) and associate members, recognizing their exemplary efforts in maintaining cleanliness. In his address, Jain emphasized the vital role of

housekeeping staff, whose contributions often go unnoticed. He remarked, "Today, we gather to celebrate and acknowledge the invaluable work of those who tirelessly keep our communities clean and healthy. It is essential that we honor them."

The day, October 2 coincides with the launch of Special Campaign 4.0, which aimed at intensifying the efforts of the Swachh Bharat Mission by focusing on cleanliness and sanitation in various public spaces. In this context, various activities on cleanliness are planned for implementation during Special Campaign 4.0 to promote cleanliness and hygiene.

## Revamped Sreeleathers Sakchi to offer enhanced shopping experience

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

The iconic Sreeleathers showroom in Sakchi Bazaar, is set to reopen its doors on October 4, after an extensive renovation, promising customers a more modern and comfortable shopping experience. This historic store, originally established in 1952 by visionary freedom fighter and founder Suresh Chandra Dey, has been a cornerstone of Sakchi's legacy. Speaking at a press conference in Sakchi, Shubhashis Dey, grandson of Suresh Chandra Dey, highlighted the showroom's transformation into an ultra-modern, air-conditioned space. "Shopping at our renovated showroom will be a pleasant experience, with new designs and an expanded range of products to cater to the needs of all age groups," he said. The showroom's re-inauguration is seen as a continuation of the family's commitment to the values set by Suresh Chandra Dey, whose entrepreneurial vision has taken Sreeleathers from a single outlet in Sakchi to a trusted brand across India and internationally. Thousands of families have gained employment through Sreeleathers, and the brand's enduring success is a testament to his legacy. Late Suresh Chandra Dey's third son, Late Ashish Dey, also played a pivotal role in growing the brand. Today, his sons, Shubhashis Dey and Sayon Dey, are dedicated to carrying forward the family legacy, staying true to the principles of their ancestors while ushering in modern innovations. In light of the upcoming Durga Puja festival, the showroom will offer a wide array of new products, including stylish footwear such as sandals, shoes, sports shoes, belts, purses, ladies' handbags, and school bags. Shubhashis Dey emphasized that the range of products available has significantly expanded to meet diverse customer demands. The press conference was also attended by Sayon Dey, Munna Agarwal, and Arun Banerjee, who collectively expressed excitement about the re-inauguration of the showroom, a landmark for the Sreeleathers brand. With this revamped showroom, Sreeleathers is set to offer customers not just quality products, but an elevated shopping experience that reflects the brand's enduring commitment to excellence.

## Bokaro pays tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri

R SHARMA : BOKARO

The birth anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri were commemorated with great reverence and ceremony today in Bokaro. Local dignitaries, including Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan, Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav, and BSL - DIC B.K. Tiwari, along with other prominent officials and community leaders, gathered at the respective statues of the two national leaders to pay their respects.

At Gandhi Chowk, the atmosphere was charged with a sense of unity as children performed cultural programs and a Sarva Dharma Sabha emphasized Gandhi's message of religious harmony. The floral tributes offered to both leaders signified a deep respect for their ideals of truth, non-violence, and simplicity—values that continue to resonate in modern India.

Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav's speech reminded the audience of Gandhi's relentless pursuit of cleanliness and non-violence while the presence of top Bokaro Steel Limited (BSL) officials underscored the lasting influence of both Gandhi and Shastri on the region's leadership. B.K.



Tiwari's reflection on Gandhi's advocacy for equality highlighted the enduring relevance of his vision, particularly in fostering societal harmony.

The tribute at Lal Bahadur Shastri's statue served to reinforce his legacy of simplicity and dedication to public service, inspiring citizens and officials alike to carry forward the principles he stood for.

As Bokaro's key administrative and community figures gathered for this commemoration, the focus on

cleanliness, equality, and national unity was clear. The events not only paid homage to two towering figures but also served as a call to action—reminding the community to live by their values in daily life, from promoting cleanliness to fostering unity in diversity.

These celebrations underline the importance of remembering and practicing the lessons taught by Gandhi and Shastri, ensuring that their legacies remain alive in the hearts and actions of the people of Bokaro.

## The Concept of Kalash as Explained by Shree Guru Rajan Ji



BY GAURA GUPTA

Representing the womb (creation) and the energy for life, Kalash is an important part of the Hindu culture.

The circular base of the Kalash signifies the womb, and its narrow neck represents the birth canal. Thus, finding Kalash as a jar of resources and life bestowing energy. Beautifully decorated during rituals (weddings, childbirth, pujas), topped with a coconut and mango leaves, Kalash is revered as a symbol of divine feminine energy and the creative force. Filled with water, grains, and other items that signify good energy, it denotes prosperity and fertility.

Samudra Manthan was the churning of the ocean by the Asuras and Devas in search of Amrit, the elixir of life. In the end, they obtained Amrit in a Kalash, making the Kalash a symbol of immortality as it held the divine nectar.

Asuras and Devas in pursuit of Amrit (the elixir of

life) churned the ocean (samudra manthan). Ultimately, they obtained the Amrit in a Kalash, which became a symbol of immortality as it contained the divine nectar.

It is believed that the water in Kalash is akin to the primal water from which the creator formed the entire universe.

When the Kalash is filled with water or rice, it is known as Purna Kumba. It is a representation of our inert bodies, possessing the divine life force. Amongst Shankh, Chakra and Jalouka, Anrit containing Kalash is held in one of the four arms of Lord Dhanvantari. As per Vasthu Shastra, when placed facing the North, Kalash invokes abundance, positivity, and wisdom. The Kalash is used to create a seat for invoked deities during puja rituals. Filled with water, and adorned with mango or betel vine leaves that are considered the deity's seat, Kalash is an integral part of the Hindu culture. Kalash is traditionally made from soil, brass, or copper, signifying the earth element (prithvi tattva). Our body is likened to this pot of soil, as it is nourished by food that comes from the earth through plants. Associating the kalash with our physical body as we nourish ourselves with the food that comes of soil (the Earth element) held by the kalash, we fill the pot with water, and grains that symbolize the essential life sustaining energy, wherein water represents

prana : Satapath Brahmana: 'apo vai pranah,' explaining 'water is life-force'. Therefore, we worship the prana, or life-force, within our body.

Originating from Mahaprana, the first point of existence with Paramatma (the Almighty), explained as 'pure existence' in the Prashnopanishad (6:4), "sa pranam asrujatah..." , consciousness initially formulates as prana of the physical body.

Understanding the symbolic meaning of the water contained in the kalasa from a sacred place (tirtha jal), as though rajasic in nature, prana should be adequately influenced by sattva guna and it should essentially tread towards Mahaprana, just like a river flows toward the ocean. This exercise reverses the Jal devta and is called Varuna puja.

A betel nut is kept in the kalash meant for puja ritual that enriches the sattva and raja components in the water of the kalash. Thus, elevating the capacity of the water to emit manifest principle energy of the invoked deity. The betel nut contains particles associated with absolute earth element that are useful in binding sattva particle.

The coconut that is placed atop the kalash is quite significant as it signifies the human head. Cerebral fluid is symbolized by the water inside the coconut, while the brain matter is represented by the coconut's pulp. The stem sig-

nifying the spine that acts as a link between the conscious world and the subconscious mind, through coconut, we invoke cranial strength.

A swastika drawn upon the pot denotes fortune and abundance. Our hands when placed crossed on our chest, a swastika is formed. This position of our retrained hands denotes our conduct that doesn't barge into the ambit of others.

Offering durba that signifies effortless growth, just as durba abundantly grows, we invoke similar energy for ourselves.

Flowers that we offer, signify our blooming mind and the fruits we place are the result of our actions. The red cloth tied around the kalash is complete surrender to the cosmic energy that sustains our life, signifying faith and security.

The Kalash can be associated with the five elements, or Pancha Bhootas. The metal pot at the base symbolizes Prithvi, or Earth. The center of the Kalash represents the water element, while the neck corresponds to Agni, or fire. The vessel's opening signifies Vayu, or Air. The coconut and mango leaves placed on top represent Akasha, or the ether element.

FOR A DETAILED KUNDLI READING AND ABOUT TREADING TOWARDS ACHIEVING YOUR GOALS, CONTACT SHRI GURU RAJAN JI AT : 9266514545, 9266524545

## Rotary Club of Bokaro Steel City launches Tailoring and Sewing Centers to Empower Rural Women

PNS : BOKARO

In a significant move to empower rural women, the Rotary Club of Bokaro Steel City inaugurated two tailoring and sewing training centers under the Saheli Center Project. The initiative aims to equip women with essential skills to become financially independent and create a strong identity in society.

The "Manju Tailoring and Sewing Training Center" was established in Kendadih village, while the "Aarti Tailoring and Sewing Training Center" was set up in Telmatia village. Aarti, who heads the Telmatia center, assured Rotary members that around 20 rural women would receive training at the center three days a week for two hours each session. The training is designed to economically empower these women, providing them with the tools to stand on their own feet.

Rotarian Anil Tripathy played a pivotal role in bringing this project to life, dedicating himself to establishing the centers and motivating the women involved. His efforts were instrumental in the success of the initiative.

Speaking on the occasion, Rotary Club President Rotarian Mahesh Kumar Gupta said, "This is just the beginning of our efforts to make rural women self-reliant. Our goal is to inspire them towards independence, and we will continue working for the welfare of society and humanity in the future."



## Congress may find it relaxing for Daltonganj seat

PNS : DALTONGANJ

If there is one assembly constituency here in Palamu where the Congress is not to labour hard to find a candidate, it's undoubtedly Daltonganj vidhan saba seat where the former minister and one term MLA K N Tripathy is taller among others say his critics, rivals, admirers and political analysts.

Tripathy knows when and how to play his political card. He recently conducted his Partigya Yatra which was a great success.

This Yatra was at such a time when the BJP had pumped in its fleet of high profile leaders for the Parivartan Yatra.

Tripathy's Partigya Yatra and the BJP's Parivartan Yatra were no match to each



Former minister K N Tripathy at the Kalash Yatra today with a huge following of the faithful photo by PNS

other as for the Parivartan Yatra the BJP had all the money and men while for Partigya Yatra Tripathy had dedicated and committed grass root workers.

BJP held a grand show at the Shivaji Maidan. Tripathy did a magnificent show at the same Shivaji Maidan. There was a party on one side and there was a leader on the

other side.

Tripathy has his political worries. Since 2014 he had his electoral misses than any electoral hit. He lost in 2014 vidhan saba election. He 'threw away his victory' in 2019.

In 2024 he went to Chatra lok saba election and there he met with what many of his supporters had predicted for him much ahead of the poll results. He couldn't win Chatra lok saba seat. There is a very strong indication that BJP will rely again on his two term MLA Alok Chourasia from the Daltonganj assembly constituency.

Speaking to this correspondent today BJP MLA Alok Chourasia said "I know many are politically over-busy. But people know who they like. It's me."

## DIC, Rourkela Steel Plant bags 'Inspirational Corporate Leader' award

PNS : BOKARO



PNS : BOKARO

In a prestigious event, the Governor of Odisha, Raghubar Das, presented the 'Inspirational Corporate Leader-2024' award to Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge of SAIL's Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP). The ceremony took place during the 13th anniversary celebration of the renowned magazine Interview Times. The event saw the presence of Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera, MP of Jajpur, as the Guest of Honour, while Dr. BK Das, Director General of DRDO, delivered the keynote address. Under

DIC Bhowmick's visionary leadership, RSP has experienced remarkable strides in both operational excellence and sustainability. His leadership has spearheaded numerous innovative projects, contributing to the plant's growth and sustainability initiatives. With a strong focus on corporate social responsibility, Bhowmick has earned widespread recognition from both corporate and government sectors. This prestigious award serves as a testament to his inspiring leadership and commitment to driving growth, innovation, and inclusivity in the industrial landscape.

## Bokaro MLA performs Durga Puja rituals

PNS : BOKARO

On the auspicious occasion of Shardiya Navratri, Bokaro MLA Biranchi Narayan, along with his wife Neena Narayan, performed the rituals of Durga Puja at their residence. The couple offered prayers and worshipped Goddess Durga with a pure heart, devotion, and traditional practices, beginning with the establishment of the sacred Kalash.

MLA Biranchi Narayan prayed to Goddess Durga for peace, prosperity, and happiness in the lives of all people. The celebration marked the reverence and devotion towards the nine divine forms of Maa Durga.





# CM inaugurates Transport Nagar phase 1, lays foundation of phase 2

*Transport Nagar will ease traffic and transportation, Transport business will get benefitted: CM*

PNS : RANCHI

Today Ranchi is getting a well-equipped and organized Transport Nagar. Transport Nagar will make the traffic and transport system smooth and strong, while transport business will get momentum," said Chief Minister Hemant Soren in his address while inaugurating Phase-1 and laying the foundation stone of Phase-2 of the newly constructed Transport Nagar by the Urban Development and Housing Department at Sukurhutu in Ranchi.

He said that this will be the permanent place for transport businessmen, where they will get all the facilities related to business.

The Chief Minister said that the facilities in Transport Nagar will be expanded according to the

need and requirement in the coming days. Today the inauguration of Phase One of Transport Nagar was completed. At present, many facilities related to transport business have been made available here and many modern facilities are to be made available here in Phase-2 as well.

The Chief Minister said that Transport Nagar will provide a lot of convenience to the common citizens. This will provide relief from the traffic jam in the city to a great extent. The traffic system will be smooth. Heavy vehicles will not come to the city, which will ease the movement on the roads. At the same time, activities related to transport business including parking of heavy goods vehicles, loading-unloading, accommodation of drivers will be possible at one place.



Chief Minister Hemant Soren inaugurates the newly constructed Transport Nagar Phase-1 and laid the foundation stone of the construction work of phase 2 at Sukurhutu in Ranchi on Thursday. Rajya Sabha MP Mahua Majhi and Sports Minister Hafizul Hassan and others are also seen in the picture. PNS

The Chief Minister said that Transport Nagar will encourage many other activities in this area. This will expand the city. Urban

activities will also increase rapidly here. Business will gain momentum. New employment opportunities will be created. Overall,



Transport Nagar will give a new dimension to development. Minister Hafizul Hasan, Rajya Sabha MP Mahua

Maji, Principal Secretary Sunil Kumar, Director SUDA Amit Kumar, Deputy Commissioner Manjunath Bhajantri,

Municipal Commissioner of Ranchi Sandeep Singh and other officials were present on this occasion.

Meanwhile, a delegation led by Maulana Ahmed Wali Faisal Rahmani, Secretary of Imarat-e-Shariah, Bihar-Jharkhand and Odisha's Ameer-e-Shariah-cum-All India Muslim Personal Law Board met CM Hemant Soren today. It apprised the Chief Minister of his sentiments regarding the Waqf Amendment Bill. The delegation that met the CM in the presence of Minister Irfan Ansari and State Congress President Keshav Mahato Kamlesh included MP and member of the Joint Parliamentary Committee constituted for the Waqf Amendment Bill, Dr. Nasir Hussain and Maulana Muhibullah Nadvi, Minnat Rahmani, Qazi Mohammad Anjar Alam Qasmi, Maulana Mufti Anwar Qasmi, Maulana Tahjibul Hasan, Fahad Rahmani, Ehtesham Rahmani and Mufti Shahabuddin.

## HC FIAT TO DEPLOY ADDITIONAL WOMEN SECURITY PERSONNEL DURING PUJA



PNS : RANCHI

A public interest litigation (PIL) filed raising the issue of increase of crime against women and minor girls including school children in different districts of Jharkhand was heard in the Jharkhand High Court on Thursday. During the hear-

ing, the court directed the state government to monitor major places with CCTV cameras, promote helpline numbers for emergency help to women through advertisements in local TV channels and newspapers and repair street lights at all places.

At the same time, the court has directed the gov-

## Rs 50 lakh fine in cheque bounce case

Ranchi Civil Court has imposed a fine of Rs 50 lakh on Rajan Bhardwaj, a resident of Pandra, after finding him guilty in a cheque bounce case. The court has also sentenced Rajan to one year imprisonment. A court of Judicial Magistrate of Civil Court has given this verdict. A cheque bounce case was filed against Rajan on 3 May 2019. Manoranjan Jha had filed a cheque bounce case against Rajan.

ernment to appoint additional women security forces around the Puja pandals and extend the operating time of pink buses regarding Durga Puja. Now the High Court will hear this PIL on November 18. High Court woman advocate Bharti Kaushal has filed a PIL in this regard. Advocate Gaurav Kumar presented his

side in this case on behalf of the state government. A division bench of High Court Chief Justice and Justice Deepak Roshan is hearing this case. Meanwhile in other development, the hearing in the High Court on the order of charge framing by the trial court in the sexual harassment case against Sunil

Tiwari, a close aide of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Babul Marandi and his press advisor, has been completed.

After which the court has reserved its decision. Sunil Tiwari's petition was heard in the court of High Court Judge Justice Sanjay Kumar Dwivedi. Advocates Prashant Pallav and Parth Jalan presented their case on his behalf. On Thursday, the final debate took place from both sides in this case. Let us tell you that a girl from Khunti has accused Sunil Tiwari of raping and abusing her using casteist words. The girl lodged an FIR at Argona police station in Ranchi on 16 August 2021. The entire incident has been mentioned sequentially in the FIR.

## RMC gears up for Durga Puja, officials issue various instructions



PNS : RANCHI

In view of Durgotsav, under the chairmanship of Ranchi Municipal Corporation Additional Administrators Sanjay Kumar and Filvius Barla conducted a meeting and issued necessary guidelines to the entire team of the corporation to prepare a special strategy to provide better facilities to the Puja committees and devotees of the City on Thursday.

The Additional Administrator said that this year Durga Puja is being celebrated in a grand manner in Ranchi Municipal Corporation area and directed all the officers to visit the entire area regularly and to take care of any lack of services from the corporation. The senior official also stated that about 160 puja pandals are being organised in 53 wards under the corporation area, so special cleanliness campaigns should be run in all the pandal premises, its surroundings and connecting paths.

Keeping in mind that all the pandals under the corporation area are clean and beautiful, cleaning work should be done by the RMC team during day and night time (three shifts), under

which sweeping, garbage collection, cleaning of drains, grass cutting, spraying of bleaching powder, fogging will be ensured on time. Apart from this, open drains need to be marked and also covered with slabs. The official also directed the concerned zonal supervisor to provide stone dust as per the requirement in all the pandals.

Kumar directed the officials of the electricity department to repair all the faulty street lights in the City as soon as possible and to make special lighting arrangements at the black spots of various areas. Kumar also said the department needs to ensure that there are no complaints of faulty street lights during Durga Puja. The official also instructed that for this, a special team should be formed and work should be done in coordination on the connecting routes, apart from the main roads. The Additional Administrator directed to make arrangements for water tankers and mobile toilets at various places in the pandal premises and main roads, keeping in view the convenience of the devotees. Apart from this, instruction for free city bus

service to be run on various routes for the devotees coming from far-off places and for this all routes should be decided. The senior official also stated that all the shelter homes under the corporation area should remain open 24 hours for the devotees to rest.

The official also directed that keeping in view the conservation of water bodies, the immersion kund should be marked and surrounded with a ribbon for idol immersion. With the same promptness with which the corporation worked last year, it should be ensured that the immersion is done this year as well by establishing coordination with the Durga Puja committees.

It was also decided that Ranchi Municipal Corporation Connect Center will be active 24 hours and common people as well as Puja committees can register their complaints by contacting on the number 1800 570 1235.

In the meeting Deputy Administrator Gautam Prasad Sahu, all assistant administrators, all city managers, all city campaign managers, zonal supervisors, ward supervisors and other workers were present.

## ROs, AROs get refresher training for Assembly polls



PNS : RANCHI

Under the guidance of Chief Electoral Officer Shri K. Ravi Kumar, those officials of various assembly constituencies of the state who had completed their training last month for the upcoming assembly elections but had scored low marks in the examination conducted during the training. Election Commission of India

organized a 2-day refresher training for them through online medium in the Election House. In this training program, the trainers of the Commission provided training on various topics related to conducting elections to the officials associated with the elections of Jharkhand as well as Maharashtra.

On this occasion, the national level trainers of the Election Commission of India gave point-wise training to the officials related to the election about their duties and rights during the election through online medium. Along with this, information related to compliance of the Commission's guidelines in conducting peaceful and error-free elections was also provided.

All the officials who had scored less marks in the past were present in the training session, while Assistant Chief Electoral Officer Dev Das Dutta, Junior Election Officer Sunil Kumar, System Analyst S.N. Jameel and other officials were also present from the Chief Electoral Office to assist in the training of the officials.



Nepali devotees during Kalash Sthapana on the first day of Navaratri festival at JAP 1 Doranda in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

## 5 Maoists, including Zonal Commander Ranthu Oraon, arrested

PNS : RANCHI

Five Maoists including CPI Maoist organization's zonal commander Ranthu Oraon, involved in the killing of 16 policemen, have been arrested. Gumla district police have taken this action. Ranchi Range DIG Anup Birathre and Gumla SP Shambhu Singh gave this information in a press conference on Thursday at Gumla SP office. The Maoists who have been arrested include zonal commander Ranthu Oraon, who has a reward of Rs 5 lakh, Jaishankar Mahato, Rohit Oraon, Raju Ahir and Sulendra Munda. One carbine, three rifles, three country-made pistols, one gun and 137 rounds of bullets were recovered from them. All these Naxalites have been arrested from Anjan forest of Gumla police station area.

Ranthu Oraon was active in Gumla district for the last two decades and has been involved in all the Naxal incidents that took place in this area. So far he has been involved in a total of 77 Naxal incidents. These include 62 cases in Gumla district, 10 in Lohardaga district and five in Latehar. Oraon on June 26, 2007 attacked the police force in Gumla's Raidih police station area, in which two policemen were martyred, he October 21, 2010 attacked the police force in Gumla's Raidih police station area, in which one policeman was martyred and the rifle and bullets were snatched, he March 13, 2013 fired indiscriminately on the police forces in Gumla's Kurumgarh police station area, in which one policeman was martyred and two soldiers were seriously injured and he April 7, 2013 fired on a patrolling vehicle in Gumla's Chainpur police station area, in which five policemen were martyred.



DIG Anup Birathre and senior officials showing arrested Maoists and weapons during a press conference in Gumla on Thursday. PNS

## Marandi terms Parivartan Yatra a huge success

PNS : RANCHI

BJP state president Babul Marandi on Thursday termed the party's Parivartan yatra which was flagged off by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and concluded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a huge success. Marandi claimed people turned out at the yatra and attended the meetings in huge numbers despite the heavy rains and inclement weather.

The State President said that the BJP's Parivartan Yatra concluded in Hazaribagh on 2 October. Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to the closing ceremony. The Parivartan Yatra was inaugurated by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on 20 September. During the yatra, the country's Defense Minister, Health Minister and BJP National President, Chief Ministers of many states and Union Ministers participated in it. All the major leaders of the country participated in it. Gave strength and strength to the yatra.

Marandi said that the slogan given in the yatra was, 'Na kahenge na sahege, badal kar rahenge'. This went on for a long time. This slogan will continue in the future as well. Another slogan given in this was 'Hemant Soren jawab do, 5



State BJP President Babul Marandi addresses media persons at the party office in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

saal ka hisaab do'. Union Home Minister Amit Shah kicked off BJP Parivartan yatra on September 20 from Bhognadih the birthplace of Veer Shaheed Sidhu Kanhu who led the Santhal revolt in 1855. The yatra, led by state BJP president and former chief minister Babul Marandi, will cover a distance of 5400 kms, passing through more than 200 blocks in the entire state across all 81 assembly segments. Marandi said that I have written many letters to the Chief Minister regarding the corruption and scams in the state. The government was already warned that such irregularities are hap-

pening. Save yourself from this and save the state as well.

The state president said that many issues will be discussed in the account of 5 years. Marandi said that he had written a letter to the Chief Minister on many issues. Illegal excavation and illegal transportation of stone continued in Sahibganj. Transportation continued from illegal ghats as well. Transportation was also done at night through water. There was information that an accident could happen here anytime. I wrote a letter to the state government and the Chief Minister regarding this. The Chief Minister did not take

cognizance of the letter. The vehicle accident occurred about 1 to 1.5 years after writing the letter. When the investigation was done, it was found that there was a stone scam worth thousands of crores of rupees in Sahibganj. The investigation is still going on. There are cases against many people.

Marandi said that there is also a case of coal theft. Coal theft broke all records and set a new record during the tenure of Hemant Soren. Coal theft happened under the protection of the government. BJP had also staged protests in Dhanbad several times regarding coal theft. A letter was also written to the Chief Minister regarding this. The SP who raised the flag of failure in Palamu was posted in Dhanbad. He said that I had written a letter to the Chief Minister that crime will never stop in the district if such an officer is posted. Many officers of his batch were promoted, but he has not been promoted. Because of getting promotion, he would have to leave the post of SP. Marandi said that there was a case in the High Court regarding the investigation of coal theft. The High Court has given instructions for a CBI investigation into this matter. This is welcome. If CBI enquiry is done on this, then the truth will come out.

## Durga Puja celebration at Cambrian Public School



Durga Puja is a festival of coordination of faith, culture, cooperation and power. This festival breaks the monotony of life and infuses enthusiasm and joy in it. Principal Dr. Neeta Pandey said these things in the program organized on the occasion of Durga Puja at Cambrian Public School, Kanke Road. She said that this festival gives the message of awakening the Satvik powers and mitigating taboos. The presentation of Navdurga Swaroop and Dhanuchi dance captivated the audience present. Vice Principal Premlata Kumari expressed her gratitude. The children presented the program under the direction of teachers Priyanka Chakraborty and Sudiksha Rai Chaudhary.

## IDFC FIRST Bank Completes Merger with IDFC Limited

IDFC FIRST Bank announced the successful completion of its merger with IDFC Limited, effective October 1, 2024, following all necessary approvals. As part of the merger, shareholders of IDFC Limited will receive 155 equity shares of IDFC FIRST Bank for every 100 equity shares held, with shares expected to be credited by October 31, 2024. Key benefits include a simplified corporate and shareholding structure, ₹600 crores in cash inflow, reduced paid-up share capital, and the potential to pay dividends. The bank is now well-positioned to leverage growth opportunities in India. Speaking on the merger, MD & CEO Mr. Vaidyanathan said, "This merger is a landmark moment, simplifying our corporate structure and allowing us to build a perennial institution like global banking giants." IDFC FIRST Bank will now have a simplified corporate structure with no promoter holding.



# India rejects USCIRF report as political bias

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday took strong exception to a US Commission on International Religious Freedom report claiming worsening religious freedom in the country and said it is a biased organization with a political agenda. Giving this stern reaction here, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said "Our views on the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) are well known. It is a biased organisation with a political agenda. It continues to misrepresent facts and peddles a motivated narrative about India. We reject this malicious report, which only serves to discredit USCIRF further. We would urge USCIRF to



desist from such agenda driven efforts. The USCIRF would also be well advised to utilise its time more productively on addressing human rights issues in the

United States." "Newagency PTI reported from Washington a US federal government commission has flagged the alleged worsening of religious freedom in India

and called for it to be designated as a "Country of Particular Concern". Authored by senior policy analyst Sema Hasan, the section on India describes the

use of misinformation and disinformation -- including hate speech by government officials -- to incite violent attacks against religious minorities and their places of worship, the US Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) said in a statement. In its annual report, the USCIRF also recommended that the US Department of State designate India as a "Country of Particular Concern" for engaging in systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom. The state department has so far refrained from accepting the recommendations. "This report highlights how, throughout 2024, individuals have been killed, beaten, and lynched by vigilante groups, religious leaders have been arbitrarily arrested, and homes and places of worship

have been demolished. These events constitute particularly severe violations of religious freedom," the USCIRF said. Beginning with the previous Manmohan Singh-led government, India has consistently denied visas to USCIRF members to visit the country, citing "interference" in its internal affairs, it added. India and several Indian-American groups have in the past accused the USCIRF of biased, unscientific and agenda-driven reporting to malign the country. "It (the report) further describes changes to and enforcement of India's legal framework to target and disenfranchise religious minorities, including the Citizenship Amendment Act, a uniform civil code, and several state-level anti-conversion and cow slaughter laws," the USCIRF said.

# J and K Assembly polls show 69.69 per cent turnout: EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Voter turnout of 69.69 per cent has been recorded in third phase of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, with women outnumbering men in casting votes, the Election Commission said on Thursday. Overall, 63.88 per cent turnout has been recorded at polling stations, as against 58.58 per cent in the Lok Sabha polls, the poll panel noted. In phase-three of the polls on October one, when 40 seats went for voting in the Union Territory, the turnout of male voters was recorded at 69.37 per cent as compared to 70.02 per cent of women, the Election Commission (EC) said. Nearly 44 per cent of voters from the third gender

category came to cast their votes in this phase. Referring to the overall turnout, the Election Commission said it stood at 63.88 per cent with male participation recorded at 64.68 per cent. The overall women turnout was recorded at 63.04 per cent and that of the third gender at 38.24 per cent. The final votes polled will be available post-counting with counting of postal ballots. Postal ballots include postal ballots given to service voters, absentee voters (those above 85 years of age, persons with disabilities, those part of essential services) and voters on election duty, the EC noted. Daily account of such postal ballots received, as per established guidelines, are given to all candidates, it said.

# Modi greets people on Navaratri festival

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday greeted people at the start of the auspicious Navaratri festival. "It is my wish that this sacred festival devoted to worshipping shakti is auspicious for everyone," he said in a social media post. The festival is marked by festivities in many parts of the country, while the devout involve themselves in religious practices, including fasting, during the period.

# Indian researchers develop road safety sensor prototype

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A prototype of a road safety sensor that can be implanted at high-risk turning points where accidents are frequent, has been developed by Indian researchers from a new polymer nanocomposite with pressure sensing and energy harvesting properties. The prototype may be implanted in the movable ramp and secured to the road just 100 meters before acute and fatal turning points. Thus, any vehicle approaching from the opposite side will see the signal on a screen and be alerted, according to a statement from the Department of Science and Technology which has funded the project under INSPIRE

-faculty fellowship programme. This prototype works on the principle of piezoelectric effect so it can generate energy that can be stored and used further to power electronic gadgets as well. Developed by the scientists from the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS), Bengaluru, the novel polymer nanocomposite, from which the prototype has been crafted, has been made of transition metal dichalcogenide, Scientists, Ankur Verma, Dr. Arjun Hari Madhu, Dr. Subash Cherumannil Karumuthil synthesised vanadium disulfide (VS2) with a very high surface charge which has the capacity of improving the piezoelectric characteristics of polymers. Polymer nanocomposite films



were prepared by integrating these nanoparticles at various concentrations into a well-known piezoelectric polymer, poly (vinylidene difluoride) (PVDF). Further they investigated how

the surface charge of nanoparticles will affect the piezoelectric properties of polymer nanocomposite. In addition, a laboratory-scale demonstration of a road safety sensor and smart door

was established, with the prototype as a pressure sensor. This study demonstrates that PVDF-VS2 nanocomposites will provide significant value to flexible, long-term energy

generating and pressure sensing applications. This work was recently published in the Journal of Material Chemistry A and an Indian patent application filed. This study is part of an ongoing project "Materials for self-powered energy generating and pressure sensing devices". Scientists are constantly trying to develop new materials for self-powered energy generating and pressure sensing devices and using them for several applications. Flexible, portable, long-lasting, and wearable sensors and energy harvesting devices can play an essential part in today's artificial intelligence era. Polymers and nanoparticles serve critical roles in today's flexible electronic systems, added the statement.

# Modi to address Kautilya economic conclave in Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the Kautilya Economic Conclave here on Friday, his office has said. The third edition of the conclave will be held from October four to six, the PMO said. The conclave will focus on themes such as financing green transition, geo-economic fragmentation and implications for growth, and principles for policy action to preserve resilience. Both Indian and international scholars are slated to discuss some of the most important issues confronting the Indian economy and economies of the Global South, the PMO said.



# India joins IMDRF as affiliate member, enhancing global collaboration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India has become an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF), a development that will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide while strengthening the "Brand India" in the global market. The Union Health Ministry said on Thursday, the IMDRF, which was established in 2011, is a group of global medical device regulators whose aim is to speed up the adoption of international medical device regulatory harmonisation and convergence. Its members include national regulatory authorities of the US, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, the UK, Brazil, Russia, China, South Korea, Singapore and the World Health Organisation (WHO). "To achieve global alignment in its medical device regulatory system, enhance the competitiveness of the domestic industry and boost transnational prominence, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), under the Union Health Ministry, applied for Affiliate Membership in the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) in 2024," the Ministry said in a statement. "After review of India's application for affiliate membership and meeting

discussions by the IMDRF Management Committee (MC) with the senior officers of CDSCO during the 26th Session of IMDRF held in September 2024 at Seattle, Washington, USA, the CDSCO has received approval from IMDRF as an affiliate member of the forum," it said. Becoming an affiliate member of the IMDRF will open doors to invaluable opportunities for reliance and collaboration with regulatory authorities worldwide, it said. The membership helps to harmonise regulatory requirements across the globe, which reduces complexities for manufacturers and helps safeguard public health by promoting collaboration, harmonising regulations and promoting convergence. As an affiliate member, India will participate in IMDRF open sessions for information exchange on technical topics with other regulators, to discuss the latest medical device regulatory strategies and trends, provide feedback on its experience and perspectives and use IMDRF documents in part or in whole as the basis for its regulatory framework for medical devices, said the statement. This membership will also enable Indian medical device manufacturers to meet the regulatory requirements of IMDRF member countries, thereby strengthening the "Brand India" in the global market, it said.

# Air Marshal SP Dharkar appointed Vice Chief of Air Staff

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Air Marshal S P Dharkar, an accomplished fighter pilot with 3,600 hours of flying experience, on Thursday assumed charge as Vice Chief of the Air Staff. He succeeds Air Chief Marshal A P Singh who became the Chief of Air Staff on September 30. Air Marshal Dharkar has flown various types of fighter jets and trainer aircraft and commanded a MiG-27 squadron. He is an experienced qualified flying instructor, fighter strike leader and instrument rating instructor. Commissioned in the fighter stream in 1985, he is an alumnus of Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC),



National Defence Academy (NDA), Defence Services Staff College and the US Air War College. He has commanded a frontline fighter unit and served as the first Director General of the Defence Space Agency. Air Marshal Dharkar was serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Air Command prior to taking over as Vice Chief of Air Staff. He has also served

as the assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training) at the air headquarters. As the Director General of the Defence Space Agency (DSA), he was responsible for handling all aspects related to setting up of the new organisation. The DSA would control and oversee all aspects of space exploitation in the military domain by the Indian defence forces.

# Congress demands urgent relief for Bihar flood victims

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over the flood situation in Bihar, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday demanded that the Centre and state government should expedite the relief and rescue operations. According to the disaster management department, the number of people affected by flood has reached 14.62 lakh. "The flood situation in Bihar is becoming terrible. Nearly 15 lakh people in 17 districts are affected by the floods and the news of many deaths in the last few days is extremely painful," Kharge said in a social media post in Hindi. The Congress president said the bridges have collapsed



and the homes of citizens have been destroyed due to the disaster, especially in north Bihar. "We demand from the Centre and state government that the relief and rescue operations should be expedited so that the victims can get immediate help," Kharge said. "We thank the Indian Air Force, NDRF and SDRF teams wholeheartedly for the

help they are providing in these difficult circumstances. But we still need all possible help from the state government agencies," he added. Kharge also urged the Centre to provide adequate compensation to every flood victim and help the state government. The Congress president said the farmers, whose crops have been destroyed should also get compensation. The Congress workers are expected to be ready to serve the victims, he added. According to the state disaster management department, packets of food and other relief materials are being air-dropped by the IAF helicopters in the 17 flood-affected districts.

# Climate change fuels gender-based violence in Bangladesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Thirty-two-year-old Srestha, a mother of three from southern Bangladesh, has long relied on agriculture, cultivating rice and vegetables. However, the increasing frequency of floods due to climate change has dramatically impacted her family's livelihood. With no income, Srestha's husband, Shabbir, became increasingly stressed and frustrated. As months passed without financial relief, Shabbir's mood worsened. He began to lash out at Srestha, blaming her for their situation. What started as verbal arguments escalated into physical violence. Srestha found herself trapped in a cycle of fear and helplessness, often trying to placate Shabbir to avoid further conflict. However, Srestha's precarious situation is not an isolated case. She represents many women facing climate change-induced gender-



based violence which is set to aggravate in near future as impacts of global warming intensifies, as per a new analysis published in the PLOS Climate. A first of its kind analysis based on the data from 156 countries including India between 1993 and 2019 has shown that climate shocks—such as floods, storms, and landslides—are linked to higher rates of intimate partner violence in the two years following such events, particularly in patriarchal societies where violence against women is normalised. The study led by UCL researchers in collaboration with Exeter also shows that violence rates were found to be low in countries having a higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

# Reducing smoking could boost life expectancy: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

If smoking were cut down to just five per cent of current levels by 2050, men could expect an increase in life expectancy by about one year, while women might see an increase of 0.2 years, a recent study published in The Lancet Public Health has said. Achieving the five per cent smoking target could prevent 876 million years of life lost due to premature death, highlighting the profound impact of reducing tobacco use. The study suggests that banning the sale of cigarettes and other tobacco products could prevent an estimated 1.2 million lung cancer deaths across 185 countries by 2095. Notably, about two-thirds of these preventable deaths would occur in low- and middle-income countries, where younger populations may be more vulnerable to the effects of tobacco. The researchers analysed the potential benefits of a



tobacco-free generation policy, which aims to restrict tobacco sales to those born after a specific year. This approach, however, has not yet been fully implemented in any country. For instance, noted the study, New Zealand had enacted a law to prohibit the sale of tobacco to individuals born on or after January 1, 2009, but this legislation was repealed earlier this year. Stein Emil Vollset, a senior author of the study from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the

University of Washington, emphasised the critical need to sustain and enhance efforts to reduce smoking rates worldwide. He noted that the potential for avoiding millions of premature deaths underscores the importance of comprehensive tobacco control policies. The study's estimates regarding preventable deaths were derived from analysing the implications of banning tobacco sales on lung cancer mortality among people born between 2006 and 2010.

"We must not lose momentum in efforts to reduce, and ultimately eliminate smoking around the world. Our findings highlight that millions of premature deaths could be avoided by bringing an end to smoking," said Vollset. Commenting on the study's observation, a representative from Mothers Against Vaping, a united front of concerned mothers combating the escalating vaping crisis asserted that there is a need to highlight health hazards of New-Age Gateway devices like e-cigarettes, vapes, and heat-not-burn devices for India to meet its tobacco control goals for the youth. In fact, the authors of the Lancet study have advocated for not only maintaining existing tobacco control measures but also implementing new strategies to address the ongoing risks associated with smoking which are major reasons for many preventable diseases including cancers.



# BJP proposes renaming Sealdah station after Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There are credible reports that a section of Bengal BJP has started lobbying for rechristening Sealdah Railway Station as Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Railway Station at a Deen Dayal Upadhyay Railway Station.

The proposal to change the name of the country's sixth oldest railway station after Mumbai VT, Howrah, Chennai, Kanpur and Vadodara was given by BJP Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya before Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav during his visit to Kolkata on Wednesday. "But what is in a name?" asked Trinamool Congress' Kunal Ghosh who wondered why the name of only Mukherjee and why not Swami Vivekananda who lived nearby, barely a mile or two away from the Station at Shimla Street should be considered.

"Why the station should not be named after Swami Vivekananda because after returning from his glorious trip to Chicago his ship came to Budge Budge from where he took a train to Sealdah It is from this place where thou-



sands of young people assembled and dragged his cart by hand," Ghosh said. However according to Bhattacharya, "When lakhs of beaten and uprooted refugees from the erstwhile East Pakistan thronged Sealdah Station post Partition it was Dr Mukherjee who stood by them and their cause I will request the honourable Railway Minister to consider renaming Sealdah Station after Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee."

Historically speaking: British architect Walter Glanville in 1869 designed the Sealdah Main Railway Station as it stands today pursuing a Victorian-Gothic form. Sealdah which has 20 platforms today had only four in 1862 standing out amidst muddy, marshy and potholed

vicinity. It was a part of the East Bengal Railway and then Assam Bengal Railway set up in 1857 for the sake of establishing connectivity with northern and southern Bengal which then comprised a large province including Bihar, Odisha and portions of the present North East. Incidentally there was a tram terminus located just outside Sealdah Station before the year 1978 from where the concept of horse tram carriage started. Historically speaking Sealdah owes its name to Sealdih or a village infested by jackals. In fact the station itself was built clearing a huge Pipal tree surrounded with bushes, swamps and marshes and heavily colonized by jackals on two sides of the great Maratha Ditch (a canal) that surrounded the city and where today

runs the Upper and Lower Circular Roads more lately called the Acharya Prafulla Chandra (APC) Road and Acharya Jagadish Chandra (AJC) Road. The Maratha Ditch was dug up to prevent Maratha invasions in those days. So historically today's Sealdah Station stands by the Maratha Ditch so to say.

The Maratha Ditch could not however prevent Bengal Nawab Siraj ud Daulah from invading Kolkata in 1756 when he crossed the mighty canal and attacked the British garrison "causing a great loss to the white men's families by bundling about 64 of them including women inside an underground chamber leading to 43 deaths." Others however, put the figure to 146 captured and 123 dead. Sealdah stood witness to the brief but cruel battle between the Nawab and the British who avenged the cruelty post Battle of Plassey by allowing Siraj to be cut into pieces and ferried about the Murshidabad town on a bullock cart. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that his ministry was contemplating a Rs 60,000-crore investment schemes in Bengal and was awaiting the cooperation of the State Government.

# Indian Army aims to crack terrorists' encrypted communication networks

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JANMU

The outgoing General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Srinagar-based 15 Corps, Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai on Thursday said that the Indian Army is working hard to crack the highly encrypted communication network of the terrorists to dismantle their ecosystem in the region.

Briefing media persons in Srinagar Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai said, "We are aware that terrorists operating in the valley are using ultra communication networks, which have layers of encryption. While presently it is affording them the secrecy that they want I assure you that work is happening in this direction and soon we will be able to crack that encryption and I am hoping that will further dent their ecosystem and networks."

The senior Army officer also claimed that the active number of terrorists in the region has also come down to 80 and no fresh recruitment has taken place in recent months in the valley. "There are around 80 active terrorists in Kashmir. The figure has gone down. Their number will be further down by mid-next year," he said. He estimated that between 25 and 30 foreign terrorists remain



active, and the army is determined to neutralize them soon. "We foiled infiltration attempts by terrorists from across the border. This summer there were fewer attempts of infiltration," he said. He further stated that successful infiltration attempts were not mostly made in Kashmir but at other places. Referring to the frequent attacks in Pir Pranjal range, Rajiv Ghai said that there were chances that the terrorists may attempt to take shelter in Kashmir. "Terrorists keep moving as they cannot survive in one place," he said. Sharing his assessment of the prevailing security scenario Lt Gen Ghai said Kashmir has

seen a good year so far like last year. "We need a few more good years to make peace a permanent feature here. I believe maintaining this peaceful atmosphere is the biggest challenge for the security forces," the GOC 15 Corps said. Lt Gen Ghai said that there hasn't been any active recruitment of terrorists this year. "The numbers were down to a dozen last year and this year it is next to nil," the GOC said. He said as far as the terrorist-initiated incidents in Kashmir, they are between far and few. "Some incidents were reported where soft targets were made by even an untrained person using a pistol," the army officer said. To a query whether any

troop cut was possible at this juncture, the GOC said: "We are in a consolidation phase and no dilution of counter insurgency and counter terrorism grid is recommended. Both the grids need to be maintained. I definitely won't advocate any dilution to these grids at this stage," the GOC said.

Earlier, in his opening remarks, the GOC said that during the past year-and-a-half, numerous attempts counter infiltration steps were taken while simultaneously prosecuting a very robust and successful counter-terrorist campaign within Kashmir. "While doing this, we have been very conscious of our responsibility and nation-building. So we have maintained our connection with the people of Kashmir," the army officer said.

He said that the region is seeing a new beginning as numerous significant events are taking place besides development. "This is because of the efforts put in by (Chinar corps) 15 Corps, police, CAPF, police and numerous other security agencies," the GOC said.

While he praised the improving security situation over the last two years, Lt. Gen. Ghai cautioned that maintaining peace remains the primary challenge, and vigilance must be maintained, particularly in counter-terrorism efforts at the LoC and within the valley.

# Vijayan retracts claims on gold smuggling allegations



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Chief Minister Vijayan on Thursday made a quick volte-face from his earlier stance that Malappuram district topped the table in gold smuggling and hawala cash flow. Addressing the media after the cabinet meeting on Thursday, the chief minister said that he never blamed Malappuram district or the Muslim community for gold smuggling and hawala cash flow to the State.

But this is in stark contrast to his stance during the 21st September press meet when he had said that out of the 147 kg smuggled gold seized in the State during the last three years, Malappuram accounted for 124.47 kg of yellow metal and Rs 87.22 crore of hawala cash out of Rs 122.5 crore seized during the period.

It is widely believed that the chief minister retracted his statement on smuggled gold and hawala cash under pressure from leaders of a minority community who were offended by his disclosures. The chief minister had also said during the media meeting that the money generated out of smuggling and hawala cash transactions were being pumped into the State for anti-national activities.

While Vijayan did not disclose the reasons behind the sudden change in his stance, he gave a clean chit to the Chennai based English newspaper for carrying in its column an apology for publishing a statement attributed to him which he said he had not told the journalist who had interviewed him in New Delhi. The said interview which was carried in the 30th September edition of the paper had featured the chief minister's allegation that large scale gold smuggling and hawala cash was taking place in Malappuram district. "I did not tell this reporter anything on this issue. When I was asked about Anvar and gold smuggling, my reply was that I had made it clear in the press meet held on 21st September itself and do not have much time to elaborate further on the topic," said Vijayan who patted the Chennai newspaper for its decision to run a public apology.

# CPI(M) demands 12 seats in MVA alliance



T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Ahead of the formalisation of the seat-sharing tie-up among the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) for the Maharashtra Assembly polls, its smaller ally - the Communist Party of India (Marxist) - has staked claim

for 12 seats. Confirming the development, CPI (M)'s Maharashtra State Committee Dr Uday Narkar said on Thursday: "We have attended a couple of meetings of the MVA...We have asked the MVA leadership to allocate us 12 seats." In the 288-member

Maharashtra Assembly, the CPI (M) represents one seat - Dahanu (ST) in Palghar district, from where its party man Vinod Nikole was elected in the 2019 polls.

Apart from Dahanu (ST) seat, the other Assembly constituencies from where the CPI (M) wants to contest are Vikramgad in Palghar district, Shahpur in Thane district, Kalwan, Dindori, Nashik West and Igatpuri in Nashik district, Kinwat in Nanded district, Majalgaon in Beed district, Pathari in Parbhani district, Solapur City Central in Solapur district and Akole in Ahmednagar district.

"For the past several years, we have been very active in the constituencies where we would field our candidates. We are part of the INDIA block at the national level. We expect the MVS to allocate the seats we have asked for," Dr Narkar said. The All India Kisan Sabha

(AKIS) had in the PAST led several farmers' movements in Maharashtra, while several Left unions are active in urban areas.

The three major constituents of the MVA are Congress, NCP (Sharad Pawar) and the Shiv Sena (UBT). The Samajwadi Party, CPI, CPI (M), Peasants and Workers Party (PWP) are the smaller constituents of the MVA.

It is doubtful whether the MVA will allocate 12 seats. If anything, the MVA may consider allocating 3 to 4 seats to the CPI (M), as against 12 seats demanded by the latter. Because, the MVA's three major constituents will have to accommodate its other small allies like the SP, CPI and PWP. On their part, the Congress, NCP (SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) have so far not yet commented on the demand for 12 seats made by the CPI (M).

# SC halts Isha Foundation probe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the police probe into the alleged illegal confinement of two women at spiritual leader Jaggi Vasudev's Isha Foundation ashram in Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu. Transferring to itself a habeas corpus petition of a man alleging that his two daughters were held captive inside the premises of the Foundation, a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud directed the Tamil Nadu Police to not take any further action in pursuance of the Madras High Court's direction asking it to inquire into the alleged illegal confinement of the women.

"You can't let in the Army or the police into an establishment like this," the bench observed during the hearing. The bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said the police shall file the status report, as directed by the high court in its September 30 order, before the top court. The top court passed the order after the Isha Foundation approached it challenging Madras High Court's order directing the Coimbatore Police to collect all case details registered against the Foundation and produce them before the court for further consideration. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the Foundation, sought a stay of the high court order, and said around 150 police officials have entered

the Foundation's ashram and are probing every corner. The bench, which interacted with the two women in-chambers through video-conferencing, noted they have stated that both of them are residing at the ashram voluntarily and without any coercion. "As regards the presence of police, in pursuance to the order of the High Court, it has been stated by the two individuals that the police left the premises last night, though they were there... In pursuance of the order of the high court," the bench noted.

While taking up the habeas corpus petition, the bench permitted the father of the two women to appear before it through video-conferencing if he wishes to interact with the court in person or through counsel. The court said text of the high court's order indicated that they are presently 42 and 39 years old respectively. The bench noted the two women have stated that they are free to travel outside the ashram, which they had done from time to time and their parents have also visited there to meet them. The court noted it was submitted before it that a similar petition was filed by the mother of the two individual about eight years ago, in which the father had also appeared. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for the Centre, said the high court should have been "very circumspect". Madras High Court had on September 30 passed an interim order on a habeas corpus petition filed by Dr S Kamaraj.

# Bengal doctors divided over protest strategies



SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There seems to have developed differences of opinion among the doctors of Bengal agitating in demand of justice for their woman colleague who was on August 9 raped and murdered inside the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital with the seniors opposing the juniors' decision to resume indefinite "cease work" for the second time within a span of ten days following repeated attacks on their colleagues at various medical college hospitals.

According to the senior doctors the protestors who had been getting full support from the general public should not take recourse to actions that could impede people's interest. "About 35,000 patients come to the five medical colleges in Kolkata alone for treatment most of them have supported our cause throughout the movement so we should also take their plight into consideration particularly during the festive season when many private doctors would go on vacation and the poor patients would be left in lurch," said one of the senior doctors while

expressing his views in a general convention of doctors called in RGKMCH on Thursday.

Another senior doctor said that "we have been by the side of these junior doctors and will continue to support their cause but without imposing our views on them we will just like to advise them that this is not right time to resume cease work impeding the interests of thousands of common people who have been by us all these days we cannot alienate the common man from this movement," said another senior paediatrician.

The doctors who had gone on an indefinite cease work post the RGKMCH incident had resumed duty breaking their 42-days' cease work after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee assured foolproof security inside hospital premises besides conceding to their demand of removing Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal and two directors of Health.

"But the Government which had given us assurance on other demands would not fulfill them forcing us to resume our movement," said Dr Aniket one of the leaders.

Another doctor, a cardiologist suggested alternative mode of movement saying, "we can think about partial cease work or regular rallies and even dharnas or even go to the districts setting special medical care camps so as to make people aware about the plights of the doctors."

The junior doctors had not presented their views when reports last came in. However some of them said that they would take the advice of the senior doctors and hold general body meeting of joint platform of junior doctors before taking a final decision.

"It is clear that this Government is trying to create a rift between the common people who have supported us and the doctors but we will not fall in its trap if we withdraw our cease work then it will not be because of the government pressure but because of the needs of the people but still we will continue to agitate until attacks on doctors stop and until the Government takes some concrete steps to ensure safety and security inside the hospitals," said Dr Kinjal Nanda one of the agitating doctors.

# Bombay HC orders to expedite inquiry into custodial death

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After the BJP-led MahaYuti government set up a Commission of Inquiry into the "encounter killing" of Badlapur children sexual assault case Akshay Shinde, the Bombay High Court on Thursday directed the Magistrate looking into Shinde's death to expedite its inquiry and submit its findings to it at the next hearing on November 18.

Hearing a PIL filed by the father of Shinde on the suspicious circumstances leading to the death of Shinde, a HC bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan asked the Thane Magistrate and the police to collect, preserve and get all the evidence relating to Shinde's death in police custody. Earlier, Advocate General Birendra Saraf told the court that all relevant documents have been forwarded to the magistrate for inquiry. While asking the Magistrate to start the inquiry proceedings quickly and submit its report quickly after hearing all parties in the case.

"Law requires that when there is a custodial death, the investigation be conducted by the Magistrate. Let the investigation be conducted. We will wait for the report of the magistrate," the HC bench said. "The Magistrate should expedite the inquiry and submit its report to the court by November 18.

Akshay Shinde -- key accused in the sensational Badlapur child sexual assault -- was shot dead at a point blank range while he was being taken from Badlapur to Thane in a van for investigation in another case. It may be recalled that two nursery girls - aged four and



six years -- were sexually abused allegedly by sweeper Shinde when they in the washroom of the kindergarten school run by Adarsh Vidya Prasarak Sanstha (AVPS) on August 13 for using the toilet there. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Thane police that investigated the case has filed a charge-sheet in the case before the special Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act court in Kalyan.

The incident caused a major public uproar in the state and always as other parts of the state. The Opposition MVA - comprising Congress, Uddhav Thackeray-headed Shiv Sena (UBT) and Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) - had demanded a judicial probe into the suspicious circumstances leading to the accused Shinde's death in a police van.

Directing the prosecution to collect strong forensic evidence in the case, the HC asked the prosecution if the police had collected forensic evidence from the body of the deceased. "Every firearm has a peculiar pattern and the residue it leaves is also differ-

ent. The residue left on the deceased's head where he was shot, his hands when he opened fire from the police's pistol needs to be collected, preserved and analysed forensically," the HC bench said. "Dead body is the most silent and honest witness... There is a need to collect and preserve all evidence. Bullets were fired from two different firearms in the incident. Empty shells found were of two different arms. The firing pin of every gun is different. This can be a conclusive proof which firing arm will have which firing pin," the HC bench said.

"We want to see a report showing this conclusively," the HC bench said, while wanting to know from the police State CID police who are investigating the case if the bullet had pierced through the accused. Advocate General Saraf replied in the affirmative. Expressing its displeasure over the failure to recover a bottle of water that was given to the accused when he asked for water in the vehicle. "The police's case is that the handcuffs of the accused were removed after he asked for

water after which he forcibly snatched the pistol of one of the police officers and opened fire. "It (bottle) is an important piece of evidence," the bench said.

Seeking the medical report of the police officer who sustained injury in the firing opened by the deceased accused, the HC bench said: "The police officer who sustained gunshot injury... Has he been examined properly? Was there any residue or blackening at the spot? We need to see that. Was there an entry and exit wound on the thigh of the police officer who got hurt?"

At a hearing held on September 25, a HC bench of Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan had questioned the version put out by the police Shinde was shot by the police in self defence. Justice Chavan said "it is hard to believe" that a man of slight build as Akshay Shinde could be overpowered by the four policemen when he turned violent and pulled the slide back on a 9 mm pistol for firing which "requires strength".





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## The caste contest

Haryana elections will be a tight contest. The BJP-JJP alliance breakup and Congress rebels have added uncertainty to it

As Haryana heads to the polls on October 5, 2024, the political landscape is marked by intense competition and shifting alliances. This election holds importance as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which had formed a government in 2019 with the support of Dushyant Chautala's Jannayak Janata Party (JJP), is now contesting alone. The breakup of the BJP-JJP alliance has left the BJP in a precarious position, governing as a minority until the upcoming elections. The ruling party, which is contesting without its former ally, the JJP, is focusing on its development agenda, highlighting its work on infrastructure, education and women's safety. However, the party faces challenges, especially in rural areas, where discontent over issues like agricultural reforms remains strong. The Congress is positioning itself as the main alternative to the BJP. Led by Bhupinder Singh Hooda, the party is banking on strong support in rural areas, especially among Jat voters and hopes to capitalise on dissatisfaction with the BJP government. Dushyant Chautala is attempting to redefine his party's narrative, distancing himself from the BJP's policies and advocating for farmer-friendly reforms.



Another unpredictable player is Aam Aadmi Party which is contesting in Haryana with renewed vigour. AAP is aiming to replicate its success in neighbouring Punjab. The party is focusing on issues such as health-care, education and anti-corruption measures, appealing primarily to urban voters. A strong contender of yesteryears, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) led by Abhay Singh Chautala has joined hands with Bahujan Samaj Party. But the agrarian sector remains a pivotal issue in Haryana, especially after the farmers' protests against the now-repealed agricultural laws. Farmers' resentment towards the government has not entirely subsided, and the opposition parties, particularly Congress and JJP, are using this to mobilise rural voters. Besides, Haryana has one of the highest unemployment rates in India. Both the BJP and Congress have promised to address the issue, with the BJP touting its industrial initiatives and the Congress proposing new employment schemes. But all said and done, it is the caste politics which decides who rules the State. The traditional Jat-non-Jat divide continues to shape Haryana's political landscape. The BJP, which has traditionally garnered support from non-Jat communities, faces the challenge of consolidating this base while the JJP and Congress focus on winning over Jat voters. Caste dynamics have always been a significant factor in Haryana's political landscape, deeply influencing voter behaviour and electoral outcomes. Jats, who make up approximately 25-30 per cent of Haryana's population, are the state's most politically influential caste group. The Congress, under Hooda, is attempting to bridge the gap between Jats and non-Jats by emphasising its rural-urban development plans but is plagued by rebels. The outcome of the elections will be favourable to the party which manages the complex caste matrix of the state well.

protests against the now-repealed agricultural laws. Farmers' resentment towards the government has not entirely subsided, and the opposition parties, particularly Congress and JJP, are using this to mobilise rural voters. Besides, Haryana has one of the highest unemployment rates in India. Both the BJP and Congress have promised to address the issue, with the BJP touting its industrial initiatives and the Congress proposing new employment schemes. But all said and done, it is the caste politics which decides who rules the State. The traditional Jat-non-Jat divide continues to shape Haryana's political landscape. The BJP, which has traditionally garnered support from non-Jat communities, faces the challenge of consolidating this base while the JJP and Congress focus on winning over Jat voters. Caste dynamics have always been a significant factor in Haryana's political landscape, deeply influencing voter behaviour and electoral outcomes. Jats, who make up approximately 25-30 per cent of Haryana's population, are the state's most politically influential caste group. The Congress, under Hooda, is attempting to bridge the gap between Jats and non-Jats by emphasising its rural-urban development plans but is plagued by rebels. The outcome of the elections will be favourable to the party which manages the complex caste matrix of the state well.

### PICTALK



A man makes red handprints on a wall as part of a tradition on the first day of the 'Navratri' festival, in Ahmedabad

# BJP strives hard to imbibe 'integral humanism'



K S TOMAR

As the BJP marks Deendayal Upadhyaya's 108th birth anniversary, it faces the challenge of aligning his "Integral Humanism" ideals with modern governance

On the occasion of the 108th birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyaya, a founding figure of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and the proponent of "Integral Humanism," the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) finds itself reflecting on how closely it has adhered to his visionary ideals. Upadhyaya's philosophy focused on a holistic approach to human well-being, emphasising decentralisation, indigenous culture, self-reliance, and ethical governance. Though the BJP has embraced these principles rhetorically, transforming them into practical realities remains a formidable challenge.

**Economic Ideals vs Modern Policies:** Deendayal Upadhyaya's vision of economic self-reliance and decentralisation stands in contrast to India's current globalised and capital-driven economic policies, particularly those introduced since the liberalisation reforms of the 1990s. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP has focused on economic growth through increased foreign direct investment (FDI), free-market reforms, and privatisation. Critics argue that this approach clashes with Upadhyaya's idea of a self-reliant economy, which emphasises supporting rural and local industries, creating jobs at the grassroots level, and minimising dependence on foreign capital. **Balancing Indigenous Culture and Globalisation:** Deendayal Upadhyaya advocated for the preservation and promotion of India's indigenous culture, even as the nation embraced modern advancements. Striking this balance has been a delicate task for the BJP. On one hand, the party emphasises cultural pride, nationalism, and traditional values, promoting initiatives like Ayurveda and yoga on the global stage. On the other hand, India's integration into the global economy, alongside the rise of modern lifestyle trends and technology, risks diluting the deeper cultural roots Upadhyaya sought to preserve. The BJP has been critiqued for veering toward an exclusionary



cultural nationalism, which may diverge from Upadhyaya's more inclusive vision.

**Ethical Governance vs Corruption:** A key tenet of Upadhyaya's philosophy was the need for ethical governance, marked by integrity, honesty, and service to the people. While BJP leaders, including Modi, have presented themselves as champions of clean governance, the party has faced allegations of corruption, crony capitalism, and favouritism toward large corporations. Such accusations, particularly regarding land acquisition policies and privatisation, have cast doubt on the party's commitment to Upadhyaya's ethical standards.

**Inclusive Society vs Polarisation** Upadhyaya's vision of an inclusive society focused on addressing the needs of all communities, ensuring harmony across social and religious divides. However, the BJP has often been criticised for promoting divisive politics, particularly along religious lines. Reconciling Hindutva-driven politics with the ideals of inclusion and social harmony remains a central challenge for the BJP as it seeks to bridge the gap between rhetoric and reality. **Antyodaya - Uplifting the Last Person:** One of



UNDER PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI, THE BJP HAS FOCUSED ON ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH INCREASED FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI), FREE-MARKET REFORMS, AND PRIVATISATION. THIS APPROACH CLASHES WITH UPADHYAYA'S IDEA OF A SELF-RELIANT ECONOMY

Upadhyaya's most important principles, Antyodaya, focus on uplifting the most marginalised in society. The BJP has made significant strides in this area through its welfare schemes such as the PM Ujjwala Yojana (providing LPG to rural households), the PM Awas Yojana (affordable housing), and the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (improving sanitation).

The BJP has adopted this principle through various campaigns, such as the global celebration of Yoga Day, the promotion of Indian languages, and the reassertion of India's historical achievements.

**Political Decentralisation** A core aspect of Upadhyaya's philosophy was decentralising power, ensuring governance was closer to the people. The BJP's emphasis on cooperative federalism and policies such as GST and the creation of NITI Aayog are steps in this direction. Moreover, the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system and the Jan Dhan Yojana have empowered citizens by reducing middlemen and ensuring that subsidies and welfare benefits reach the people directly.

Self-Reliance through Atmanirbhar Bharat; The Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) initiative, launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, resonates with Upadhyaya's emphasis on self-

reliance. The promotion of local manufacturing, domestic industries, and efforts to reduce dependence on foreign goods align with his philosophy. The "Make in India" initiative, a key aspect of this vision, has made strides in boosting domestic production and job creation. However, the globalised nature of modern economics makes it challenging to fully realize a self-reliant economy.

**Striving toward Upadhyaya's Vision:** As the ruling party, the BJP's journey in adopting and implementing Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideals has been a mixture of successes and challenges. While considerable progress has been made in promoting nationalism, self-reliance, and Antyodaya, the party faces significant hurdles in achieving true economic decentralisation, upholding ethical governance, and fostering social harmony.

The complexities of modern governance, global economic integration, and political strategies often pull the BJP away from Upadhyaya's pure vision. However, the ideals of Integral Humanism remain a guiding light, challenging the party to strike a balance between philosophical ideals and contemporary realities in their pursuit of a better India. (Writer is a political analyst and strategic affairs columnist based in Shimla; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### DECLINE OF GANDHIAN IDEALS

Madam — Since the Mahatma was an epitome of confidence and possessed an international mindset, he didn't treat the hymns of the Scottish gem "Abide with me" as threat enough to get blown off his feet! Rather, he allowed the window of his mind to let in the breeze of all possible cultures around the globe, including the evergreen Henry Francis Lyte classic. It is indeed a matter of utmost disgrace to notice the closure of minds in the country of Mahatma Gandhi—the epitome of liberal values and humanitarian thoughts with an all-embracing mindset.

Not to forget Gandhi's cardinal call: "Recall the face of the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything from it? Will it restore him to control over his own life and destiny? Will it lead to 'swaraj' for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?" Do the faces of any weak man get recalled today amidst the zealous trumpet of India being 'Viswaguru' (fast marching towards the status of "world's third largest economy") being beaten like a maniac! When none other than the Gandhians find themselves cornered and marginalised in the very state and den of Mahatma Gandhi itself (Sabarmati Ashram, Gujarat), rest assured about the fate of his values, ethics and humanitarian thoughts in the rest of the country!

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

### FLOODS HITS BIHAR

Madam— The rain in Nepal is wreaking havoc in Bihar. While 170 people have died in Nepal due to continuous heavy rains, floods and landslides, the terrible form of flooding is being seen in Bihar. In view of the flood, all 56 gates of Birpur Vairaj of the Kosi River and all 36 gates of Balmiki Nagar Vairaj of the Gandak River have been opened. This is not a disaster. It is a tragedy that

## India's triumph in Kanpur



Team India creates Test history on October 1. Kudos to Team India for defeating Bangladesh by 7 wickets on the fifth day of Kanpur Test and winning the Test series by

2-0. Team India has set a record of never losing to Bangladesh so far and has created a record on home ground by achieving a thrilling victory in the 18th series. With this extremely brilliant and powerful performance of Team India, India has reached the top position in the ICC World Test Championship table (WTC).

Yashasvi Jaiswal scored his second half-century with great skill and scored 51 runs to win the title of 'Player of the Match'. Bangladesh's so-called opening batsman Shadman Islam and former captain Mushfiqur Rahim were forced to kneel in front of Indian bowlers. India's next match with Bangladesh will be in the 3 T20 match series from October 6. It is hoped that Team India will be successful in maintaining its magical status.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

is repeated every year. Bihar floods are writing the story of new misery and devastation every year; it is a serious humanitarian crisis. But no permanent solution has been found so far. How long will people continue to bear this pain? People are losing their homes, land, and loved ones.

How many more lives will be lost, and how many more dreams will be shattered? However, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar said that full attention is being paid to the flood at every level. All kinds of relief and rescue operations are being arranged. To stop this, the government should make immediate arrangements on a war footing. For which a permanent solution is needed so that this disaster is not faced in the future.

Anshu Bharti | Begusarai

### KARNATAKA LAND SCANDAL

Madam — Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife, BM Parvathi, said she would return the 14 plots she received in exchange for her undeveloped land.

However, the return policy, seen as Siddaramaiah flipping, might actually be counter-productive. The Muda case pertains to allegations that compensatory sites were allotted to BM Parvathi in an unmarked area in Mysuru that had a higher property value as compared to the location of her land that had been "acquired" by the authority.

Siddaramaiah, BM Parvathi, Mallikarjuna Swamy, and one Devaraju were named in an FIR registered by the Mysuru-based Lokayukta police on September 27. This came after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) initiated a probe against her, Siddaramaiah, and her brother, Mallikarjuna Swamy, in what has now become popular as the Muda scam. Parvathi, the wife of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, has returned 14 plots of land to Muda. Thus, Siddaramaiah shot himself in the foot for gaining more wealth using power politics.

CK Subramania | Bengaluru

## Online gaming industry needs regulation and govt support

A balanced, collaborative approach between the government and the online gaming industry is essential for responsible and sustainable growth

The online gaming industry in India is experiencing rapid growth but is often misinterpreted as being synonymous with gambling. This misconception fuels concerns about problem gambling and social harm, leading to a negative narrative surrounding the sector. In reality, much of the harm stems from illegal offshore betting and gambling platforms, which further exacerbate this misrepresentation.



alone contributed 60 per cent of their revenues to the Indian exchequer in FY 2023-24. Misunderstanding the online gaming industry as gambling could jeopardize its potential for economic growth and its contributions to national development.

Regulators must prioritise cracking down on offshore and illegal businesses and apps that operate in violation of Indian law. Measures such as whitelisting legitimate platforms, and initiating legal actions against those facilitating illegal activities are crucial. Steps like freezing the bank accounts of operators and intermediaries, and working with financial institutions to block transactions tied to illegal gambling, are urgent- ly needed. Practical enforcement challenges cannot be an excuse for inaction, as the

risks are significant. A coordinated effort involving the Ministry of Finance, Information Technology, Home Affairs, and Consumer Affairs is essential, with each department playing a critical role in enforcement and raising public awareness about the legal implications of supporting illegal operations.

Without robust enforcement and heightened awareness, illegal gambling platforms will not only make Indian citizens vulnerable to gambling addiction but also siphon their hard-earned money into criminal networks. The profits from illegal gambling often fund organised crime, money laundering, and terrorism, with global examples linking gambling profits to drug trafficking and terrorist financing. This not only destabilises local economies but poses a serious threat to national security. As the government takes strict action against illegal gambling, it must also work closely with the legitimate gaming industry to differentiate between legal online gaming and illegal gambling. Such a partnership would not only help clear the negative perceptions but also sup-

port the industry's growth. This collaboration could further enhance the crackdown on illegal gambling through combined awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts. Finally, the government and the gaming industry must work together to develop a responsible gaming framework.

This should include self-exclusion tools, age verification systems, game time monitoring, and partnerships with mental health experts. By promoting responsible gaming, the industry can ensure ethical practices, protect consumers from addiction, and foster a sustainable, well-regulated gaming ecosystem in India. A balanced approach that differentiates legitimate online gaming from illegal gambling, alongside stronger enforcement measures, is vital for the sustainable growth of online gaming industry. With govt and industry collaboration, responsible gaming practices can be promoted, ensuring the sector's positive contributions to economic growth and job creation.

(The writer is a partner at AP & Partners; views are personal)



ARJUN SINHA





## FIRST COLUMN

## REBALANCING THE GLOBAL ORDER

The escalating missile strikes between Israel and Iran threaten regional stability in West Asia



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The escalating situation in India's extended neighbourhood is threatening internal security for the region. The recent elimination of several top Hezbollah commanders, especially the killing of its top leader Hassan Nasrallah, by Israel, and Iranian missiles raining on Israeli territory is likely to widen the crisis in West Asia. PM Modi realised the sensitivity of the situation and immediately made a phone call to their Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu. Indian PM's message to Israel was "the crucial need for preventing regional escalation and the safe release of all hostages, terrorism has no place in any form and manifestation and India stands ready to support early restoration of peace and stability." Last month on the sidelines of the Summit of Future in New York, the PM met the President of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas. A press statement released after the meeting read "The Prime Minister reiterated India's time-tested principled position on the Israel-Palestine issue, and called for ceasefire, release of hostages and return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. He stressed that only a two State solution will deliver enduring peace and stability in the region. Recalling that India was one of the first countries to recognise Palestine, he conveyed India's continued support to Palestine membership of the UN." Even as the Indian PM was holding bilateral with several global leaders in the US, the newly appointed head of the interim government of Bangladesh Muhammad Yunus was getting a much-needed pat on his back from Western leaders. Yunus during his US trip met the US President Joe Biden, former President Bill Clinton, US Secretary of State,



Canadian PM, President of the European Union, heads of the World Bank and ADB. He topped it up by having an unusually warm meeting with Pakistan's PM, where he expressed the desire to deepen their bilateral ties and revive the regional body SAARC. For India, these ties could potentially lead Pakistan and China to use this newfound bonhomie with Bangladesh to push its subversive agenda against India. Almost on cue External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in his remarks at the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York spoke on rebalancing the global order. He said "Rebalancing a global order which started with 51 founding members of the United Nations, which has quadrupled in the last eight decades, where you not only have more independent countries in the world, but the economic, political and even demographic weight of individual members of the global order has shifted, shifted to a point where many of us believe that today we are actually at an inflection."

The minister carefully brought multipolarity and plurilateralism in same address while trying to define the evolving global order. He said "Today, we are looking really at a global landscape which is much more regional, which is, as I said, much more characterised by countries who have their strong interests and which have the ability to pursue that interest. And so a lot of what we see in terms of the world is really how does the politics of convergence of the world is really how does the politics of convergence play out. And a third word which would occur to me is 'plurilateralism'. It's a very ugly word, but it in a sense describes a world beyond bilateral relations but which are short of multilateral. That where countries form combinations based on these convergences and overlaps that I've talked about. And you have really this phenomenon of groups of countries coming together for often a limited agenda, sometimes in an agreed theatre to pursue their interests." The recent global events and India's measured stance on several of these reflect what the EAM spoke about in New York, and a rebalance is underway. (The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

Previously, ration cards were issued by the government to provide food grains and other rations to the poor at subsidised rates. However, when workers moved to another state, they often lost access to these benefits, particularly in more developed states like Gujarat. With this new system, that issue is resolved, adding another significant chapter to this revolutionary initiative.

Union Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution, Nimuben Bambhaniya, recently inaugurated Gujarat's first grain ATM in Bhavnagar, facilitating 24/7 ration distribution under the Central Government's Public Distribution System (PDS). The grain ATM, called Annapoorti, was installed in the Karchaliapara area of Bhavnagar city to free the poor from India's outdated, bureaucratic ration distribution system. According to Minister Bambhaniya, the grain ATM represents a global success story. She expressed pride in the Annapoorti scheme, a globally awarded solution developed in India, which is set to be operational in multiple states. Based on a year-long pilot program, the Annapoorti technology, developed by WFP India, is an important step toward improving food security and ensuring that people receive their rations efficiently and accurately. The new system allows people to obtain their ration from any PDS shop, reducing dependence on shop owners and minimising corruption. After the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system, the biggest beneficiaries of grain ATMs will be migrant laborers and disadvantaged communities who live outside their home states for extended periods or are unable to reach grain shops. For



instance, if someone from Bihar or Uttar Pradesh trav-

els to Delhi or Mumbai for work, they will be able to easily access ration from PDS shops or ATMs in those cities. The 2011 census reported that about 4.1 crore people had migrated to other states for work. The Aadhaar numbers of family members on over 85 per cent of the country's ration cards are registered, enabling them to use the ATM system. India runs one of the world's largest food-based safety nets, providing subsidised grains to around 813 million people every month through a network of over 500,000 fair price shops (FPS). This initiative is key to the partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme to enhance food

security. ATMs will be installed across the state, offering 24/7 access to food grains under the National Food Security Act. The Annapurna Yojana allows anyone with a valid PDS ration card, regardless of their state or union territory, to access their entitlements. The ATM can deliver up to 50 kg of grain in just five minutes, reducing waiting time by 70 percent. Once biometric authentication with an Aadhaar card is complete, users will have continuous access to their entire ration. The modular design of the ATM allows for easy assembly based on the available space. Additionally, Annapoorti is energy-efficient and can be connected to solar panels for automa-

tic refilling. The grain ATM is designed to distribute wheat and rice and includes a tank with a capacity to hold 2,500 kg of grains, according to an official release. Officials explained that individuals covered under the National Food Security Act can visit the grain ATM at any time, punch in their ration card, authenticate their identity using the fingerprint scanner, and collect their monthly ration. However, there is speculation that the grain ATM in Bhavnagar could also be used to attract migrant voters in the upcoming assembly elections. (The writer is a senior journalist; views expressed are personal)

## How global powers exploit democratic ideals



V K BAHUGUNA

From the overthrow of governments to the double standards in addressing terrorism, democracy has been reduced to a fashionable tool of manipulation by global superpowers



One of the remarkable characteristics of the modern era is reflected in the progress of democracy, and the rise of nation-states. The modern era in the real sense started after the end of the Second World War with the establishment of the United Nations (UN) on October 25, 1945 at the end of the San Francisco conference which was attended by 50 countries and the UN Charter was adopted. The United Nations is the global diplomatic and political platform for ensuring international peace, progress and security. The democratic form of governance, freedom, equality and dignity of humanity is the cornerstone of the modern era. In this regard, world leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King played a very vital role in ending colonial rule in Asia, Africa and other such countries.

Since then world leaders swear by the power of the masses in democracy and the rule of the elected leaders. The UN Security Council assumes the role of overseeing the peace and security of the world, especially the five Veto yielding countries China, Britain, France, Russia and the United States yield enormous clout in the Security Council. However, the Veto power in practice and particularly is used by these powers for thwarting any issue if one of them does not like it due to their geo-political interests and international alliance.

More than 80 years after the establishment of the UN, the world is still in the grip of intense conflicts and the noble objectives of the UN for ensuring world peace and security are lost in the realpolitik of big powers which smacks of hypocrisy and inherent bias. There are several examples of the derailing of the true democratic edifice of the world's governments, especially in third-world countries by the United States and Western powers. A recent example is dethroning of Sheikh Hasina Wazed's government in Bangladesh a classical example of hypocrisy by America and its allies.

Similarly, in dealing with terrorism the white race has double standards. I can kill



MORE THAN 80 YEARS AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN, THE WORLD IS STILL IN THE GRIP OF INTENSE CONFLICTS AND THE NOBLE OBJECTIVES OF THE UN FOR ENSURING WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY ARE LOST IN THE REALPOLITIK OF BIG POWERS WHICH SMACKS OF HYPOCRISY AND INHERENT BIAS

my terrorist anywhere in the world like America did to Osama Bin Laden and Khalistani terrorists and protagonists are provided with a platform to bash up India recently when the American President and Bill Clinton former President hosted and hailed Muhammad Yunus as a savour of democracy and human rights a few weeks ago with the promise of full support. Mr Yunus heads the puppet interim Government of Bangladesh as Chief Advisor. The world is asking America the lone super power is it permissible to oust a government by engineering well-orchestrated violent agitation. When the Indian Prime Minister was in the USA last month the Khalistani leaders were hosted by the white house. Every such thing is done in the name of democracy.

If this is allowed at the international level then any government can be ousted by the frustrated opposition in league with foreign powers. Is it, not neo-colonialism being practised under the nose of the United Nations itself? Though the Hasina government might have committed some blunders after all, it was an elected government and the world should not support such illegal seizure of power by students origin well-planned violent agitations. United States, China and the Western block have been supporting such regimes routinely in African countries and Pakistan and Bangladesh for the past several decades.

The anger against such hypocrisy of world leaders is growing and if the modern era has to survive the third world war which in any case is undergoing a different pattern in Europe and the West Asia, the people have to junk this system of the United Nations which is becoming a talking machine, a burden on its resources and sub-serving the

geo-political undemocratic stance of powerful countries making a mockery of the lofty UN Charter. The democracy Western leaders in UN practice can aptly be termed as 'Fashionable Democracy'. This fashionable democracy is a tool to perpetuate and support all kind of undemocratic regimes that comes to power in the name of democracy, human rights and liberty. These lofty goals are being pooh-poohed by the powerful countries. There are talks about deep states interfering in the affairs of the countries to upset the ruling regimes that do not fall in line. In this regard, the non-state actors play a significant role though the national governments may not be promoting it directly but in the name of democracy, many outsiders do influence the government.

The Indo-US relations built steadily after the end of the cold war during the last 25 years are a shining example of two democratic governments ensuring a global alliance of strategic importance to thwart the attempts of Chinese ambitions to browbeat other countries in the Asia-Pacific region. But the Cold War psychology of the white house is still promoting countries inimical to democratic values in the Indian sub-continent especially Pakistan which is ruled by the Army with a proxy government.

This may derail the India-USA strategic relationship. Even Sheikh Hasina opined that her government was toppled after she refused to part with San Martin Island to the United States. China instead of supporting India, with which it has cultural affinity as well as trade interests, supports and aids Pakistan and has been fomenting trouble in the North-East and Ladakh for a long time with its expansionist vision and is a poten-

tial threat to world peace. Thus, it is a clear indication that the geopolitics of the world needs a serious rethink. If one analysis the sequence of events over the past 80 years or so the main reason for such behaviour of powerful countries is due to the patently undemocratic nature of assigning the Veto power to winners of the Second World War.

As for democracy, I would appropriately call it fashionable democracy to fool the people around the world in the name of democracy and liberty and this disease is also spreading in most of the countries all over the world including India where democracy has given way to Dynastic Democracy. The state of present day democracies was aptly forecasted by Socrates the ancient Greek Philosopher who said more than 2000 years ago that 'Democracies would elect Demagogues'. India is a glaring example of such leaders in states who pander to this and skilfully use democracies to perpetuate their family interests in power games and practising vote bank politics.

The Father of Athenian democracy was Cleisthenes who lived from 570 BC to 508 BC and who as Chief Magistrate successfully imposed democracy in the Athens assembly against the nobles hence is appropriately called as Father of World Democracy must be weeping in his grave seeing how democracy is being run by the world leaders and thus people of the modern era in the 21st Century. Is it, not food for thought for all of us who believe in true democracy because there is no alternative to true democracy like the ancient Indian panchayat system? At least India should reform from within and then lead the rest of the world.

(The writer is a former civil servant; views are personal)

## One Nation, One Ration: Revolutionising food security with 24/7 grain ATMs

These grain ATMs are a major step in India's fight against hunger. Biometric authentication and Aadhaar-linked portability ensures streamlined distribution

Since June 1, 2020, under the Modi administration, the 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system has been implemented across India, marking the beginning of a revolutionary scheme. Its purpose is to provide food grains to the poor, particularly those who migrate from one state to another, through a single ration card.

Initially, the system was launched in two clusters comprising four states (Andhra Pradesh-Telangana and Maharashtra-Gujarat). Even then, work was underway on inter-state ration card portability in other states. The government claimed that the common people would benefit most from this scheme.



# Boat capsizes in Congo, killing at least 50 people: Witnesses

AP ■ GOMA

A boat carrying scores of passengers capsized on Lake Kivu in eastern Congo on Thursday, killing at least 50 people, witnesses told The Associated Press.

It was not immediately clear exactly how many people were on board or how many perished but witnesses said they saw rescue services recover at least 50 bodies from the water. They said 10 people survived and were taken to the local hospital.

The boat, overloaded with passengers, sank while trying to dock just metres (yards) away from the port of Kituku, the witnesses said. It was going from Minova in South Kivu province to Goma, in North Kivu province.

Local authorities said that the rescue efforts continued and the death toll remained unknown for the moment. In February, the majority of the 50 passengers aboard a wooden boat were presumed dead after

the vessel capsized on Lake Kivu. "This boat was carrying about a hundred people when it had the capacity for about thirty passengers," the governor of the province of South Kivu Jean-Jacques Purusi told a local radio station following the accident.

It was the latest deadly boat accident in the central African country, where overcrowding on vessels is often to blame. Maritime regulations also are often not followed.

Congolese officials have often warned against overcrowding and vowed to punish those violating safety measures for water transportation. But in remote areas where most passengers come from, many are unable to afford public transport for the few available roads.

In June, an overloaded boat sank near the capital of Kinshasa and 80 passengers lost their lives. In January, 22 people died on Lake Mai-Ndombe and in April 2023, six were killed and 64 went miss-

ing on Lake Kivu.

Witnesses said the boat that capsized on Thursday was visibly overcrowded.

"I was at the port of Kituku when I saw the boat arriving from Minova, full of passengers," Francine Munyi told the AP. "It started to lose its balance and sank into the lake. Some people threw themselves into the water."

"Many died, and few were saved," she added. "I couldn't help them because I don't know how to swim."

The victims' families and Goma residents gathered at the port of Kituku, accusing authorities of negligence in the face of growing insecurity in the region.

Since the fighting between the armed forces and the M23 rebels made the road between the cities of Goma and Minova impassable, forcing the closure of the passage to trucks transporting food, many traders have resorted to maritime transport on Lake Kivu. It's an

alternative considered safer than road traffic, which is threatened by insecurity. But according to Elia Asumani, a shipping agent who works on this line, the situation has become dangerous: "We are afraid," he told the AP. "This shipwreck was predictable." Bienfait Sematumba, 27, said he lost four family members.

"They are all dead. I am alone now," he said, sobbing. "If the authorities had ended the war, this shipwreck would never have happened."

The survivors, about 10 of them, were taken to Kyeshero hospital for treatment. One of them, Neema Chimanga, said she was still in shock.

"We saw the boat start to fill with water halfway," she recounted to the AP. "The door of the boat opened, and we tried to close it. But the water was already coming in, and the boat tilted." "I threw myself into the water and started swimming," she said. "I don't know how I got out of the water."

AP ■ KYIV

New NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte visited Ukraine on Thursday in his first official trip since taking office and pledging the alliance's continued support for Kyiv in its war with Russia.

Rutte met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv as air raid sirens twice went off in the Ukrainian capital.

The new head of NATO vowed when he took office on Tuesday to help shore up Western support for Ukraine, which has been fighting Russia's full-scale invasion since February 2022 and has for most of this year been on the defensive due to a relentless Russian army push in the country's eastern regions.

Rutte expressed confidence that he can work with whomever is elected president of the United States, the alliance's most powerful member, in November. That could be a key moment for Ukraine's effort to ensure continuing Western support.

# NATO chief visits Ukraine in his first trip since taking office

Zelenskyy said he discussed with Rutte elements of Ukraine's so-called victory plan, ahead of a NATO meeting at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany next week. The gathering draws together defence leaders from the 50-plus partner nations who regularly meet to coordinate weapons aid for the war. Rutte reiterated the alliance's unwavering support for Ukraine, insisting that "Ukraine is closer to NATO than ever before".

He said recent steps taken by NATO "build a bridge to NATO membership" for Ukraine, including 40 billion euros (\$44 billion) of funding assistance, bilateral security agreements between allies, and the formation of a new NATO command to coordinate assistance and training. Rutte arrived after a Russian glide bomb struck a five-story apartment block in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring at least 12 people, including a 3-year-old girl, local officials said Thursday.

The bomb hit between the third and fourth floors of the building on Wednesday night, igniting a fire, Kharkiv regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov said. Firefighters searched for survivors through smoke and rubble.

The city of Kharkiv, around 30 km (18 miles) from the Russian border, has been a frequent target of aerial attacks throughout the war against Russia that is now deep into its third year. Increasingly common in the war, glide bombs have terrorised civilians and bludgeoned the Ukrainian army's front-line defences. Ukraine has no effective countermeasure for glide bombs, which are launched from Russian aircraft inside Russia. They were a key weapon in Russia's capture of the tactically significant town of Vuhledar on Wednesday, as Russian forces wreak destruction on the eastern Donetsk region and force weary Ukrainian troops to withdraw from obliterated towns and villages.

# 12 hurt as Russian bomb hits Ukrainian apartment

AP ■ KYIV

A Russian glide bomb struck a five-story apartment block in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, injuring at least 12 people including a 3-year-old girl, local officials said Thursday. The bomb hit between the third and fourth floors of the building on Wednesday night, igniting blazes, Kharkiv regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. Firefighters searched for survivors through smoke and rubble.



Rescue workers clear the rubble inside a building damaged by a Russian airstrike in Kharkiv, Ukraine, Thursday. AP/PTI

The city of Kharkiv, located around 30 kilometers (18 miles) from the Russian border, has been a frequent target of aerial attacks throughout the war against Russia that is now deep into its third year. Glide bombs have become an

increasingly common weapon in the war. They have terrorised civilians and bludgeoned the Ukrainian army's front-line defenses. They were a key

weapon in Russia's capture of the tactically significant town of Vuhledar on Wednesday, as Russian forces wreak destruction on the eastern Donetsk

region and force weary Ukrainian troops to withdraw from obliterated towns and villages. Ukraine has no effective countermeasure for glide bombs, which are launched from Russian aircraft inside Russia. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the latest Kharkiv attack highlighted the urgent need for increased support from Ukraine's Western allies.

Zelenskyy recently held talks with officials in the United States in an effort to ensure further Western military support. Russia has had the battlefield initiative since late last year, when a Ukrainian counteroffensive petered out. Ukraine is grappling with a critical manpower problem on the front line and is straining to hold back Russia's grinding assaults.

Though Russia's battlefield gains have been incremental, its steady forward movement is adding up as the Ukrainians are pushed backward and yield ground. Both sides have kept up regular cross-border aerial attacks, usually at night.

Ukraine's air force said Thursday that 78 out of 105 Shahed drones launched by Russia overnight were destroyed on Thursday as 15 regions of the country came under attack. The Russian military, meanwhile, intercepted 113 Ukrainian drones overnight, according to a statement by the Defense Ministry in Moscow.

The drones were destroyed over four Russian regions on the border with Ukraine — Belgorod, Bryansk, Kursk and Voronezh, it said.

# Votes against party lines can be counted, rules Pak's top court

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the votes cast by lawmakers in parliament against their party directions can be counted, in a major relief to the government seeking support for a constitutional amendment to tweak laws related to the judiciary.

The apex court's previous ruling had stated that the votes of parliamentarians who deviated from their party's directives were to be disregarded and not counted. The Supreme Court Bar Association had filed a review petition against the apex court's verdict related to the defection clause under Article 63-A of the Constitution.

Hearing the plea, a five-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa announced the unanimous verdict and approved the review petition with the top judge saying the detailed verdict would be issued later.

The bench comprising Chief Justice Isa and justices Naem Akhtar Afghan, Aminuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail and Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhal issued the verdict after hearing the petition that the bench had started on Monday.

The court in its May 17, 2022 verdict had said that the votes of the lawmakers would not be counted but after granting of review petition, the vote would be counted but the person going against the party line would lose his seat.

The 2022 verdict was given in response to the presidential case filed by then-President Arif Alvi. It was then a 3-2 split decision, with then-chief justice Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar being the majority verdict authors. The development comes as the government is struggling to get support for its planned constitutional amendment to tweak laws related to the top judiciary.

# Imran Khan's party claims over 700 supporters held ahead of protests

Lahore (PTI): Over 700 supporters of the jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan were arrested from different parts of Punjab province on Thursday, a day before a major showdown in Islamabad by his party for the independence of the judiciary, release of the party founder and against rising inflation.

"Do or die — October 4th is the battle cry! No more waiting, no more silence. This is the final stand at D Chowk (Islamabad), where the brave gather and the weak fall behind. We are unstoppable, unbreakable, and ready to fight for the soul of this nation. Either we win or we perish trying," Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said soon after the arrests started. It said the Punjab police arrested over 700 its workers and leaders in different districts including Bahawalpur, Faisalabad, Mianwali and Jhang following its announcement to hold protests on Friday demanding independence of the judiciary, release of party founder Imran Khan and against rising inflation.

Punjab's provincial government had adopted similar measures to prevent PTI's Jalsa — the power show — at Lahore last month. Khan, 71, has been in jail since his arrest on August 5, 2023. Facing dozens of cases, he has been convicted in a few of them. His party has been staging protests demanding his release and claiming that the government should adhere to the constitution and the independence of the judiciary.

PTI's central information secretary Sheikh Waqas Akram said the government led by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had sealed the Red Zone in Islamabad and was taking similar measures in other cities to stop PTI workers from holding protests and public meetings. "PTI's call for protests has panicked the government which is why it is sealing the cities," he said. The Punjab police have deployed heavy contingents of police and put in place containers at the entry and exit points of all cities to stop the protesters' movement, he said. "The selected districts were turned into no-go areas for the residents of Punjab and those inside the cities were not allowed to go out." Punjab's provincial government on Thursday also imposed Section 144 in Lahore banning all kinds of political assemblies, gatherings, rallies and protests. On Wednesday, despite the restrictions, party workers including women, took to the streets, managed to cross hurdles and survived tear-gas shelling to stage rallies in different cities, the PTI said. Chief minister Maryam Nawaz, daughter of Khan's arch rival Nawaz Sharif, said political activity is allowed in the province but not terrorism by the PTI. "We will deal with such elements with iron hands," she said. Khan's party held three major political events, including a rally each in Islamabad and Lahore, and a protest in Rawalpindi. The party had called for protests in Mianwali, Bahawalpur and Faisalabad on Wednesday, which would be followed by a power show at D-Chowk in Islamabad on Friday.

# Amid reshuffle, B'desh recalls envoy from India

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh's interim government has recalled five envoys, including its high commissioner in New Delhi, as it carried out a second phase of reshuffle in the diplomatic service alongside the domestic administration, an official said

on Thursday. The interim government led by Professor Muhammad Yunus as the Chief Adviser has asked Bangladesh's envoys in India, Brussels, Canberra, Lisbon, and the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York to return immediately and report to the foreign ministry here as part of the latest reshuffle. "The recalling of the envoys is part of a government decision under which our High Commissioner to India, Mustafizur Rahman, has been asked to return to the foreign ministry in Dhaka," an official said on Thursday, preferring anonymity. Bangladesh High

Commissioner in London Sadia Muna Tasneem was asked to return to Dhaka four days ago. The foreign service witnessed a major change in late August, weeks after the ouster of the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5 after a massive student-led

mass upheaval. The upsurge installed the Nobel Laureate's interim administration on August 8. Dhaka, at that time, ordered its ambassadors to the United States, Russia, Germany, Japan, the United Arab Emirates & Saudi Arabia and the High Commissioner to the Maldives to return home.

**SALE NOTICE**

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

Case Details	Asset Details
ICICI Bank Ltd Vs GULFISHA CS (COMM) 4395/21	Make and Model- MARUTI SWIFT Vehicle No-DL2CAZ4264, Manuf. Yr 2018

Auction Date : 4-November 2024  
Venue: Godara Yard, Kheoni No:166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chock, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhraili, Gurugram  
Contact Person- Rohit Shrivastava (8657476284)/ Vijay Sharma (9372730494)

**Terms of Sale**

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participants are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids.

Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sole amount within 5 days from the approval date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT.

The intending bidders may visit at ICICI Bank Ltd, Plot No. 23, Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle

**ICICI Bank**

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, Shal Tower, 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005

**PUBLIC NOTICE:**  
Builder Cancellation

**Public Notice:**  
This is to bring to your notice that ANKUR TYAGI/ SHWETA TYAGI (borrowers) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number LBNOD00003078610 located at FLAT NO 1123, 11TH FLOOR, FERRARA MAHAGUN MEZZARIA SIENA, PLOT NO GH-01/A SECTOR 75, GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, NOIDA - 201301. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.

The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated June 02, 2021, informing that MAHAGUN INDIA PVT LTD, has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.

Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.

Dated: October 04, 2024 For ICICI Bank Limited  
Place : Delhi/NCR

Case Ref. No. DIAC/566/11-22

In the matter of  
M/s Mihurisha Global Marketing Pvt. Ltd. ...Claimant

Versus  
M/s Anil Bhutani Products ...Respondent

**Notice to Respondent**  
M/s Anil Bhutani Products having Reg. office at H. No. 415, 1st Floor, Sector-22, Faridabad, Haryana-121005.

Whereas the above noted case is listed before Sole Arbitrator Smt. Kamalakhshi Singh Chauhan, The Delhi International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), Delhi High Court, 5-BLOCK, New Delhi on 09.10.2024 at 2p.m. Since despite the service, no one has appeared and represented the Respondent (M/s Anil Bhutani) on date fixed i.e., 23.09.2024. Consequently, the Ld. Arbitrator has directed the Claimant (M/s Mihurisha Global Marketing Pvt. Ltd.) to serve the respondent through publication as a precautionary measure before proceeding Ex-Parte against Respondent.

In pursuance to and compliance with the order dated 23.09.2024, we hereby serve upon you the present notice to appear before the person or through your Authorized Representative before the Ld. Arbitrator, DIAC in captioned matter on 09.10.2024 at 2p.m. Please note, in case no one appears on the said date, time and venue before the Ld. Sole Arbitrator, the matter will be heard and determined Ex-Parte in your absence.

Smt. Kamalakhshi Singh Chauhan (Sole Arbitrator)  
The Delhi International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)  
Delhi High Court, 5-Block, New Delhi  
Tel: 011-23386492

**THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.**  
C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi-110058

Phone: 011-25611042, 25611043, 25611044  
Email: legal@kangrabank.com, legal1@kangrabank.com, Website: www.kangrabank.com

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

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized officer of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", Head office at, C-29, Community Centre, Pankha Road, Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058, having its registered office at 1916, Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj, New Delhi-110055, under The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule [3] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Bank had issued a demand notice on dated 27-06-2023 calling upon the borrower Sh. Ganesh Gupta S/o. Sh. Kumar Pal Gupta R/o. RZ-82, Gali No. 1, Main Sagarpur, New Delhi-110046 and calling upon the Mortgagee/sureties namely: Smt. Sneh Lata, W/o. Sh. Kumar Pal Gupta, R/o. RZ-82, Gali No.1, Main Sagarpur, New Delhi-110046, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.22,32,298/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakhs Thirty Two Thousand Two Hundred and Ninety Eight Only), together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of the notice till the date of payment, with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the notice.

The above mentioned borrower, mortgagor & surety having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, mortgagor, surety and the public in general that the Bank has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the property described here in below in exercise of powers conferred under sub-section (4) of section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, read with rule [8] of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, on this 27<sup>th</sup> day of September 2024.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the mortgaged property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "The Kangra Co-operative Bank Ltd.", for an amount of Rs. 22,32,298/- together with further interest, penal interest and other charges as applicable to this Loan account from time to time, from the date of notice till the date of realization together with all the costs incurred by the Bank in realizing the said amount.

The borrower, mortgagor & surety attention is also invited towards provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of The Securitisation and Reconstruction of the Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, in respect of time available, to redeem the below mentioned mortgaged property/Secured Asset.

DISCRPTION OF THE PROPERTY	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY
The property under consideration is entire built-up property bearing no. RZ-82, and roof rights, area measuring 24 Sq. Yds.	All that part and parcel of the BUILTUP PROPERTY BEARING NO. RZ-82, ON PLOT NO.82, LAND AREA MEASURING 24 SQ.YDS., WITH ALL THE ROOF RIGHTS, OUT OF KHASRA NO.2124, SITUATED IN THE REVENUE ESTATE OF VILLAGE DABRI, DELHI STATE DELHI, ABADI KNOWN AS WEST SAGARPUR, NEW DELHI-110046. Falling Under the Registration of Sub-Registrar IX, New Delhi/Delhi.

Bounded as under:-  
EAST : HOUSE OF OTHERS, WEST : HOUSE OF OTHERS, NORTH : NALA ROAD, SOUTH : PART OF PROPERTY NO. RZ-82.

(HARISH SHARMA)  
AUTHORISED OFFICER  
THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.  
HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58.  
DELHI.  
DATED : 27.09.2024

**THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.**  
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Bounded as under:-  
EAST : HOUSE OF OTHERS, WEST : HOUSE OF OTHERS, NORTH : NALA ROAD, SOUTH : PART OF PROPERTY NO. RZ-82.

(HARISH SHARMA)  
AUTHORISED OFFICER  
THE KANGRA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LTD.  
HEAD OFFICE AT, C-29, COMMUNITY CENTRE, PANKHA ROAD, JANAKPURI, NEW DELHI-58.  
DELHI.  
DATED : 27.09.2024

# Singapore court jails Indian-origin ex-minister for 12 months

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore's Indian-origin former transport minister S Iswaran has been sentenced to 12 months jail on Thursday by the High Court for obtaining gifts worth about SGD 403,300 over seven years, from two businessmen he considered his friends. The 62-year-old pleaded guilty to four charges relating to receiving gifts and one blocking justice on September 24, the first day of trial proceedings, cutting short what was set to be a protracted trial with 56 prosecution witnesses.

In sentencing, Justice Vincent Hoong said he had considered submissions on sentence from both prosecution and defence but was "ultimately unable to agree with both the positions taken". In his sentencing remarks, Justice Hoong emphasised that trust and confidence in public institutions are the bedrock of effective governance. The judge added that the former minister abused the position to accept gifts worth about SGD 403,300 (USD 313,200). He said, "This can all too easily be undermined by a public servant who falls below standards of integrity and accountability." The judge said it was significant that Iswaran had made public statements rejecting the charges as

false. "In a letter to the Prime Minister, Iswaran said he rejected the charges and was innocent, and believed he would be acquitted. Thus, I have difficulty believing that he was remorseful," The Straits Times quoted the Judge as saying. As Justice Hoong addressed the court, Iswaran looked down and took notes. The judge added, "The higher the office held by the offender as a public servant, the higher his level of culpability." He said such individuals set the tone of public servants in conducting themselves with high standards of integrity, and they must avoid any perception that they are susceptible to influence to financial benefits. Iswaran's lead lawyer Davinder Singh had argued for no more than eight weeks' jail, while Deputy Attorney-General Tai Wei Shyong sought a jail term of six to seven months. "I'm of the view it is appropriate to impose a sentence in excess of both parties' positions," said Justice Hoong, adding that taking the submission of either prosecution or defence would result in a "manifestly inadequate sentence". Justice Hoong noted certain aggravating factors such as the total duration of Iswaran's offending, the high office he occupied and the overall harm to public interest as well as trust in public institutions.



# Prosecutors lay out new evidence in Trump election case

**AP ■ WASHINGTON**

Donald Trump laid the groundwork to try to overturn the 2020 election even before he lost, knowingly pushed false claims of voter fraud and "resorted to crimes" in his failed bid to cling to power, according to a newly unsealed court filing from prosecutors that lays out fresh details from the landmark criminal case against the former president.

The filing from special counsel Jack Smith's team offers the most comprehensive view to date of what prosecutors intend to prove if the case charging Trump with conspiring to overturn the election reaches trial.

Through a months-long congressional investigation and the indictment itself have chronicled in stark detail Trump's efforts to undo the election, the new filing cites previously unknown accounts offered by Trump's closest aides to paint a portrait of an "increasingly desperate" president who while losing his grip on the White House "used deceit to target every stage of the electoral process."

"So what?" the filing quotes Trump as telling an aide after being alerted that his vice-pres-



ident, Mike Pence, was in potential danger after a crowd of violent supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021.

"The details don't matter," Trump said, when told by an advisor that a lawyer who was mounting his legal challenges wouldn't be able to prove the false allegations in court, the filing states.

The filing was submitted, initially under seal, following a Supreme Court opinion that conferred broad immunity on former presidents for official acts they take in office, narrowing the scope of the prosecution charging Trump with conspiring to overturn the results of the election he lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

The purpose of the brief is to con-

vince US District Judge Tanya Chutkan that the offences charged in the indictment are private, rather than official, acts and can therefore remain part of the indictment as the case moves forward. Chutkan permitted a redacted version to be made public.

"Although the defendant was the incumbent president during the charged conspiracies, his scheme was fundamentally a private one," Smith's team wrote, adding, "When the defendant lost the 2020 presidential election, he resorted to crimes to try to stay in office."

Trump campaign spokesman Steven Cheung called the brief "falsehood-ridden" and "unconstitutional" and repeated off-stated allegations that Smith and Democrats were "hell-bent on weaponising the Justice Department in an attempt to cling to power."

"The release of the falsehood-ridden, Unconstitutional J6 brief immediately following Tim Walz's disastrous debate performance is another obvious attempt by the Harris-Biden regime to undermine American Democracy and interfere in this election."

The filing includes details of conversations between Trump and Pence, including a private lunch the two had on November 12, 2020, in which Pence "reiterated a face-saving option" for Trump, telling him, "don't concede but recognise the process is over," according to prosecutors.

In another private lunch days later, Pence urged Trump to accept the results of the election and run again in 2024.

"I don't know, 2024 is so far off," Trump told him, according to the filing.

But Trump "disregarded" Pence "in the same way he disregarded dozens of court decisions that unanimously rejected his and his allies' legal claims, and that he disregarded officials in the targeted states — including those in his own party — who stated publicly that he had lost and that his specific fraud allegations were false," prosecutors wrote.

Trump's "steady stream of disinformation" in the weeks after the election culminated in his speech at the Ellipse on the morning of January 6, 2021, in which Trump "used these lies to inflame and motivate the large and angry crowd of his supporters to march to the Capitol and disrupt the certification proceeding," prosecutors wrote.

# Kamala Harris surveys Hurricane Helene devastation in Georgia

**Augusta (AP):** Vice-President Kamala Harris handed out meals, embraced a shaken family and surveyed Hurricane Helene's "extraordinary" path of destruction through Georgia on Wednesday as she left the campaign trail to pledge federal help and personally take in scenes of toppled trees, damaged homes and lives upended.

She visited Augusta, where power lines stretched along the sidewalk and utility poles lay cracked and broken. The vice-president spoke from a lectern erected in front of a house with a fallen tree teetering on its roof, acknowledging those who had died in the disaster while also trying to project a tone of unity and hope for communities now facing long and expensive rebuilds.

Harris and President Joe Biden, who visited the Carolinas on Wednesday, were seeking to demonstrate commitment and competence in helping devastated communities after Republican former president Donald Trump's false claims about their administration's response.

Harris said she wanted to "personally take a look at the devastation, which is extraordinary." She expressed admiration for how "people are coming together. People are helping perfect strangers."

The Democratic presidential nominee said that shows "the vast majority of us have so much more in common than what separates us," an echo of a line she frequently uses on the campaign trail.

Before delivering her remarks, Harris could be seen embracing and huddling with a family of five grappling with the storm's aftermath.

"We are here for the long haul," she said. Harris also toured a Red Cross relief center and received a briefing from local officials, praising those working to "meet the needs of people who must be seen and must be heard."

"I am now listening," she said.

Brittany Smith, an Augusta resident, walked away from the distribution centre with Styrofoam boxes of food and some fruit cups, beaming that she got a photo with the vice-president. She said there's a hole in her roof and she had to send her kids elsewhere to live because it wasn't safe.

Harris' visit, she said, "made it better" despite the hardship. Smith said she was encouraged that Harris travelled to the town instead of just appearing on television.

"She's a person. She's not just a voice." About 200 miles north in the Carolinas, Biden was also surveying the storm's aftermath. With many of the area's roads inaccessible, he flew by helicopter over toppled trees, twisted metal and towering piles of debris in the normally tourist-friendly downtown of Asheville.

From the air, Biden saw flooded roads, piles of shredded lumber and displaced sandbags, emergency trucks and downed power lines. In one area, homes were partly underwater, and it was hard to distinguish between lake and land. Visits to disaster zones are a familiar responsibility for Biden, who has frequently been called on to survey damage and comfort victims after tornadoes, wildfires and tropical storms. But this was Harris' first visit to a disaster area as vice-president.

Because of the destruction where Biden was on Wednesday, he was unable to walk

around and personally comfort people as Harris did in Georgia.

Biden wore a vest and boots and, before his air tour, he hugged and grabbed the hand of Asheville Mayor Esther Manheimer, who was at the airport in Greenville, South Carolina, to meet him. The mayor, with visible emotion, said they could not close down the area's one operable road for Biden's motorcade.

Biden will be back in the region Thursday to visit Florida and Georgia, and Harris plans her own North Carolina trip in coming days — as Helene's aftermath continues to pose a political and humanitarian test for the administration.

Before leaving Washington, Biden made a point of mentioning how an ongoing dockworkers strike could make getting supplies to hard-hit areas more difficult.

"Natural disasters are incredibly consequential. The last thing we need on top of that is a man-made disaster that's going on at the ports," he said. "We're getting pushback already, we're hearing from the folks regionally that they're having trouble getting product that they need because of the port strike." Harris is being especially watched as her bid for the White House enters its closing stretch, and Helene's path included the battleground states of Georgia and North Carolina.

The vice-president last visited scenes of natural disasters as a California senator, including when she went to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria in 2017 and when she walked through charred wreckage in Paradise, California, after the camp fire in 2018.

# UK hands over Chagos Islands to Mauritius, holds on to military base

**PTI ■ LONDON**

The UK on Thursday announced a "historic" agreement that will see Britain hand over sovereignty of the remote Chagos Islands in the Indian Ocean to Mauritius while it retains the joint UK-US military base on Diego Garcia. The British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) status of the disputed archipelago, made up of around 60 islands, has been in contention for many years and negotiations over its future began under the previous Conservative Party government in 2022. Under the agreement announced this week, the tropical atoll of Diego Garcia — which the West says plays a crucial role in the region's stability and international security — will remain under UK and US jurisdiction for at least the next 99 years. "This government inherited a situation where the longer-term, secure operation of the Diego Garcia military base was under threat, with contested sovereignty and ongoing legal challenges," said UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy. "Today's agreement secures this

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

General public is hereby informed that my client Sri. Manoj Kumar Sharma R/O GF-1207, Ram Nagar, Delhi-110032, and her husband have severed all their relations with their sons (1) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (2) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (3) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (4) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (5) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (6) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (7) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (8) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (9) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (10) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (11) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (12) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (13) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (14) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (15) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (16) Anand Prakash Gupta and his wife Prasenjit Gupta, (17) 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# Samsung workers protest continues to 4th week

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Workers of Samsung India Electronics Ltd on Wednesday observed a token fast near the factory in Chennai on Wednesday, as part of intensifying their ongoing protest which entered the fourth week. Communist Party of India (Marxist) led Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) which is spearheading the protest by the employees said they would be meeting the Director of Factories in a day or two, alleging that the Korean electronics giant has roped in temporary workers to work in the shop floors in view of the strike. About 1,100 employees of Samsung India Electronics Ltd are on strike since September 9 pressing for various demands including wage revision and better work conditions. While several rounds of talks held in the presence of the Labour Department and company



officials failed, another tripartite meeting has been planned for next week, said CITU leaders. "We are observing a token fast today. We want the state government to come forward and resolve the issue fast. Our most important demand is to recognise the Samsung India Workers Union by the labour department at the earliest. "The temporary

labourers are not trained like regular employees and this attitude by the management is not acceptable. We will file a complaint with the Director of Factories in a day or two," said the trade union leaders. Samsung's Chennai unit produces consumer durables at the factory including air-conditioners, refrigerators and television sets. Recently, Union Labour Minister

Mansukh Mandaviya wrote to the Tamil Nadu government urging to resolve the issue amicably. On Tuesday, the CITU members staged a protest in some districts as part of extending their support to the Samsung India workers. They were detained by the police and were released later. Samsung India recently said scores of agitating workers have returned to work soon after it issued a show-cause notice. "The management has already indicated that all the issues can be resolved by discussions and has made various harmonious attempts to resolve differences and for your report to duty," Samsung had said. Due to the strike, Samsung India said the impact on the plant operations was minimal and added that the welfare of the employees is of top priority and would engage with them to address any grievances they may have.

# Government launches internship programme for youth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday rolled out the internship programme that will provide financial assistance of Rs 60,000 per annum to 1 crore youth over a period of five years. In 2024-25, the total cost of the pilot project will be around Rs 800 crore and will look to provide internship to 1.25 lakh candidates during this fiscal, government sources said on Thursday. Announced in the Union Budget 2024, the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme in Top Companies will also provide insurance coverage to the interns. The scheme will be implemented through an online portal developed by the corporate affairs ministry. Subject to certain conditions, youth aged between 21 and 24 years will be eligible for the scheme, the sources said.



The internship programme will commence on December 2. The other company/ bank/ financial institution can participate in the scheme with the approval of the ministry, which will take into consideration factors like sectors and areas under-represented by the top 500 companies. The interns will be provided a financial assistance of Rs 5,000 per month and out of

the total amount, Rs 4,500 will be disbursed by the government and Rs 500 will be paid by the company from its CSR funds. Also, a one time grant of Rs 6,000 for incidentals will be disbursed by the ministry to each intern, upon joining the place of internship. Expenses associated with the training of interns under the scheme will be borne by the company from its CSR funds. Insurance coverage will be

provided to each individual intern under insurance schemes of the Union government, PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and PM Suraksha Bima Yojana. The premium amount in this regard will be offered by the government. As part of the eligibility criteria, sources said, candidates enrolled in online/ distance learning programmes are eligible to apply. Candidates who have passed High School, Higher Secondary School, possess a certificate from an ITI, hold a diploma from a Polytechnic Institute, or are graduates with degrees such as BA, B.Sc, B.Com, BCA, BBA, B.Pharm, etc. Are eligible, sources said. Partner Companies will have a dedicated dashboard on the portal where they can post internship opportunities, detailing location, nature, required qualifications, and any facilities provided.



# Kia launches two new MPV

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kia India today launched the second-generation of their Kia Carnival Multi-Person Vehicle (MPV) and the EV9 electric MPV for Rs

63.9 lakh and Rs 1.29 crore respectively. The Carnival sold 14,500 units in its first generation and Kia expects the new vehicles to help it climb into the luxury segment in India.

# SEBI lowers InvIT trading lot to ₹ 25 lakh



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has drastically reduced the trading lot size of privately placed infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) to Rs 25 lakh in a bid to boost investors' participation and increase liquidity of such investment vehicles. The current trading lot for

secondary market trading for privately placed InvITs is set at Rs 1 crore. Further, if the InvIT invests at least 80 per cent of its asset value in completed and revenue-generating assets, then the trading lot is Rs 2 crore. "Trading lot for the purpose of trading of units on the designated stock exchange shall be Rs 25 lakh," Sebi said

in its notification dated September 26. The move came into effect the same day. The move will help increase the liquidity of privately placed InvIT units by permitting a broader base of investors to participate in the market and boost diversification of investment portfolios. In separate notifications, Sebi

has amended its rules on infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs) to reduce compliance burden and facilitate ease of doing business. Under this, Sebi has fixed the timeline for undertaking distributions to unitholders by the REIT and InvIT to five working days from the date of declaration. The move is expected to bring efficiency to the distribution process and will aid in making funds available to investors within a relatively shorter period of time. The markets regulator has allowed REITs and InvITs to call a unitholders' meeting after giving shorter notice (less than 21 days) if consent is granted by writing or in electronic mode. In case of an annual meeting, consent by at least 95 per cent of unit holders will be needed and in case of any other meeting, consent by a majority of unit holders will be required.



# Mahindra Thar ROXX sees 1.76 lakh bookings in 60 minutes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mahindra which in September overtook Tata Motors for the third position in India's passenger vehicle market and came extremely close to dethroning Hyundai from second position today claimed that their new Thar

ROXX SUV has bookings of 1,76,218 units in the first 60 minutes. The Mahindra Thar ROXX which is the five door variant of the very popular Thar off-road SUV was launched on August 14 and prices start at Rs 12.99 lakh going up to Rs 22.49 lakh for the fully-loaded AX7L 4x4 model.

# Goyal seeks US investments for Indian manufacturing



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has held a series of meetings with US business leaders in New York to seek investments in India. He met Chief Operating Officer of BlackRock Robert Goldstein, Chairman and CEO of Systems Technology Group Anup Popat, CEO of Tillman Holdings Sanjiv Ahuja, chief executive officer of C4V Shailesh Upreti, and Janus Henderson Investors CEO Ali Dibadj. During the meetings, Goyal discussed

opportunities for collaboration to position India as a global manufacturing hub and invited the investors to increase their commercial and trade footprints in India, the commerce ministry said. In another meeting, the minister emphasised the government's commitment to improving ease of doing business, infrastructure development, IPR (intellectual property rights) reforms, and prioritising manufacturing sectors through appropriate incentive schemes.

# Coal production jumps 32 per cent in FY24-25

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The coal production from both captive and commercial coal blocks rose by 32 per cent to 79.72 Million Tonne (MT) in the April-September period of the ongoing fiscal. The coal output from both captive and commercial coal blocks was 60.52 MT in the first half of the previous fiscal. The coal dispatch rose by 34 per cent year-over-year, from 65.37 MT in H1 of FY24 to 87.86 MT in H1 of FY25. There has been "a significant rise in coal production and dispatch from both captive and commercial coal blocks during the first half of FY 2024-25, from April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, compared to the same period last year," the coal ministry said in a statement. The coal production in September rose by 32 per cent to 13.74 MT from 10.40 MT. Likewise, dispatch in the month of September has



grown by 47 per cent year-over-year, from 9.68 MT in FY24 to 14.27 MT in FY25. The coal ministry said that it applauds the efforts of all stakeholders, including coal companies and industry partners, for their invaluable support. Through collaborative initiatives and focused assistance, the ministry aims to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and output across the coal sector.

# BPCL signs pact for green fuel ecosystem at Mumbai port

PTI ■ MUMBAI

State-owned BPCL has inked an initial pact with Mumbai Port Authority and Mumbai Port Sustainability Foundation (MPSF) for setting up a green fuel ecosystem at the port. The MoU is a pivotal step towards driving India's transition to cleaner energy solutions. By focusing on green fuel innovations, this initiative aims to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to the country's climate change goals, a BPCL statement said. Additionally, the pact outlines an exploration into the conversion of diesel-powered vessels to cleaner fuel alternatives, further enhancing the port's green infrastructure and reducing its carbon footprint, it said. The agreement was formalised during the launch of the Cruise Bharat Mission by Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal at Mumbai Port earlier this week, according to BPCL. As part of the initiative, the two partners will jointly set up



EV charging stations at Mumbai Port, promoting green energy adoption for port users and the general public, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) said. "This MoU is consistent with BPCL's plans towards a sustainable tomorrow alongside our own aspiration to achieve net zero emissions in Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2040. Enabling sustainable energy solutions like LNG and EV for the maritime sector is part of our endeavour to demonstrate social responsibility and partnering for our sustainable growth with that of the communities we serve," said G Krishna Kumar, Chairman & Managing Director, BPCL. The agreement also includes provisions for waste management, as BPCL and

MPSF will work on systems for source segregation, storage, and handling of recyclable and non-recyclable solid waste at Mumbai Port, it said, adding this initiative promotes socially responsible practices, ensuring a cleaner and more sustainable operational environment. "Our partnership with MbPA is a testament to BPCL's strategic vision of advancing the sustainable fuels business. By leveraging LNG and green energy infrastructure, we aim to reshape the future of maritime operations. This collaboration reflects our commitment to driving innovation in fuel solutions that not only reduce carbon emissions but also create long-term value for the environment and the industry," said Rahul Tandon, Business Head (I&C), BPCL.

# Ashok Leyland, Nidec tie up to develop e-drive motors for commercial vehicles

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Commercial vehicle maker Ashok Leyland on Thursday said it has entered into a partnership with Japanese firm Nidec for developing e-drive motors for commercial vehicles. Under the multi-pronged collaboration, the two partners will work to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Electric Drive Units (EDUs), which will focus on developing motor technologies and power electronics systems for EVs, along with innovations in gear-shifting mechanisms, Ashok Leyland said in a statement. "This collaboration allows us

to co-develop, innovative e-drive motors specifically designed for the unique demands of India's commercial vehicle market, while significantly advancing our electric mobility capabilities," said Shenu Agarwal, Managing Director and CEO at Ashok Leyland. The collaboration will also involve joint research and development efforts, with both companies contributing to skilling, lab infrastructure, and defining novel, differentiated motor technologies for the EV portfolio of Ashok Leyland and its subsidiary Switch Mobility, the company said. Ashok Leyland further said it will continue to source motors



from Nidec for its existing EV lineup, while collaborating on research and development for future electric solutions. "Our investment strategy and motor technology are well complemented by Ashok Leyland, who understand the precise and specific demands of the commercial vehicle market," said Michael Briggs, President at Nidec Motion & Energy.

The announcement comes days after the government launched the Prime Minister E-Drive Scheme with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore for faster adoption of electric vehicles, setting up of charging infrastructure and development of EV manufacturing ecosystem in the country. The scheme has come into effect from October 1.

# Tata Power-DDL conducts Extensive Safety Awareness Drive

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited organised an extensive safety drive for its consumers and field staff to reduce the chances of electricity-related incidents. Under this drive, more than 2.28 Lakh installations including plain cement and concrete (PCC) poles, street lights, stay wires, towers, rail poles, fencing of sub stations, feeder & service pillars, PWD Poles, MCD Poles, ATMs & lights installed in parks were checked for any unsafe situation / hazard and rectifications thereof. Tata Power-DDL is dedicated to supporting Ramllela, Durga Puja, and other festive

events by providing temporary connections within 24 hours. While the discom is committed to offering tatkal connections during the festive season, the safety of people in mass gatherings remains of utmost priority. Tata Power-DDL's operations and maintenance teams would remain on high alert to handle any safety-related issues that may arise during this time. Additionally, consumers are advised to take due precautions with their wiring and avoid any loose connections, as these can lead to accidents. It is also crucial to install an ELCB (Earth Leakage Circuit Breaker)/RCCB to protect both people and equipment from electrical shocks.

## INBRIEF

### GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY RELEASES SCHEDULE

**AMRITSAR:** The online examination form submission and fee payments for December 2024 exams of Law FYIP/TYP, B.Ed., B.A.-B.Ed., B.Sc.-B.Ed., B.Com-B.Ed and B.Ed-M.Ed Sem-1 for Regular students through online portal have been scheduled.

### GNDU NSS UNIT ORGANISES WORKSHOP ON E-WASTE MANAGEMENT

**AMRITSAR:** The NSS unit of Guru Nanak Dev University, successfully organized a comprehensive E-waste management drive under the banner of "Swachhata Hi Sewa." The initiative aimed to raise awareness about the pressing issue of electronic waste.

### ZONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL OF "GCA ZONE" KICKS OFF

**AMRITSAR:** The three-day Zonal Youth Festival of "GCA Zone" of Guru Nanak Dev University began here today with great enthusiasm and energy, marked by an impressive inauguration ceremony presided over by S. Charanjit Singh Sohal, IPS SSP Amritsar (Rural). The festival will be concluded on October 5, 2024.





# WORLD ANIMAL DAY: OCTOBER 04, 2024

# A HOME FOR EVERY HEART

As we observe *World Animal Day 2024*, we embrace the theme, "The World is Their Home Too" This day serves as a powerful reminder that animals share our planet and deserve our care and protection. Let's come together to ensure that every creature feels safe and loved in the world we all inhabit, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Collage: Satish C Jakhmola

**O**n *World Animal Day*, we are reminded of a simple yet profound truth: animals share our world and in many ways, they reflect the best parts of ourselves. As we go about our lives, it's easy to forget the loyalty, grace and beauty that animals bring to this planet. Whether it's the silent strength of a tiger in the wild or the trusting eyes of a stray dog, animals have a way of touching our hearts. As the author **Anthony Douglas Williams** once said, "We have more to learn from animals than animals have to learn from us." Their unconditional love, resilience and ability to live harmoniously with nature offer us lessons in compassion, humility and care. October 4th, *World Animal Day*, is a time to highlight the pressing issues that animals face across the globe. The theme for this year, "The World is Their Home Too," is a powerful call for all of us to recognise the rights of animals, whether they are roaming freely in the wilderness or wandering the streets as strays. This day is a chance to reflect on how we treat the creatures that share our planet and to realise that they, too, deserve safety, respect and love. From the majestic *Royal Bengal Tiger* to the critically endangered *Indian Rhinoceros*, the wildlife in India is under constant threat.

Habitat destruction, poaching and human-wildlife conflict have left these species teetering on the edge of survival. The tiger, once a symbol of untamed power, now roams in small, fragmented patches of forest. The *Indian Rhinoceros*, whose numbers were once decimated by hunting, faces the constant pressure of habitat loss and illegal poaching for its horn. Similarly, the Asiatic Lion, which now has a population of approximately 600 individuals confined to the Gir Forest, faces an uncertain future in its last remaining natural habitat. This small population survives in a limited area, making them vulnerable to catastrophic events like disease outbreaks or forest fires, which could wipe them out forever. These creatures, emblematic of India's natural heritage, are not merely animals, they are vital parts of ecosystems that sustain life, including our own. Yet, it's not only the rare and exotic species that require our attention. Animals that live closer to us, whether they are stray dogs, cattle, or even birds, also face significant challenges. *Stray dogs*, in particular, bear the brunt of urban neglect. But beyond the dogs, there are countless other animals like cows left to fend for themselves on the streets, often injured or malnourished. Birds, too,

## BOOKS TO CELEBRATE WORLD ANIMAL DAY

**The Gopi Diaries** is a charming series for children by **Sudha Murty**, published by *Harper Children's*. The series follows Gopi, a lovable pup. In *Coming Home*, Gopi is adopted by a loving family and quickly learns about his new world. In *Finding Love*, he grows stronger and cheekier, facing new challenges and meeting exciting dog companions. Finally, in *Growing Up*, Gopi matures and welcomes a new friend, Nova, into his life. **Warrior Queens of Ranthambore** by **Manish Kalani**, is a unique coffee table book that captures the journey of five generations of tigresses in Ranthambore National Park. Featuring over 500 photographs taken over eight years, wildlife photographer **Manish Kalani** tells the story of the legendary tigress Machhli and her descendants, highlighting their beauty, strength and emotional bonds. The book emphasises the importance of tiger conservation and serves as a significant addition to wildlife literature in India. **Mountain Mammals of the World** by **M.K. Ranjitsinh**, published by *Penguin Ebury Press*, is a definitive guide that explores the larger mammals inhabiting mountainous regions globally. The book features

detailed profiles of approximately 62 species and 78 subspecies, highlighting their behaviour, ecology and conservation status. This work serves as an essential resource for understanding these majestic animals within their breathtaking mountain habitats. **Wildlife Chronicles** by **Adit Jain** (Publisher: Rupa) is a travelogue and guide to India's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. The book showcases the country's diverse landscapes and wildlife, featuring travel tips, must-see places, and captivating photographs. **Jain's** personal anecdotes aim to inspire interest in conservation while providing practical advice for travellers. **Wildlife India @ 50: Saving the Wild, Securing the Future** by **Manoj Misra** (Publisher: Rupa) commemorates 50 years of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. The book chronicles India's wildlife conservation journey, reflecting on successes and missed opportunities through contributions from various experts. With a focus on the impact of colonial hunting practices and the need for wildlife legislation, it highlights the progress made and the challenges ahead in protecting India's biodiversity.



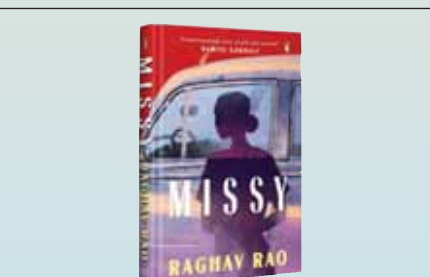
Rather than purchasing pets, adopting from shelters not only saves lives but helps reduce the suffering caused by overpopulation. We must also push for stronger laws against animal cruelty and promote humane population control measures for stray animals, such as spay and neuter programmes. On this day, let's broaden our perspective. Let's not just think about the wild animals in distant forests or the pets in our homes. Let's consider all the creatures that make up our world: the birds, the cattle, the marine life and the strays and how each one plays a vital role in the delicate balance of life on Earth. Every action we take, no matter how small, contributes to creating a better world for them. As we observe *World Animal Day*, let's remember that the answer for stray animals begins with a simple yet profound action: adopt, don't shop. Every stray dog on the street is a potential companion, waiting for a family. By adopting a stray, you give an animal a second chance at life and the warmth of a loving home. This small act not only transforms their lives but also enriches yours with unique love and companionship. Every life saved reflects our compassion for these deserving souls. The world is their home too and together, we can ensure that every animal feels safe, loved, and valued.

### NEW ARRIVALS



**First Flood**  
By **KALKI**, TRANSLATED BY **GOWRI RAMNARAYAN**  
(PRICE: ₹799, PAGES: 544)  
Penguin Random House

In *First Flood*, the first installment of Ponniyin Selvan, **Kalki** delves into the political intrigue of tenth-century Tamil Nadu. As Emperor Sundara Chozha lies unwell in Tanjavur fort, a sinister plot unfolds to dethrone Crown Prince Aditta Karikalan. Entrusted with a critical message, Vallavaraiyan Vandiyatevan faces perilous challenges as he navigates betrayal and ambition. Beautifully translated by Gowri Ramnarayan, this timeless tale of loyalty and intrigue captivates readers with its rich storytelling and complex characters.



**Missy**  
By **RAGHAV RAO**  
(Price: ₹699, Pages: 312) Vintage Books

In *Missy*, **Raghav Rao** follows Savi, a gifted young woman from St. Ursula's Convent in Madras, who dreams of escape. After a night of trauma forces her and her lover, Ananda, to flee to America under new identities, Savi transforms into Missy, a pillar of the South Asian community in Chicago. As she raises her two daughters, Mansi and Shilpa, the arrival of Varun, a charming doctor, threatens to unravel her carefully built life. This extraordinary debut delves into themes of identity, love, and the inescapable nature of the past, showcasing a woman's resilience and courage.

# Hindus and the Modern Struggles of Religious Persecution

Anand Ranganathan's book, *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*, offers a scathing analysis of the plight of Hindus in modern India, drawing parallels to historical persecution and raising crucial questions about religious dynamics in the country.

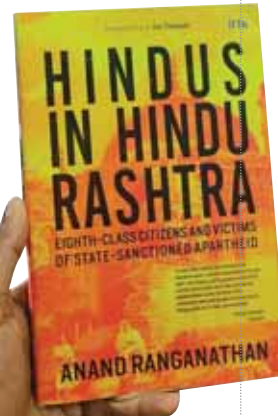
BY **KUMAR CHELLAPPAN**

Sufferance is the badge of our tribe," Shylock, the Jewish money lender, says in the Shakespearean play "The Merchant of Venice." Had Shylock been around now, he would certainly have added Hindus too as the victims of hatred and cruelty perpetrated by the Abrahamic religions. History, as well as modern times, substantiate what Shakespeare made Shylock say in this path-breaking play. In October 2023, the dreaded Hamas organisation let loose one of the most barbaric attacks ever reported in history on the innocent Jewish residents of the Gaza Strip, kidnapping more than 300 of them and subjecting them to vicious torture. The Hamas terrorists were celebrating in style as their colleagues recounted how they raped young girls in front of their parents and tore them apart, a la Nirbhaya incident that shook India in 2012. It was only when Israel retaliated (like any other nation would) in a bid to release their brethren from the torturing cells of Hamas, that liberals, secularists and pseudo-intellectuals came out extending their open-hearted support to Hamas. The Israeli Defence Force was portrayed as the aggressor while the Hamas terrorists were seen as angels in the eyes of these paid intellectuals. The history of the Jewish people is packed with stories of persecution faced by them and their struggles for survival. No other community, other than Hindus, has faced the kind of cruelty to which the Jewish were subjected by their tormentors. To lambast Israel and eulogise the Arabs as well as Palestinians became the measure of one's intellectual dexterity. This is what the Hindus in India face now. Though 80 per cent of the Indian population are Hindus, they face the

same kind of torment and cruelty at the hands of the minorities. In the land of the Sanatana Dharma, the aggressors claim ownership of more than 70 per cent of the land. A cleric was heard claiming the other day that Antilia, the 27-storey personal residence of Mukesh Ambani in Bombay and valued at \$4.6 billion, has been constructed on Waqf land. It is for Mukesh Ambani to give clarification to this claim, while the day is not far off when the same people are likely to come forward claiming that Rashtrapati Bhavan as well as 7 Lok Kalyan Marg belong to them. Forget about these things. The Hindus have become eighth-class citizens and victims of State-sanctioned apartheid in their own country, according to Dr **Anand Ranganathan**, scientist, author and political critic who works in the Communist citadel Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU for short). Dr Ranganathan speaks and writes with conviction and articulation. True to his profession as a genetic engineer and biotechnologist, **Dr Ranganathan** has found out the basic reasons behind the plight of the Hindus in the country, and he has made it unambiguously clear with his latest book *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*, published by BluOne Ink. The book of 128 pages is a power-packed punch from this frail professor, which the rivals would not be able to counter. The author has made his intention clear from the word go. "To those who claim we are now living in a totalitarian Hindu Rashtra, one must ask: What kind of a Hindu Rashtra is this where a billion-strong Hindus have been, through our parliament, courts, education system and our Constitution, reduced to not just second-class but rather, eighth-class citizens? What kind of a Hindu Rashtra is this where Durga Puja and Garba celebrations are stoned with impunity, where a sitting Prime Minister claims minorities have the first right to



**ABOUT THE BOOK**  
**Book :** *Hindus in Hindu Rashtra*  
by **ANAND RANGANATHAN**  
**Publisher :** BluOne Ink  
₹399



resources?" Even as I write about the book, TV channels scroll news headlines about Ganapati statue immersions in Karnataka and Maharashtra being stoned by a group of people. The Marxist-Mullah-Congress axis held State-wide protest rallies in Kerala to express solidarity with the terrorists and extremists of Hamas and Hezbollah. A TV channel and newspaper owned by Jamaat-e-Islami laments 24x7 that there is no freedom of expression and religion in India since 2014. The channel beams anti-India news round the clock, forcing the viewers to complain to the ministries of home and information and broadcasting about the hidden agenda behind the channel and the newspaper. The Supreme Court comes to the help of the channel by blasting the Centre for its high-handedness. This is the kind of privilege enjoyed by the minority communities in India, only in India. A Hindu cannot be blamed for feeling compelled to convert to Islam, but what prevents most of the Sanatanis from doing so is the severe pain it may cause in the process. **Dr Ranganathan**, I feel, is lenient in his words. He explains through eight chapters the state of abyss the Hindus find themselves in. The powers that be, whether it is the Congress, BJP, or the motley crowd of the Third Front, do not have any answer for the questions posed by him in the opening chapter, "State Control of Hindu Temples". In Kerala, from where I hail, the most coveted post for which politicians who fail to make it to the assembly or parliament vie with each other is for the post of the chairman of the Devaswom Boards (Travancore, Kochi, and Malabar). Even rationalists and atheists in the CPI(M), CPI, and RSP turn believers to occupy the chairmanship and to

swindle the hundis (treasure boxes in which the devotees make offerings to the presiding deities). "The Hindus have no right to question the injustice meted out to them in the form of adding pig fat to laddus, a divine offering to God. If you dare to question the act, the Lordships would come down on you like an avalanche with the claim that 'Secularism is in danger.'" The term secularism has become the most nauseating one in India, as a jurist was heard asking the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh to keep quiet over the affair with the Tirupati laddu. To those who do not care about the ground realities facing the Hindus, we have to ask, "What happened to the Veda Patasalas and Gurukulas, which were the landmarks along the banks of Krishna, Godavari, Kaveri, Ganga, Yamuna, and Brahmaputra?" It is an unpardonable sin in the Hindu country to ask the questions posed by the likes of **Anand Ranganathan**, R Vaidyanathan, Rajiv Malhotra, Sandeep Balakrishna and of course Arun Shourie. India may be the only country in the world that keeps its citizens from the real history (the XI volumes of the *History and Culture of the Indian People* edited by that wonderful historian Prof R C Majumdar). It is a "crime" in this country to pinpoint the directives given by the one and only Prophet that the idolaters only are unclean (Surah 9, ayat 5) and the disbelievers are an open enemy to you (Surah 4:101) (Quotes from *The Calcutta Quran Petition* authored by Sita Ram Goel). If the Hindus fail to take note of the observations by **Anand Ranganathan**, they are doomed to be Pappus and village idiots. In this era of religious hegemony, scholars like **Ranganathan**, **Vaidyanathan**, and **Rajiv Malhotra** are beacons of hope. Please do not miss out on what they speak and write.



# INDIA NEED TOP GUNS FIRING IN UNISON AGAINST NEW ZEALAND

**PTI ■ DUBAI**  
A stellar effort by senior stars would be mandatory when India take on New Zealand in their opening Group A match of the women's T20 World Cup here on Friday, aiming for a strong start in their quest to wipe off the memories of past near-misses. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who in all likelihood, will be appearing in her last T20 World Cup, has been witness to several near misses and disappointing moments from close quarters, including India's capitulation to Australia in the final at Melbourne in 2020. As a has been in the past, this Indian line-up is rich in talent and, arguably, only Australia have a similarly well-oiled unit. But the reigning champions have six titles in their cabinet, and India's is still dust-laden. So, what pegs India back in global events? It seems more a case of mental fragility at clutch moments, and the Women in Blue tried to address that during a preparatory camp at the NCA (National Cricket Academy) with a few counselling sessions. But such external measures can only be of limited help in big tournaments, as it boils down entirely to flawless execution of strategies on a given day. In that context, India will not get a

better opponent than New Zealand, which is not a fancied side like its Trans-Tasman neighbour. But the two-time runners-up are as tough as nails. A victory against them could well be counted as a sign of being in fine shape — tactically and mentally — and that's a pre-requisite for India in a group that also has Australia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. To start with, India will require heavy contributions from their top guns — the 35-year-old Harmanpreet, Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma and Deepti Sharma. Among them, Shafali and Mandhana have been in excellent touch, making runs in their last international outing in the Asia Cup in Sri Lanka in July even though India lost to the hosts in the final. In fact, Mandhana's last five T20I innings include three fifties. But Harmanpreet and Shafali have been a tad underwhelming and the duo finding range is imperative for India's charge at the top and middle order. It is critical to India's chances as the pitches in the UAE, going through a harsh heat wave, might not be a treasure trove of runs, particularly deep into the tournament. However, the expected weariness of the track, in one way, will cater to India's strengths in the bowling department — spin.



They have only three pacers in their squad — Renuka Singh, Pooja Vastrakar and Arundhati Reddy. In all likelihood, India will only play two of them, while depending on a plethora of spinners in their line-up. India have exceptional variety in that department. The attack will be marshalled by off-spinners Deepti and Shreyanka Patil, leg-spinner Asha Shobhana and left-arm spinner Radha Yadav.

But the Kiwis have a good blend of experienced and young players, who can lift them above such obstacles. Their talismanic skipper Sophie Devine, experienced all-rounder Suzie Bates along with veteran pacers Lea Tahuhu and Leigh Kasperek form the crux of this New Zealand side. Add the exciting young all-rounder Amelia Kerr to the mix, and they have the wherewithal to spring a surprise or two in this tournament. But beyond them, the Kiwis are a bit green behind the ears and that could be their Achilles Heel.  
**TEAMS:**  
**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Yastika Bhatia (subject to fitness), Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh Thakur, Dayalan Hemalatha, Asha Sobhana, Radha Yadav, Shreyanka Patil (subject to fitness), Sajana Sajeewan  
**Travelling reserves:** Uma Chetry (wk), Tanuja Kanwer, Saima Thakur  
**New Zealand:** Sophie Devine (c), Suzie Bates, Eden Carson, Izzy Gaze, Maddy Green, Brooke Halliday, Fran Jonas, Leigh Kasperek, Melie Kerr, Jess Kerr, Rosemary Blair, Molly Penfold, Georgia Plimmer, Hannah Rowe, Lea Tahuhu.



## Khushi seals dramatic bronze, takes India's tally to 15 at ISSF Jr Worlds

## Biggest challenges for India in Women's T20 WC will be Australia, SL: Harbhajan

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
India's World Cup-winning spinner Harbhajan Singh said the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side will face a tough challenge from Australia and Sri Lanka in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The global showpiece gets underway in the UAE from Thursday, and India are placed in Group A alongside Australia, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and New Zealand. "I think India needs to be very careful when playing against Australia. Looking at this group, India has Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. But one match that I think will be a little tough is the India-Australia match," Harbhajan told Star Sports. "Australia is a good team, even though these matches are being played in Dubai, on subcontinent pitches that might not suit them as much as their home conditions. But Australia, no matter where they play, are hard to beat. So,

the biggest challenge for India may be Australia," he said. Harbhajan's fears were not entirely misplaced as the Australia have beaten India 23 times in 32 T20Is with the 'Women in Blue' winning seven of them. However, the 44-year-old warned India of another potential hazard on its way - Sri Lanka. The Islanders had recently trumped India in the Asia Cup final with Chamari Athapaththu and Harshitha Samarawickrama producing match-winning efforts. "Sri Lanka, too, after their recent series win against India, will be confident when they play against India. So, that will also be a good contest." But Harbhajan had little doubts that India have the skill sets to land their maiden ICC title. "Team India will be the team to beat in this tournament. They have both experience and youth. Harman (captain Harmanpreet Kaur) is in good

form, Smriti (Mandhana) is in good form, and Deepti (Sharma) is an unbelievable spinner. "They are a very capable team and have been playing very good cricket. The unit looks solid. If India plays good cricket overall, I believe they will win this tournament," he noted. The off-spinner, who has 711 international wickets, also advised the Indians to take it one match at a time, without succumbing to the big-moment pressure. "You have to try to give your best and not take pressure. At this stage, the only thing that matters is to know yourself, and play as a unit. Results will follow. "Don't think about the big picture; just take small steps with each match and focus on the process. I hope if they follow these things, our team will perform very well," he added. India open their campaign against New Zealand on Friday.

**PTI ■ LIMA (PERU)**  
Khushi secured a hard-fought bronze in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions at the ISSF Junior World Championship here, dramatically qualifying for the final before rallying to claim the third spot. Her medal on Wednesday took India's tally to 15, including 10 gold, one silver, and four bronze medals, keeping the country at the top

of the standings. The youngster shot 447.3 in the final to finish behind Caroline Lund of Norway who won silver with 458.3. Caroline's compatriot Synnoeve Berg won gold with 458.4. However, Khushi's path to the podium was far from easy. She narrowly made it to the medal round, rallying brilliantly in the final standing position in qualifying to clinch the

seventh spot with a score of 585. It got so tight that there were four others on the same score. However, Khushi and Italian Anna Schiavon clinched the final two qualifying spots, scoring 29 inner-10 shots, while two Swiss athletes — Alexa Tela and Emely Jaeggi — managed 27. Khushi finished ahead of Anna on countback. In the eight-woman final, Khushi was fourth at the end

of the first two positions — Kneeling and Prone. A strong finish in the Standing position allowed her to pip Norwegian Pernille Nor-Woll after the 40th shot to move up to third. Synnoeve and Caroline were having their own battle for top-two throughout the 45-shot final. Khushi wobbled again on the 41st shot with 9.1 which put her back down to fifth, but a brilliant 10.7 in the 42nd and

10.4 in 43rd ensured the bronze. In the team competition in junior women's 3P, the trio of Sakshi Padekar, Melvina Joel Gladson and Prachi Gaekwad, finished fifth with a tally of 1757. Anoushka Thakur also shot 585 in qualification, but 26 hits in the inner-10 ring meant she ended 11th. Sakshi, Melvina and Prachi finished 24th, 32nd and 41st respectively.

## Weight management is athlete's responsibility: Mary Kom

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
No stranger to the physical toll of weight management during a competition, six-time world champion boxer M C Mary Kom Thursday waded into the debate surrounding wrestler Vinesh Phogat's Olympic heartbreak for being 100gm over, saying that to be within the prescribed limit is an individual responsibility. The 42-year-old mother of four, who is India's only woman boxer with an Olympic medal (a bronze in London, 2012), was in the city to promote Utkarsh Small Finance Bank, which named her as its brand ambassador. Speaking for the first time on Phogat, who was disqualified on the day of her 50kg finals in the Paris Games for being marginally over the prescribed limit, Mary Kom said weight management is an athlete's responsibility. "I felt so disappointed in the sense that I have also done the same (weight management) for the last so many years. Weight is important, that is my responsibility. I cannot blame anyone," she said. "I do not want to say this in her case. I am saying this in my case only. If I do not cut the weight properly then how will I play? I am there to win a medal and that is what I think," she continued.

Mary Kom, in the past, has spoken about her weight cut routines and how difficult the process can be. The Manipuri started out as a pin-weight (46kg) category boxer before settling for the flyweight (51kg) division in her amateur career. Phogat, who was being seen as gold medal contender in Paris, skipped meals and fluids, worked out an entire night and also cut her hair to be within the requisite category but the effort fell short eventually. She challenged her disqualification, calling the rules inhumane, but her appeal was rejected by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The wrestler retired to join politics after the heartbreak and is contesting the Haryana assembly elections on a Congress ticket. **WANT TO DISCUSS INDIAN BOXING WITH SPORTS MINISTER:** Mary Kom was also quizzed about India's boxing campaign in Paris and she was still perplexed by how poor the performance was. She said she wants to have a meeting with the national federation and sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya to understand "what is lacking" and clear her "doubts". The Indian boxing contingent, which included two reigning world champions in Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain, cut a sorry figure



situation demands. If the sports minister has the knowledge (about the issues) I want to discuss that also," she said. Refusing to share her exact concerns, Mary Kom said she would rather discuss them in the meeting with Mandaviya and BFI brass. "The federation has provided all the coaches. But I have a few doubts as well. But what is the point in saying them now, the Olympics are done. Now there is no point in saying all that, but I want to discuss it with them in the meeting," said the former Rajya Sabha MP. "(The) sports minister is doing whatever he can do from his side, infrastructure, facilities or whatever (other) needs are there. But how did the federation handle the training? Was it done systematically or not? What happened exactly, I do not know," she wondered. "If I do not meet them and not discuss, how will I know about them?" Mary reiterated that she wants to participate in professional boxing "I have not retired yet but I want to compete. I am trying to get opportunities, waiting for my chance to fight pro. I just want to come back." "I can continue for another three-four years, that is my will. I have the passion and hunger. I want to continue," she added.

# Lionel Messi, Inter Miami win MLS Supporters Shield with 3-2 win at Crew

**AP ■ COLUMBUS (OHIO)**  
Lionel Messi and Inter Miami have another trophy, along with home-field advantage throughout the Major League Soccer playoffs. Messi scored twice in the final minutes of the first half, goalie Drake Callender stopped a penalty kick in the 84th minute and Inter Miami beat the defending MLS Cup champion Columbus Crew 3-2 on Wednesday, wrapping up the Supporters Shield given annually to the team with the best regular-season record. It was Messi's 46th major trophy won for club or country, extending his record for the most by any men's soccer player in history. And it is the second he has won with Inter Miami, this Supporters Shield being added to the Leagues

Cup trophy the Herons claimed shortly after Messi joined the club in 2023. "We knew this was a group that could fight for this," Messi said. Luis Suarez also scored for Inter Miami, which will open a best-of-three first-round playoff series in the final weekend of October. If the team wins that series, it would have the right to host every match it plays the rest of the season - an Eastern Conference semifinal (scheduled for Nov. 23 or 24), the East final (Nov. 30 or Dec. 1) and the MLS Cup final on Dec. 7. "We have a nice opportunity to go down in history... And now we think about what is coming," Messi told Apple TV after the match. "We have a great advantage in that we play all the games at home, which



was what we were looking for. I think that we are very, very strong at home." Also still within reach for Inter Miami: the best MLS regular-season mark ever. Wednesday's win pushed Inter Miami's record to 20-4-8 this season, giving it 68 points. If the club wins its final two matches -

Saturday at Toronto and Oct. 19 at home against New England - it would finish with 74 points. New England has the single-season points record, finishing with 73 in 2021. Messi opened the scoring in the 45th minute, taking a long pass from Jordi Alba - his

longtime teammate at Barcelona, the club with which Messi won 35 of his trophies - and splitting two defenders before somehow getting the ball past Columbus goalkeeper Patrick Schulte for a 1-0 lead. And about five minutes into first-half stoppage time, Messi struck again on a free kick from about 30 yards out. Schulte seemed fooled, and Messi squeezed the ball between the goalie and the near post for a 2-0 lead. "Dominant," Inter Miami coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino said. Diego Rossi scored in the first minute of the second half for Columbus to cut the lead in half, but it didn't take long for Inter Miami to restore the two-goal cushion. Almost immediately after play resumed, Schulte was upended

by one of his own defenders and Suarez sent a header into an empty net for a 3-1 edge. Juan "Cucho" Hernandez's penalty kick in the 61st minute got Columbus within 3-2. But once again, the momentum didn't last for long. Rudy Camacho was sent off for his second yellow card in the 63rd minute, meaning the Crew had to play with 10 men the rest of the way. Didn't matter. Columbus still created some big chances down the stretch. A deflected ball in the 76th minute got across the box and onto the right foot of Mohamed Farsi - but his shot was blocked by Callender, who was perfectly positioned to protect the lead. Then came more drama, when Inter Miami was called for its second handball inside the box

— an automatic penalty kick — of the second half. Hernandez picked the left side of the net, but Callender made the save look almost easy. That save helped finish what Messi started. It was the fifth two-goal game of the MLS season for Messi, who now has 17 goals in 17 league matches this season. He's missed 15 of Inter Miami's MLS matches in 2024, either because of commitments to Argentina's national team or the two-month absence that he needed to recover from a badly injured ankle - an injury that happened during his nation's run to the Copa America title in July. Inter Miami, in MLS play this season, is now 10-1-6 with Messi in the lineup.