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Published From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR  
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DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 21 Issue 268  
\*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

BHOPAL, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 28, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹ 2

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## Supreme Court raps Air Quality Commission over stubble burning

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday rapped the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) over its failure to curb air pollution in National Capital Region due to crop residue burning in the neighbouring States and said it needs to be more active in its approach. Expressing dissatisfaction over steps taken by the panel to control pollution, a bench of Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Augustine George Masih said CAQM needs to exercise its power under the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021.

"There has been total non-compliance of the Act. Please show us a single direction issued to any stakeholder under the Act. We are of the view that though the commission has taken steps, it needs to be more active. The commission must ensure that its efforts and directions issued actually translate into reducing the problem of pollution," the bench said.

The Court added that the CAQM may not be holding sufficient meetings and was hardly issuing enough directions to tackle violations of environmental norms. "The Chairperson present today through VC says that three sub-committees are holding only one meeting every three months. They have been assigned important tasks.



FILE PHOTO: PTI

We wonder how they are performing those tasks by meeting only once in three months!" the Court said. SC said efforts are needed to ensure that stubble-burning alternative equipments are used at the grassroots level. The panel must immediately step into action to ensure the equipment provided by the Central Government for avoiding stubble burning are actually used by the farmers, it added. The bench directed the panel to file a better compliance report and posted the matter for hearing on October 3.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, informed the court about the steps taken, such as issuing advisories and guidelines, to control

stubble burning. However, the top court remarked, "It is all in the air, nothing has been shown regarding what has been done in the National Capital Region (NCR) states." Chairman of the Commission for Air Quality Management for NCT of Delhi Rajesh Verma, who was present during the hearing virtually, told the bench that he has held meetings with the deputy commissioners of Punjab and Haryana where incidents of stubble-burning have been reported. The Supreme Court on September 24 asked the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas to explain the steps being taken to curb air pollution caused by crop residue burning.



### Flash flood risk in Bihar, Red alert in Mumbai

PNS ■ MUMBAI/ PATNA/ SHIMLA

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday forecast heavy rainfall in parts of Bihar, Maharashtra and Himachal Pradesh and warned of low to moderate "flash flood risk" in 13 districts of Bihar over the next 24 hours. IMD issued warnings for heavy to very heavy rainfall across Mumbai and Maharashtra, with significant impacts expected over the coming days. Following the recent trend of erratic monsoons, Mumbai is bracing for widespread rain, particularly in the Konkan region, which is anticipated to experience intense downpours today. According to the latest bulletin by the Met Department, a cyclonic circulation lies over north-central Maharashtra, and, under its effect, Maharashtra is expected to witness more downpour in coming days.

## BJP, Cong crossfire in Haryana poll

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ REWARI/ NEW DELHI

With elections round the corner, BJP on Friday latched on to alleged corruption involving Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's brother-in-law Robert Vadra when the Congress was in power in Haryana by firing a fresh salvo against the Opposition party. Modi during his campaign in Haryana recently had also revived the corruption charges involving him to slam the Congress and its leadership. Vadra has constantly denied allegations of any wrongdoing and accused the BJP of targeting him due to political vendetta.

Echoing Modi's words, Union Home Minister Amit Shah too trained his guns on the grand old party, alleging that "dealers, dalaals and damaad" came to rule the State before the BJP came into power. He also asked Rahul Gandhi if he knew the full form of MSP as he underlined that the BJP government in Haryana was procuring 24 crops at the minimum support price. With the Congress seen to be putting up a strong challenge after registering an impressive performance in the Lok Sabha polls, BJP sought to know who will stop Vadra if the party comes to power again. Haryana had become a hotbed of corruption when it was in power between 2004 and 2014, he said.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed the election in the State is a fight between "Haryana ka laal" (son of Haryana) and "dalaal" (fixer) of the Gandhi family, as it questioned the Congress leadership's silence on the corruption charges against Vadra and the party's then Government



headed by Bhupinder Singh Hooda. He said people of the State have made up their mind to elect the BJP to power for a third straight term, asserting that the central Government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the State Government headed by Nayab Singh Saini have worked for farmers' welfare. In one case, he noted, Vadra's company allegedly acquired 3.5 acres of land of farmers and the then Hooda Government changed the land use, allowing him to pocket a huge profit by selling the parcel at four times the purchase price.

In another case, farmers resorted to distress selling of their land after the Congress Government in the State issued a notification to acquire their land and then denotified after a builder linked to Vadra bought their land, he alleged.

Rahul on his part stressed the need for simplifying the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and opening up the banking system to small businesses to promote job creation and alleged that Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's "monopoly model" has taken away jobs in the country.

Sharing a video of the "Dogri Dham with RG" event hosted by the All India Professionals' Congress (AIPC) in Jammu on Wednesday, Rahul said that the frustration in the eyes of a young start-up owner from Jammu and Kashmir reflects the struggles of most entrepreneurs and small-business owners in India.

"The systematic attack on small and medium industries through incompetent policies like a bad GST and demonetisation has turned India from a producing economy to a consuming one. At this rate we can neither compete with China nor ensure prosperity for all Indians," he said, adding that India deserves better.

In his rally Shah also attacked the Congress on the issue of corruption, reservation and over Article 370, which he said, the Congress wants to bring it back. Shah claimed the BJP will return to power in Haryana for third time after the October 5 polls.

### Bangladesh fan heckled in Kanpur test match

PNS ■ KANPUR

A Bangladeshi fan attending the India-Bangladesh Cricket Test match on Friday was rushed to hospital after he was apparently heckled and assaulted inside the stadium. The fan, popular as 'Tiger Robi', was dressed in a tiger's get-up (tiger being the emblem of Bangladesh cricket team) and standing in the C Block balcony of the Green Park stadium where the incident took place.



The fan through gestures indicated he was punched on his lower back, according to a video clip shared on social media. The Kanpur Police, however, categorically denied the charge, and said his version would be cross-checked through the CCTV footage.

The Bangladeshi fan suffered from dehydration and was taken to hospital and now he was fine, said Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chander. "Bangladeshi fan was gasping for breath when he met a constable and went unconscious before he could speak to him, but now he is fine," the officer added. Other details related to the incident were yet to be ascertained. The incident comes amid a protest by right-wing groups near Green Park with the demonstrators demanding that the Test Match be cancelled. Police said they have beefed up security in the area in view of the international match.



### Israel strikes on central headquarters of Hezbollah

AP ■ BEIRUT

The Israeli military said Friday it carried out an airstrike on the central headquarters of Hezbollah in Beirut, where a massive explosion levelled buildings in a southern district, sending clouds of orange and black smoke billowing in the skies.

The strike in the Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh came shortly after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the UN, vowing that Israel's campaign against Hezbollah would continue. Not long before the explosion, thousands were massed in the suburb for the funeral of three Hezbollah members, including a senior commander, killed in earlier strikes.

There was no immediate word on casualties in the strike. The Israeli army spokesman, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, said it targeted the main Hezbollah headquarters, located beneath residential buildings. Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV said four buildings were reduced to rubble in the blast, so powerful that it rattled windows and shook houses some 30 kilometers north of Beirut. Ambulances were seen headed to the scene of the explosions, sirens wailing. Earlier in the day, an Israeli airstrike killed a family of nine in a Lebanese border village, authorities said, as Lebanon struggled to deal with a rising death toll, a wave of tens of thousands fleeing their homes and the possibility of an all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah.

## Karnataka CM, wife booked in MUDA scam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU

Lokayukta police on Friday registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and others in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case, following the court order. A Special Court in Bengaluru on Wednesday ordered a Lokayukta police probe against Siddaramaiah in the case, setting the stage for filing an FIR against him. The order of the Special Court Judge, Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, came a day after the High Court upheld the sanction granted by the Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to conduct an investigation against Siddaramaiah on the allegations of illegalities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife BM Parvathi by MUDA. The Special Court, formed to deal exclusively with criminal cases related to former and current MPs/MLAs issued the order directing the Lokayukta police in Mysuru to initiate an investigation on the complaint filed by RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna.



The Court issued directions to take up the probe under section 156 (3) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) (that gives a magistrate the power to order an investigation into a cognisable offense and file the investigation report by December 24. "Acting under Sec156(3) of Code of Criminal Procedure, the jurisdictional police i.e. Superintendent of Police, Karnataka Lokayukta, Mysuru is hereby directed to register the case, investigate and to file a report as contemplated under Sec.173 of CrPC, within a period of

three months from today," the court had said. It had listed offences punishable under Sec 120B (Punishment of criminal conspiracy), 166 (Public servant disobeying law, with intent to cause injury to any person), 403 (Dishonest misappropriation of property), 406 (Punishment for criminal breach of trust), 420 (Cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), 426 (Punishment for mischief), 465 (Punishment for forgery), 468 (Forgery for purpose of cheating), 340 (Wrongful confinement), 351 (Assault) and other relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code. The court had also listed offences punishable under sections 9 and 13 the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and under Sec 3, 53 and 54 of the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988 and 3, 4 of Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Act, 2011. Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, Devaraju (from whom Mallikarjuna Swamy purchased land and gifted it to Parvathi) and others are named in the FIR, official sources said.



BJP councillors Sunder Singh Tanwar(C) along with other BJP councillors flash victory sign after winning the last Standing Committee seat at the Civic Centre in New Delhi on Friday. Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

## AAP fumes as BJP bags crucial MCD seat

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After a high-drama voting process, Bharatiya Janata Party's Sunder Singh won the last vacant seat of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) standing committee.- the civic body's highest decision-making body. With this poll result, the BJP now has 10 of its 18 members in the panel while the ruling AAP has only eight. Singh secured 115 votes while in the absence of party councillors, AAP's candidate Nirmala Kumari did not receive any vote. Singh has been elected as the sixth member in the Standing Committee from the House.

The elections for the last seat of the MCD standing committee were held when the post fell vacant after BJP councillor Kamaljeet Sehrawat was elected as the Lok Sabha MP from West Delhi in the general elections earlier this year. The Congress which has eight councilors, boycotted the election. This was the first time that the election was held without the participation of AAP and Congress councillors. Singh's win — which will be most likely to be challenged in court means the BJP now has control over the Standing Committee, which is widely seen as the real power behind the municipal body.

## Indo-Bangla ties to relish Hilsa on plates

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The much awaited "silver crop" as they call it in Bengal has finally arrived. The much awaited Padma Hilsa or the Hilsa fish of mighty River Padma, perhaps the world's tastiest fish has finally arrived to grace the dishes of Kolkatans. Much to the ecstasy of the Bengali Bhadrakol (gentleman) about 50 tonnes of Padma Hilsa on Friday arrived at the wholesale market juxtaposing the iconic Howrah Station. This is the first consignment of an expected 2,420 tonnes of Hilsa each weighing between 800 gram to about little more than 2 kg that is likely to be sent to India by mid October.

The Bangladesh Hilsa 'swims' to India through a cross current of debates and controversies in that country with a sizeable number of people in the new Bangla regime objecting to the export fearing that the transaction might jack up prices there. However, a top woman diplomat in the new regime in that country convinced the protesters saying "only Indian can give the best price" for their national fish. True, the mouth-watering flavour of Hilsa remains the same but diplomacy over it has kept on changing over the years. Like during the previous Sheikh Hasina regime consignments of this exquisite fish came to India as a gesture of friendship. But this time round it comes with



Representative Image

a "dose of economics" too says a senior retired diplomat in this side of the border. The export of Hilsa from Bangladesh has seen fluctuations over the years, with a ban in place between 2012 and 2018. However, Bangladesh has made special

exceptions in recent years for Durga Puja, as a gesture of goodwill and cultural diplomacy, said a professor in Dhaka University. Unlike in other parts of India fish is an item of offer to Mother Goddess in Bengal and so "Hilsa will be offered

to Durga who is worshiped besides as a Mother also as the Daughter who is coming home," said an organiser of the South Kolkata Durga Puja committee. Cut to its taste. They say the Padma Hilsa is Noor Jehan (Empress) of all fishes. Not for its silvery glaze but for its stupefying odour. So much so that while being cooked, the aroma of Padma Hilsa can drive the neighbour living several houses apart mad. No wonder why erstwhile Zamindars of eastern Bengal would employ country robbers to rob each others' Hilsa consignments. Legend has it that Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq of Delhi, succumbed to the lure of Hilsa. If stories are to be

believed, then Tughlaq was already suffering from various ailments when he tasted this fish. Mesmerised by its unique taste and flavour, he went on and on for days until he fell to his gluttony. Cut back to the wholesale market the fish is presently selling for anywhere between 1,400 and 1,600 per kg -- with its size varying between 800 gms and 1.2 kgs. "When bigger size will come the price will breach Rs 2,500 ceiling," said Netai Pramanik an importer. "Though we have been eating Hilsa for the past several months, the catches mostly coming from Ganges, Kolaghat and Digtha there is nothing Padma Hilsa," said a Jadavpur University professor

whose ancestors hailed from the other side of the border. "The funda is the more the fish -- which comes from the sea -- swims upwards through the river ... the more tasty it is likely to be," he says reminiscing "when there was no Farakka dam the fish would swim as far as Varanasi or even Allahabad, but not today. "You can steam it, you can cook it with poppy seeds, with white mustard paste, with onion and ginger, make a simple curry or even wrap it in banana or Haldi leaves and simply steam it ... it tastes like heaven any day," he says wishing prices to come down below Rs 1,000 "so that the poor man can also have a taste of Hilsa during the Durga Pujas."

# Bundelkhand on the Path to Future Development: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said that the future of Bundelkhand will be a "Vikasit Bundelkhand" (Developed Bundelkhand), with continued industrial development across the state. The government will fully support even the small-scale entrepreneurs. He emphasized that the implementation of the Ken-Betwa project will boost irrigation capacity across 2.5 lakh hectares in Bundelkhand, significantly transforming the region. Additionally, the construction of an airport in Sagar will open new opportunities in the aviation sector. Dr. Yadav was addressing the inaugural session of the Regional Industry Conclave in Sagar. Commencement of Investment Facilitation Centers in 6 districts On the occasion of the inaugu-

ration of RIC Sagar by Chief Minister Yadav, a short film 'Advantage MP' on industrial investment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh was screened. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav performed a virtual Bhoomi puja of the regional office of MPIDC at Sagar. He inaugurated the Investment Facilitation Center in 6 districts of Sagar Division, Sagar, Panna, Tikamgarh, Niwari, Chhatrapur, and Damoh, and the Regional Office of MPIDC at the Divisional Headquarters. Along with this, Chief Minister Dr. Yadav also virtually inaugurated the office of MPIDC in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu). On this occasion, an MoU was also signed between Municipal Corporation Sagar and MPIDC for the supply of treated water from the industrial area to Sindhgawan. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav issued letters

of intent for 96 industrial units. About 240 acres of land is to be allotted to these units. With this, it is proposed to make a capital investment of Rs 1,560 crore and provide employment to more than 5 thousand 900 persons. Yadav presented the first, second, and third prizes to the winners of the Bundelkhand Innovation Challenge (Hackathon) Sujit Tiwari of Bamboo World, Ashish Sharma of Seva Hub, Vipul Singh Parmar of Nimbus Gaming respectively. Nilay Sharma of Jai Anaag Gayatri Private Limited bagged the Best Woman Entrepreneur award. Social media creator Rajeev Yadav was also awarded for book audio. Ambassador of Mongolia Ganolod Dambajav, CEO of TWW Ingo Soeller, Consul General of Thailand Donnavit

Poolsawat, Minister Govind Singh Rajput, Minister Chaitanya Kashyap, Minister Dharmendra Bhav Singh Lodhi, Minister Lakhan Patel, Minister of State Dilip Ahirwar, Khajuraho MP V.D. Sharma, former ministers Gopal Bhargava and Bhupendra Singh, senior public representatives and representatives of national and international industry groups were present at the inaugural session of the Regional Industry Conclave. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav inaugurated the English version of 'Madhya Pradesh Sandesh' published in Hindi by the Department of Public Relations. The issue includes President Smt. Draupadi Murmu's visit to Madhya Pradesh, the state's first Janman Colony Shivpuri, and other achievements. On this occasion, Secretary and

Commissioner of Public Relations Dr. Sudam Khade was specially present. Yadav said that large-scale investment encourages local business. The entire division will benefit from this conclave. Industrial and business activities will start in all the districts of the division. Many units will come to Bina. Besides, investment is also being made in the Petroleum sector at a cost of Rs 120 crore. The establishment of Sagar data center in the state is an important step. This is an investment of Rs 1700 crore and will provide employment to about one thousand people. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that the Bundelkhand region will also benefit from the new 6-lane and 4-lane roads. He said that investment is also going to be made in the Renewable Energy sector.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav addresses the Regional Industry Conclave in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh on Friday.

## Ample possibility of development in minerals, tourism in Bundelkhand

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

MP and State President V.D. Sharma said that there are immense possibilities of development of industries in minerals, tourism and other fields in Bundelkhand region. Madhya Pradesh has made a distinctive mark in the country in the field of cleanliness. Special efforts are being made to develop Khajuraho as a film city. An integrated steel plant will be set up in Niwari at a cost of Rs 3200 crore. JP Agarwal of Pacific Meta-Steel said that they are setting up an integrated steel plant in Niwari at a cost of Rs 3200 crore. This will provide employment to 10 thousand people and the government will also get revenue of about Rs 1 thousand crore per year. He also shared the plan to start activities in the medical sector in Madhya Pradesh. Investors appreciated the efforts

of Chief Minister Dr. Yadav. Sunil Bansal of Bansal Group, who came to the conclave, said that Bansal Group is working in the medical industry sector. The group has started the facility of kidney transplant in Sagar. Bansal proposed 4 super specialty hospitals, a five star hotel and an investment of Rs 1350 crore in the energy sector. Sagar Group industrialist Sudhir Agarwal said that his units are working in Tamot near Bhopal. Sagar Group is making efforts for new investment in the textile sector. The group is working in all the areas of education, health, food, clothing, housing. His group plans to invest about Rs 1400 crore in the dyeing and processing sector, which will create employment opportunities. He said that his group works on the principle of co-operation, not competition. Madhya Bharat Agro's Pankaj Oswal said that his group has

made the maximum investment in Madhya Pradesh. The industry friendly policy of investment and the supportive attitude of the government are incomparable. His group is producing single super phosphate in Sagar. Oswal informed that his group has plans to invest Rs. 500 crore near Banda in Sagar. Principal Secretary, Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Raghendra Kumar Singh said that after 3 divisional conclaves in the state, Sagar Regional Industry Conclave is being held today. Interactive sessions have also been held this year in Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Mumbai and Kolkata. Madhya Pradesh is the second largest state in the country from an industrial point of view, India's largest solar power plant has been established here. The state has vast possibilities for the development of industries in many sectors. The state is favorable for investors due

to important work being done from the point of view of infrastructure. Due to the industry policies of the state government, industrialists are interested in setting up industries in Madhya Pradesh. Additional Chief Secretary Shri Sanjay Dubey provided information about the state policies prepared for the development of industries in the information technology sector. He said that Madhya Pradesh is the most favorable state from the point of view of setting up a data centre. Shri Dubey gave information about the activities conducted in the IT sector. Principal Secretary Minerals Shri Sanjay Kumar Shukla gave detailed information about the mineral wealth available in the state and the industries operating there. Shri Shukla gave a detailed presentation on the possibilities of mineral based industries in Madhya Pradesh.

## Membership drive: an exercise to increase Modi ka parivar

GIRISH SHARMA ■ BHOPAL

In an ostensible bid to cover all bases and silence critics, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State unit in Madhya Pradesh is asking those signing up as party members to register themselves on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's website, Narendramodi.in. The innovative move is aimed at silencing critics who claim that the BJP is inflating membership drive numbers by simply lifting data from the electoral rolls. Just as every BJP leader and worker wrote in their Twitter bio—Modi ji ka parivar—the nationwide special membership drive of the party is providing new entrants with a link to the Prime Minister's website, where they are required to fill out a form for



their membership to be formalized. BJP leaders claim that, as per the process, those filling out this membership form also need to submit extensive details on the BJP website. However, only a few are completing these forms, and party leaders are persisting in their encouragement for the new members to fill out and submit their forms to the party website. According to claims from the state unit of the BJP in

Madhya Pradesh, it has enrolled 1.03 crore members during the recent membership drive that concluded on Wednesday. While the BJP says that over 96 lakh of these new members have filled out their forms on the Prime Minister's website, it admits that sufficient data is not available at the moment to suggest how many of these have also filled out forms on the BJP website. Party sources claimed that the new members are shying away from filling out the form on the party website as they are required to provide personal details, such as information about family members and profession, along with some political questions that seek to identify their commitment to the party ideology. While talking to The Pioneer,

BJP's State Spokesperson Rajneesh Agrawal informed that the party is in the process of compiling data to ascertain how many new members have filled out the extensive form on the party website. While insisting that the BJP has become the number one political party in the world, Agrawal claims that the party has extensive digital data on its members. He stated that it may be easy for the Congress to term the membership drive as bogus, but factually, the BJP has the biggest digital data on its members. Meanwhile, the party has completed the first phase of the special membership drive and has entered into the second phase as of September 26. The ongoing phase of the enrollment campaign concludes on October 15.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav releases the English version of monthly magazine Madhya Pradesh Sandesh, published by the public relations department during Regional Industry Conclave in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh on Friday. Pioneer photo

## Transparent online transfer policy likely to be cleared soon

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Amid speculations of an overhaul of the transfer policy, employees in the state have been left surprised by a rumoured Madhya Pradesh government move to take the process online to enhance transparency. Speculations of a change in the policy started in July, and it was said that a comprehensive round of administrative transfers could commence anytime after August 15. However, the deadlines kept getting pushed back. No decision regarding the policy was made at a recent meeting of the state cabinet, but sources claim that consensus has been reached on a decision to take the process online. The government has instructed all departments to prepare and submit files online instead of

offline. It is believed that a significant announcement regarding the transfer policy could be made at the next cabinet meeting. Those in the know say that ruling party lawmakers have been pressuring the state government to implement the new transfer policy immediately. The decision was, however, postponed due to concerns that it might affect the BJP membership campaign. Thus, it is expected that the approval of the new regulations and the subsequent lifting of the transfer ban will likely happen in the first week of October, coinciding with an upcoming cabinet meeting.

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However, these ministers will have to wait a few more days before they can exercise their special powers. The term "minister in charge" refers to ministers assigned to different districts. According to Madhya Pradesh government rules, ministers are given responsibility for various districts in addition to their departments. Notably, no minister is assigned to their home district; they oversee the entire administration of another district. Consequently, all activities in a district must be reported to the minister in-charge who then reports to the Chief Minister. Previously, the relevant departmental minister had significant influence in transfers, but under the new policy, transfers of district officials and employees will only occur with the approval of these ministers.

## Police arrest 6 including minor for attempted ATM burglary

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Madhya Nagar police have arrested 6 accused including a minor who tried to break into the ATM of Canara Bank located in Narela Shankari; accused have planned a Goa trip from the money, vehicle used in the crime was a vital clue in the arrest of the accused. Police said that all the accused have done recce by roaming around in autos. As soon as they got the chance, they tried to break the ATM with an axe, rod, crowbar and tommy. After succeeding in the theft, the accused had planned to go to Goa. The incident took place late at night on September 21. After receiving the complaint, the police had deployed three teams to search for the accused. During interrogation, the accused said that at the time of the incident they heard the siren of the police vehicle. On hearing it, they fled from the spot. During the investigation, the police checked the footage of more than 50 CCTV cameras installed nearby. In this, the police spotted the suspicious auto rickshaw registration number MP04RB0508 with the help of this auto rickshaw, the police reached the accused.

During interrogation, the accused said that they wanted to become rich at the earliest soon by stealing from the ATM. The first plan was to visit Goa with the money received from this. Nandlal Singh alias Golu alias Aju alias Bade (22) lived in village Baberu police station Bisanda district Banda, Uttar Pradesh. He has been driving an auto rickshaw in Bhopal for the last two years and lives in the coach factory area. The accused entered the machine with an unlawful child and tried to break the machine with an axe, tommy gun and cutter. The accused also used to drive the car of the GM of Railways. Ankit Arya alias Gappe (18) resident of Hazira Gwalior currently lives on rent at Kapda Mill Ki Chaal Vijay Nagar Chandbad police station Bajaria. The accused also vandalized the ATM along with Nandlal and the minor at the time of the incident. Ravi Ahirwar (21) of village Ratanpur police station Salamampur district Raisen currently lives in front of Nitya Seva Sadan in Vijay Nagar Chandbad police station Bajaria. At the time of the incident, the accused stood away from the ATM and kept watch.

## Temporary meters for Puja Pandals

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Ahead of the forthcoming festive season, the Madhya Kshetra Vidut Vitran Company (MKVVCL) on Thursday said adequate arrangements are in place and urged Pandal Samitis and Garba organizers to adhere to safety guidelines. The MKVVCL, in a media release, said temporary connections will be provided for Navratri, Durga Utsav, Dussehra Pandals, Garba festivities, and other cultural activities. The company has urged religious festival committees and electricity consumers to obtain online temporary connections as per regulations for electrical decorations in religious pandals and displays during Navratri. The power distributor said that it is mandatory to obtain a temporary connection for these events, as unauthorized use of electricity can cause overloading of local transformers and result in power outages. The company cautioned that unauthorized use of electricity may elicit a penal response against the organizers and the electrical contractor. The consumption will be chargeable at applicable domestic rates, said the company while urging organizers to strictly adhere to safety regulations.

## Sanitation workers' panel Vice-chairperson visits BHEL Bhopal

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Vice-Chairperson, National Sanitation workers' Commission, Anjana Panwar took a review meeting on Friday on issues related to sanitation employees working in BHEL Bhopal. On this occasion, SM Ramanathan, Executive Director, BHEL Bhopal, all General Managers, Liaison Officer (Liaison Officer Scheduled Caste), representatives of Scheduled Tribe Association, contractors/supervisors of contract labor organizations and representatives of sanitation workers were present. Rajesh Kumar Agrawal, General Manager (SOM) gave brief information about BHEL Bhopal and gave a presentation on the products manufactured and capabilities of BHEL, Bhopal. Panwar inquired about the facilities being provided to the sanitation workers of contract labor organizations working in BHEL, Bhopal. She highlighted the importance of the contribution made by sanitation workers in daily life. She mentioned the contribution of sanitation workers in the Swachh Bharat Mission started by the

## Panwar inquired about the facilities being provided to the sanitation workers of contract labor organizations

Honorable Prime Minister and also appreciated the valuable contribution of sanitation workers during the time of Corona. Panwar discussed about the facilities being provided to the sanitation workers working through contract labor organizations in BHEL Bhopal. She also listened to the problems and urged BHEL Bhopal to make every effort to improve and increase the facilities being provided to the sanitation workers. All the present members learned about the jurisdiction of the National Safai Karamcharis Commission and the provisions being made by the Commission in the interest of Safai Karamcharis. Arif Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional General Manager (HRM) co-ordinated the program.



BJP MLA Bhagwan Das Sabrani during the party's membership drive at Tulsi Nagar market, 2nd stop in Bhopal on Friday.

## Special 400 days FD at 8.10% in festive season

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As a Festive Season Gift to its Customers, Bank of India, one of the leading public sector banks in India, has introduced a Special 400 Days Retail Term Deposit in amount bucket of less than Rs.3.00 Crs at a very attractive rate of interest of 8.10% pa for

Super Senior Citizen, 7.95% for Senior Citizen & 7.45% for other customers under Non-callable\* deposits (for deposit above Rs.1.00 crore). Under callable deposits with an option of premature withdrawal, Bank is offering attractive rate of interest of 7.95% pa for Super Senior Citizen, 7.80% for Senior Citizen & 7.30% for other customers.

This special 400 days fixed deposit is offered to Resident Indian, NRE & NRO depositors in Domestic Rupees for less than Rs.3.00 Crs. This Special 400 Days Retail Term Deposit is made available from 27th Sept, 2024 at all branches and can also be availed through digital channels (BOI Omni Neo App/ Internet Banking).

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# Shahjehanabad rape accused sent to jail

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The accused who raped and killed 5-year-old girl in Shahjehanabad area was presented in the court on Friday and he was sent to jail. The police would investigate involvement of the accused in human trafficking. Before his arrest, the accused fell while trying to escape and suffered a serious injury in one of his legs. The police have searched the accused's flat once again. From where, the lower, undergarments and a shirt worn by him at the time of the incident were seized. The police will once again search his flat to seize other items. The accused's moth-

er Basanti and sister Chanchal have been sent to jail. People with whom the accused met would be identified and questioned and were they aware of the crime would also be investigated in the further probe. Did the accused inform anyone else about the incident? The police will also recreate the incident. The accused told the police during interrogation that due to fogging, people had closed the gates of their flats. Usually the area is crowded. On Tuesday afternoon, the girl was seen alone in the verandah due to smoke. Seeing this opportunity, he pulled the girl inside the flat. At this time, his mother and sister had gone to work and he molested the girl inside

the flat. When the health of the innocent deteriorated, he got scared, first he gagged her mouth and later strangled her. On Tuesday afternoon, when the mother of the accused returned from work, he told the whole incident to his mother. When the mother came, the mother also informed the sister about the matter. Before he could dispose of the body, he started searching for the girl in the building. In a short while, the police arrived. Due to this, he did not get a chance to dispose of the body. On the intervening night of Tuesday, the body was tied in a cloth and kept in the water tank. His mother had told him to do so.

Later, there was a plan to dispose of the body along with the water tank. But the police did not leave the spot. Police force remained deployed all around the multi. Police said that information has been received about the accused's mother Basanti Bhalase kidnapping a child in the past. However, the case is quite old. Police are also questioning her in this case regarding human trafficking. People living nearby in the multi have described the behaviour of Basanti and her daughter Chanchal as suspicious. Different kinds of people also used to visit their house. Police also suspect that the accused are also involved in a sex racket.

# CM at Round table conference

Bhopal: Chief Minister Mohan Yadav engaged in a roundtable conference with industrialists at Sagar in fourth Regional Industry Conclave on Friday. He discussed the numerous opportunities and challenges surrounding new and renewable energy sector. During his interactions with entrepreneurs, he emphasized the commitment to providing all necessary facilities and approvals within the stipulated time frame, as outlined in the new investment promotion policy. He also highlighted the online services available for easier land allotment. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that a policy has been prepared to promote the renewable energy sector in the state, similar to the initiatives by the Central Government.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav during one-to-one discussion with Executive Director Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited Shriram AN during Regional Industry Conclave in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh on Friday. Pioneer photo



People participate in zumba class during an event organised on the occasion of World Tourism Day, by Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, at Boat Club in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

# Man urinates in upper lake, punished

Bhopal: Acting swiftly after the video of a person urinating into the Upper Lake went viral on social media, the Bhopal Municipal Corporation tracked the man, slapped him with a 5k fine and moved an application at the local thana for stringent action. The BMC response to the public misdemeanor will serve as an example and make people resist the urge to emulate the man, said a city resident. Soon after the video went viral, Municipal Commissioner Harendra Narayan took cognizance and instructed officials to take strict action. The BMC team promptly located the owner of the vehicle, seen in the video. Though the vehicle owner claimed ignorance saying his vehicle was borrowed by another person, the BMC officials levied a spot fine of Rs 5000, and later filed an application at the Kohefiza police station. BMC officials are seeking strict action in the matter to refrain others from emulating the act as the lake is the primary source of water supply for a sizeable portion of the state capital.

# CM holds One-on-One discussions with Industrialists

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav engaged in one-on-one discussions with industrialists and investors at the Sagar Regional Industry Conclave regarding investment and the expansion of industrial activities in the state. AN Sriram, Managing Director of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, informed Chief Minister Yadav about the plan to establish a Skill Development Institute for youth alongside the expansion of the Bina Refinery. SK Das, Executive Director of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, mentioned during the conversation that natural gas production in Hatta will commence by 2026-2027, which will not only generate revenue for the government but also create employment opportunities at the local level. Chief Minister Yadav also discussed the establishment of food processing units



and the resulting employment opportunities with Dr. Anil Tiwari, Director of Swasti Agro Science Private Limited, and Pramil Jindal, Managing Director of Baramalt. **Renewable energy sector holds significant expansion potential** Chairman and Managing Director of Sunkind Group, Hanish Gupta; Chairman of Insulation Green Energy, Manish Gupta; and CEO of Alpek Solar Limited, Aditya Sehgal, expressed interest in investing in the energy and renewable energy sectors in the state.

Considering the vast potential in the IT and semiconductor sectors in the state, Raunak Chaudhary, Managing Director of Aceds Private Limited, and Navot Singh Sandhu, Managing Director of Data Centrics, also held discussions with Chief Minister Dr. Yadav. Discussions regarding human resources and mining were held with Agyat Gupta, Managing Director of Avani Apparel, and JP Agarwal of Pacific Metasteel. In a one-on-one discussion regarding skill development activities for youth, a conversation was also held with Dr. Anil Sirvaia, President of DICCI Madhya Pradesh. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav also held one-on-one discussions with Manoj Soni, CEO of Ease My Trip, and S. Ram, a representative of Fly Ola, regarding promoting the tourism industry and plans for the aviation sector. Sunil Bansal, Promoter of Bansal Group, briefed the

Chief Minister about the solar power plant in the state and hospital construction plans in Jabalpur, Indore, and Gwalior. In the series of one-on-one discussions, Chairman of Dara Engineering & Infrastructure, Dr. Papu Ram Vishnoi; Managing Director of Sigma Engineering, Hasan Sardar Khan; and Director of Swarn Bharat Steel Private Limited, Anil Singh Dangi, discussed the infrastructure development sector in the state. In addition, discussions were held with Pankaj Oswal, Managing Director of Madhya Bharat Agro, and Manoj Jain, Director of Sethia Group, regarding investment and expansion possibilities in the chemicals and fertilizers sector. Chairman and Managing Director of Alinj Group, Inderjeet Purthi, highlighted the bright future of portable petrol pumps and textiles, making Chief Minister Dr. Yadav aware of his plans.

# DGP gives necessary instructions for safety of women and children and maintenance of law and order

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To ensure safety of women and children and to maintain law and order in the state, DGP Sudhir Saxena has given necessary instructions to all Superintendents of Police through video conferencing for effective prevention of sexual crimes in the state, intensive investigation of sexual offenders and action to get strict punishment to sexual offenders. All the Zonal IGS/ADGs of the state, Commissioners of Bhopal and Indore Commissionerate, SPs of all districts and Deputy Commissioners of Police of Indore and Bhopal participated in the VC. DGP Saxena directed that from today onwards, by running a campaign against people involved in sexual crimes, ensure intensive investigation and monitoring of people involved in such crimes in the last ten years in all the police station areas of the state. Obtain information about sexual offenders from various

databases of police, especially those who have committed such crime more than once. If they are residing anywhere else except their area, inform the concerned police station so that their activities can be monitored closely. If any activity or conduct of such criminals is found suspicious or doubtful in your respective police station area, give instructions and ensure strict action as per law including bond over if necessary. Make sure to prepare the history sheet of repeat offenders and keep a special eye on habitual offenders. He said that as per the intention of the government, take continuous follow-up for quick resolution of cases related to POCSO Act and other sexual crimes in the fast track court and make meaningful efforts to ensure quick justice to the victim and severe punishment to the criminal by constantly contacting the DPO and other concerned officials. All the arrangements should be ensured in all the schools of the

state with the cooperation of the district administration in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court regarding the safety and security of children. He further added that police verification of all the staff of all schools should be done compulsorily. Also, there should be vigilant vigil on the people and roads around the school premises. Ensure that CCTV cameras are on in the premises and vehicles. Do not ignore any suspicious activity and suspicious person found, take necessary steps after thorough investigation. DGP Saxena said that all field police officers should review the black spots by establishing coordination with the concerned officials of the district administration, urban and rural bodies in their respective areas and exercise special caution there. Strengthen the beat system and identify anti-social elements and take action against them as per rules.

# Bundelkhand has immense opportunities for IT

Bhopal: Additional Chief Secretary Department of Science and Technology Sanjay Dubey gave a presentation on department policies and investment opportunities at Regional Industrial Conclave Sagar. Dubey said that the state's progress will increasingly depend on the kind and level of investment in IT/ITES and ESDM sectors. He highlighted that in future, the growth of the country will not only be determined by metro cities but also by Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. Madhya Pradesh in particular offers significant potential for investment in this sector. Dubey said that Madhya Pradesh has a large vibrant Tech ecosystem and entrepreneurial culture. State government ensures active support to industrial units while offering advance infrastructure, connectivity within its region and technically skilled workers. Currently more than 2 thousand IT/ITES & ESDM units are working in the state, with 650 units registered with MPSEDC in cities like Bhopal, Indore and Gwalior which have benefited from the policies of the state. The turnover of these units is more than Rs 10 thousand crore per annum. More than 50 of the country's largest IT & ITES units are established in Madhya Pradesh. Every year, 500 million dollars worth of

exports are done from the state through IT related industries. Madhya Pradesh has 5 IT SEZs, 15 IT parks built by the state government. More than 1.5 lakh people have got employment from these industries. Dubey highlighted that Madhya Pradesh is home to over 300 engineering colleges, with top institutions like IIT and IIM in Indore, IIIT in Gwalior, IITDM in Jabalpur, and AIIMS in Bhopal, alongside several other national-level institutes. He also mentioned Anoop Rathore, an entrepreneur from a small start-up in Gwalior, who has developed a drone motor. While similar motors are imported from China at a cost of around Rs 20,000, Rathore's innovation costs only Rs 1,500, showcasing the remarkable talent and entrepreneurial spirit present in the state. Indore is the cleanest city of the country and Bhopal is the clean capital of the country. Madhya Pradesh ranks second in the country in overall cleanliness. The level of pollution is also low in the state due to which it is a better place for ease of doing business and work life balance. More than 1200 technological start ups are established in the state, out of which two 'Neev Cloud & Shop Kirana' are unicorns. He said that he has formulated the policy which has all

types of incentives, The policy has fiscal incentives, non fiscal incentives, developer incentive, rental incentive and land related benefits. If the business is of more than Rs 200 crore, a committee has been formed under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister, which takes decisions and provides you additional benefits.

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDERING TENDER NOTICE**  
 Divisonal Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work.  
**E-Tender No. : JHS-ENGG-N-2024-179 | Approx Cost : 1276641420.35**  
**Description of work :** "Jhansi Division: Providing and erecting "W" metal cattle barrier along the track to prevent CRO in remaining portion in VGLJ-DHO section.  
**Earnest Money : 6533200.00 | Date of closing Tender : 23.10.2024 at 15:00 hrs.**  
**Date of Completion/period from issue acceptance letter : 12 Months**  
 \* Tender online can be submitted upto 15:00 hrs on 23.10.2024 \* For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) 1700/24 (C)  
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# Wall collapse at Mahakal temple, 2 dead

PNS ■ UJJAIN

At least two persons have been killed and four people have been injured after a boundary wall of Ujjain's Mahakaleswar Temple collapsed on Friday following heavy rainfall. Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath expressed grief over the incident and said, "Sad news was received of two people being killed and

four injured due to the wall collapse near Gate No. 4 of Mahakal Temple in Ujjain. May God grant the departed souls a place in his lotus feet. Wishing the injured a speedy recovery." Further details are awaited. Earlier in March this year, at least 14 priests were injured after a massive fire broke out during the early morning 'bhasma aarti' inside the sanctum sanctorum of the temple on the occasion of Holi.

"The fire started as 'gula' (coloured powder used during rituals) fell on the puja thali that contained burning 'kapoor' (camphor). It later spread on the floor and turned into a blaze," Ujjain Collector Neeraj Kumar Singh had said. Several leaders Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah expressed grief over the tragic incident and had assured every possible help to the victims.

# AAP, Congress demonstrate against rapes of minor girls in MP

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

I am Aadmi party workers demonstrated at Roshanpura intersection in against the incidents of rape of minor girls in Madhya Pradesh including the state capital. Congress workers reached the Police Commissioner's office and submitted a memorandum to the police officers. Aam Aadmi party Bhopal unit workers demonstrated at Roshanpura intersection in Bhopal against the increasing atrocities and crimes against women in Madhya Pradesh. Many party workers including Aam Aadmi Party's state organization minister Sajjan Singh Parmar, state secretary Raisa Malik, minority wing state president Minhaj Alam were present in this demonstration led by Bhopal city president Harish Pathak. City's president Harish Pathak

# AAP, Congress demonstrate against rapes of minor girls in MP

said that if the state government is failing to stop the increasing crime in the state, then the responsible people should resign. Crimes against women are increasing day by day in the state. Aam Aadmi party's state secretary Raisa Malik said that such atrocities have been committed against women and children which are shameful for humanity. The accused of these incidents should be punished as soon as possible. Law and order should be made strict so that such incidents can be curbed. State Congress spokesperson Avneesh Bundela reached the police Commissioner's office along with Congress spokesperson Swadesh Sharma, Anand Jat, Mithun Ahirwar, Farhana Khan and former candidate of Govindpura assembly constituency Ravindra Sahu Jhumarwala and gave a memorandum to the Police

Commissioner. Congress leaders submitted a memorandum to take legal action against the school management regarding the incidents of sexual abuse of girls in Bhopal. In the memorandum submitted to the Police Commissioner, it was told that on September 13, 2024, a school teacher sexually abused a nursery student studying in a private school located on Bhadbhada Road in the capital Bhopal. A report of this incident was lodged at Kamla Nagar police station by her parents on September 14, 2024. Bundela said that the school management has completely failed in providing security to the children as well as in discharging its duties. It has been found that the school management did not promptly inform the police about the incident. The act of the school management is a clear violation of Section 19/21 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012. Referring to another incident, it was told that in a private school located in Katara Hills of the capital Bhopal, a chemistry teacher sexually abused a class 10 student. These incidents are creating fear and anger as well as a feeling of insecurity among the parents of the children. In this incident, along with the act committed by the accused, the school management is also unable to provide security to the children. The police was not informed about such an incident by the school management on its own discretion. In relation to these incidents, cognizance has been taken against both the private schools and legal action has been demanded under section 19 and 21 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012.

# Indian Bank DEMAND NOTICE

**Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of The Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002**

A notice is hereby given that the following Borrower/s have defaulted in repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non Performing Assets (NPA). The notices were issued to them under Section 13(2) of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 on their last known address, but they have been returned unobserved and as such they are hereby informed by way of this public notice.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) & Loan A/C No.	Loan Amount	Outstanding Amount/ NPA Date	Demand Notice Date	Details of Mortgaged Properties
1	Borrower - Mr. Sumit Singh S/o M. Keshav Singh (Borrower, Mortgagor) Residential Address: 110, Main Road Adhartal, Dhani Ki Kutiya, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Ward, Adhartal Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh 2 Mrs Monika Singh W/o Mr. Sumit Singh (Co-Borrower) Residential Address: 110, Main Road Adhartal, Dhani Ki Kutiya, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi Ward, Adhartal, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh Branch - Adhartal	27,00,000/-	26,52,017/- as on 06/07/2024 06/07/2024	19/07/2024	All that part & parcel of property consisting of Mouza Bineka, NB No 296, PHN 17, KH No 11/1 New Kharsa No 11/1/1, Layout Plot No 11 Area 1000 SqFt at Plot no. 110, Mouza- Bineki & Dist Jabalpur in the name of Mr. Sumit Singh Boundaries: East - Side Road, West - Plot No 103, North : Plot No 111, South - Side Road

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above Borrower(s) and/or their Guarantor(s) (whenever applicable) are hereby called upon to make payment of outstanding amount within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which further steps will be taken after expiry of 60days from the date of this notice under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002. Your attention is invited to the provision of section 13(8) of the act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. This Notice is without prejudice to any other right remedy available to the Bank.  
 Date - 28-09-2024, Place - Jabalpur  
 Authorised Officer, Indian Bank, Satna

# BJP slams Karnataka Government for CBI consent withdrawal

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The BJP on Friday criticised the Congress over the Karnataka government's decision to withdraw the general consent to the CBI to probe cases in the state amid the MUDA land allotment row, describing it as a response of a "professional thief and a corrupt party".

Terming the Congress government's move a bid to evade a CBI probe into the MUDA "scam" allegedly involving Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said the decision depicted a "guilty mind" in itself.

"Thousands of crores have been usurped in the MUDA

scam. After this, the Congress has done what is expected from any certified 'chor and looter' (thief and robber). To evade the long hand of law, it has withdrawn the general consent given to the CBI to investigate in the state," he said.

"The Congress is behaving like a professional thief and a professional corrupt party. First to err and then go brazen about it, this is the attitude and approach of the Congress in Karnataka and other states where it is in power," Poonawalla added.

Opposition parties in Karnataka have alleged that the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) has fraudulently allotted sites to people who lost land to other projects,



including Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi. Poonawalla alleged that Siddaramaiah was following the "same approach" of the Congress since his alleged involvement in the MUDA scam worth Rs 5,000 crore surfaced, and demanded his resignation as chief minister.

"When Narendra Modi ji was chief minister of Gujarat, several cases were (registered) against him and the central probe agency was unleashed on him... Yet, being the chief minister, Narendra Modi ji cooperated fully with every investigation," he said.

"This is the difference between a morally upright individual and one with a guilty conscience," Poonawalla said.

Amid the MUDA land allotment row, the Karnataka government on Thursday withdrew general consent given to CBI to investigate cases in the state as it alleged that the federal agency was "biased".

Announcing the decision after a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister

Siddaramaiah, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil said, "It is clear that the CBI or the Central government are not using their instrumentalities judiciously."

The move came amid demands by the opposition BJP to hand over the MUDA site allotment case to the CBI. The BJP spokesperson dismissed the Karnataka government's accusation against the CBI and said the Congress has no problem with the central probe agency when it "suits" the party's interest.

"They approached the CBI and ED with a complaint in the Delhi liquor scam and put up posters across Delhi calling Arvind Kejriwal a thief after the CBI took action," he added.



## Dhankhar calls for multilateral action on global threats

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday asserted that multilateral engagements are no longer optional but essential for addressing modern-day threats, ranging from cyber crimes and terrorism. He also said that peace is best secured from a position of strength and underscored the importance of national security.

"Global peace is assurance for sustainable development, the only way to existence. But geopolitical configurations and conflagrations have affected a sea change in security outlook," he noted.

Addressing the participants of the inaugural International Strategic Engagement Programme (IN-STEP), a collaborative effort between the National Security Council Secretariat, the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Ministry of Defence here, Dhankhar emphasised the fundamental connection between global peace and sustainable development, underlining that the current state of world affairs demands a redefined approach to security.

Highlighting the dynamic geopolitical shifts that have altered global security perspectives, the vice president noted that multilateral engagements are no longer optional but essential for addressing modern-day threats, ranging from cyber crimes and terrorism to climate change and disruptive technologies.

Dhankhar also drew attention to the evolving global threats, many of which were unimaginable just a few years ago.

"We are in a world that has suddenly appeared on our radar with unprecedented challenges such as climate change, pandemics, cyber threats, and disruptions in global order," he told the gathering.

He pointed out that these challenges are not accidental but stem from policies and actions driven by power ambitions and a disregard for sustainable growth.

Addressing the significance of technological advancements, he emphasised the critical role that emerging technologies such as machine learning can play in shaping global narratives and mitigating misinformation.

Disruptive technologies must be harnessed to neutralise harmful narratives that may lack factual basis but have the potential to create dangerous global environments, Dhankhar underscored.

Reflecting on India's philosophy of "Atithi Devo Bhavah," the Vice-President reinforced the nation's belief in welcoming all with warmth and respect, as embodied in the G20 motto: "One Earth, One Family, and One Future."

He stressed that these values are essential in fostering unity and cooperation in a world that increasingly faces challenges that transcend borders.



## India, Greece strengthen Naval ties

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

India and Greece have held discussions to further strengthen navy to navy partnership by augmenting operational interactions, maritime security co-operation and streamlining goals for a stable and secure maritime environment, navy said here on Friday.

These issues were taken up during Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi's talks with Vice Admiral Dimitrios E Katsiras, Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff in Athens on Thursday.

During this maiden visit by an Indian Navy chief to Greece, both the Chiefs also explored avenues of furthering training cooperation along with laying emphasis towards enhancing interoperability and capacity-building.

Admiral Tripathi also met Ioannis Kefalogiannis, Deputy Minister of Defence, Greece and Vice Admiral Christos Sasiakos, Deputy Chief of the Hellenic National Defence General Staff, marking a significant step in deepening defence ties and fostering a robust strategic partnership towards enhancing maritime security in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Discussions focussed on the criticality of open sea trade routes, laying the groundwork for advancing Indo-Greek defence collaboration with focus on strategic naval opportunities, capacity building, shared training initiatives, and enhancing interoperability. Collaboration in niche technologies and defence industry opportunities were also deliberated.

## SC Judge addresses smuggling, counterfeiting at MASCRAGE

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Justice Sanjay Karol, Judge, Supreme Court of India, on Thursday highlighted the debilitating impact smuggling and counterfeiting have on the nation's economic and social aspects.

Delivering the valedictory address on Day-2 of 10th edition of 'MASCRAGE', organised by FICCI-CASCADE, Justice Karol said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting continue to jeopardise economic stability, social security and integrity of the nation.

Smuggling and counterfeiting often lurk undetected amidst a host of other economic and social problems but continue to erode substantial portions of legitimate businesses, resulting in substantial economic and social damages."

Justice Karol emphasized that the use of technology is essential to combat the menace and highlighted the importance of robust interstate collaborations.

"Utilizing QR codes will help safeguard consumers and address the issues of smuggling and counterfeiting. Social media intermediaries also play a crucial role in this fight."



We must strengthen our inter-state collaborations, and I am pleased to note that over the past ten years, these collaborations have been solidified at the international level," he stated.

Justice Navin Chawla, Judge, Delhi High Court, said, "Smuggling and counterfeiting affect the day-to-day lives of citizens in various ways. These activities constitute a \$2 trillion shadow economy, resulting in significant economic losses for the nation.

This menace needs to be addressed uniformly by the legislature, judiciary, and executive. I assure you that all three branches are doing everything possible to combat this issue."

Justice Chawla added that consumers need to be aware that buying illicit products may result in short-term gain

## EC seeks explanation from Maharashtra officials over non-compliance

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Sending out a stern Smessage, the Election Commission on Friday sought an explanation from the Maharashtra chief secretary and the state's police chief for failing to fully implement its orders on the transfer of officials ahead of the upcoming assembly polls.

In a strongly-worded letter, the poll body said despite a directive issued on July 31 to relocate officials who had served in their home districts or current posting for over three years, the state administration had not completed the process.

According to the Election Commission's (EC) mandate, the compliance report was due by August 31.

While the additional director general of police submitted a partial report, the chief secretary is yet to provide a full response.

Sources noted that more than 100 inspector-level officers in Mumbai and revenue officials, many holding key positions in the state, had not been transferred as required.



Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar expressed his displeasure over the state administration's non-compliance, stating that the delay undermined efforts to ensure a free and fair electoral process.

# Lokpal issues accreditation norms for journalists

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal has sought applications for accreditation from journalists to cover its working and has issued a list of eligibility norms that includes a dress code for media persons while visiting its premises.

Desirous journalists need to have a law degree recognised by the Bar Council of India under the Advocates Act, reads the norms for accreditation of legal correspondents in the Lokpal of India.

However, the Lokpal chairperson can waive or relax this condition in appropriate

cases if the journalist or correspondent holds a Bachelor degree of a recognised university; and possesses at least five years' experience of reporting events and proceedings of any constitutional court, the norms said.

Interested journalists should have at least five years' experience of reporting in a daily newspaper or a national or international news agency or electronic media organisation, of which at least three and a half years must be of reporting events and proceedings of any constitutional court, reads the norms issued on September 25.

"Applications are invited from

interested and eligible journalists/ correspondents in proforma in annexure for accreditation as the Legal Correspondents in Lokpal of India," the circular said. The last date of receiving application is 30 days from the issue of the circular.

Mentioning conditions to be observed by a working journalist/correspondent after his accreditation, the norms said "an accredited correspondent, temporary/regular, shall visit the Lokpal premises in a formal dress, in a manner befitting the decor of the office and displaying prominently his accreditation card."

At all times, an accredited correspondent, temporary or

regular, shall maintain decorum in the Lokpal premises and refrain from doing such things as may interfere with the proceedings before the Lokpal and shall restrict his movement within the prescribed area for the media, interact only with the spokesperson of the Lokpal and no other official including shall not attempt to access any confidential or even official records except the ones shared to him by the spokesperson of the Lokpal, the circular said.

"Accredited correspondent, temporary/regular, shall make a serious endeavour of reporting accurate account of the information shared to him by the spokesperson of the Lokpal without any distortions and embellishments," the norms said.

In another order, the Lokpal has nominated its deputy registrar as its spokesperson.

According to the norms, the applications for temporary/regular accreditation shall be placed before the chairperson or accreditation committee nominated by him for that purpose, for consideration. The chairperson, for reasons to be recorded in writing, may accord accreditation to any deserving candidate in relaxation of the rules and these norms, the circular said. On being granted temporary/regular accreditation, a legal correspondent will be issued an identity card.

"In case, an accredited legal correspondent, temporary/regular, is transferred or otherwise ceases to represent the concerned newspaper, news agency or electronic media organisation for which she/he was granted accreditation, shall, within two weeks of such transfer or cessation, return the identity card," one of the conditions mentioned in the norms said.

Such legal correspondent will not be extended the privileges of an accredited legal correspondent of the Lokpal unless she/he seeks a fresh accreditation by making an application in accordance with the norms for representing the press/agency/organisation concerned, to the chairperson, it said.

The Lokpal has also cited certain conditions for journalists while seeking temporary accreditation. It said that the application for accreditation "must be accompanied by an attested copy of the Law degree" and interested candidates "must possess at least three and a half years' of experience of reporting events and proceedings of any court in a daily newspaper and/or a national or international news agency and/or electronic media organisation having standing."

## Maldives President Muizzu set to visit India amid improving ties

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu is likely to visit India in the second week of October. It comes in the backdrop of recent strained ties between the two countries. He had last come to New Delhi on June nine for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing in ceremony.

Incidentally, it will be his bilateral visit to India since Muizzu became president in November last year on the back of an 'India Out' campaign. He is perceived to be pro-China.

The Maldivian president will come to New Delhi for a three-day visit commencing October seven, sources said here on Friday. He will hold talks with Prime Minister Modi on October eight, they said.

Muizzu government's efforts to reduce the Maldives'



dependence on India and a demand for the removal of some 85 Indian military personnel deployed there to operate three aircraft took bilateral ties to a fresh low.

Last December, his government terminated a 2019 agreement with India for joint hydrographic surveys. This was followed by several steps to bolster defence cooperation with China and Turkey.

However, there are signs of improvement in the overall relationship in recent months. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Maldives in August and the two sides

inked an agreement on introducing India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) system in there and inaugurated several projects built with Indian grants and loans.

Signs of a thaw came from Muizzu himself, when he described India as "one of the closest allies and invaluable partners" of the Maldives at a meeting with Jaishankar.

Earlier this month, Muizzu's spokesperson announced he would visit India "very soon" on the same day that two junior ministers, who were suspended in January for derogatory comments against Modi, resigned from the government.

The Indian side has also helped the Maldives avoid the risk of defaulting on its Islamic bond payments by extending the State Bank of India's (SBI) subscription to government treasury bills worth \$50 million for another year.

## Health Ministry issues revised guidelines for Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

With Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) fast becoming a major public health crisis, closely linked to the increasing rates of obesity, diabetes, and CVDs, the Union Health Ministry on Friday issued revised operational guidelines and a training module aimed at improving patient care to combat the silent but serious condition.

"Out of 10, one to three people can have NAFLD which highlights the impact of the disease," said Apurva Chandra, Union Health Secretary at an event here on the need for the revised guidelines.

He further said that 66 per cent of the liver deaths in the country are due to NCDs and the major risk factors are tobacco use (smoking and smokeless), alcohol use, poor dietary habits, insufficient physical activity, and air pollution.

As rapid urbanisation, along with sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy dietary habits become more common, more individuals are developing fatty liver, even without alcohol



consumption. The growing prevalence of type 2 diabetes and insulin resistance further exacerbates this condition.

Punya Salila Srivastava, Officer on Special Duty with the Ministry said, "These guidelines need to reach the grassroot level workers so that the disease is detected early and the burden of NAFLD is reduced." Dr S K Sarin, Director, Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) noted that many NCDs such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer are linked to liver

health, underscoring the importance of maintaining a healthy liver.

"India contributes high numbers for NCDs globally and one of the core causes of metabolic diseases is in the liver. Realising the growing burden and urgent need to address it, India became the first country to integrate the NAFLD in the National Programme for Prevention and Control of NCDs in 2021," said a statement from the Ministry.

Welcoming the Ministry's move, Dr. Arun Gupta, a pediatrician and

convenor of Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest (NAPI) said later that while the revised guidelines for managing NAFLD are a positive step, they alone are insufficient to address the root causes of this growing health issue.

"There is a pressing need to regulate the marketing of unhealthy foods, particularly ultra-processed foods (UPFs), which contribute significantly to poor dietary habits," he said, adding that banning advertisements for these unhealthy products and implementing higher taxes on them.

"It's crucial to educate children about the potential harm of such products, fostering a healthier understanding of food choices from an early age," he said.

The guidelines focus on health promotion and early detection which are important for ensuring that patients with NAFLD receive timely and appropriate care. It also advocates for a multidisciplinary approach, integrating the efforts of healthcare providers from various disciplines to offer holistic care to individuals affected by NAFLD.

# No murmurs on illegal Rohingya settlement in Jammu polls

**MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU**  
Rohingya settlements in Jammu have always been a bone of contention. But this election season it's business as usual. No one is dragging them and running any hate campaign targeting them for posing a security threat to several strategic military installations in and around Jammu. When this correspondent visited the Kiryani Talab and Bhatindi area in Jammu on Thursday the Rohingya shopkeepers were going about their usual activities to earn their livelihood. The entire market is run by Rohingyas to sustain a large number of families living in different vacant plots.

The houses in the neighborhood adorned flags of different political parties and a street corner meeting was also going on when this correspondent arrived there. The leader who was making a speech to woo the voters talked about implementing various schemes for the welfare of the masses including improving the condition of the roads. Adequate water and electricity supply and sanitation facilities. When I asked a group of Rohingyas whether anyone was disturbing them in the name of security or otherwise, they unanimously responded negatively. At the same time, they were curious to know the outcome of the elections in

the region and which party was most likely to win the elections. The Bharatiya Janta Party in its election manifesto has made a one-line mention claiming "We will undertake a concerted drive to address illegal Rohingya and Bangladeshi settlements in Jammu and Kashmir". In contrast, the Congress party has not touched upon this issue. The regional political parties in the fray, the National Conference and the PDP have also not commented on the 'contentious' issue in their election manifestos. According to a Home Department report tabled in the state assembly on February 2, 2018, "a total



number of 6523 Rohingyas were found camping across 39 different locations spread across five districts of Jammu and Kashmir". According to this report, "6461 Rohingyas were staying in the Jammu division and 62

in the Kashmir division". The majority of Rohingyas (illegal immigrants) camping in Jammu are spread across the Bahu Assembly segment in the Jammu district. The local activists and politicians, spearheading a campaign in support of their deportation for a long time, often contest these figures claiming a large number of these illegal immigrants are scattered and even their biometrics have not been collected by the security personnel. In December 2023, the Jammu and Kashmir police teams launched a massive crackdown on over three dozen locations across five districts of Jammu province to expose the 'unholy' nexus between a large number of facilitators and Rohingyas (illegal immigrants from Myanmar). During the day more than 10 fresh FIRs were registered by the police, seven in Jammu district alone and one each in Doda, Kishtwar Rajouri, and

Poonch districts. Around 40 people were detained for further questioning by the police during these raids. The Police in the Jammu region have taken action against the facilitators providing shelter to Rohingyas in the Jammu, Kishtwar, Doda, Poonch, and Rajouri districts. Earlier, the UT administration launched a special verification drive in the first week of March 2021 in the sports stadium in Jammu. At the end of the drive, a total number of 155 Rohingyas were found to be staying illegally in Jammu and all of them were lodged in the holding centre. According to official sources, more than 250 Rohingyas

have been camping in the holding centre out of which 50-60 are children. Protests also staged violent demonstrations inside the detention centre in July 2023 demanding their release at the earliest. The majority of Rohingyas in Jammu earn their livelihood by doing daily wage jobs and some of them have become scrap dealers. Children support their families by collecting and selling recyclable material, and a few women work as daily wagers in the dry fruit industry, domestic help, daily wage labourers with the contractors of Jammu Municipal Corporation, and in local factories/sweepers in the hotels/guest houses etc.

## Didi planned flood to divert attention from rape case: BJP

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA**  
The BJP has slammed Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for using natural calamities to play "political games." All by shifting its own responsibilities on the Centre for the recent floods that has inundated several districts of the State. Days after the Chief Minister shot off two back-to-back letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging that the Damodar Valley Corporation had released lakhs of cusecs of water without alerting her State administration sinking several districts and damaging properties and crops worth several thousand crores. Bengal BJP president Sukanto Majumdar said that Banerjee's allegations were a ploy to release pressure from her Government by diverting public attention from the Kolkata lady doctor rape and murder issue. "It is not only the DVC but also the dams run and controlled by her own Government that have released water contributing to the flood situation," Majumdar said adding "the Chief Minister is falsely blaming the DVC which had already informed her Government several hours



before releasing the water. "DVC only released water from Panchet and Maithon dams in Jharkhand but here the Bengal Government released water from its own dams on rivers Subarnarekha, Kangshabati, Ajoy and Mayurakhi... this was done to create a situation so as to divert the public attention from the rape and murder case" of a lady doctor in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital which had put the State Government in a tight spot. The BJP's statements came at a time when the flood situation in south Bengal districts continued to be grim with the Damodar Valley Corporation releasing additional 25 thousand cusecs of water on Friday taking the total amount of water released over the past two days to about 35,000 cusecs, sources said.

Earlier the DVC had released about 5 lakh cusecs of water inundating about districts of Hooghly, Howrah, two Mdnapores, Bankura, Birbhum and parts of Burdwan leading the Chief Minister to write two consecutive letters to the Prime Minister seeking relief funds. Fresh bouts of rains over the past few days have led to the situation, sources in the administration said. "The water had just started to recede in Ghatol and Panshikura sub divisions of West Midnapore and Hooghly districts which had remained most affected areas but fresh rains in the past two days have only compounded the problem," said an Irrigation Department official. Quoting the DVC sources the BJP leadership said how the authorities had released water from Maithon Dam when it was almost 489.50 feet full. "The total capacity of the dam is 490 feet... the dam was brimming over... it is a hilly zone and if the dam would have burst then not only the other districts but also Kolkata would have been washed away," said sources adding how the Bengal Government had been kept posted about the developments through the State's representatives.

## Bombay High Court directs police to find burial spot for Akshay Shinde

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

Two days after it questioned the version put out by the Thane police over the circumstances leading to the killing of Badlapur sexual assault accused Akshay Shinde, the Bombay High Court on Friday directed the Maharashtra police to find a secluded spot to bury Shinde's body. A HC division bench comprising Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice M M Sathaye issued a directive to this effect after the parents of their deceased-accused son Akshay Shinde told the court that they had been refused cremation or burial spots for the past five days since Shinde was gunned down in a police van. The HC bench directed the police to inform Shinde's family once the burial spot was identified so that the death rituals could be performed. Currently, Shinde's body is in the morgue of the state-run Sir JJ Hospital in Mumbai. The HC directive to the police came during the hearing of a petition filed by Akshay Shinde's father Anna Shinde seeking space for burial of his son. During the hearing, Chief



Public Prosecutor Hiten Venegaonkar informed the HC bench that burial grounds in Badlapur and nearby areas had refused permission for the burial of Akshay Shinde. "Once the burial ground is finalised, Shinde's family will be informed about it But the family need not make an event out of the burial. Let them do his death rituals quietly. The family members will be taken to the burial spot escorted with police team," Venegaonkar told the court. Shinde's family's lawyer Amit Katarnavare said that the father of the deceased wanted a "decent burial" for his son. He said that the family was opting for a burial so that there was the option of exhumation in future - to which the judges said that the

police are ready to do that. It may be recalled that 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 on Monday evening. A HC bench of Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan had on Wednesday 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".

## Australian business ladies launch 'Elevate' to empower Indian women entrepreneurs

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI**

As part of strengthening the role of Indian women in entrepreneurship and business, two Australian ladies who were successful in business and commerce will share their experience with the former. The two women professionals who share decades of hands on experience in management and crafting of success stories are launching their book "Elevate" for women entrepreneurs in India. It is hoped that the principles gained by these two ladies would come in handy for women managing kirana shops to super markets. This is a work that wants to propagate the message "One word Can Change Your Life". The book, being published in India by Penguin Random House, tells the unique story of how Shannah Kennedy, an executive life coach with two decades experience and Colleen Callander, founder of the iconic fashion brands Sportsgirl and Sussan, made it to the top of Australian business league. Shannah is known as the Australian Powerhouse in strategic life coaching,

according to Abigail, publicist, Penguin Random House. Quoting the author, Abigail said that the book Elevate is meant for Indian women who want to embrace the extraordinary life they aspire for. Colleen Callander stands out among businesswomen as a self-made professional. Having dumped the traditional educational path at the age of 16 to carve out her unique trajectory to success, what she has done on her own is path breaking work. Both Shannah and Colleen are sought after speakers in global business and leadership meetings and have not let their listeners down at any point of time. Abigail stated that through their unique blend of business acumen and personal insight, Shannah and Colleen provide a practical roadmap that emphasizes clarity, focus, and balance across three key pillars: Life, Leadership, and Longevity. Their experience as leaders who have thrived in highly competitive industries gives readers valuable, real-world advice on how to excel in both careers and personal lives.



## India launches new tourism initiatives, Visa fee waiver for tourists

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
To promote unexplored tourist sites of "Incredible India" globally, the Government will soon release a "dedicated master list" for holistic development, exempt one lakh foreign tourists from visa fees under the "Chalo India" campaign, and launch the "Paryatan Mitra and Paryatan Didi" initiative across 50 destinations across the States. Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat outlined these plans during his address at an event here marking World Tourism Day on Friday. Through these initiative, the Ministry of Tourism aims at elevating the overall experience for tourists at these destinations by having them meet "tourist-friendly" people who are "proud ambassadors and storytellers for their destinations". "This is being done by providing tourism-related training and awareness to all individuals who interact and engage with tourists in a destination," the ministry announced. World Tourism Day is celebrated every year with a special theme. This year's theme is "Tourism and Peace". Vice President Jagdeep Dhanekar who was the chief guest at the event highlighted that the entire world is traumatised by conflagrations as it disrupts supply chains and planning and people-to-

people connect brings harmony and tourism plays a crucial role in it. About the "dedicated master list" to be soon to be released for a holistic development of tourist sites," the Tourism Minister said that the list will be jointly prepared by the tourism ministry, culture ministry, civil aviation ministry, railway ministry, transport ministry and ports, shipping and waterways ministry. "... In the next three years, development of these tourist sites and new tourist sites will be taken up on priority. This will be a new effort to bring the unbelievable sites of Incredible India on a global platform," Shekhawat said. "We will make this list public so that private investment and industry stakeholders can also contribute to it.... And the Dekho Apna Desh sites will also be included in it," he said, adding that a "big jump" in domestic tourism is being witnessed after the "Dekho Apna Desh" campaign was launched. In her address, Union Tourism Secretary V Vidyavathi said, "Our efforts from the ministry and the Government are to promote the five Ps of tourism — people, place, product, planet and promotion." She said "our strength is our people" and diversity is the hallmark of destinations in India. From museums to temples, India offers everything for everyone.

## BJP fails to woo voters as Union Ministers hold meetings in narrow places

**STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM**

The recent two public meetings held by the two Union ministers in narrow places indicated that the BJP failed to woo voters. BJP seems to be failing to connect with the masses. Perhaps for this reason, rallies of Union Ministers are being organized in small streets and places, so that the crowds appear to be larger. Apart from this, quitting rebelling BJP leaders against the party and announcing support for Independent candidate Naveen Goyal is a major shock to the saffron outfit amidst the ongoing Assembly election campaign. BJP Gurgaon constituency candidate Mukesh Sharma does not seem to be successful in taking others within the organization along with him. Due to this, there is chaos

inside the party. Since the distribution of tickets in Gurgaon and Badshahpur assembly constituencies, both BJP candidates are forced to fight with people associated with their party. Especially in the Gurgaon seat, Naveen Goyal, who is contesting the election after rebelling from the BJP, is causing the most trouble. He has been successful in convincing several local BJP leaders to switch sides. From party officials to people from the organization, everyone is joining Naveen. Goyal has been emerging as a big threat to the BJP candidate Mukesh Sharma with each passing day. Goyal has been targeting and penetrating the party's local ranks and voter base. In addition to anti-incumbency, Goyal's growing popularity is emerging as a major challenge for the BJP in Gurugram.

## War of words breaks out over feuding Senas, Dharmaveer-2

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

A political war of words broke out between the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the rival Sena (UBT) over "Dharmaveer 2", as the sequel to the Marathi biopic about the life and times of late Sena leader Anand Dighe hit the screens on Friday, ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly polls. Hours after the premiere of the "Dharmaveer 2"—at which deputy chief minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis made some remarks, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut singled out Fadnavis for criticism. "Dharmaveer 2" is a sequel to the Marathi biopic 'Dharmaveer: Mukkam Post Thane' released on May 13, 2022 that had proved to be a propaganda vehicle for senior Minister Eknath Shinde in the run-up to his rebellion within the Sena and his subsequent elevation as the chief minister of a government supported by the BJP on June 30, 2022. In "Dharmaveer: Mukkam Post Thane", the character of

Shinde, who used to be the close aide of late Dighe, has been played up by the makers to give a larger-than-life image to the Sena leader who is now known across the country as being the rebel Sena minister who brought down the Uddhav Thackeray government. Dighe, who remained a bachelor, died at the age of 50 while undergoing treatment at Thaneshinghania hospital following a road accident in Thane in 2001. After Dighe's death in 2001, the hospital was burnt down by Dighe's supporters. Speaking at the premiere of "Dharmaveer 2", Fadnavis made a tongue-cheek comment when he said: "This is based on true facts... this is about people whom we have seen, heard and read about... I am sure people would like the movie. When Dharmaveer 3 is made, I will write the script". Fadnavis was accompanied by state BJP President Chandrashekhar Bawankule at the function. Not taking kindly to Fadnavis' statement, Shiv Sena (UBT)



MP and spokesperson Sanjay Raut said: "We know all about Dharmaveer... Shinde and Fadnavis do not know what we know about Dharmaveer (Dighe). Dighe was the President of the Shiv Sena's Thane unit. He was a good leader. Now with the help of BJP, the Shinde Sena is trying to make him bigger than late Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray" "Fadnavis says he is going to write the script of

Dharmaveer-3. What does he know about the Shiv Sena or Dighe... He should write a script for a film on today's Aurangzeb... the Aurangzeb and Afzal Khan from Delhi and Gujarat who are out to loot Maharashtra," Raut said. Before long, Shinde's close aide and newly elected Sena MP Nareish Mhaske said: "Dharmaveer 1 was a hit film... Dharmaveer 2 is going to be a super hit. This is why Raut is upset... Balasaheb was Balasaheb... he was the Guru and Dighe was his disciple". Taking a dig at Raut over the failure of "Thackeray" -- a 2019 Marathi-Hindi biopic on actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui played the protagonist's role -- at the box office, Mhaske said: "Raut also made a film on late Balasaheb Thackeray which turned out to be a flop. Raut wants to make a film on Sharad Pawar... He does not know anything about Balasaheb, what will he know about Dighe Saheb. Sanjay Raut and Uddhav Thackeray always hated Dighe Saheb".

## BJP targets Robert Vadra over corruption

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The BJP on Friday flagged the alleged corruption involving Rahul Gandhi's brother-in-law Robert Vadra when the Congress was in power in Haryana by firing a fresh salvo against the opposition party ahead of the assembly polls in the state. Spokesperson of BJP Gaurav Bhatia claimed the election in the state is a fight between "Haryana ka laal" (son of Haryana) and "dalaal" (fixer) of the Gandhi family, as it questioned the Congress leadership's silence on the corruption charges against Vadra and the party's then government headed by Bhupinder Singh Hooda.

He said people of the state have made up their mind to elect the BJP to power for a third straight term, asserting that the central government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the state government headed by Nayab Singh Saini have worked for farmers' welfare. While Rahul Gandhi has been speaking about farmers' issues, he has not said a word about his "land-grabbing" brother-in-law, Bhatia told a press conference. Hooda is just a mask and the real face of corruption is the Gandhi family, he alleged, citing questionable land deals involving Vadra. In one case, he noted, Vadra's company allegedly acquired 3.5 acres of land of farmers and the then

Hooda government changed the land use, allowing him to pocket a huge profit by selling the parcel at four times the purchase price. In another case, farmers resorted to distress selling of their land after the Congress government in the state issued a notification to acquire their land and then denotified after a builder linked to Vadra bought their land, he alleged. Vadra has constantly denied allegations of any wrongdoing and accused the BJP of targeting him due to political vendetta. Modi during his campaign in Haryana recently had also revived the corruption charges involving him to slam the Congress and its leadership.

With the Congress seen to be putting up a strong challenge after registering an impressive performance in the Lok Sabha polls, Bhatia asked who will stop Vadra if the party comes to power again. Haryana had become a hotbed of corruption when it was in power between 2004 and 2014, he said. The BJP spokesperson exuded confidence that his party will retain power. Rahul Gandhi should respond to the charges against his brother-in-law, he said. Bhatia claimed the Congress in Haryana is marred by infighting, adding that Kumari Selja, who comes from a Dalit community, had been treated shabbily by Hooda and party general secretary Randeep Surjewala.

## Indian Army boosts artillery with new weapons systems

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Indian Army is enhancing the combat prowess of its artillery units along the frontier with China by procuring an array of weapons systems, including an additional batch of 100 K9 Vajra howitzers, swarm drones, loitering munitions and surveillance systems. Lieutenant General Adosh Kumar, the Director General of Artillery in the Army, said various futuristic platforms and equipment are being procured to bolster the capabilities of the artillery units considering national security challenges.

"Today, we are modernising at a pace like never before and as per defined timelines," he told reporters ahead of the 198th anniversary of the Artillery Regiment on September 28. The development work is also in progress by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for hypersonic missiles, he said. Hypersonic missiles can fly at a speed of five mach or more than five times the speed of sound. Lieutenant General Kumar said a number of 155 mm gun systems, including K-9 Vajra, Dhanush and Sharang, have been deployed along the Northern borders to boost the Army's fire-power.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Playing with lives

CDSCO flags over 50 drugs, including paracetamol, as substandard, raising serious health concerns

In a concerning development, the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) has declared over 50 commonly used drugs, including Paracetamol and Pan D, as "not of standard quality" in its latest quality check report. The drugs, which also include vital medications such as calcium and vitamin supplements, high blood pressure medications, and anti-diabetic pills, were flagged in the organisation's August 2024 report, raising serious questions about their safety and efficacy for public use. The CDSCO's monthly quality check, which involves random sampling by state drug officers, identified numerous drugs under the "Not of Standard Quality (NSQ Alert)" category. Among the affected products are popular over-the-counter medicines such as vitamin C and D3 tablets, Shelcal (a calcium and vitamin D3 supplement), paracetamol tablets (IP 500 mg), Glimperide (an anti-diabetic drug), Telmisartan (for high blood pressure), and anti-acid Pan D. These widely used drugs, manufactured by companies like Hetero Drugs, Alkem Laboratories and Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals Ltd, pose potential risks to consumers due to their substandard quality.

The CDSCO's report included two lists, one naming 48 drugs that failed the quality tests and another listing 5 drugs under investigation as potentially spurious. In response to the findings, some manufacturers have claimed that certain batches of the flagged products were spurious and not manufactured by them. But that is a standard defence. A thorough probe must be initiated against such companies. This isn't the first time the CDSCO has taken action against unsafe drugs. Earlier in August, the central regulator banned over 156

fixed-dose drug combinations (FDCs) across the country, citing "likely risk to humans." These recurring incidents are ringing alarm bells about the quality control standards in India's pharmaceutical industry and the potential health risks posed by compromised drugs on the market. As the investigation into the spurious drugs continues, the public's trust in the safety of medicines remains at stake. Last year cough syrup supplied to Africa had allegedly resulted in deaths of 141 individuals. This not only is inhumane act but also tarnishes the reputation of Indian pharmaceutical industry in the world. For consumers, the key takeaway is to remain cautious about the medications they purchase and consume, particularly from lesser-known sources. Additionally, it is imperative for the regulatory framework to intensify its vigil to ensure that pharmaceutical companies adhere to strict quality standards. And we are not even talking about the Counterfeit medicines that are freely sold in the market. CDSCO report has just scratched the surface of this 65 billion dollar market. Blinded by greed, many companies indulge in manufacturing substandard medicines and even counterfeits. They have scant regard for human life and are fixated on making profits. Indeed the Government has to deal with them with heavy hand and give them the taste of their own medicine.

### PICTALK



Performers dressed in traditional attire rehearse for Garba, ahead of Navratri festival, in Ahmedabad

PTI

## Technology as a force multiplier in education

The intertwining of education and technology has brought about a profound transformation in the way knowledge is imparted

Education gave birth to technology and technology revolutionised education in several ways giving the "Force Multiplier" effect in promoting the main objectives of education. The Covid-19 pandemic has acted as a catalyst in revolutionising the educational system. With many objectives and aims wherein education and technology both became mutually inclusive and dependent. Thus many educational tools emerged, and technology catapulted the availability of much-needed time that can be highlighted in various and innumerable ways, and how technology is promoting education with such tools. It becomes our utmost responsibility to guard against its misuse considering the emerging Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). The Information technology (IT) resources thus aid in academics as well as research. A Learning Management system (LMS) along with an Enterprise resource planning (ERP) has been introduced in educational institutions and universities to have outcome-



based education.

The future of higher education thus lies in embracing technology effectively as is taught by the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing innovative use of e-learning platforms for an effective learning environment.

With technological advancements, it is now necessary to enhance education so that it meets the interests of both students and teachers.

It is very essential to build awareness about the process of technology with remarkable advances in technology. The way technological advancements are incorporated into the education system for knowledge transfer is remarkable. Thus the teach-

ing learning process has undergone revolutionary changes and posed challenges to forcibly learn the effective use of technology (teaching tools). While the education system is harnessing the several advantages of technology-based tools, it is pertinent and equally important to foresee the negative aspects emerging in some quarters and ponder over the preventive steps to be thought of in the ever-changing world of the education system. Thus Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education has become important for imparting quality education that is ethical, transparent and secure.

The ICT tools have transformed how the education sector is evolving. The rapidly emerging technology and the educational field are inseparable and they are like conjoined twins to monitor and improve quality in higher education. However, one needs to address the challenges associated with digital access to transform education. Education requires continuous monitoring, brainstorming and supervision and with the invasion of technology

into the teaching-learning process, it has become very effective. Technology offers accessibility to educational resources such as online platforms and digital libraries that offer a wealth of information making learning very interesting and dynamic. The e-resources aid in a very large magnitude, especially with the integration of artificial intelligence which will increase opportunities for research and academics. The design of technology and its implementation includes the perspectives and the skills that are required for diverse users. Thus technology is an integral part of education with the development of various devices such as laptops, smartphones, and apps that have changed the learning process. Education with technology has progressed by leaps and bounds in modern times. This blend has helped to achieve perfection but with caution that it must not be misused and produce adverse consequences. (The writer is Director Academics, Dr DY Patil Medical College, Pune; views are personal)

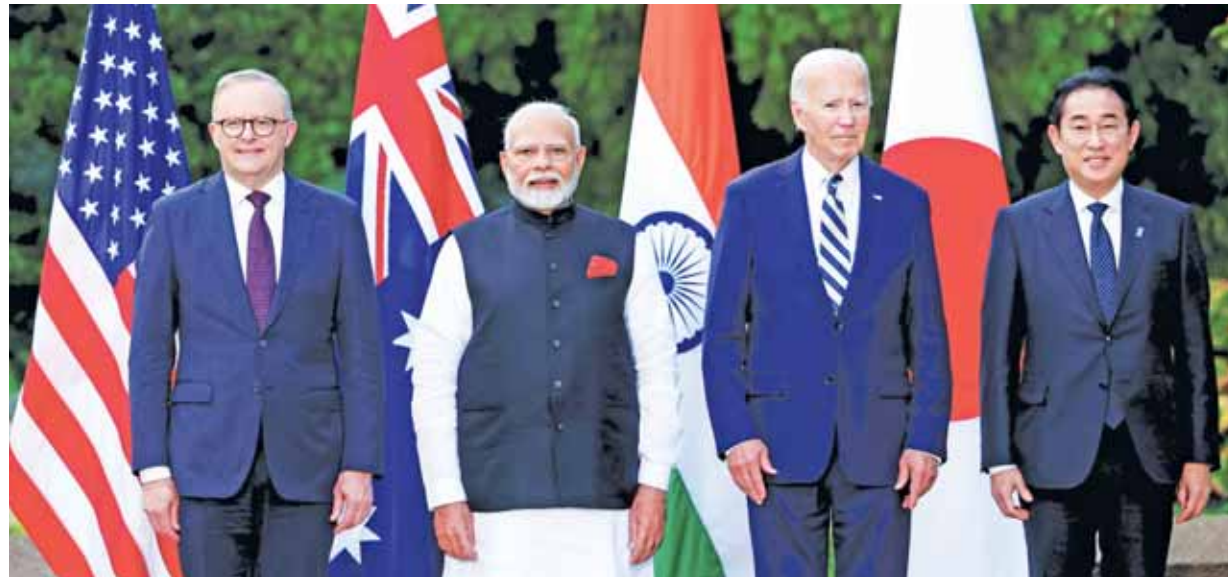


P VATSALA SWAMY

The fourth Quad Summit, held in Wilmington, Delaware, USA, marked a significant step toward reinforcing the strategic partnerships between the member countries—the United States, India, Japan, and Australia. The Quad, officially known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, has become an essential platform for collaboration on multiple fronts, particularly in addressing security issues across the Asia-Pacific, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean Region. Over time, the scope of this partnership has expanded to include critical areas such as disaster management, digital infrastructure, and climate change, making it a multifaceted initiative with both security and development dimensions.

One of the key highlights of this summit was Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposal to establish a new collaboration between India and the United States in the semiconductor sector. Modi emphasised the potential of AI (American-Indian) power, in reference to both artificial intelligence and the burgeoning US-India partnership. This collaboration, centered on a semiconductor facility near Noida in Uttar Pradesh, promises to bring advanced technologies, including control chips essential to both Indian and American security. The move is seen as a direct challenge to China's and Taiwan's dominance in the global semiconductor market, signaling a shift in the geopolitical landscape of technology. Alongside the semiconductor cooperation, maritime and cyber security remained top priorities for the Quad. The recent summit, attended by US President Joe Biden, Indian Prime Minister Modi, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, underscored the strategic importance of these areas. The Quad leaders are working to counter a variety of regional conflicts, including the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, transnational terrorism, and both traditional and non-traditional threats emerging in the Indo-Pacific. The member nations are

particularly concerned about China's increasingly aggressive stance in the Indian Ocean and parts of the South and East China Seas, areas critical to global trade and security. Through dialogue and coordinated efforts, the Quad aims to tackle the growing threat of terrorism, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. By fostering diplomatic engagement and conflict resolution mechanisms, the Quad hopes to promote stability while ensuring economic prosperity for all member nations. The group's shared strategic vision is vital in shaping a multilayered, multilateral strategy for dealing with security challenges in an increasingly interconnected world. The Quad is not only a military alliance but also a platform for fostering development in fields such as education, science, biotechnology, and strategic planning, further strengthening the bonds between its members. India's rising global influence has been evident through its leadership in multiple international organisations such as the G20, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). These roles have allowed India to showcase its diplomatic prowess and address global issues. The Quad summit provided yet another opportunity for India



SUDHIR HINDWAN

## Quad summit: Prioritising security in the Indo-Pacific

Quad summit reiterated its commitment to ensure regional stability and foster sustainable development in the face of China's growing influence



THE QUAD LEADERS ARE WORKING TO COUNTER A VARIETY OF REGIONAL CONFLICTS, INCLUDING THE ONGOING WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE, TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM, AND THREATS EMERGING IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

to contribute to the development of a robust, cooperative international system. The discussions during the summit included the need to evolve a new strategic approach to counter threats from nations that seek to destabilise the global order. A key focus of the summit was the Indo-Pacific region, where the Quad aims to ensure a free, open, and secure maritime environment. This area has become a flashpoint for various conflicts, with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) posing a significant challenge to regional stability. To counter this, the Quad members have collaborated on several initiatives, including the "Quad-at-Sea" Ship Observer Mission, which will enhance maritime security by 2025. Moreover, the group is also investing in renewable energy and high-quality infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific, aiming to foster sustainable development and reduce reliance on Chinese-led initiatives. Health cooperation was another important topic at the summit, with the Quad leaders announcing a collaborative effort to combat cervical cancer through the Quad Cancer Moonshot initiative. This humanitarian approach, combined with the group's security efforts, underscores the

Quad's commitment to a comprehensive vision for regional stability and prosperity. The focus on addressing modern terrorism, including its funding and cyber threats, also highlights the Quad's adaptive approach to emerging security challenges. The ongoing collaboration among the Quad nations is not limited to traditional security measures. The group is working to enhance policing cooperation, cyber security, and border protection by leveraging technological innovations. These efforts are particularly crucial in addressing non-state actors who engage in smuggling, drug trafficking, and cyber-attacks. By tightening security mechanisms and boosting intelligence-sharing, the Quad hopes to build a more resilient defense network across the Indo-Pacific. The Quad's influence has also extended to humanitarian aid, as seen in its support for Papua New Guinea. The summit emphasised the need for a vigilant, modern approach to security, replacing outdated strategies that no longer fit the current geopolitical landscape. (The writer is recipient of Bharat Gaurav and Rastriya Gaurav Award is a professor and an expert of strategic affairs, views are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SIDDARAMAIAH FACES HEAT

Madam — The Karnataka High Court's dismissal of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the Governor's sanction for inquiry against him in the MUDA (Mysore Urban Development Authority) case is a political setback for Siddaramaiah. It is untenable for him to continue in office. The court has paved the way for Lokayukta to investigate the case in which the CM's wife Parvathi has been allotted 14 sites when she should have gotten only two sites as per rules. The judge raised some questions and inferences: Would the allotments have been made, "bending the rule from time to time," if the beneficiary were not the wife of a politician wielding power in various positions? While Siddaramaiah might not have signed any of the allotment documents or issued orders for the same, can he claim that he was not aware of what government favours his wife was getting and that she was claiming and getting benefits beyond her entitlement? These questions naturally lead to the judge's finding that "it prima facie, depicts stretching of the arms of undue influence and portrays abuse of power of the seat of the Chief Minister or Minister or any other post held by Siddaramaiah." For a politician who has had a relatively clean image over a long political career, these observations are damning. These are the very questions that the common man and voter, too, would be asking, given the facts of the case. N Sadhasiva Reddy | Washington

#### CONCERN OVER CUSTODIAL DEATH

Madam—Now, another custodial death happened under another "double engine" government on September 23. According to the official report, Akshay Shinde, the accused of sexually assaulting two girls at a school in Badlapur, Maharashtra, snatched the revolver of one of the policemen, and he died in retaliatory firing by police. The Bombay High Court expressed serious concerns

#### Ensure children's safety



Recently, a physical education teacher (PET) was booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, as reported in your newspaper. The incident highlights the vulnerability of children but also raises serious questions about the effectiveness of current protective protocols in edu-

cational institutions. This distressing event underscores the urgent need for stronger measures to safeguard our children from such grievous acts. It is critical that schools adopt thorough background checks for all staff members and provide regular training on child protection measures. Furthermore, the reported stone-pelting incident, which resulted in injuries to four policemen, is an alarming indicator of rising public disorder. It's essential for law enforcement agencies to address such issues swiftly to uphold public safety and order. The authorities should take immediate action to strengthen child protection laws and ensure strict enforcement. In addition, public awareness campaigns should be launched to educate the community about the importance of safeguarding our children and maintaining public order. Juloori B Saraswathi | Hyderabad

#### KANGANA'S COMMENTS BACKFIRE

Madam — Actor-turned-politician and the BJP MP Kangana Ranaut once again at the centre of controversy with her recent remark calling for the return of the now-repealed farm laws, though withdrawing it later. Her remark highlights a pattern of provocative statements that raise important questions about her intentions and the broader political implications, leaving the BJP finds itself in an embarrassing situation every time. The BJP high command must know that while her willingness to engage in controversial topics can energise a segment of the party's base due to her celebrity status, her comments always draw flaks and pose risks. The BJP must ensure that its party members maintain balance in their comments, especially when addressing sensitive topics like agriculture and farmers' rights. Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

over the custodial death of the accused. The court asked, "Why was he shot in the head and not in the legs or arms first?" Justice Prithviraj Keshavrao Chavan observed, "He wasn't a heavily built or strong man. This raises serious doubts. This cannot be termed an encounter." Any custodial death always raises a question about whether it has deliberately been orchestrated to stop the accused from exposing some powerful culprits. Therefore, the custodial death of one of the convicts of a gang-rape case in Assam's Dhing area is not above suspicion. In May, the Supreme Court expressed concern over custodial deaths and extrajudicial killings in Assam. The court was hearing a petition that cited 80 cases of "fake encounters" since May 2021, which resulted in 28 deaths and 48 injuries. I wonder how the people would have reacted had an accused in a case like the RG Kar Hospital case died in custody in Kolkata. Sujit De | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

**COUNTERING WORKPLACE MANIPULATION**

It can quietly undermine trust and productivity, often without employees realising the damage



SAKSHI SETHI

In any workplace, collaboration and effective communication are vital for achieving organisational goals. However, these dynamics can be undermined when manipulation becomes a part of the equation. A manipulative colleague can distort the working environment, leading to decreased morale, distrust among coworkers and even stifled productivity. Manipulative individuals may use various methods, including emotional blackmail, guilt-tripping, gaslighting, or even leveraging workplace politics to gain control or ascend in their careers. This type of manipulation involves the use of deceptive tactics by individuals to influence others for personal gain, often at the expense of colleagues.

Such individuals tend to be skilled at subtly exploiting their coworker's emotions or vulnerabilities, leaving their targets unaware of the manipulation until it has already caused them damage. Manipulative behaviours can manifest in different forms. Some may employ gaslighting, making others question their perception of reality, while others may pit coworkers against each other to create divisions. Moreover, in certain cases, manipulative colleagues present themselves as victims, seeking sympathy to evade accountability.

In more extreme cases, they might distort facts, spread rumours, or even take credit for others' accomplishments. The presence of a manipulative individual in the workplace can create a toxic environment. Manipulation can lead to a breakdown in trust among team members. Coworkers may become wary of each other, questioning each other's intentions and credibility. The tension that manipulation creates can also disrupt team cohesion, leading to a lack of collaboration and efficiency. Additionally, manipulative individuals often prioritise their agenda over the success of the group, negatively affecting overall productivity.



Constant manipulation may cause stress, anxiety, and frustration among colleagues. Individuals who fall victim to manipulation may experience decreased confidence in their abilities or find themselves overloaded with tasks due to guilt or coercion. Over time, this emotional strain may even lead to burnout, poor job satisfaction and higher turnover rates. While manipulation can be difficult to address directly, some strategies can help mitigate its effects and create a healthier work environment. The first and foremost step in dealing with manipulation is being able to identify it which involves recognising patterns of behaviour, such as when a coworker tries to guilt-trip into taking on tasks, using flattery to sway decisions or playing the victim to avoid accountability.

Dealing with a manipulative colleague in the workplace is a challenging task that requires both emotional intelligence and assertiveness. One of the most effective long-term solutions for dealing with workplace manipulation is to foster a culture of transparency, open communication and collaboration. A strong and united team is harder for manipulative individuals to exploit. If the manipulation becomes severe or affects the broader workplace, it may be necessary to seek help from higher management or HR. A neutral party can help mediate conflicts, establish formal boundaries and ensure that manipulative behaviours are addressed appropriately. Involving HR ensures that the organisation is aware of any detrimental patterns, protecting not just but potentially other colleagues as well. By recognising manipulative behaviours, setting clear boundaries and maintaining composure, an individual can mitigate the impact of such individuals. It is equally important to seek support from supervisors or HR when necessary and contribute towards creating a positive work environment. Staying vigilant and proactive can help ensure that manipulation does not compromise the productivity, well-being as well as overall success of the team.

*(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)*

**Charting a course for global leadership**



GURMEET SINGH

The Government's ambitious Sagarmala project aims to solidify India's position as a dominant maritime power in the coming decades



The existing world order is undeniably in crisis, with geopolitical dynamics undergoing significant changes over recent decades.

Historically, the division between East and West, or North and South, largely defined global politics, with rich and poor nations distinctly separated by ideology, economic strength, and resources. However, this traditional world order began to shift dramatically towards the end of the 20th century, erasing the once-clear lines that divided these global spheres. What we see now is a world not defined by competing ideologies, but rather by economic and political strategies aimed at consolidating power and influence.

The latter half of the 20th century and the first two decades of the 21st century have seen discernible shifts in global economic and political power.

The Cold War's end led to a unipolar world dominated by the United States, but cracks in this dominance began to appear, especially in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, which severely damaged faith in market-driven economies. Financial instability across the globe exposed the fragility of once-trusted economic systems. Simultaneously, international relations have grown increasingly strained, compounded by more recent crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2022), the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and the resurgence of violence in the Israel-Hamas war. These events have brought the global economy back to a state of stress and instability.

This ongoing instability signals that the world is transitioning from a unipolar system, first towards a bipolar or tripolar system, and now, perhaps, toward a multipolar future. As new powers rise and old alliances shift, nations are compelled to reassess their resources and strategic positions. Among the most critical of these resources are those connected to the sea, particularly the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs), which provide nations with substantial control over marine resources. These zones are essential for securing economic growth, national security, and environmental sustainability.

Human activity, driven by technological advancements, has increasingly turned towards the maritime domain, not only for international trade but also for security and ensuring open, free access to international



THE COLD WAR'S END LED TO A UNIPOLAR WORLD DOMINATED BY THE UNITED STATES, BUT CRACKS IN THIS DOMINANCE BEGAN TO APPEAR, ESPECIALLY IN THE WAKE OF THE 2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS, WHICH SEVERELY DAMAGED FAITH IN MARKET-DRIVEN ECONOMIES

waters. The importance of the seas cannot be overstated, as oceans provide an array of resources vital to sustaining global commerce, energy needs, and food supplies. In recognition of this, international conventions and agreements have been signed to create standardised norms for maritime conduct, aiming to ensure peaceful seas.

One example of this shift is the practice of ships being registered under flags different from their countries of ownership, a practice now followed by more than 60 per cent of the world's ships. This reflects the interconnected nature of modern trade and economic systems. Additionally, with 85 per cent of the world's nations having a coastline and nearly 40 per cent of the global population living within 100 nautical miles of the sea, the importance of the maritime domain for both individual nations and global commerce is clear. Moreover, most of the world's major capitals and economic centers are situated along coasts, and 36 per cent of the ocean's area falls under the EEZ of nations. Critically, 97 per cent of the world's trade is conducted by sea, underscoring the dominance of maritime trade in global affairs.

Oceans represent an enormous economic opportunity, providing vast areas for investment, development, and growth. Many countries, including India, heavily depend on the sea for economic prosperity. Given this, the need for India to build a robust national maritime consciousness is more urgent than ever.

India is uniquely positioned as a maritime power, with a coastline of over 7,500 kilometers, an EEZ covering 2.37 million square kilometers, a continental shelf of 530,000 square kilometers, and nearly 1,200 islands. Since 2011, India has been working to extend its EEZ from 200 nautical miles to 350 nautical miles, which would give the nation access to an additional 1.2 million square kilometers of marine resources.

This extension would significantly bolster India's potential for economic growth through the exploitation of its maritime resources.

Historically, India's maritime heritage has been rich and vibrant. The Satavahanas, Pallavas, Cholas, and Pandyas built strong maritime traditions, engaging in far-flung trade that brought prosperity to their kingdoms. For example, during the 5th to 11th centuries, the Malacca Straits were controlled by the Srivijaya Empire, a critical maritime chokepoint for global trade. Indian ships, reputed for their advanced design and durability, played a significant role in regional and long-distance trade. However, after the arrival of the Mughals and later the British, India's maritime tradition began to erode, as colonial policies discouraged Indian maritime development.

One major oversight in modern Indian education is the neglect of this rich maritime past. Very few students are taught about India's ancient maritime successes, such as how the Chola Empire led military expeditions across Southeast Asia or how the Travancore Navy defeated the Dutch. This lack of awareness has stifled India's maritime aspirations, but there is a growing recognition that the nation must reclaim its historical maritime identity.

India's future as a global economic and political power will hinge on its ability to harness its maritime resources. With advancements in technology, deep-sea mining has emerged as a new frontier, offering the potential for extracting hydrocarbons, natural gas, and rare earth metals from the ocean floor.

In addition, the demand for shipping services is projected to grow as seaborne trade becomes even more critical to global economies. India, where 95 per cent of trade by volume and 77 per cent by value travels by sea, is particularly reliant on maritime trade for its continued economic growth. India must focus on developing multiple sectors

within the maritime domain, including fishing, shipbuilding, ports, coastal tourism, and blue energy. The country has a significant advantage in terms of labor costs and technological know-how, yet it contributes only 1 per cent to global shipbuilding. Furthermore, more than 60 per cent of Indian cargo is carried on foreign vessels, underscoring the need for greater domestic capacity in shipping and shipbuilding.

The Indian government's Sagarmala project, which envisions the modernisation of ports and coastal infrastructure, is a crucial step in developing the country's maritime potential. With an investment of USD 1.42 trillion planned by 2035, this project aims to revolutionise India's coastline, focusing on creating special economic zones, inland waterways, and promoting coastal tourism. India's growth as a maritime power will also enhance its standing as a responsible global player, capable of providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The Indian Navy's initiative to create the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2008 was an important step in fostering cooperation among regional navies. India is now seen as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean, reinforcing its commitment to maintaining open, rule-based seas. As India looks to the future, building awareness about the maritime domain and its economic potential is essential. Universities and defense institutions must collaborate to design programs that will prepare future generations to embrace India's maritime identity. Through a combination of education, policy, and strategic investment, India has the opportunity to emerge as a true maritime power and an influential global leader.

*(The writer is former Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University and former Vice-Chancellor of Gandhigram Rural Institute; views are personal. Inputs by A. Subramanyam Raju)*

**Education in the Age of AI: Why traditional methods no longer fit the future**

As automation and artificial intelligence reshape industries, the education system faces an urgent need for transformation

The growing controversy around entrance exams, particularly regarding paper leaks, has spotlighted the need for reforms in our education and evaluation systems. One obvious solution is transitioning to computer-based exams, which have already been implemented for major tests like JEE Mains, BITSAT, and CAT. These exams feature randomly generated questions and simultaneous distribution across various nodes, effectively preventing paper leaks. Additionally, the possibility of immediate grading offers transparency. Conducting such exams multiple times a year could also alleviate the immense pressure students face. However, while the method of testing is a critical discussion,



RAJNEESH BHANDARI

it is equally important to reassess the fundamentals of our education system. The questions of "why to teach," "what to teach," "how to teach," "how to evaluate," and "why to evaluate" should be at the heart of this debate. Oscar Wilde once remarked, "Education is an admirable thing, but nothing that is worth learning can be taught."

This statement resonates deeply with the current state of education. Our system tends to follow a one-size-fits-all model, assuming that sixty students in a classroom can learn the same material at the same pace and, more importantly, enjoy the process.

Rote learning, which dominates the Indian education system, is a clear indicator of how outdated the approach has become, especially in an era of artificial intelligence. Until 2011, CBSE even offered Typewriting as a subject, reflecting how antiquated parts of the curriculum are. The pressure on students has reached a breaking point, contributing to alarmingly high suicide rates among those preparing for competitive entrance exams. Many stu-

dents begin preparing for entrance exams like the IITs from as early as the ninth grade, which hampers their childhood and overall development.

Each individual is unique, and every human brain functions differently. Despite advancements in pedagogy—the science of learning—we continue to follow an archaic, cookie-cutter approach that aims to mass-produce education. The original purpose of mass education was to prepare individuals for jobs. However, automation and AI are now poised to eliminate many of these jobs. Technological advancements are rapidly rendering certain skills obsolete. A large number of young professionals today are employed in the app and web develop-



ment sectors, jobs that can now be done by generative AI systems like ChatGPT. These systems can create apps or websites based on simple prompts. Furthermore, with tools like generative AI, anyone has the potential to become a writer, artist, musician, or coder, drastically reducing the skill gaps that once existed between experts and novices. The most critical skill in the

future, therefore, will not be the ability to perform a specific task, but the ability to learn and adapt continuously. In an ever-changing world, much of the knowledge we acquire will either become irrelevant or require frequent updates. Education should not be seen as a one-time investment made during the early years of life. Instead, learning should be recognised as a lifelong journey. The degree one earns at the beginning of their career may be irrelevant by the time they are halfway through it. Traditional degrees, once crucial for securing jobs, may lose their relevance in the coming years. Many software developers, for instance, learn programming from online platforms like Coursera, rather than from formal university

programs. The way companies evaluate job candidates is also evolving. Resumes are increasingly being replaced by portfolio reviews, where individuals can showcase their skills and creativity.

The impact of AI on education is already evident. Last year, ChatGPT made headlines by passing the US Medical Licensing Exam, the law school exam, and Google's coding exam. This has sparked debates about whether AI tools should be banned in educational institutions. Nassim Taleb recently commented on this by stating, "ChatGPT passing is not a reflection of ChatGPT but of the examination system." The core purpose of education should not be to test students by limiting their resources, but

rather to prepare them to solve real-world problems using all available tools. A calculator, for example, is a common tool allowed in many international board exams but still restricted in some Indian boards like CBSE. Generative AI holds the potential to revolutionise education by generating personalised lesson plans and assessments. Virtual tutors providing real-time feedback are already available through platforms like Khan Academy and Duolingo. The future of education lies in learning that is seamlessly embedded in everyday life, facilitated by mentors rather than traditional teachers.

*(The writer is founder Founder NeuroEquilibrium; views are personal)*







# SC clears GMR Airports to operate Nagpur airport, closes curative plea of Centre, AAI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



The Supreme Court on Friday cleared decks for private firm GMR Airports to upgrade and operate Nagpur's Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport (AAI) by closing the proceedings on a curative plea of the Centre and the Airport Authority of India.

The Centre and the AAI had filed a curative petition against the dismissal of their review plea by the top court. Prior to this, the apex court had rejected the petition of the Centre and the AAI against a Bombay High Court judgement allowing GMR Airports to upgrade and operate the Nagpur airport.

"The observation ...Of the judgment that the AAI and the Union of India are not necessary parties would not be the correct position in law." Earlier, the bench had sought the "dispassionate views" of the solicitor general as an officer of the court and not as a lawyer of the Centre and the AAI in the case.

The top court had on May 9, 2022 upheld the Bombay High Court order which quashed a March 2020 communication issued by a joint venture firm cancelling a contract awarded to GMR Airports for the upgradation and operation of the airport. The Centre and the AAI have filed the curative plea against the 2022 order of the top court.

The civil aviation ministry to submit the file notings pertaining to the tender process for the airport. In 2022, the top court, while upholding the high court's order which quashed the March 2020 communication issued by the joint venture firm, MIHAN India Ltd (Multi Modal international Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur), cancelling the award of contract to GMR Airports, had said the impugned judgment was based on sound reasoning and true analysis of facts and did not warrant interference.

# Government plans 4.5-6 crore textile jobs by 2030

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



The government has prepared a road map for creating 4.5-6 crore jobs in the textile sector by 2030, Union Minister Giriraj Singh said on Friday, asserting that efforts are being made to take the sector's market size to USD 350 billion from around USD 165 billion at present.

A 100-day road map. "Earlier, when a new government was formed, for three months, they would speak in irreverent terms. Which, they (in an apparent reference to Rahul Gandhi) are currently doing abroad. On the other hand, the Modi government has drawn a road map for development in the first three months," Singh said.

procure clothes from India and one should look not just the export figures but domestic numbers also. Notably, India's textiles exports declined for the second year in a row in 2023-24. The government has set an ambitious target to achieve USD 100 billion export for textile products by 2030. Exports of textiles and apparel from India during FY24 fell 3.24 per cent at USD 34.4 billion, as compared to USD 35.5 billion a year ago. Singh stated that efforts are underway to promote Make in India for the textiles sector, adding that neither Bangladesh nor Vietnam poses a challenge to the domestic industry. "We are promoting Make in India for the country's textiles sector (to meet the demand of growing population). It is a different matter that our population increases by more than the size of Australia's population every year. In the last ten years, more than 21 crore people were born (in India)," he said.

# Karnataka launches draft GCC policy to attract investments, create jobs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Karnataka Government on Friday launched a draft Global Capacity Centres (GCC) policy with the aim to generate USD 50 billion economic output and attract 500 new GCCs by 2029, creating 3.5 lakh jobs.

and position Karnataka as a global leader in AI research and development. Crafted through extensive industry research and stakeholder consultations, it draws insights from over 500 discussions with experts and industry leaders, they said, adding, the result is a comprehensive framework that sets ambitious goals for growth, incentives, and collaboration. Speaking at the event, Information Technology and

Biotechnology Minister Priyank Kharge said: "Today, we proudly launch India's first dedicated policy for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), reaffirming Karnataka's position as the top destination for innovation and business transformation. GCCs have evolved from back-office operations to becoming critical drivers of global strategic initiatives, R&D, and technology solutions."

"Through this policy, we expect the GCC sector to grow at a compound annual rate of 12-14 per cent over the next decade and foresee Karnataka holding nearly 50 per cent of the National GCC market share by 2029. We are committed to creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation, supports R&D, and nurtures top talent, ensuring Karnataka remains the most attractive destination for GCCs globally," Kharge said.

# Government considers merging RINL with SAIL amid financial woes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is considering merger of RINL with another state-owned steel company SAIL as one of the options to ensure survival of RINL's plant and resolve the financial and operational issues being faced by the Andhra Pradesh-based steel maker, sources said. To provide capital for continuity of operations at the RINL's steel plant, plans like sale of land parcel to NMDC and bank loans are also being worked out, they told PTI.

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), under the Ministry of Steel, owns and operates a 7.5 million tonnes plant at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. It holds the distinction of being India's first shore-based integrated steel plant. SAIL (Steel Authority of India Limited) also comes under the steel ministry. Sources further said that arranging capital for operations are also being considered, besides other measures like having talks with lenders for financial assistance and monetising assets through sale of a land parcel of 1,500-2,000 acre to NMDC for a pellet plant. Unlike other primary steel makers, RINL never had the advantage of having captive iron ore mines. Workers union say this is one of the major reasons for the crisis being faced by RINL. "RINL never had captive mines. All other primary steel makers who make steel



through blast furnace enjoy benefit of captive mines which helps with cost of raw material. We have always bought iron ore at market price," said J Ayodhya Ram, leader of a union protesting against privatisation of RINL. In January 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave its 'in-principle' approval for 100 per cent disinvestment of government stake in RINL, also called Visakhapatnam Steel Plant or Vizag Steel, along with RINL's stake in its subsidiaries/joint ventures

through strategic disinvestment by way of privatisation. According to a steel ministry document, RINL is in serious financial trouble. It has been running at minimal capacity and facing continuous losses. The overall dues of RINL have gone above Rs 35,000 crore and it is at the risk of being classified as non-performing asset by banks. The document said that the ministry is taking steps to keep RINL as a 'going concern' in consultation with the finance ministry.

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Advertisement for a medical clinic in Sagor. Details include the name of the clinic, location, contact information, and services offered.

# AICTE, OPPO India launch second phase of 'Generation Green' campaign

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and OPPO India launched the second phase of their 'Generation Green' campaign with a nationwide e-waste awareness drive at Ramjas College, University of Delhi.



sustainable practices. In the first phase, over 5,000 students from 1,400 institutions were selected as

Sustainability Interns, participating in green activities such as awareness sessions and surveys. The

second phase focuses on the challenges of electronic waste disposal, targeting 10 lakh students by the end of 2024. During the launch, Dr. Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairperson of the National Education Technology Forum (NETF), highlighted the importance of educating students on sustainability to drive societal change. Rakesh Bhardwaj, Head of Public Affairs at OPPO India, emphasized the role of youth in achieving India's Net-Zero vision.

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E-Auction Sale Notice for immovable properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. Includes details of the properties, reserve price, and terms of the auction.

# New PLI scheme for specialty steel: Government



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is working on the another round of the PLI scheme for specialty steel as the response for the first round of the initiative did not meet expectations, according to Steel Secretary Sandeep Poundrik. The top ministry official made the remarks at CII Steel Summit 2024 in the national capital on Friday.

brought a PLI to incentivise specialties steel but the offtake was not as expected. "So we are bringing another round of PLI so that we can get more interest in the speciality steel business," he said. Later speaking to PTI, the secretary said the government had launched Rs 6,400 crore PLI Scheme for speciality steel, out of that only Rs 2,600 crore could be allocated. Speciality steel is high grades used in sectors like defence, automobile, and electrical among others.

# Delhi Jewellery and Gem Fair returns with over 650 exhibitors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

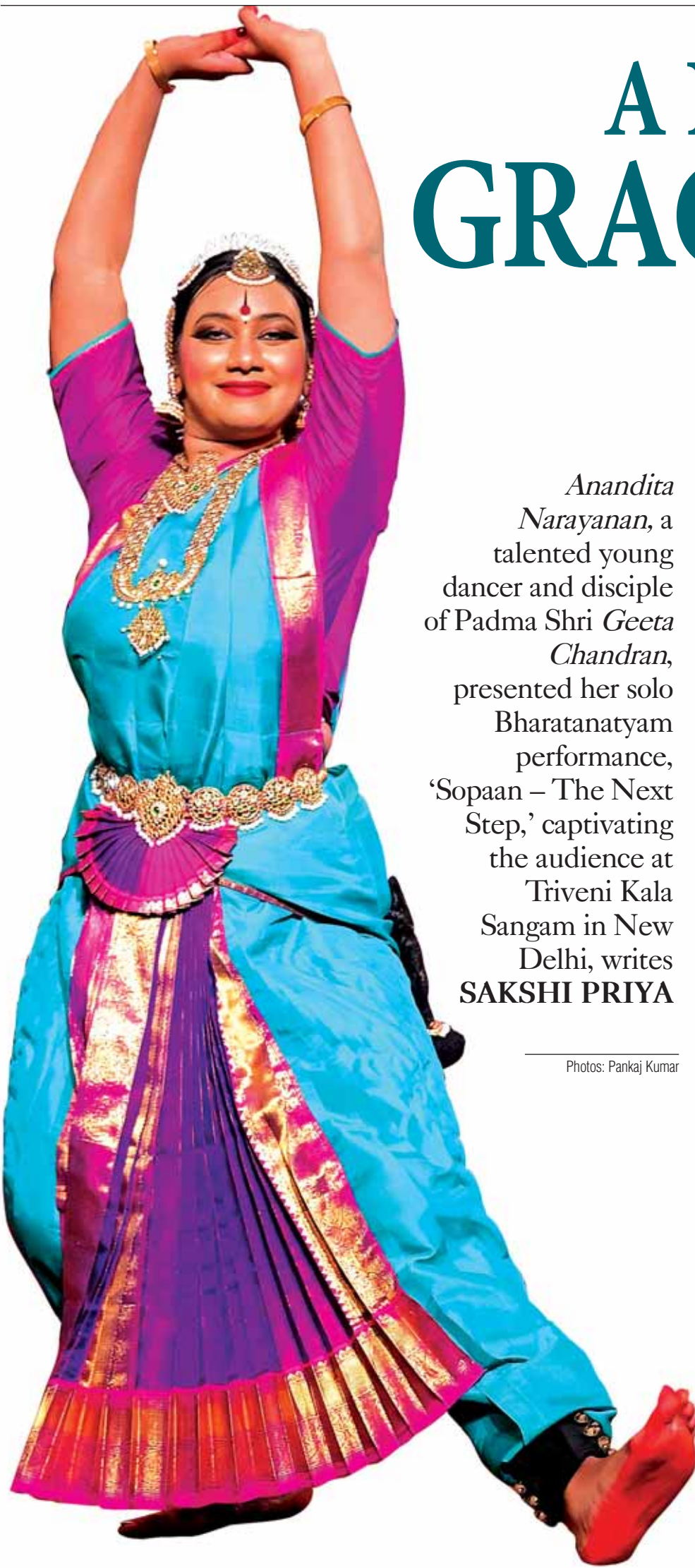
The Delhi Jewellery and Gem Fair (DJGF) returns for its 12th edition at Pragati Maidan, running from September 29 to October 1, 2024. Organised by Informa Markets in India, the fair is set to be North India's leading international B2B jewellery exhibition. DJGF 2024 will feature over 650 exhibitors and 700 exclusive brands, displaying more than 150,000 jewellery designs, including collections in gold, silver, diamonds, pearls, and cutting-edge technology.



A key attraction of the event is the DJGF Silver Show, which will showcase a stunning array of silver jewellery. The fair is expected to draw over 25,000 visitors, including major buyers, wholesalers, and retailers, providing ample networking and business opportunities. The event will also highlight gold, Polki, and diamond jewellery, with notable brands such as Shree Ram Krishna Exports and Hare Krishna participating. Additionally, DJGF 2024 will host a series of knowledge sessions covering topics such as responsible sourcing, retail trends, and export opportunities. Other highlights include the Retail Jewellers Guild Awards and the 'Shakti - Honouring Women Achievers' initiative, recognizing contributions by women in the industry.



# AN EVENING OF GRACEFUL RHYTHMS



*Anandita Narayanan, a talented young dancer and disciple of Padma Shri Geeta Chandran, presented her solo Bharatanatyam performance, 'Sopaan - The Next Step,' captivating the audience at Triveni Kala Sangam in New Delhi, writes SAKSHI PRIYA*

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

In a world where emotions often remain hidden, dance speaks volumes, transforming feelings into a breathing art form. On a recent evening, the prestigious Triveni Kala Sangam auditorium in New Delhi became the stage for a captivating performance by young Bharatanatyam dancer, *Anandita Narayanan*. Her solo performance, titled 'Sopaan - The Next Step,' promised to take the audience on a journey not only through the intricate movements of classical dance but also through the emotional depths that only art can reach. As the evening unfolded, it became clear that *Anandita*'s performance was more than just a showcase of talent; it was a mesmerising expression of her dedication to Bharatanatyam.

*Anandita*, a disciple of the esteemed Padma Shri *Geeta Chandran*, stepped onto the stage with grace, drawing the audience into the world of traditional Indian dance from the moment she began. Her performance commenced with the Pushpanjali in Ragam Shree, a ritualistic offering of flowers symbolically presented to the stage, her teacher and the audience. This introductory piece, set to the rhythm of Adi Talam, established a humble yet powerful tone for the evening, filled with reverence for the art form she holds so dearly. The simple yet elegant movements of the Pushpanjali invited the audience into the performance, preparing them for the deeper narratives that would follow.

The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the Varnam in Ragam Poorvikalyani, a piece that provided a showcase for *Anandita*'s technical brilliance and emotional depth. In this Varnam, composed by the legendary *Dandayudha Pani Pillai*, *Anandita* embodied the Virahotkantitha Nayika - a heroine tormented by her separation from her beloved, the god Kartikeya. Through her expressions and gestures, *Anandita* conveyed Nayika's intense longing and sorrow with remarkable sensitivity. The audience could feel the emotional weight of the performance, as she brought to life the pain of unrequited love, working it into the intricate footwork and hand movements that define Bharatanatyam. Her portrayal made it seem as though the stage had transformed into a canvas for her emotions, with every movement adding to the visual poetry unfolding before the audience.

The ability to seamlessly blend emotion with technique is a hallmark of great dance and *Anandita* demonstrated this with ease. As she transitioned to the next part of her performance, she moved from the intense, heart-wrenching narrative of the Varnam to lighter, more playful pieces, displaying her versatility as a performer. One such piece was the Padam 'Inendu Vachitira' set in Ragam Surrati, where she portrayed the Khandita Nayika, a woman confronting her unfaithful lover, Krishna. *Anandita*'s portrayal of the heroine was both poignant



*ANANDITA, A DISCIPLE OF THE ESTEEMED PADMA SHRI GEETA CHANDRAN, STEPPED ONTO THE STAGE WITH GRACE, DRAWING THE AUDIENCE INTO THE WORLD OF TRADITIONAL INDIAN DANCE FROM THE MOMENT SHE BEGAN. HER PERFORMANCE COMMENCED WITH THE PUSHPANJALI IN RAGAM SHREE, A RITUALISTIC OFFERING OF FLOWERS SYMBOLICALLY PRESENTED TO THE STAGE, HER TEACHER AND THE AUDIENCE*



and humorous, as she conveyed a mix of anger, sarcasm and hurt. Her facial expressions and body language effortlessly conveyed the heroine's frustration, while also injecting a sense of lightness into the performance. The audience responded with appreciative laughter and applause, a tribute to the range of emotions *Anandita* was able to convey.

Following the Padam, *Anandita* performed a Javali in Ragam Paras, titled 'Smara Sundaranguni.' In this piece, she depicted the Swadheenapatika Nayika, a confident and assured woman who takes pride in her secure relationship. *Anandita*'s performance here was full of joy and exuberance, a stark contrast to the sorrowful tone of the earlier Varnam. Her ability to switch between such diverse emotional landscapes was nothing short of impressive, as she continued to captivate the audience with each new piece.

The evening reached its crescendo with the final performance, a Tillana in Ragam Yamuna Kalyani, composed by Shri Lalgudi G. Jayaraman. The Tillana is traditionally the concluding piece in a Bharatanatyam performance, known for its fast-paced rhythms and celebratory tone. *Anandita*'s rendition was no exception, as she delivered a vibrant and energetic performance that left the audience captivated. Her footwork was sharp and precise, while her movements were full of life, embodying the joy and devotion of the piece. The performance celebrated Lord Krishna, and *Anandita*'s energy lit up the stage, drawing the audience into the festive mood.

What made *Anandita*'s performance truly special, however, was not just her technical skill

but the emotional depth and sincerity she brought to each piece. She was not simply performing a series of dances; she was telling stories, sharing emotions and inviting the audience into her world. This sense of connection was visible throughout the performance and it was clear that *Anandita* love for dance went beyond just the physical movements. As one audience member remarked, "*Anandita*'s expressions and storytelling took us into the heart of each character. It was not just beautiful but deeply moving." Another attendee added, "Watching her dance was like seeing poetry come to life. She made complex emotions feel real."

For *Anandita*, dance is not merely a performance but a way of life. In her own words, "Dance flows through every cell of my being. It's an integral part of who I am." This dedication to her art was evident in every gesture and movement on stage. The connection between *Anandita* and her dance was clear to all who were present and it added an extra layer of depth to the performance, making it a truly memorable evening.

'Sopaan - The Next Step' was not just a dance recital; it beautifully showcased *Anandita*'s growth as an artist. Under the guidance of her guru, *Geeta Chandran*, *Anandita* has mastered both the technical precision and emotional depth that bring Bharatanatyam to life. The performance highlighted her potential to become a prominent figure in classical dance, and the audience had the privilege of witnessing the rise of a gifted young talent. With her journey only just beginning, many more remarkable performances are sure to come. The grace, emotion, and artistry she displayed in 'Sopaan - The Next Step' will leave a lasting impression on all who watched.

## THROUGH A SATIRICAL LENS Art That Reflects Reality

In *Satirical Symphony*, A. Rajeswara Rao showcases his unique reverse painting technique on acrylic sheets. This vibrant exhibition at Visual Art Gallery invites viewers to reflect on the humorous and thought-provoking themes of materialism and social mimicry in society, writes **TEAM VIVA**

The recent exhibition of *Satirical Symphony* by A. Rajeswara Rao showcased a vivid exploration of societal dynamics, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended. The crowd's reaction to his artwork was visible, as the humour and critique embedded within each piece resonated deeply with viewers. The series, characterised by *Rao*'s reverse painting technique on acrylic sheets, offers more than just visual appeal; it is a mirror reflecting the characteristics of a society undergoing rapid change. Curated by *Annapurna M. and Kiran K. Mohan*, the exhibition was not just a display of artistic brilliance but a reflection of *Rao*'s sharp observations on human behaviour.

At the heart of *Rao*'s works lies a sharp satirical lens. His paintings humorously capture the essence of people, their desires, and their attempts to mirror a high-society lifestyle. *Rao* himself drew inspiration from the transformation he witnessed in a village near his studio. Once a place of modest lifestyles, where people walked or cycled through narrow lanes, the village changed almost overnight after an industrial group arrived. "All of a sudden, people started driving motorbikes, cars, and adopting



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

fashionable items like sunglasses and leggings," *Rao* explained. He found this shift amusing and decided to reflect it in his work, seeing it as an exaggerated attempt to imitate higher society. This theme of sudden wealth and social mimicry is evident throughout the *Satirical Symphony*.

Among the standout works in the exhibition was *1947 Classmates*, which, along with pieces like *My New Ray-Ban*, prompted both laughter and introspection on the impact of materialism on self-image. Guests were particularly captivated by *My New Ray-Ban* and *New Billionaire With Her*



*Golden Ducks*, both of which explored this abrupt transformation in a humorous



yet thought-provoking manner. *Rao*'s bold use of colour and exaggerated figures transforms these everyday scenes into a striking spectacle of satire. His reverse painting technique, especially on acrylic, introduces a dynamic layer to his compositions, allowing light to

interact with the transparent surface and creating an almost ethereal depth.

What was most engaging, though, was how his art connected with the audience on a personal level. Visitors could easily see reflections of people they knew or perhaps even of themselves in his depictions of men and women adorned in flashy attire, oversized sunglasses, and luxury items they didn't quite seem to belong with. Yet, in all the laughter and satire, there was a genuine warmth in how *Rao* portrayed these characters, making them endearing rather than simply objects of mockery.

The exhibition also drew attention to the artist's masterful technique. *Rao*'s ability to layer humour with critique, using a vivid colour palette, kept the audience mesmerised. Paintings such as *Smoking Zone* and *Massage Centre* demonstrated how he uses space and detail to draw viewers into his world. The juxtaposition of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances added to the intrigue and made each painting a story in itself.

It was heartening to witness the engagement between the artist and his audience. Many of those present spent considerable time in front of each painting, clearly appreciating not just the

technical brilliance but also the wit that *Rao* brings to his art. Conversations among visitors frequently circled back to how well the paintings captured the ridiculousness of societal pretensions. In this way, the *Satirical Symphony* did more than entertain; it provoked thought, forcing viewers to reflect on the often comedic ways in which people chase status.

A. Rajeswara Rao's *Satirical Symphony* was a winning showcase of satire at its finest. It reminded everyone that while art can be a serious reflection of society, it can also be a source of humour and lightness. Each painting, from *The Kings to The Merry World*, invited viewers to look beyond the surface, to laugh at the follies of human nature, and to leave with a sense of connection, not only to the art but to the society it so cleverly critiques. *Rao*'s work leaves one pondering how wealth and societal pressures shape identity, all while smiling at the absurdity of it all.

The exhibition will continue at Art Magnum Gallery until 20 October 2024, offering those who haven't experienced this thought-provoking show a final opportunity to immerse themselves in *Rao*'s satirical vision. Don't miss the chance to explore this engaging dialogue between art and society!

# AKASH DEEP, ASHWIN KEEP INDIA AHEAD ON RAIN-HIT DAY 1



**PTI ■ KANPUR**  
Pacer Akash Deep was impressive in a probing opening spell while Ravichandran Ashwin removed the dangerous Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto before rain halted India's progress in the second Test on the opening day, here Friday. Given the forecast, it was expected to be a weather-hit contest from the beginning.

Only 35 overs could be bowled after Rohit Sharma invited Bangladesh to bat in overcast conditions as visitors struggled to 107 for three after a brief resistance through Shanto (31). Mominul Haque (40 batting) and veteran Mushfiqur Rahim (6) were at the crease when heavens opened up. Overnight rain had delayed the start of the match by an hour. Heavy overcast conditions influenced India's team

selection as the hosts kept all three pacers from the Chennai Test, which meant that local boy Kuldeep Yadav missed out on another Test match. Akash (2/14 in 10 overs), who bowled round the wicket to the left-handers, consistently hit the good length areas and got the ball to either shape away or come in with the angle. Shanto (57 balls, 4x6), though, batted with positive intent, if not combative, to ensure Bangladesh don't lose way

from the start. As expected, the initial bounce and seam movement had openers Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam playing in circumspect manner. Islam (24) worked the ball around but an overcautious Hasan (0) simply couldn't get going. Jasprit Bumrah had the openers squared up as the away-going deliveries kept landing in Rishab Pant's gloves. Mohammed Siraj induced edges that flew to the slip

cordon but none carried to the fielders. Shadman hit couple of boundaries off Bumrah in a single over, the first was a flick off the pads, and the second was an uppish drive. On the other side, Hasan consumed 23 dot balls and was yet to open his account. Akash, who came in as a second-change, ended his misery by inducing an edge that flew to Yashasvi Jaiswal who went low on his right to

grab the chance. Akash soon sent back Shadman on a ball that came in and caught him in front of the wicket. The opener reviewed the decision but to no avail. Shanto, who has been in good rhythm, began with two shots to the fence in a sort of statement that he won't get intimidated by the classy Indian bowlers. He also got a boundary off Siraj but those were not the cleanest of hits. His reverse sweep off off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin though stood out. Ashwin, who did not get a wicket in the opening session, trapped Shanto in the third over of the second session. Shanto played for the turn but was beaten. The umpire had no hesitation in raising his finger. The Bangladesh skipper reviewed the decision hoping against hope. Seasoned Mominul grew in confidence as he spent more time at the crease. He hit two boundaries off Akash in a single over and later hit an exquisite drive through mid-off. He raised Bangladesh's hundred with another four. Only nine overs were bowled in the second session when bad light stopped play even as the flood lights were on, forcing the players off the field. Light drizzle followed and soon it was pouring.



## Bravo retires from all forms of cricket, joins KKR as mentor

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
World Cup-winning West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket and will join IPL side Kolkata Knight Riders as its mentor, a move that marks the end of his long-standing association with Chennai Super Kings. In KKR, the 40-year-old will replace Gautam Gambhir, who left the role to take over as India's head coach earlier this year. Bravo's last season in the Caribbean Premier League was cut short due to an injury that he sustained earlier this week. "Today is the day I say goodbye to the game that has given me everything," he wrote on Instagram on Thursday. "Twenty-one years as a professional cricketer - it's been an incredible journey, filled with many highs and a few lows. Most importantly, I was able to live my dream because I gave you 100 at every step." "As much as I'd love to continue this relationship, it's time to face reality." Bravo had stepped away from international cricket in 2021 while concluding his IPL career last year. He won three IPL titles as a CSK player after joining the franchise in 2011. He then became the team's bowling coach in the 2023 season. He also worked as a consultant with the Afghanistan men's team. "DJ Bravo joining us is an exciting development. His relentless drive to win, along with his vast experience and deep knowledge, will greatly benefit our franchise and players," Knight Riders Group CEO Venky Mysore said in a media release on Friday. Apart from KKR, he will be in charge the other franchises under the Knight Riders label in T20 leagues. The new role puts an end to his long association with CSK. "We're also pleased that Bravo will be involved with our other franchises globally, including CPL, MLC, and ILT20," Mysore said. Talking about his role in KKR, Bravo said: "I've been part of the Trinbago Knight Riders for the last 10 years in the CPL. Having played for and against the Knight Riders in various leagues, I have a lot of respect for how they operate. "BODY CAN NO LONGER ENDURE THE PAIN": Ahead of the ongoing CPL season, Bravo had declared it would be his final tournament. However, a groin injury sustained while fielding against the St. Lucia Kings in Tarouba earlier this week cut his CPL stint short. "My mind wants to keep going, but my body can no longer endure the pain, the breakdowns, and the strain. I can't put myself in a position where I might let down my teammates, my fans, or the teams I represent," Bravo wrote in his Instagram post. "So, with a heavy heart, I officially announce my retirement from the sport. Today, the Champion bids farewell." During his illustrious career, Bravo played 582 T20 matches and took 631 wickets, besides scoring nearly 7,000 runs. "Though this ending is bittersweet, I have no regrets about my career or this decision. Now, I look forward to my next chapter. Once again, thank you. See you soon on the other side," he added.

## Injury is fine now, next big target is 2025 world championship: Neeraj Chopra

**PTI ■ SONEPAT**  
Promising to be 100 per cent fit for the new season, India's two-time Olympic medal-winning javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra on Friday said a podium finish in the 2025 Tokyo World Championships is the next big target on his mind going forward. The 26-year-old is back in the country after winding up his season with a second-place finish at the Diamond League finale in Brussels. This was after he became the first Indian track-and-field athlete to claim successive Olympic medals by adding a silver in Paris to the momentous gold clinched in Tokyo. "The season is over now. The biggest target for next year is the World Championship, and we will begin preparations for that now. The Olympics are always on our minds,

but we have four years for that," Neeraj told PTI Videos on the sidelines of a conference on 'Mission Olympics 2036' organised at the Sports University of Haryana here. The world championship is scheduled to be held from September 13 to 21 next year. Chopra battled an adductor muscle niggle throughout the year and it also affected his performance at both the Olympics and the DL finale, where he also competed with a fractured left hand. He had spoken about consulting doctors at the end of the season to decide whether to go for a surgery to fix the problem. Asked about his fitness, Chopra played down concerns and also stated that he will look to improve his technique. The Haryana-lad is trained by renowned German biomechanics expert Klaus Bartonietz.

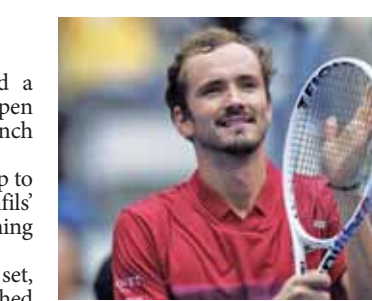


"It was an injury-plagued year but injury is fine now, I will be 100 per cent fit for the new season," he asserted. "Technical issues are also there but we will work on them. I will look to improve my technique. I do like to train in India but when competitions start, I prefer to train abroad," he said. Reflecting on India's Olympic

performance, which yielded six medals but no gold this time, Chopra pointed out that the country could have got more as reflected by the half a dozen fourth place finishes. "There were a lot of fourth positions. (But) this time, we had a very good performance in the Paralympics and won several medals. "In the coming times, we expect strong performances in both the Olympics and the Paralympics," said Chopra. Chopra has been working hard to hit the 90m mark but hasn't managed so far despite coming close. In the Paris Olympics, his silver-winning throw was 89.45m and he was bested by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who broke the Games record with a 92.97m effort. At the DL finale, Chopra threw 87.86m to miss the top finish by just one centimetre.

## Medvedev beats Monfils in Beijing, Draper upsets Hurkacz in Japan

**AP ■ BEIJING**  
Daniil Medvedev safely navigated a tricky first outing at the China Open on Friday, winning 6-3 6-4 against French veteran Gael Monfils. The third-seeded Medvedev, runner-up to Jannik Sinner here last year, broke Monfils' serve three times in a dominant opening set. After trading breaks in a closer second set, former No. 1-ranked Medvedev clinched the match with another service break to seal the win in 92 minutes. Roman Safiullin, who made the main draw as a lucky loser in qualifying, beat three-time major winner Stan Wawrinka 6-3 6-4 and will face top-ranked Sinner. No. 3-ranked Carlos Alcaraz, seeded second in Beijing, begins against No. 51 Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard of France later Friday. In the women's draw, sixth-seeded Emma Navarro was upset by Chinese wildcard Zhang Shuai 6-4 6-2 in 75 minutes. The 35-year-old Zhang, a doubles specialist, played well above her current singles



ranking of No. 595 as she took five of her seven breakpoint opportunities against the U.S. Open semifinalist. Zhang will play Greet Minnen of Belgium, who beat 28th-seeded Anastasia Potapova 7-5 2-6 6-4 in the third round. Also, 12th-seeded Diana Shnaider beat former Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin 6-2 6-3 and Yulia Starodubtseva had a 6-2 6-2 win over 27th-seeded Katerina Siniakova. Second-seeded Jessica Pegula was due open her tournament later Friday against Diane Parry of France, and Coco Gauff faced Clara Burel in a night match.

US Open champion Aryna Sabalenka plays Saturday against Thai qualifier Mananchaya Sawangkaew. Top-ranked Iga Swiatek was not playing this week for personal reasons. **JAPAN OPEN:** Second-seeded Hubert Hurkacz lost 6-4 6-4 to US Open semifinalist Jack Draper in the second round in Tokyo, a day after top-seeded Taylor Fritz and third-seeded Casper Ruud were eliminated from the tournament. While the 22-year-old Draper and Hurkacz were evenly matched on aces and winners, it was the Polish player's 30 unforced errors, to Draper's 20, that proved costly. Draper will next play either Brandon Nakashima or Ugo Humbert in the quarterfinals. Defending champion Ben Shelton also progressed to the quarterfinals with a 6-4 6-3 defeat of Mariano Navone. Shelton, along with Fritz, traveled to Japan from the Laver Cup in Berlin, where they represented Team World in a loss to Alcaraz's Team Europe.

## India U-17 face Nepal hurdle in semifinals

**PTI ■ THIMPHU**  
A buoyant Indian football team will take on Nepal in the semi-finals of the SAFF U17 Championship here on Saturday, hoping to continue its good run of form in the continental age-group tournament. The Blue Colts eased into the last four as Group A table toppers after beating Bangladesh (1-0) and Maldives (3-0). Nepal, on the other hand, sneaked into the semi-finals, thanks to a late winner against Bhutan in their last group match, which lifted them to second place in Group B behind Pakistan, who will face Bangladesh in the second semi-finals later on Saturday. India have had ample rest between their matches so far, including three full days to prepare for their semi-finals. Head coach Ishfaq Ahmed stated that the rest days for



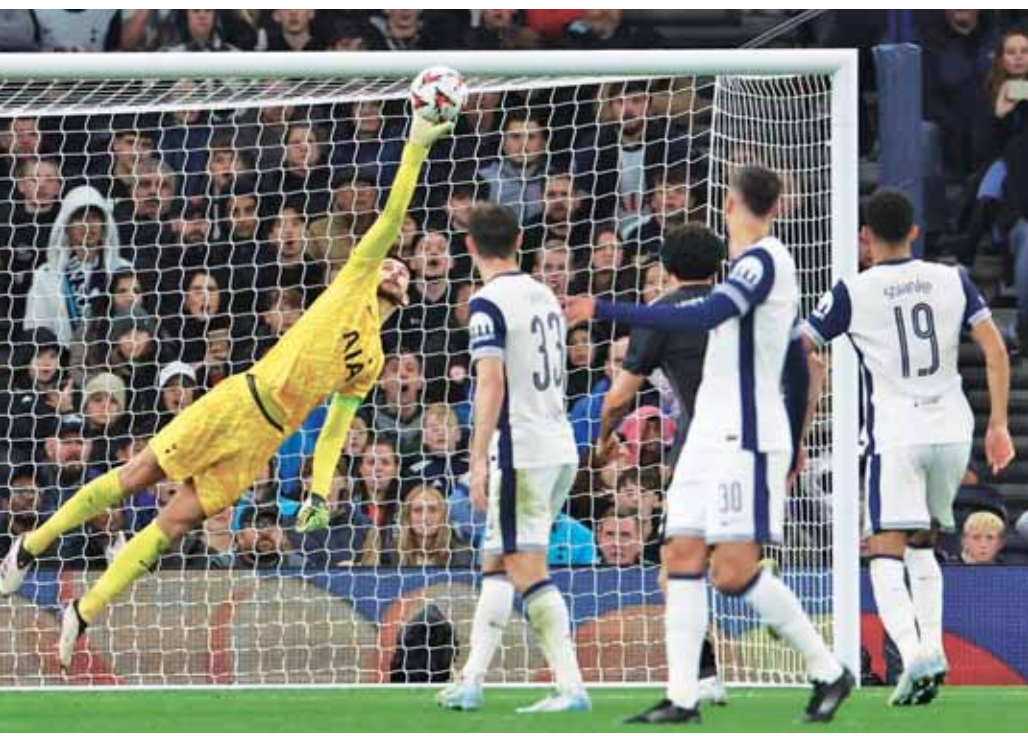
players are more about recovery and staying injury-free. "This rest is about recovering because we are playing on artificial turf. It's not easy to play and train on turf everyday. It has its negative impacts also. We've been training mostly to recover our boys. "It has been raining here everyday and we are stuck inside the hotel. Sometimes that can be a good thing because you spend a lot of time with each other and that helps. The best part is that there are no injuries and I am very thankful to God that all players are available for selection," said Ahmed. India got the better of Nepal 1-0 in the group stage of last year's SAFF U16 Championship, with Md Arbash scoring the lone goal in the first half. Nepal exited the tournament without scoring a goal 12 months ago, but have looked an improved side this time around. Sujan Dangol will be one to

mark for the Indian backline as the Nepalese striker is the competition top-scorer with four goals, including a hat-trick against Sri Lanka and the all-important match winner against Bhutan. "I rate Nepal as a good side. They are not afraid of playing. They have done quite well, coming from 0-1 down, showing character and beating the hosts," said Ahmed. "Since it's a knockout match, you have to take your chances. In both matches so far, we created a lot of chances but failed to make the most of them. Whether it was a good save by the goalkeeper or a missed shot, it doesn't matter. We need to convert our ball possession into goals. "If we get an early goal against them, it will be a little bit easier for us. We wouldn't want the match to stretch because then you have to keep one eye on the defence as well," Ahmed added.

## Tottenham overcomes early red card to post 3-0 win in revamped Europa League

**AP ■ LONDON**  
Tottenham marked its return to European competition after one-year absence by overcoming an early red card to beat Qarabag 3-0 in the revamped Europa League. Defender Radu Dragusin was sent off in the eighth minute for bringing down Juninho to prevent the forward from going in alone on goal. But the hosts opened the scoring just four minutes later. Brennan Johnson's angled shot was his third goal in three games. Pape Sarr doubled the advantage early in the second half off a corner kick and Dominic Solanke finished it off on a rebound in the 68th. "The red card was not ideal, we started really sloppily but the reaction afterwards was good," Spurs manager Ange Postecoglou told TNT Sports. "We wanted to press high, even with ten men." Johnson also scored in a 3-1 win over Brentford in the Premier League and had a stoppage-time winner in a 2-1 victory over second-division Coventry in the English League Cup

three days earlier. Tural Bayramov wasted a golden opportunity to score from the spot when the Azerbaijan visitors were 2-0 down. Travel disruptions forced the game to start 35 minutes late. Roma blows lead Roma allowed a late goal and settled for a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao following the Italian club's turbulent recent stretch that included firing coach Daniele De Rossi. Aitor Paredes headed in the equalizer in the 85th minute to offset Artem Dovbyk's first-half goal. Roma beat Udinese 3-0 in Serie A on Sunday in the first game under new coach Ivan Juric. Bilbao winger Nico Williams came on as a substitute for last 30 minutes in his return from an ankle injury. Ajax cleans up Mika Godts had two goals, Kian Fitz-Jim and Kenneth Taylor added one each for Ajax in a 4-0 rout of Besiktas. Czech side Viktoria Plzen scored two late goals from Prince Adu and Vaclav Jemelka to hold high-flying Eintracht Frankfurt to a 3-3 away



draw. Frankfurt, the 2022 Europa League winner led 3-1 on goals from Hugo Ekitike, substitute Junior Dina Ebimbe and defender Rasmus Kristensen. Olympiacos, last year's Conference League champion, started with a 2-0 loss to Lyon in France on second half goals by Rayan Cherkil and Said Benrahma. Braga rallied to beat nine-man Maccabi Tel Aviv 2-1. Romania's FCSB beat Latvia's RFS 4-1 in Bucharest. Fenerbahce, Rangers score early wins Fenerbahce opened the competition with a 2-1 home win over Belgian club Union Saint-Gilloise with both teams finishing the game with 10 men. Defender Caglar Soyuncu opened the scoring for Jose Mourinho's team in the 26th with a half-volley from close range and Christian Burgess' own goal in the 82nd made it 2-0 for Fenerbahce. Ross Sykes scored in stoppage time for the visitors. Union defender Kevin Mac Allister received a red card in the 74th and Fenerbahce substitute Bright Osayi-Samuel was sent off in the final

minute. Last season, Fenerbahce eliminated Union in the round of 16 of the third-tier Conference League. Europe's second tier is a familiar turf for Mourinho, who led Manchester United to the 2017 title. He took the Fenerbahce job in the offseason. With Mourinho in charge, Roma lost the 2023 final to Sevilla after a penalty shootout. In another early game, Rangers won 2-0 at Malmö. The 2022 Europa League beaten finalist didn't waste time. Nedim Bajrami scored in the opening minute. Ross McCausland scored in the second half. Rangers lost in the 2022 final to Eintracht Frankfurt. The German club will be in action later Thursday, hosting Czech side Viktoria Plzen. As in the Champions League, the traditional group stage of the Europa League has been replaced with an expanded league phase with all 36 teams competing in a single standings. Each Europa League team will play eight games against eight different opponents through Jan.