



OPINION 6

BJP'S RECRUITMENT DRIVE TO SOLIDIFY POWER

WORLD 8

'BOKO HARAM MILITANTS KILL OVER 100 IN NIGERIAN VILLAGE'

MONEY 10

SENSEX, NIFTY TUMBLE ON GLOBAL DOWNTURN

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WORLD CHAMPION SACHIN WINS SILVER IN MEN'S SHOT PUT
11 SPORTS

Kejriwal bail plea hearing in SC today



FILE PHOTO

and gave two days to Kejriwal to file a rejoinder. Kejriwal has filed two separate petitions challenging the denial of bail and his arrest by the CBI in the case. He has challenged the August 5 order of the Delhi High Court upholding his arrest. He was arrested by the CBI on June 26. On August 14, the top court refused to grant interim bail to Kejriwal in the case and sought a response from the probe agency on his plea challenging his arrest. The Delhi High Court had on August 5 upheld the arrest of the Chief Minister as legal, and said there was no malafide intention in CBI's action which was able to demonstrate how the AAP supremo could influence witnesses who could muster the courage to depose only after his arrest. The HC had asked him to move the trial court for regular bail in the CBI case. It had noted that the loop of evidence against the chief minister closed after the collection of relevant evidence following his arrest by the CBI and it cannot be said that it was without any justifiable reason or illegal.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Thursday Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's pleas seeking bail and challenging his arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the alleged excise policy scam. According to the cause list, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan is likely to hear the matter. The top court had on August 23 allowed the CBI to file its counter affidavit in the matter

Phogat, Punia likely to contest Haryana polls on Congress ticket

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia are all set to join the Congress, amid speculation that they are likely to contest the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections scheduled for October 5. Phogat, is expected to mount challenge for the Julana seat held by the Jannayak Janta Party's Amarjeet Dhandra while Punia is likely to contest from Badli seat. Both Phogat and Punia met Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. They also met Congress general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal. Phogat and Punia joining the Congress at this time is significant because it is both nominating election candidates and is engaged in seat-sharing talks with the Aam Aadmi Party. Punia is a Tokyo Games bronze medallist, while Phogat became the first woman wrestler to reach the Olympics final, the stage where she was disqualified after being found overweight by about 100 gm in her 50-kg category weigh-in. She subsequently announced her retirement from the sport. The Congress' X handle shared the picture of Phogat and Punia with Rahul. The party as well as the duo have remained tight-lipped



Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi with wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia in New Delhi

about the speculations. However, a clearer picture could emerge in a day or two. Sources said that Phogat wanted to fight from the Julana seat, but the Congress had initially wanted her to contest from another seat near Gurugram. Sources said deliberations are on to finalise the seats for the two wrestlers with Julana and Badli seats under consideration for Phogat and Punia respectively. The Congress put out a photograph of Gandhi with Phogat and Punia on its official X handle. Asked whether Phogat and Punia could contest on a

Congress ticket, AICC general secretary in-charge of Haryana Deepak Babaria said there is a possibility and it would become clear by Thursday or Friday. Punia is a Tokyo Games bronze medallist, while Phogat became the first woman wrestler to reach the Olympics final, the stage where she was disqualified after being found overweight by about 100 gm in her 50-kg category weigh-in. She subsequently announced her retirement from the sport. The Congress' Central Election Committee (CEC) cleared the names of candidates for 66 seats out of 90 till Tuesday.



BJP releases first list of 67 candidates

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Looking to get the first-mover advantage in the Haryana Assembly polls, the BJP on Wednesday released its first list of 67 candidates for the 90 Assembly seats for the upcoming Assembly elections, with Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini to contest the Ladwa seat while former Haryana BJP president Om Prakash Dhankar has been fielded from Badli and veteran party leader and former home minister Anil Vij from Ambala Cantonment. The party has dropped nine sitting MLAs. Saini, who was an MP from Kurukshetra until he replaced Manohar Lal Khattar as the Haryana Chief Minister in March this year, currently represents the Karnal Assembly seat, which he won in a bypoll in June. Vij will be the BJP's candidate from the Ambala Cantonment constituency, a seat he has won three successive times since 2009.

BJP trounces AAP in MCD ward elections



The Pioneer photo

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday won the crucial Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) zonal ward elections by defeating the AAP in a close contest with the former bagging the posts of chairman, deputy chairman of the zonal-level ward committees, and one member each for standing committee in seven of 12 zones. The AAP managed to win five zones in the elections which took place amid heavy security arrangements. The Standing Committee of the MCD is considered the most powerful body in the civic body. BJP bagged Narela, Civil Lines, Keshav Puram, Shahdara North, Najafgarh, Shahdara South, and Central Zones, while AAP won Karol

Bagh, West, South, City SP and Rohini zones. Voting in Karol Bagh and City SP did not take place as BJP did not field a candidate, while in Keshav Puram, BJP's was the sole candidate in fray. The elections were conducted smoothly under a heavy security. With the win in the much awaited elections which is taking place after a delay of 18 months due to clashes between AAP and BJP. The BJP will be seen dominating the highest decision making body of the civic agency and MCD's financial backbone - the standing committee. With the elections, the committee has nine councilors from the BJP and eight from AAP. The standing committee is important for giving approval to proposals involving expenditures of ₹5 crore and above.

PESA law to be placed in next Assly session

Elaborate discussions with stakeholders needed before it's passed: **Min SUDARSHAN CHHOTARAY ■ BHUBANESWAR**

Replying to an Adjournment Motion on Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Area (PESA) Act moved by CLP leader Rama Chandra Kadam in the State Assembly on Wednesday, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Supply Minister Rabi Narayan Naik said that the State Govern-

ment would bring PESA Rules in the next Assembly Session. Naik stated the State Government is prepared to place PESA in the House but before that the law needs further reviews and analyses. "Though the Department has started some process in 2023, we would start discussion with all Departments of the Government and would take suggestions of all tribal MLAs. The BJD Government has done nothing for tribals' developments," the Minister said. Initiating the discussion, CLP leader Kadam said that

the State Government must bring PESA legislation as it suggests establishing tribal self rule through empowered Gram Sabha and ownership over natural resources by tribals in the scheduled areas. Kadam further stated that the BJP Government is dilly-dallying in bringing the legislation though eight State Governments have already brought the same. As many as 13 out of 30 districts in the State come under Scheduled Area. The Act would benefit tribals of the State and improve their livelihoods and rights over resources, he added.

BBSR youth jumps into Mahanadi, missing

Suffered huge loss in online trading

PNS ■ CUTTACK

A Bhubaneswar youth, Mrutyunjay Manik jumped into the Mahanadi river from the Jobra barrage in Cuttack on Tuesday.

His body was yet to be traced. His family members said a huge loss in online trading was the main reason that prompted him to jump into the river.

Fire Service personnel are carrying out search operations which entered its second day on Wednesday. The family members of the deceased said that he had initially lost Rs 10 lakh in online trading and recently suffered another loss of Rs 4 lakh.

"He had withdrawn money from his savings account. He used to repay the bank from profits. Two days back, he had lost Rs 4 lakh," said a relative

of Mrutyunjay. The family members stated that Mrutyunjay had texted his sister for the last time and appeared depressed. Later, his mobile phone got switched off and they could not contact him. "I have committed a mistake. Don't search for me. I have lost," he had sent a message to his sister. "We had told him to work hard and repay the money. His morale broke after the recent loss and he could not cope up with the pressure," the relative added.

Meanwhile, Fire Service personnel are also continuing a search operation to trace the body of one Anup Agarwal, who allegedly jumped into the Mahanadi from the Madhusudan Setu on Tuesday night. "We are carrying out two search operations, one in Jobra and the other in Madhusudan Setu area," said an official.

Smart meter row 'Strict action against those removing meters'



Warns Singh Deo ■ PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Amid allegations over inflated billing by the Tata Power Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL), Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo has warned of strict action against those removing their meters.

Singh Deo, who holds the

Energy Department portfolio, stated that consumers are not authorised to remove meters installed by the TPWODL. "It involves the risk of getting electrocuted. If consumers have any doubt or complaint about the proper functioning of meters, they are required to inform the company for replacement," Singh Deo said.

He further said the government would be left with no option but to ask the TPWODL to disconnect electricity to the consumers who have removed their meters. Then, they would have to re-apply for a new connection with the payment of all dues, including the power they have consumed during the period without the meter, he added.

City IIT girl student jumps to death

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A third-year B Tech girl student from New Delhi studying at the IIT Bhubaneswar allegedly committed suicide by jumping off the hostel roof on Tuesday night.

She was rushed to the Capital Hospital, where she

was declared dead. Her body was kept in the mortuary and investigation was ongoing.

The reason for her taking the extreme step was yet to be ascertained.

Students rushed to her aid after hearing the sound of her fall and immediately

took her to a healthcare facility in the IIT campus. She was then shifted to the Capital Hospital.

Her family members were informed about the incident and they were on their way to Bhubaneswar, A probe is on to ascertain the reason behind her death, police said.

MLAs unanimously demand hike in salary, pension

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a rare show of unity, the MLAs from various political parties in Odisha urged Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy on Wednesday to instruct the State Government to introduce a Bill for increasing the salaries and pensions of current and former MLAs.

The issue was raised during the Zero Hour by senior Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati with strong backing from BJD lawmaker Ashwini Patra, BJP's Sanatan Bijuli and others.

The legislators emphasised the "financial strain" they are facing due to the current pay structure, particularly given the sharp rise in essential com-

modity prices and the pressure to meet public expectations. They also highlighted the plight of some former MLAs who are struggling to afford medical treatment with the current government provision offering only Rs 2,000 per month for such expenses.

Despite a committee's recommendation to increase the salaries and pensions, the previous BJD government did not introduce a Bill on the matter.

Speaker Padhy assured that she would request the government to take necessary steps to address the MLAs' concerns.

The lawmakers justified their demands by pointing to the high inflation rates, particularly the increasing costs

of petrol and diesel. They also called for an adjustment in travel allowances to reflect the soaring fuel prices.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who was the Opposition Chief Whip in the previous Assembly, had acknowledged the difficulties faced by both sitting and former MLAs in managing their day-to-day expenses.

Sources revealed that the earlier committee had proposed raising an MLA's salary from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh per month. Currently, an MLA receives Rs 1 lakh, which includes Rs 35,000 as salary and Rs 65,000 as allowances, along with a daily allowance of Rs 1,500 per session day and travel reimbursements.

Subhadra Yojana: No deadline for registration

Call centre unveiled for clarifying all queries

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida on Wednesday inaugurated a call centre for the Subhadra Yojana where people can get their queries resolved.

While talking to reporters, the Deputy CM informed that 20,000 to 22,000 calls are being received per day and 1.50 lakh calls have been received so far seeking clarifications on various aspects of the scheme.

"There are small confusions among people and the call centre will be helpful to address such issues. 180 people



have been deployed and it is functioning in three shifts. By September 17, the call centre's strength will be enhanced as it will be functional till the last person is enrolled," said Parida.

On the Aadhaar updation rush, the Deputy CM clarified that in the Subhadra Yojana application form, an applicant has only to give the Aadhaar number and there is no need

to submit a physical copy.

"There is no need to rush as money will be provided to all eligible beneficiaries as there is no deadline to complete the registration process. Those, who will complete the registration process after September 17, will also get financial assistance. Forms will be accepted till the last eligible beneficiary is included," she added.

Clearing the air about whether an applicant can apply online, Common Service Centre (CSC) head Dilip Dash informed that no applicant can apply online from their home. The portal for registration is going to open from Wednesday, he informed.

"As no deadline has been announced, we urge people not to crowd Jana Seva

Kendras unnecessarily. Forms are available with Anganwadi workers and Jana Seva Kendras. During registration, the applicants need to bring their Aadhaar card which will be verified. No one will take a copy of the Aadhaar card and it will be returned after verification," said Dash.

Dash informed that as Aadhaar authentication can be done through four modes - Iris, fingerprint, mobile-based OTP and face authentication, people should not unnecessarily crowd Aadhaar centres to update their mobile number. "People are now thronging to update their mobile numbers at Aadhaar centres. They can do this through the other three modes for Subhadra Yojana," Dash added.

Deputy CM opens Climate Resilience Cell

For climate-resilient agriculture in State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A Climate Resilience Cell (CRC) was inaugurated at the Krushi Bhavan here by Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo on Wednesday. This event marks a key step towards enhancing the State's efforts for climate-resilient agriculture in the State.

The CRC has been constituted for implementation and monitoring of the State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC). The State Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment (DAFE) in association with international institutional partners wishes to create a carbon-sensitive policy framework for collaborative research, policy analytics, institutional capacity building and policy engagement and outreach in the backdrop of climate change in Odisha.

The International Food



Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and The Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) comprise the main knowledge partners.

Singh Deo emphasised the critical need for adopting climate-resilient agricultural practices in the current scenario. To ensure sustainable production and food and nutrition security for all, it is imperative that we move towards climate-resilient practices, he said.

"IFPRI and CSTEP have been roped in to work closely with the Department and support the CRC in implementing sustainable agricultural food systems, building capac-

ity, and advocating for effective policies, Green House Gases (GHGs) emission reduction and efficient irrigation techniques and support in institutional capacity building for sustaining the climate smart practices in future," said Singh Deo.

DAFE Principal Secretary Dr Arabinda Kumar Padhe said there is now a unique opportunity for us to meet the larger carbon goals collectively while keeping farmers and citizens' lives and livelihood protected. This initiative shall be funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation without any financial implication to the State Government.

Naveen calls upon women to expose BJP's 'lies'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Leader of opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday urged women to expose the "lies" of the BJP and asserted that his party is committed to giving women significant roles and focusing on increasing female membership in the party.

Patnaik was speaking at the concluding session of a Biju Mahila Janata Dal (BMJD) meeting here. "Lies are the biggest identity of BJP," he remarked.

Patnaik said though the BJP in its election manifesto announced to give financial assistance of Rs 50,000 to each woman under Subhadra Yojana within two years, now its government has announced to give it in five years. "Women will get a financial assistance of Rs 5,000 every six months," he pointed out.

Patnaik also recalled the BJP's pre-election promise of providing 300 units of free electricity.



Addressing the issue of rising crimes against women, Patnaik said, "Crimes against women is a crime against the divine. In our culture, we revere women as mother goddesses."

"Our membership drive should focus on enrolling more women, and I will be assigning greater responsibilities to women within the party organisation," he concluded.

In response, BJP spokesperson Urmila Mohapatra said, "BJD is shedding crocodile tears for women. BJD supreme is worried about losing the women vote bank."

Demand for students' union polls

Student Cong, police scuffle during demo



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A scuffle broke out between members of the Pradesh Students Congress and police on Wednesday during a demonstration over the former's demand for holding of students' union elections in the State.

The Congress' student wing members were taken into preventive custody while they

tried to march towards the State Assembly under the leadership of Student Congress State president Udit Pradhan.

"The State Government claimed that there is no time this year for students' union elections, but we condemn it. We want to ask the minister concerned whether he doesn't have time or the ABVP is not ready for the polls," remarked a Student Congress leader.

"We will continue with our agitations for holding students' union elections in the State. Earlier, the BJP was also opposing when students' union elections were not held under the BJD rule. Now, the BJP has formed the government but is not holding the polls. We tried to gherao the Assembly as voices of students are being suppressed," said an agitator.

Before elections

BJD spent Rs 1,200 cr on jute bags, livelihood aid

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Naveen Patnaik-led BJD government spent a whopping Rs 1,206 crore for jute bags and livelihood assistance to each family under the Public Distribution System (PDS) before the General Elections 2024, informed Food Supplies & Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra in the State Assembly on Wednesday.

Replying to a question, Patra said, "The BJD government spent Rs 247.36 crore for around 2 crore jute shopping bags for distribution to around 96L-odd PDS beneficiaries."

Apart from two jute bags to every PDS family, the government also provided Rs 1,000 to each family, putting an additional Rs 959.5 crore burden on the State exchequer, he revealed.

The BJD had claimed that it was a step to wean people away from hazardous plastic bags. However, the Opposition slammed the government and termed it as a vote-winning trick.

Despite all the expenditures, the BJD lost the elections paving the way for the BJP to form a government in the State alone for the first time since Independence.

Onion, garlic prices skyrocket in State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

After potato, the prices of onion and garlic have increased significantly in the State.

While onion sells at Rs 60 per kg, garlic is sold at Rs 500 per kg in Bhubaneswar. This surge follows a recent spike in potato prices, adding to the financial burden of consumers already facing high costs for vegetables and grocery items. Traders attribute the hike to supply delays from

Nashik due to rains. Consumers are worried that the prices might increase further if the demand and supply are not met anytime soon.

"The wholesale price of onion is now Rs 48 per kg and we sell it at Rs 55. A few days back, it was Rs 40 per kg and has now increased to Rs 55. It is expected to surge further tomorrow or anytime soon," said a trader. "Potato price is normal now with Rs 35 per kg but is also expected to rise again," he added.

Call it by any name, 'Ravenshaw' sounds as sweet

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has set the proverbial cat among the pigeons with his comment on the need for a change in the name of the iconic Ravenshaw University. Maybe that was the whole idea because it came completely out of the blue, without a context or a proper backdrop that would justify such a highly controversial statement.

His attempt to cloak his comment as a 'personal view' that needed a wider debate fooled no one because everyone knows politicians, especially someone as seasoned as Pradhan, don't make off-the-cuff remarks just like that. There is always a scarcely veiled political agenda in everything they do and speak in the public arena.

Going by the heated exchanges since he made the statement, Pradhan appears to have succeeded in his design of dividing the State between the pro and no changers. But let us not get into the politics of it and discuss the issue strictly on merit. Is there re-

ally a good enough case, based on historical evidence, for changing the name of a prestigious university that has produced the virtual Who's Who of Odisha?

The evidence presented – and the argument built around them – by the pro changers doesn't really back their contention that Thomas Edward Ravenshaw, the then commissioner of Odisha, was a mass killer who condemned about a million people to death with his acts of omission and commission during the Great Famine of 1866, immortalised both in history and legend as the NaAnka Durbhiksha. Of course, it is nobody's case that he was not responsible for the mass deaths in any manner – and he was the first person to admit and own up his mistakes before the Campbell Commission set up by the British Government. Equally, it should be no one's case that he knowingly and deliberately sent lakhs to their deaths in doing what he did – or not doing what he didn't. His failures were an honest error of judgment at best and gross inefficiency and lack of fore-



sight at worst. Using the same logic, shall we demand the change of name of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) next because Nehru's gross error of judgment led to the loss of countless lives and thousands of acres of Indian land in the war with China in 1962 – and deny his immense contributions to nation building?

Some people in favour of the change of name claim that he was 'severely indicted' by the Commission without bothering to cite the exact para or the page from the Commission's report where the alleged severe indictment occurs. In any case, they fail to explain how the British Government kept the officer 'severely indicted' by a Commis-

sion appointed by itself as the commissioner till as late as 1878?

Let us, for a moment, accept that the charges against him are true. But the point is: is the pioneering role he played in setting up the first higher education institution in the State – and then followed it up with a series of equally important institutions that laid the foundations of modern education in Odisha – fiction? For those who don't know, he was the person who personally took it upon himself to allay the apprehensions of financial viability expressed by his bosses in Calcutta and enlisted the support of many kings of princely States to raise funds for the first college. He was also the person who played the

troubleshooter-in-chief during the highly challenging formative years and groomed the newly founded college with love and care. And it was not Ravenshaw who engraved his name to the college that was initially known simply as Cuttack College. It was the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj Krushna Chandra Bhanjdeo, the principal donor for the setting up of the college (upwards of Rs 20, 000, a princely sum in those days) who insisted on a change of name – and that too after Ravenshaw had gone back to England after serving his term for well over a decade. In crucifying Ravenshaw posthumously, thus, we are also demeaning the contribution of the Mayurbhanj Maharaja but for whose generous monetary support the college would never have been set up in the first place. But so desperate are the people bent on name change that they even accuse Bhanjdeo of 'buying' peace with Ravenshaw with his contribution to quell an alleged tribal uprising in his kingdom.

Two questions for them. First, why didn't the Maharaja insist that the college be set up

in his own kingdom – rather than in faraway Cuttack – since he was the principal donor? Second, what was his compulsion in proposing the naming of the college after Ravenshaw when the latter had already laid down office and gone back to his native country?

There is another point we must ponder. Why did none of the stalwarts of our movement for a separate State and recognition of Odia as a separate language – starting from Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das and Fakir Mohan Senapati to Utkalmani Gopabandhu and Dr Harekrushna Mahatab or any of the leaders who followed them – never objected to the name of Ravenshaw being lent to the premier higher education institution in the State? Were they all also 'stooges' of Ravenshaw?

Last but not the least, what about the hurt feelings of lakhs of former and present students for whom the name 'Ravenshaw' is a badge of honour to be worn proudly, a brand name recognized across the country and even outside?

HITTING THE BULL'S EYE

Name change does not yield game change harvests

Go-getter Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan kicked up a huge controversy when he suggested renaming the 156-year-old Ravenshaw University located in Cuttack, the erstwhile capital of Odisha. Thomas Edison Ravenshaw was an administrator who served as the Commissioner of the Orissa Division from 1865 to 1878. He played a pivotal role in the establishment of educational institutions in the region with the view to promoting education among young Odias. The historic Cuttack College was named after him much later when he was not around anymore. Ravenshaw College, now a university, is highly regarded for Ravenshaw's noteworthy contribution to advancing higher education in Orissa. The institution he set up with little support from the government and most from royals of princely states stands today as a majestic temple of learning that has been making Odisha proud across more than one and a half century.



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

Minister Pradhan, probably not aware of the historical facts, has portrayed Ravenshaw as a villain because the great famine of 1866 occurred during his tenure. The famine had claimed the lives of about a million of Odia people. This very incident prompted Ravenshaw to improve the education system in the region as the gravity of the drought-linked famine situation had not been fully realised due to inadequate educational infrastructure. He had come to know that ordinary people could never realise that lack of education caused disasters in all spheres.

The Cuttack College, operating in a small school building, was founded in 1868. It was elevated to a full-fledged first-grade college in 1876 and was renamed 'Ravenshaw College' in honour of Ravenshaw who had founded the great institution with enormous personal efforts. He wanted to make education popular and accessible, particularly for women who were traditionally kept away from schools. Maharaja of Mayurbhanj Krushna Chandra Bhanjdeo had donated a princely sum of twenty thousand rupees then only on appeal from Commissioner Ravenshaw. Other princely states' chiefs had come by too. "The establishment of a college at Cuttack is an object of personal importance to myself and also of greatest importance to the spread of Higher Education in Orissa," Ravenshaw wrote in a letter to the Secretary, Government of Bengal, on August 5, 1875. Ravenshaw took great deal of personal care in creating a number of departments for various subjects in the first college to see light of day in Odisha. He had relentlessly advocated for women's education. He also got financial assistance sanctioned by the higher authorities for the estab-

lishment of the 'Cuttack Girls' School', which was initially started as a primary school. Later in 1873, the girls' school was renamed as 'Ravenshaw Hindu Girls' School'.

Another significant initiative in the spread of education was Commissioner Ravenshaw and Dr W.D. Stewart, Civil Surgeon of Cuttack, joining hands to expand the scope of medical education in the region. Ravenshaw had strongly recommended the sanction of the scheme which led to the government starting the highly-admired institution on an experimental basis. It is pertinent to make clear that it was Maharaja Krushna Chandra Bhanjdeo who was insistent on the Cuttack College being renamed after the great founder Ravenshaw.

Most notable luminary alumni of the iconic Ravenshaw College include Utkalgaurab Madhusudan Das, the great lawyer and social reformer who played a pivotal role in the formation of Odisha as a separate State, Godabarish Misra, a political leader and social reformer who was instrumental in the Odia language movement, Pandit Gopabandhu Das, a key figure in

the Odia renaissance, a freedom fighter, poet and social reformer whose contributions to education and social justice are unforgettable. Nandini Satpathy, the first woman Chief Minister of Odisha, known for her contributions to women's empowerment and social justice too, had passed out of the Ravenshaw College. Academician Prana Krushna Parija, former Chief Ministers Biju Patnaik and Janaki Ballav Patnaik et al were all Ravenshawians as they loved to be called. Anyone worth whoever went to the college between 1870s and 1944 has to be a Ravenshawian. Colleges in Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur and Balangir were established only in 1944.

So, Dharmendra Pradhan, who is not a Ravenshaw college alumnus, floated the proposal to change the name of the great institution after some local hero as he believes visionary Ravenshaw was a villain for whose indifferent attitude and mismanagement of the great famine of 1866, at least one million Odias died of acute starvation when the total population of the region was only three million.

The truth is 1865 had witnessed the worst drought and 1866 unprecedented rains causing uncontrollable floods. The winter rice crops of 1866 were completely damaged. Ravenshaw, just around the onset of the famine, had asked all his field officials to collect information on the amount of rice stock in stores of the revenue intermediaries called zamindars and leading traders. The lazy, lax officials believed the greedy, unscrupulous zamindars and traders that all was well and there was nothing to panic about hunger or starvation in the region. But actually, they had hoarded away the grains to sell to outsiders for a fatter price. Ravenshaw's only sin was to trust these crooks including his corrupt subordinates, mostly local guys. He could not have done better as moving across the region was not possible due deplorable transport or travel facilities. So, when he faced a commission back home, he confessed to having trusted the rogue zamindars and subordinate officials, for which he could not import the required amount of grains.

All the same, efforts to ship food

to the isolated province were hampered by bad weather; and when some shipments did reach the coast of Odisha, they could still not be moved inland. The British Indian government imported some 10,000 tonnes of rice at four times the market price, which reached the affected population only in September. Although many people died of starvation, more were killed by cholera before the monsoons and by malaria afterwards. In the two years of the famine, the Government of British India spent approximately Rs 9,500,000 on famine relief for 35 million units (i.e., one person per day); a large proportion of the cost, however, was the high price of the imported grain.

Ravenshaw was a hero by several standards and parameters. The people of Odisha take pride in the name 'Ravenshaw'. Minister Pradhan will, hopefully, take note and refrain from trying to change names of places the way they have defaced 'Allahabad' by making it Prayag with which millions cannot identify at all.

Name-changing acts do not yield game-changing harvests.

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Senior govt officials assigned districts

To review development programmes
SUDARSHAN CHHOTORAY ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Wednesday asked its several senior officials to visit assigned districts to review development projects and fast-pace the new government's priorities. Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Home and Forest, Environment and Climate

Change Satyabrata Sahu has been assigned Jagatsinghpur district, Additional Secretary to Government Revenue and Disaster Management Deorajan Kumar Singh assigned Anugul district. ACS, Steel and Mines and General Administration Surendra Kumar given Cuttack district, Similarly ACS to Government and Director General of Gopabandhu Administrative Academy G Mathibhitan assigned Kendrapada district.

ACS, Industries and MSME Hemant Sharma assigned with Keonjhar district. ACS, Social Justice and Empowerment of People with Disability Bishnupada Sethi asked to visit Malkangiri district. ACS, Labour and Employment and ESI Chitra Arugam assigned Koraput district ACS, Panchayati Raj Sushil Kumar Lohani asked to visit Kalahandi district. Principal Secretary, Agriculture and Farmer's Empowerment Arabinda Kumar

Padhee assigned with Khordha district; Principal Secretary, Finance Saswat Mishra given Bargarh district, Principal Secretary, PWD and Food and Civil Supply Department Vir Bikram Jadav assigned Balangir district. Similarly, Principal Secretary, IT and Electronics Vishal Kumar Dev assigned Nuapada district and Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban Development and Commerce and Transport Usha Padhee given Kandhamal district.

500 turtles rescued; 4 held in M'giri



PNS ■ MALKANGIRI
Forest Department personnel arrested four wildlife smugglers and rescued 500 turtles from MV 79 village in Malkangiri district on Wednesday. The turtles were rescued from two cars in the Kalimela area near the Andhra-Odisha border in Motu section of the local forest division, said sources. The forest officials acted on a tipoff and intercepted the two pickup vans which were

transporting turtles illegally into Odisha from Andhra Pradesh. Frisking of the vehicle led to the discovery of 500 turtles. The four persons involved were first detained and later arrested under the relevant Sections of the Wild Life Protection Act and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, the sources added. "The vehicles used by the accused were seized and the turtles shifted to a safe location," a senior forest official said.

7K die due to snakebite in Odisha

NHRC puts CS, Subarnapur DM on notice
Asks them to furnish ATRs
SRIKUMAR MAHANTA ■ SONEPUR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notice to the Chief Secretary Odisha directing him to submit a detailed report regarding the steps being taken by the government to reduce deaths due to snakebite in the State. The NHRC has also sought action taken reports (ATRs) from the District Magistrate, Subarnapur to ensure needful action on the incidents mentioned in a petition. Considering the petition filed by advocate and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the NHRC passed the order August 28. The petitioner quoted various incidents of snakebite

reported in hospitals, police stations, schools, Anganwadi and residential homes in Odisha and failure of the State Government to ensure safety and security at public places including the government offices. The petition quoted the incident of snakebite took place at Birmaharajpur police station in Subarnapur district on June 24 when Goura Kumbhar, a snake rescuer, died due to snakebite while the police personnel were busy in watching the snake play by Kumbhar inside the police station. Raising several unattended issues about snakebites, Tripathy contended that due to the failure and negligence of the government to save life of the people due to snake bites, more than 7,000 people died in the last eight years in Odisha.

4-day talk on natural farming concludes at CUO

PNS ■ KORAPUT
The Central University of Odisha hosted a four-day National Seminar Cum Workshop on Sustainable and Regenerative Approaches with Desi Chasa (natural farming) from August 27 to 30.

Organised jointly by the School of Agriculture and the School of Animal Husbandry, the event focused on integrating Indian knowledge systems into modern agricultural practices. The seminar was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Prof Chakradhar Tripathi, who presided over the inaugural session. He underscored the critical role of natural farming in preserving Indian knowledge, culture and tradition. Chairman, Loka Samabaya Pratishthan Odisha Natabara Sarangi, who joined as chief guest, highlighted the evolution of Indian agriculture from an-



cient practices to contemporary challenges and potential of natural farming to address issues like climate change and sustainability. He advocated for natural farming as a means to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience in agriculture. Chairman of BPCL Biofuel and Professor of Renewable Energy at OUAT, Bhubaneswar, Prof MK Mohanty emphasised the transformative role of renewable energy in agriculture and waste management, includ-

In Mayurbhanj Woman poisoned to death for dowry

2 including mother-in-law detained
PNS ■ BARIKUDA

A woman was allegedly poisoned to death by her mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law at a village in the Kaptipada area of Mayurbhanj district over dowry. Reports said the incident occurred at Bhandaripal village under the jurisdiction of Kaptipada police station. The woman, who was allegedly poisoned on Tuesday, died on Wednesday while undergoing treatment. The deceased was identified as Sita Naik, wife of

Sudarshan Bindhani. Sources said Sudarshan and Sita had got married around nine months back. After their marriage, her in-laws allegedly started torturing Sita mentally and physically and asking her to get more dowries from her parents. After getting information from neighbours, Sita's relatives went to Bhandaripal and rushed her to the Udla Hospital in a critical condition. Later, Sita's mother lodged a written complaint at the Kaptipada police station alleging that her daughter was poisoned to death. Based on the complaint, the police have started an investigation into the incident and detained the in-laws of the deceased.

INBRIEF

30 blood units collected at B'pur camp
Brahmapur: A blood donation camp was recently conducted here on the birthday of Lanja Panchayat Samiti member and Ambagada Seva Samabaya Samiti president Kanhu Charan Patra. The camp was inaugurated by former MLA, Brahmapur



Dr Ramesh Chandra Caupatnaik. Social activist Rajendra Jena attended as guest of honour. A total of 30 units of blood were collected on the occasion. Niladri Moharana, Himanshu Padhy, Pruthiraj Paika, Muna Panda, Abhijit Sahu, Bhismacharya Choudhary and Biranchinarayana Panigrahi among others cooperated in organising the camp.

Tiger hide seized in Kandhamal; 3 held
Phulbani: Forest officials on the directions of DFO Prasant Kumar Patel conducted a raid near the Gudari airstrip in Kandhamal district and nabbed three wildlife criminals identified as Trinath Kanhar, Sanjaya Mallick and Prabhat Mallick. The team led by Ranger Shibananda Lenka seized a tiger skin, a gun, two bikes and three mobiles phones from the possession of the accused. Later, the Forest Department registered a case and forwarded the accused to court. Earlier on July 20, a tiger skin was also seized and six persons were arrested.

Brahmapur scribe Sahu honoured
BRAHMAPUR: The Happy Moment India, Rourkela organised a National Honours Ceremony in Bhubaneswar, where senior journalist, singer, lawyer, actor, coordinator, social activist,



multi-talented person Sudip Sahu was felicitated. Padma Shri Prabhakar Moharana, MLA Ananta Narayan Jena, Advisor CV Raman Institute Sunil Sadangi, Pandit Hari Chandan and many other eminent personalities were present. The programme was chaired by Rajendra Panda. Seventy people who gained expertise in various disciplines were felicitated. About 2,000 delegates from different parts of the State participated in the event.

ASUS launches Pegasus Store in Bhubaneswar
Bhubaneswar: As a step towards strengthening the brand's retail footprint across the country, ASUS India, a Taiwanese tech giant, has announced the launch of a Pegasus Store in Bhubaneswar. The store is set to host an extensive range of electronics and computer hardware, including the ASUS flagship products such as Vivobooks, Zenbooks, Republic of Gamers (ROG) laptops, Gaming Desktops, All-in-One Desktops, and accessories. This marks the brand's 1st Pegasus store in the city.

Seminar on naturopathy at Healthville
Bhubaneswar: Healthville, a naturopathy health centre at Bhalunka, Barang, and Wellopady, a nephrology organisation of the USA, jointly hosted a seminar on naturopathy practice and its effectiveness. Around 100 naturopathic enthusiasts, beneficiaries and promoters participated in it. Dr Satyabrata Minaketan, chairman, Healthville, delivered the welcome address. Chief Guest was Golak Mohapatra, vice-president of Odisha BJP.

Birla Fertility & IVF further expands network
Bhubaneswar: Birla Fertility & IVF has announced the acquisition of 12 BabyScience IVF Clinics, marking its entry into Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. BFI will now manage 50 clinics nationwide.

FireNet expands its reach to Bhubaneswar
Bhubaneswar: FireNet, a leader in the fire safety industry, has announced the opening of its newest branch office in Bhubaneswar. This expansion, spearheaded by founder Sudhanshu Panda along with directors Prateek Verma and Rohit Mahapatra, marks a significant milestone as FireNet extends its exceptional fire safety solutions to the heart of Odisha.

IWG launches workspace 'Regus' in BBSR
Bhubaneswar: IWG, the world's leading provider of flexible office spaces, has announced the launch of its "Regus" brand at Infocity, Patia, Bhubaneswar. This state-of-the-art facility spans 12,000 square feet and offers a comprehensive flex working environment tailored for individuals and teams ranging from 1 to 25 people.

Paradip Refinery holds 65th Indian Oil Day

PNS ■ PARADIP
The IOCL Refinery at Paradip celebrated the 65th Indian Oil Day which began with an employee meet in the afternoon, where Executive Director and Refinery Head Kausik Basu addressed the gathering.

He reflected on Indian Oil's remarkable growth from its modest beginnings to becoming one of the nation's largest energy conglomerates. Basu expressed deep appreciation for the visionary leaders who have guided the corporation's success and commended the hard work and dedication of the Paradip Refinery team in achieving the refinery's goals. During the event, Basu administered the Indian Oil Day pledge to all employees, reaffirming their commitment to the corporation's values and mission. A special cake-cutting ceremony was held to mark the occasion, adding to the celebratory atmosphere. Additionally, Basu felicitated the Production Department with the Unit Level Suggestion Scheme Award and the Divisional Level Functional Group Award in recognition of their



contributions. A blood donation camp was also organised in collaboration with the District Red Cross Society, Cuttack. A cultural programme featuring traditional and modern dance performances, and a melody by members of the Employees' Club, Utkal Jyoti Officers' Wives Club, and Women in Public Sector (WIPS) mem-

bers were conducted in the evening. The event drew a full house, with participation from local industrial heads, representatives from DPS Paradip Refinery, CISF, and IOCL VKPRMS Hospital. The celebration also included the felicitation of retired employees, long service awardees, and meritorious students.

Despite being an old civic body B'pur's basic infra not evolved to meet modern needs

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR
Brahmapur is one of the oldest municipalities in Odisha, established in 1867. After 142 years, in 2009, the State Government elevated Brahmapur to the status of a municipal corporation. Despite this long journey and the celebration of the Self-Governance Day on Saturday, the fundamental structure of the city's governance has remained largely unchanged. While it has been 15 years since Brahmapur became a corporation, significant challenges still persist in the city's development. Brahmapur has witnessed urban expansion and some changes over the years, yet it continues to lag behind its contemporaries like Visakhapatnam. While Brahmapur was once on par with Visakhapatnam, its devel-



opment has been minimal in comparison. The stagnation has often been attributed to the negligence of the MLAs, MPs, and municipal corporators who represented, or now, are representing the city. Their failure to take proactive steps for the city's growth has been a point of contention. In Brahmapur, the traffic system operates without proper regulation, and unlike other cities, it lacks sanctioned traffic engineers. The foreclosure of essential infrastructure is a significant issue, and political disputes have often impeded progress. Over the past 50 years, many areas of the city

have seen development, but this has often been unplanned and chaotic. Brahmapur's basic infrastructure has not evolved to meet modern needs. The transition of Brahmapur from a Municipality to a Municipal Corporation marked it as the third largest city in the State, but this has not translated into proportional development. The city still lacks vital facilities like national-level sports stadiums, transit facilities such as airports, and modern recreational parks. The narrow roads have caused persistent traffic congestion, and despite the city's native population exceeding 5 lakh, it has now slipped to the fifth position in terms of urban prominence. Brahmapur's geographical area remains just 78 sqkm, making it one of the smallest metropolitan areas in the country. The city's expansion has been limited by the absence of Panchayat amalgamation, despite demands to merge 14 adjacent panchayats into the Brahmapur Municipal Corporation (BeMC). The State Government's lack of commitment to the cause is widely blamed for hindering the city's growth. Since 2015, the Coordinated Development Plan (CGP) for Brahmapur has been approved but remains unimplemented. This has further hampered the city's planned development. The future of Brahmapur lies in a concerted push towards structured growth, leveraging its rich history while addressing its current challenges.

BJD protests MLA not invited to college fest

Prohibitory orders clamped in Bhadrak
PNS ■ BHADRAK

As many as 15 platoons of police force were deployed keeping in view palpable tension prevailing near Motto Degree College in Bhadrak district on Wednesday. Prohibitory orders under Section 163 of BNSS were also clamped to maintain law and order. The measures were taken in view of protests staged by BJD activists as Chandbali MLA was allegedly not invited to the foundation day celebration of the educational institution. As per reports, Bhadrak MP Avimanyu Sethi and BJP State president Manmohan Samal were invited to the event as guests. The prohibitory orders were clamped around 1 km

radius of the college and nearby areas till Thursday 10 am. Finding it as an affront on their leader, Chandbali BJD MLA's supporters and party men staged protests which created tension in the area. "In the Staff Council of the college, all staff decided that as a new government has been formed, the leaders of the party in power would be invited to ensure faster development of the college," said Principal Bibhuti Biswal. Meanwhile, senior police officials informed that stern action would be taken against those who will resort to vandalism and any kind of indiscipline. Chandbali SDPO Kartik Mallick said, "We have clamped prohibitory orders to maintain law and order. Senior police officials are on the spot."

Centre, Tripura Government, two insurgent groups sign peace pact

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is committed to all-round development of the Northeastern region, especially tribals, while preserving their culture, language and identity, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday. He made this assertion here while addressing an event where a peace agreement was signed between the Central and Tripura Governments and two insurgent groups of the State aiming to end violence and bring peace in the north-eastern State. Shah also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has not only bridged the gap between the Northeast and Delhi by connecting them through roads, railways and flights, but has also bridged the gap between hearts. He said a new milestone is set today in Tripura's ongoing journey towards peace and progress with the signing of the agreement. Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha and senior officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the State Government were also present during the signing of the Memorandum of Settlement with the representatives of National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) and All Tripura



Tiger Force (ATTF). The NLFT and the ATTF have agreed to end a 35-year-long conflict and return to the mainstream, renouncing violence and committing to building a prosperous and developed Tripura, reposing their trust in the Modi Government, Shah said. "The Modi Government is committed for the overall development of the Northeast, especially the tribal groups, through development while preserving their culture, language and identity," he said. Shah said the Government has given highest priority to peace and development in the north-eastern region. "All peace agreements signed in the Northeast has been implemented by the Government," he

said. The home minister said the Central Government has been working tirelessly to fulfil Modi's vision of a developed Northeast, free from extremism, violence and conflict. He said under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the Government has signed 12 important agreements to bring peace and prosperity in the Northeast, of which, three relate to Tripura. Around 10,000 people have given up arms and joined the mainstream due to these agreements, the Home Minister said. Shah said over 328 insurgents will give up arms and join the mainstream and Rs 250 crore has been approved for development of area of operation of the two insurgent groups, par-

ticularly pockets dominated by the tribals. "The signing of this agreement is a major milestone in fulfilling the resolve taken by the Modi Government to develop the entire Northeast by combining the 'Ashtalakshmi' concept and 'Purvodaya,'" he said. He said wherever a peace agreement is signed, the Modi Government is working to develop those areas and remove the reasons for taking up arms. "In the Modi Government, agreement is not just a piece of paper but a feeling of the heart and we have demonstrated this on the ground," Shah said adding, the NLFT and ATTF agreement will be implemented in letter and spirit, fulfilling all the expectations.

Centre seeks report from States, UTs on safety steps taken for doctors, healthcare workers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra on Wednesday issued a directive to all States and Union Territories (UTs) demanding an action-taken report by September 10 on the implementation of safety and security measures for doctors and healthcare workers. The move comes in the wake of a recent Supreme Court order calling for urgent actions to ensure the safety of medical professionals nationwide. In a letter written to chief secretaries and directors general of police of all States and UTs, the Secretary outlined several key measures to be prioritised by States and UTs, including the identification of high-risk establishments, security audits, CCTV surveillance, background checks, and bereavement protocols, among others. States and UTs have been urged to identify hospitals with high patient foot-fall and categorise them as high-priority establishments for security enhancements. The Health Secretary recommended regular security audits, conducted in consultation with local health and police authorities, to assess and improve existing security measures in hospitals. Special attention should be given to areas within hospitals that are prone to security breaches, such as emergency rooms, triage areas, intensive care units (ICUs), and labour rooms, according to Chandra. "Proper training and establishment of bereavement protocols for all doctors and healthcare workers to handle



intense and emotional grief situations," the top official said. Chandra noted that several states have already initiated actions in line with the suggestions provided in a previous communication dated August 23. He also acknowledged that some states have gone beyond the ministry of health and family welfare's (MOHFW) recommendations, implementing additional measures to enhance security in healthcare settings. The conference, held on August 28, deliberated on the provision of a safe working environment in all medical institutions in the wake of recent violent incidents, including the horrific rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

The heinous act had triggered nationwide protests among resident doctors across the country seeking a safe environment for the medical professionals in the hospitals. Dr Rohan Krishnan and Dr Manish Jhangra, President and co-Founder respectively of Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) have sought implementation of the Central Protection Act for the Health professional. The bill was introduced in Parliament in 2022 to prevent violence against healthcare professionals and clinical establishments. The Bill's provisions include defining acts of violence against doctors, mandatory reporting of acts of violence, and a grievance redressal mechanism among others.



Indian Army to host drone event in Leh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to harness drone technology for operations in high altitude areas including Siachen glacier and Line of Actual Control (LAC) facing China, the Army HIM-DRONE-ATHON 2 will take place at Wari La, near Leh on September 17-18, officials said here on Wednesday. This will be followed by HIMTECH-2024 on September 20-21, an event conceptualised to discuss, demonstrate and discover new avenues for development, incorporation and cross-pollination of technology, ideas and innovations with focus on harnessing military technologies for high altitude areas. Major General C S Mann, Additional Director General of the Army Design Bureau highlighted that the Indian Army is deployed from icy heights of the Siachen Glacier to the rugged Himalayas where its soldiers face unparalleled adversities daily. For drone operations, rarified atmosphere results in reduced lift and degraded engine performance which are further accentuated by extreme cold temperatures and high wind speeds. These conditions are unique for Indian Army and demand systems that can adequately perform in these conditions. Since such altitude battlefields are not prevalent anywhere else, tailor-made, indigenous solutions are the way forward. If the indigenous industry succeeds here, it also opens vistas for them to international arena and establish India as a credible drone manufacturing hub. HIM-DRONE-ATHON-2 will focus on drone solutions for Indian Army for high altitude areas. The event is planned to be conducted under actual terrain and environmental conditions at altitude of 4,000-5,000 meters. The event is open to all indigenous drone manufacturers and invites their participation for demonstration of surveillance drones, Loitering munitions, Logistics Drones, Swarm Drones and drones with specific capabilities / role / payloads like; Electronic Warfare, Synthetic Aperture Radar, Communication Intelligence and Electronics.

Had stainless steel been used in Shivaji statue it would not have collapsed: Gadkari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/PUNE

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has said if stainless steel had been used for construction of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue at Rajkot fort in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district, it would not have collapsed. Gadkari also pitched for use of rust-resistant products in coastal areas.

The collapse of the statue of the iconic Founder of the Maratha State on August 26 triggered a political row ahead of assembly elections in Maharashtra. The road transport and Highways Minister said here at an event he has been pressing for the last three years that stainless steel should be used in the construction of bridges built close to sea. Recalling his days as PWD Minister of Maharashtra, he said he was constructing 55 flyovers in Mumbai and one person fooled him. "He put some powder coating on iron rods and said those were rust-proof. But there was rusting. I believe that stainless steel should be used within 30 km of sea. "If stainless steel had been used for the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji, it would have never collapsed," Gadkari said at an event here.

Police in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district has issued a look out circular (LOC) against contractor Jaydeep Apte in connection with the collapse of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue at Rajkot fort. An LOC is issued to airports and all other exit points to stop Apte from fleeing the country. Apte, a Thane-based sculptor, had executed the contract to make the statue. Following its collapse on August 26, less than nine months after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated it on the coastal fort, Malvan police registered a case against Apte and structural consultant Chetan Patil for negligence and other offences. Patil was arrested from Kolhapur, where a search was on for Apte, a police offi-



cial said, adding that Malvan police has now issued an LOC for him. Meanwhile, the Congress on Wednesday alleged in Pune that a meagre amount of Rs 1.5 crore was spent on the construction of the Shivaji Maharaj statue that had collapsed in coastal Sindhudurg even though a sum of "Rs 236 crore" was taken for this work from the State coffers. Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole also hit back at Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and other leaders of the Mahayuti who have accused the Opposition of politicising the statue incident. Speaking to reporters in Pune ahead of the party's constituency review meeting for assembly elections, AICC in-charge for Maharashtra, Ramesh Chennithala, alleged spike in crimes against women and children, and murders, which is testimony to the worsening law and order situation under the Mahayuti Government. "Every day, cases of murders, and sexual assaults on women and children are being reported. In Pune, two murders were reported. It shows that the law and order situation has crumbled completely," Chennithala told reporters. He alleged the State Government was insensitive towards people and engrossed in perpetrating "scams and means to collect money". Patole claimed approximately Rs 236 crore was taken from the State

Government's coffers in the name of the construction of Shivaji Maharaj's statue at Rajkot fort in Sindhudurg district. "But as per our information, the statue construction work was completed with Rs 1 crore to Rs 1.5 crore," the Congress leader alleged. The statue collapsed on August 26, more than eight months after it was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, triggering a political firestorm. Responding to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's charge that the opposition was politicising the statue incident, Patole said venting anger against the "insult" of Shivaji Maharaj and the Badlapur incident cannot be termed as politicising the matter. Two four-year-old girls were allegedly sexually abused by a male sweeper at a school in Badlapur in Thane district. The opposition had alleged that the police delayed the registration of FIR in the case. "These issues are beyond the realm of politics," Patole said, alleging the Government was not taking the opposition into confidence and instead the ruling parties are organising counter protests. Chennithala said the MPCC will hold deliberations with the party workers and functionaries from Pune, Solapur, Kolhapur and Satara districts for the upcoming assembly elections. He added that the party had held review meetings for 122 constituencies so far.

NMC reintroduces controversial topics in medical curriculum

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Omitted in 2022 following a Madras High Court directive, the National Medical Commission (NMC) has reintroduced controversial topics such as 'sodomy and lesbianism' as unnatural sexual offences in the forensic medicine and toxicology curriculum for undergraduate medical students. It has also brought back topics such as the hymen and its type, and its medico-legal importance besides defining virginity and defloration, legitimacy and its medico-legal importance. The updated curriculum also covers legal competencies related to new laws, such as the Bharatiya Nagarika Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA), alongside existing laws like the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO). It includes discussions on various sexual perversions, such as fetishism, voyeurism, and necrophilia, however, distinctions between consensual sex between queer individuals have been removed, a source said. Notably, the revised curriculum omits the previous seven-hour training on disability. The NMC's Competency-Based Medical Education Curriculum (CBME) Guidelines for 2024 emphasize a curriculum that integrates subject areas while aligning with global educational trends. The goal is to create an "Indian

Medical Graduate" (IMG) who is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for effective primary care and global relevance, it said. At the end of teaching-learning in forensic medicine and toxicology, the student should be able to understand the medico-legal framework of medical practice, codes of conduct, medical ethics, professional misconduct and medical negligence, conducting medico-legal examination and documentation of various medico-legal cases and understand latest Acts and laws related to medical professional including related court judgements, the NMC said in its document. "It was time to have a relook at all aspects of the various components in the existing regulations and guidelines, and adapt them to the changing demography, socio-economic context, perceptions, values, advancements in medical education and expectations of stakeholders," the NMC said in its Competency-Based Medical Education Curriculum (CBME) Guidelines, 2024. "To achieve this, the following national and institutional goals for the learner of the Indian Medical Graduate training program are hereby prescribed. "The first contact physician needs to be skilful to perform duties of primary care physician and have requisite skills for promotive, preventative, rehabilitative, palliative care and referral services," the document said.



Indian, South African Navies sign rescue agreement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant milestone to develop bilateral naval cooperation, the Indian Navy and the South African Navy have signed an Implementing Agreement that ensures the safety of the South African Navy's submarine crew in times of distress or accident, navy said here on Wednesday. Giving details, officials said the agreement was signed by Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and Vice Admiral Monde Lobese, Chief of the South African Navy. The Implementing Agreement underscores a shared commitment to maritime safety and mutual support. Under this agreement, the Indian Navy will provide assistance by deploying its Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) when required, further strengthening the collaborative ties between the two navies. This partnership reinforces the longstanding maritime relationship between India and South Africa.

Rising temperatures disrupting age-long weather patterns in Kashmir valley over last century: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Researchers analysing weather data spanning over the past century in all the ten districts of the Kashmir Valley in the northwestern Himalayas, have flagged the region is experiencing increased temperatures, particularly in winter, pre-monsoon, and post-monsoon seasons. This warming trend is disrupting traditional weather patterns, thus the region's ecosystem. Similarly, less precipitation is being reported during winter months while in contrast, spring and summer months are seeing increased rainfall. "In Kashmir, accelerated glacier melting is a result of higher temperatures, which also impacts ecosystems and access to freshwater resources. Water scarcity, decreased agricultural water supply, and disruptions in the hydropower industry can



all result from this. "The risk of flooding and landslides might increase with higher precipitation and more severe rainstorm events. Flash floods and debris, caused by a combination of high rainfall and steep topography, can pose serious threats to communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems," said the study 'Unveiling Precipitation and Temperature Patterns in Kashmir Valley, India'. The authors have called for understanding these climatic trends which are crucial for managing water resources and preparing for the impacts of climate change in the fragile Himalayan region to address the potential impacts on biodiversity, ecological services, and local livelihoods. Published in Springer and ResearchGate, the research covered monthly, seasonal, and annual trends from 1901 to 2018 across the districts of

Srinagar, Kulgam, Shupian, Ganderbal, Budgam, Bandipore, Anantnag, Pulwama, Baramulla, and Kupwara. As per the authors Sana Rafi and Raghupathi Balasani respectively from Delhi-based Jamia Millia Islamia and JNTU, Hyderabad, significant warming was noted in winter, pre-monsoon, and post-monsoon seasons, although Kupwara and a few other districts were some exceptions. Annual precipitation is increasing significantly in all districts. February and March show rising trends in most areas, with significant increases observed in April through June. By July, all districts except Anantnag experienced significant increases in precipitation, said the study. Monthly weather patterns are also changing. February, March, and April show signif-

icant increases in precipitation in various districts and in most months except for a few districts in certain months like August and December. Temperature trends are also rising, with some variations between districts, the study said, noting that it can accelerate glacier melting, impacting water resources and ecosystems while increasing and changing precipitation patterns can lead to water scarcity, reduced agricultural water supply, and disruptions in hydropower. "This study is therefore an attempt to detect trends and variability in precipitation and temperature for the period 1901-2018 in Kashmir Valley. For studies on climate change and the management of water resources, especially in the vulnerable Himalayan region, it is essential to comprehend these trends and variability," said the authors.

Kharge accuses PM Modi of failing to protect Manipur people hit by violence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "miserably failing" to protect the people of Manipur and said the turmoil in the State is another stark addition to the long list of his "betrayals" of the people of India. Kharge alleged that it has been 16 months since Manipur has been engulfed in violence, but the BJP's "double engine" Government has done nothing to mitigate it. No measure has been taken which instils confidence among the people of all the communities to ensure peace and normalcy, he claimed. "Why has the Manipur CM (N Biren Singh) made to brazen it out and has not been sacked by you? Is he not culpable in virtually paralysing the State



machinery, and making obnoxious statements, now recorded in public domain? A resignation drama was enacted to shamelessly dodge that bullet," he said. "Modi ji, why have you been so remorseless? Why have you not bothered to set foot in the State? It is because of your ego that people of all communities are suffering. Your Government's rank incompetency and shamelessness has not been able to start even a fundamental peace process!" Kharge said in his social media post.

BJP plans to intensify fight against Karnataka Government

PTI ■ BENGALURU

BJP seems to be planning to intensify its fight against the Congress Government in Karnataka, with its senior leader and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Wednesday stating that the party will decide on the next phase of agitation, in consultation with its national leadership.

A group of BJP leaders under the leadership of senior legislators Basanagouda Patil and Ramesh Jarkiholi is planning to take out a 'padayatra' (foot march) to highlight 'Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribe Development Corporation' scam, and diversion of funds meant for the welfare of the SC/STs to guarantee schemes, by the Congress Government.

Last month, the combined opposition of BJP and JD(S) had held a week-long protest march from Bengaluru to Mysuru, demanding the resignation of the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam'. "There is no question of first



and second padayatra, everyone together, after discussion with party national President (J P Nadda) and Union Home Minister (Amit Shah) the party will decide on the next phase of the fight (against the state Government). So everyone will sit together, discuss and decide," Joshi told reporters in New Delhi in response to a question.

On some differences within the party regarding holding another padayatra, he said: "...Those who are of the opinion to hold another round of padayatra have said that they will do it within the party forum and after getting approval from the party's national President." The march planned by a

section of BJP led by Yatnal and Jarkiholi, who are said to be disgruntled against state BJP chief B Y Vijayendra and his father and veteran leader B S Yediyurappa "controlling the state unit", is being seen as a counter to the march to Mysuru, which was led by Vijayendra. Vijayendra had recently said that he has no objections for another 'padayatra', adding that they can go ahead with their programme if the party's central leadership gives its nod. Asked about BJP's complaints to the Governor Thaaarchand Gehlot against Minister Priyank Kharge in connection with allotment of a land to a trust run by his family, Joshi said: "two-three petitions

have been submitted to the Governor, and he will decide on it. It is too early to comment on them." As for Congress party's demand that the Governor accord sanction for prosecution of JD(S) leader and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy, he said: "...The Chief Minister and Congress leaders are raising questions regarding Kumaraswamy. The case against Kumaraswamy is of 2005-06 (timeline), after that from 2013-18... Congress Government was there, under Siddaramaiah. Why were they silent then?" Claiming that after the 2018 Assembly polls, Congress pleaded with JD(S) chief H D Deve Gowda and Kumaraswamy and made latter the Chief Minister, he asked: "were Congress leaders not aware of the case against him then? Do they remember things only after the MUDA case and Valmiki Corporation scam against Siddaramaiah and Congress government come to light?... Are you playing this drama after the Governor accorded sanction against you (CM), people are aware of your drama."

Manipur villagers flee homes after drone drops bombs

PTI ■ IMPHAL

A section of villagers of Senjam Chirang in Manipur have been forced to abandon their homes and seek refuge in a nearby community hall after bombs dropped from a drone injured three members of a local resident's family two days ago. The first bomb smashed through the roof of a 65-year-old farmer's house, injuring his daughter. Minutes later, another bomb fell from the sky and injured him and his son.

Watham Gambhir said the explosive that broke the roof of his house was the second of the three bombs that were dropped from a drone on Monday evening in his house. The first one damaged his cowshed, which was empty, and the third explosive injured him and his son who took shelter under a tree after fleeing home in Imphal West district.

Drones are a new technology added recently to the weapons used in the violence between the two large ethnic groups - Meitei and Kuki - in the northeastern state, which left over 200 people dead since May last year.



The use of the remote-controlled small flying device as a weapon is first noticed in Manipur on Sunday in Koutruk village in Imphal West district. In the attack in which guns were also used, two persons were killed and nine others were injured. Drones were employed again in Senjam Chirang, around three km away, the next day. Chief Minister N Biren Singh has described the dropping of bombs on the civilian population and security forces using drones as an act of terrorism. The state government has imposed restrictions on the import of drones or their components. "We became concerned when

we heard the buzzing sound of drones on Sunday. We also heard that bombs were dropped at Koutruk. Our village became the target the next day," said Gambhir. The elderly farmer told PTI that he initially thought the buzz was coming from random drones checking residential localities as Senjam Chirang has witnessed several gunfights before. "However, within seconds, we heard a loud explosion. I along with my son rushed outside in the courtyard and saw smoke billowing from the cow shed. The second bomb broke the CI roof of our bedroom where my daughter was and she was injured," he

said. "We ran towards a tree, some 50 metres from the courtyard, to take cover but the drone followed us there and dropped an explosive. We started running again but we were thrown forward under the impact of the blast and were injured after hitting the ground," Gambhir said. Naoba Singh, a villager volunteer, suspected that hi-tech drones that can be used at night were brought from outside the country.

Both Meiteis and Kukis formed armed volunteer groups to protect their villages from attack by the other community. Singh said, "If sophisticated weapons can be sourced (from outside the country), why can't sophisticated drones that can be used in the dark be procured by those operating it?" The three persons injured in the bombings in Senjam Chirang were undergoing treatment in a private hospital in Imphal. "We are scared now and not staying at home even during the daytime. Around 10 families have taken refuge in a nearby community hall," said another villager W Inao.

AP Government provides ₹5 lakh ex gratia to kin of 20 flood victims

PTI ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday provided an ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of 20 people who perished in rain-related incidents in the state, even as rescue and relief operations continued in parts of Vijayawada.

So far, 20 people have died in the rains and floods which caused damage in several parts of the southern state, especially Vijayawada. In a teleconference with officials, the Chief Minister instructed them to identify families of the deceased persons to hand over their bodies, or perform last rites on behalf of the Government. "Extend Rs 5 lakh compensation to the families of the deceased persons on behalf of the Government," said Naidu in an official press release, adding that there is a chance now to go door-to-door for relief as flood has receded.

He directed officials to distribute essential items like water, biscuits, fruits and milk. Besides, the officials were directed to set up mobile markets to sell vegetables at an economical price. In addition to taking up sanitation work on a war footing, Naidu asked officials to restore power in a swift manner.

As there is the threat of outbreak of viral fever, the CM instructed officials to spread awareness on these dangers to people through pamphlets, along with a medical camp per ward secretariat. On Wednesday morning, 2.3 lakh breakfast packets were distributed while 4.5 lakh packets of food were being readied for lunch and dinner.

Meanwhile, 50 fire extinguishers are pressed into service for clean up work. Subbaraju, a resident from Ajit Singh Nagar police station area, one of the worst affected neighbourhoods, said, "Floodwater has receded and I came to visit my friend's home to charge up my phone. There is no power and water. This is the fourth day without power and it could take another two days."

Power supply has been disconnected in waterlogged areas to prevent electrocution and accidents. Helicopters have dropped food packets in the residential area for the past two days, he said. The State Government is also using drones to drop food packets. A private drone company is currently stationed in Ajit Singh Nagar to provide essentials. West Godavari district headquarters Bhimavaram and surrounding places witnessed rains from Tuesday night till noon on Wednesday.

Heavy rain in Rajasthan to continue for next few days; trains cancelled, diverted

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Heavy rains lashed parts of Rajasthan leading to the cancellation or diversion of trains due to damage to a railway track, officials said Wednesday.

The meteorological department has predicted that the period of heavy rain will continue in the state for the next few days.

A North Western Railway official said five trains were cancelled, two were partially cancelled and the route of another was changed due to damage to the Jodhpur-Jaisalmer railway track.

According to the Jaipur Met Centre, in the last 24 hours till 8.30 am on Wednesday, rains were recorded with thunder at most places in the state. Heavy rain was recorded at some places in Jaipur, Dausa, Sawai Madhopur, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh, Banswara, Kota, Bundi, Baran, Tonk, Jodhpur, Jalore and Pali districts and heavy to very heavy rain was recorded at some places in Udaipur, Bhilwara and Barmer districts. Rishabhdev in Udaipur, with



167 mm, recorded the highest rainfall. In Gudha Malani of Barmer, 147 mm of rain was recorded and Kotdi of Bhilwara saw 119 mm rainfall. In the 24 hour-period, 93 mm rain was also recorded in Nainwa of Bundi, 86 mm in Banswara, 84 mm in Nokhda of Barmer, 84 mm in Bassi of Jaipur, 80 mm in Lavan of Dausa, 80 mm in Sanchore of Jalore, 75 mm in Pipalada of Kota, 77 mm in Mangrol of Baran and 73 mm in Badi Sadri of Chittorgarh. A met official said that a low-pressure area that formed over Madhya Pradesh has weakened today and has turned into a cyclonic circulation and is currently

located over the south-western Rajasthan region. A new low-pressure area is likely to form in the Bay of Bengal in the next 24 hours, the official said. As a result of the weather conditions, there is a possibility of heavy and very heavy rains at some places in Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota and Ajmer divisions on Wednesday. Moderate to heavy rains can also occur in some parts of Jaipur, Bharatpur and Bikaner divisions. The monsoon will remain active in most parts of eastern Rajasthan for the next four to five days and heavy rain activities will be continuing at some places, according to the weather department.

Flooding in Gujarat worsened by extensive urban development, altered elevations: IIT-GN study

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

An analysis of recent flooding in parts of Gujarat showed that it was caused by severe weather conditions and exacerbated by extensive urban development, altered elevations and compromised drainage patterns, researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IIT-GN) have said.

Parts of Gujarat witnessed flooding due to heavy rains between August 20 and 29. During this period, 15 out of the 33 districts in the state recorded three-day rainfall totals exceeding their 10-year return period - a statistical measure indicating the average interval between such intense events - with Jamnagar, Morbi, Devbhumi Dwarka, and Rajkot experiencing levels above their 50-year thresholds, the analysis showed. The recurrence of "unusual weather events along India's western coast", such as the one witnessed last week, highlights the urgent need to reassess urban planning and



infrastructure resilience. This scenario underscores the need for robust and scalable emergency response strategies that can handle the complexities of concurrent extreme events, researchers at IIT Gandhinagar's Machine Intelligence and Resilience Laboratory (MIR Lab) said. "As rapid urbanisation continues to modify regional and local hydrology, placing greater strain on drainage systems, it is crucial to keep hydrology at the core of urban development strategies," the researchers observed. Vadodra, which grappled with severe flooding after

heavy rains last week, suffered from the situation despite rains not being unprecedented in magnitude, the IIT-GN research said. "However, the flooding was likely exacerbated by extensive urban development in flood-prone areas, altered elevations, and drainage patterns compromised due to rapid urbanisation and clogged drainage systems," it said. "This situation is a classic example of concurrent extreme events, where multiple regions experience severe weather simultaneously.

Such concurrence complicates emergency response and evacuation efforts as resources become stretched across multiple affected areas," the study said. Demands for rescue, relief, and evacuation operations in such a scenario can overwhelm emergency services, making it more challenging to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of those impacted by the floods, it said.

"This underscores the need for robust and scalable emergency response strategies that can handle the complexities of concurrent extreme events," it added. The analysis of maximum rainfall during this period revealed that Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka and Morbi in the state's Saurashtra region experienced rainfall over a one-day period last week that surpassed their 50-year "return period" (with Dwarka exceeding 100-year period). Twelve of the state's 33 districts experienced one-day rainfall totals that exceeded the 10-year return period, it said.

Watertight chargesheet filed against Darshan

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Police on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against 17 accused in the Renukaswamy murder case, including Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa. A "watertight" chargesheet was prepared after investigating the case from all aspects, Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda told reporters here.

The chargesheet comprises 231 witness statements and technical and electronic evidence, the police said, adding, it was a massive investigation. The 3991-page chargesheet (with seven volumes and 10

files) was submitted to the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court.

"We have arrested 17 people in this case who are in judicial custody. There are three direct eye witnesses; 27 witnesses have given their statements before the court and other witnesses have recorded their statements before the police," Dayananda said. "We had sent several materials pertaining to the investigation to FSL (Forensic Science Laboratory) here and CFSL (Central Forensic Science Laboratory, Hyderabad). We have received their reports but some reports from CFSL are yet to come," he said.

Renukaswamy murder case



As many as 56 police officers are among the witnesses in the case, Dayananda added. In a statement, the police said that the chargesheet against the 17 accused has been filed on the basis of the accounts of

eye-witnesses, circumstantial, technical, scientific and other evidence collected by the investigators.

The evidence collected has been submitted to the court under section 173 (8) of CrPC (Code of Criminal Procedure), which gives unrestrained right to the investigating agency for further probe, it said.

Darshan along with his friend Pavithra Gowda and 15 others, who are accused in the case, are currently under judicial custody in different prisons in the state.

According to police sources, 33-year-old Renukaswamy, a fan of the actor, had sent obscene messages to Gowda, which enraged Darshan,

allegedly leading to his murder. His body was found near a stormwater drain next to an apartment in Sumanahalli here on June nine.

Raghavendra, one of the accused who is part of Darshan's fan club in Chitradurga, had brought Renukaswamy to a shed in R R Nagar here, on the pretext that the actor wanted to meet him. It was in this shed that he was allegedly tortured and murdered.

According to the post-mortem report, Renukaswamy, a native of Chitradurga, died due to shock and haemorrhage as a result of multiple blunt injuries.

Two from Hyderabad among four Indians burnt alive as car catches fire in US road accident

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Two people from Hyderabad were among four Indians who died in a multi-vehicle road accident in the US, according to information received by their family members here.

The victims were identified as Aryan Raghunath Orampatti from Kukatpally here and his friend Farooq Sheikh, Lokesh Palacharla, another Telugu student, and Darshini Vasudev from Tamil Nadu. According to the Collin County Sheriff's Office, the accident involving five vehicles occurred on the northbound US 75 just past White Street at Anna near Dallas on Friday afternoon. A truck travelling at a high speed failed to slow down and struck the rear of the SUV. The force of the collision was such that the SUV caught fire and the four occupants were trapped inside which resulted in their deaths.

Aryan Orampatti and Farooq Sheikh were returning after visiting a (Aryan's) cousin in Dallas while Palacharla was heading to Bentonville to reunite with his wife. Darshini Vasudev, a postgraduate from the University of Texas, was on her way to visit her uncle in Arkansas. A friend of Aryan's father on Wednesday said here that four people including Aryan and his friend Farooq had joined in the vehicle using a



carpooling app. After getting to know about the accident from a relative staying in the US on Saturday, Aryan's parents already left for the US, he told PTI. Aryan after completing his engineering degree had left for the US to pursue MS and his parents had attended his convocation in May, he said adding Aryan wanted to work in the US for two years and then return to India. Farooq's father Mastan Vali, who stays in Hyderabad told PTI that he was informed on Saturday that an over speeding truck hit the vehicle in which his son and three other Indians including Aryan were travelling, from the rear side. "Some friends of Farooq had informed my daughter, who lives in the US about the accident. She informed me about it on Saturday. My daughter is following up with authorities there," Mastan Vali said, adding they were planning to bring Farooq's mortal remains to Hyderabad. Farooq had left for the US in August 2021 from here and after completing his MS there he was now working, his father said.

Tripura House witnesses uproarious scenes Over Minister's social media post

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Tripura Assembly on Wednesday witnessed uproarious scenes as the opposition Congress protested against minister Sudhangshu Das's statement on a controversial post on Facebook. Congress MLAs demonstrated in the well of the House and staged a walkout after Das described the party as "anti-Hindu".

In the September 1 post which he deleted later, the minister said, "In my view, the Hindus have no right to offer prayers to gods and goddesses because those people who can't protect



their temples and gods, don't deserve to organise prayer or puja." Though he did not mention any context for the statement, it was posted days after an idol of the Goddess Kali was found defaced in a temple in the Durganagar area in West Tripura district. Following the incident, several houses were

set on fire by unidentified miscreants on the night of August 25. Soon after question hour on Wednesday, Congress MLA Birajit Sinha raised the issue in the House and sought a statement from Das. Party legislator Sudip Roy Barman while condemning the post said, "A minister took oath swearing the Constitution cannot make such a post on the social media. India is guided by the Constitution. I exhort him to apologise for that."

Food and Civil Supplies Minister Sushanta Chowdhury, who came to the rescue of Das from the

opposition's attack, said the people have seen the post on Facebook.

"Following repentance, he (Sudhangshu) withdrew the post. The members of the House must understand the feelings of the minister who made the post.

"There has been no instance in Tripura where minority people are subjected to face oppression. The government is working for 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas'. But it is Congress which had made a member of 'tukde tukde' gang candidate from New Delhi constituency," he said, without naming Kanhaiya Kumar.

CM Yogi slams Opposition for cowering before criminals, rioters

PNS ■ PHULPUR/PRAYAGRAJ

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Wednesday, issued a stern warning to mafias, criminals and rioters while launching a scathing attack on the Opposition parties for cowering before such elements for petty political gains. Yogi said the Opposition parties do not have the guts to run a bulldozer and will have a heart attack even at the sight of it. He distributed appointment letters to over 5,000 youths, and loans exceeding Rs 510 crore to 7,138 beneficiaries.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

A boost to 'Act East'

Prime Minister Modi's visit to Singapore, marks a crucial step in fortifying India's 'Act East' policy

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Singapore marks a significant milestone in India's 'Act East' policy, reinforcing the strategic importance of the Southeast Asian region in India's foreign relations. Modi's Singapore visit enhanced bilateral cooperation in key areas, reflecting India's broader goals in the Indo-Pacific. Singapore occupies a pivotal position in India's 'Act East' policy, serving as a gateway to Southeast Asia and a key partner in advancing India's Indo-Pacific strategy. As the coordinator of ASEAN-India relations from 2021 to 2024, Singapore plays an instrumental role in shaping the regional dynamics between India and ASEAN, a bloc crucial for maintaining peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. Prime Minister Modi's visit underscores the deepening of ties between the two nations, particularly in areas such as trade, digitalisation, and sustainable development. With a trade volume reaching \$36.6 billion in 2023, Singapore is India's largest trade partner in Asia.



PM Modi's agenda during the visit included discussions with Singapore's senior leadership, including President Tharman Shanmugaratnam and Prime Minister Lawrence Wong, aimed at exploring new avenues for collaboration in advanced manufacturing, logistics, and commercial real estate.

The visit is expected to yield significant economic benefits, particularly in attracting foreign direct investment from Singaporean companies into India's emerging sectors. The focus on advanced manufacturing and digitalisation aligns with India's broader goal of transforming into a global manufacturing hub. Additionally, the emphasis on sustainable development highlights India's commitment to addressing global challenges such as climate change, a priority for both nations.

Strategically, Singapore's role as a crucial partner in the Indo-Pacific region cannot be overstated. India's '5 S' approach—Sammaan (respect), Samvad (dialogue), Sahyog (cooperation), Shanti (peace), and Samridhi (prosperity)—forms the foundation of its Indo-Pacific engagement, with Singapore and Brunei being key players. The visit reinforces India's commitment to maintaining a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, where ASEAN plays a central role. Indeed, Prime Minister Modi's visit to Singapore is more than a bilateral engagement; it is a reaffirmation of India's commitment to strengthening ties with Southeast Asia as part of its 'Act East' policy. The discussions held during this visit are likely to pave the way for deeper economic and strategic cooperation, not just with Singapore, but across the Indo-Pacific region. As India continues to assert its role as a key player in the region, Singapore remains an indispensable partner in this endeavor, embodying the principles of dialogue, cooperation, and shared prosperity.

PICTALK



An aerial view of the illuminated Chennai Street Circuit during the Formula 4 Street Car Race, in Chennai

BJP's recruitment drive to solidify power



KALYANI SHANKAR

As the BJP aims to recruit 100 million new members, it continues to strengthen its dominance, despite facing criticism and internal challenges

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party is working to expand on a two-track basis. The first is by recruiting influential leaders from other parties, particularly Congress. Although this may involve a small number of leaders, their influence is significant.

Second, the party is focusing on enrolling a large number of new members. Former Jharkhand Mukti Morcha Chief Minister Champai Soren joined the BJP after current CM Hemant Soren, allegedly involved in a scam, was released last week and resumed his post. This move adds to the trend of influential chief ministers joining the BJP, highlighting the party's strategic success. The BJP embraces well-known leaders from other parties as they bring their influence and workers along. — Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, imported from Congress, is a classic example. Sarma has become the go-to man in the northeast. According to the National Election Watch-ADR, the main reasons for defections and party switching are the absence of value-based politics, greed for money and power, rewarding political positions, and lack of efficient, honest, and credible leaders. BJP has plans to recruit 100 million new members on a parallel track.

At last week's meeting, the BJP leadership decided that the drive would be in two phases: September 2 to 25 and October 1 to 15. Over the last decade, the BJP has seen significant growth. In the 1980s, upper-middle-class, urban, and Hindus primarily supported the BJP. It has since built a broader political base, showing its increasing influence. The BJP has overtaken Congress and is already the world's largest party, with 180 million members. The Grand Old Party, Congress, has 130 million members. Between 2014 and 2019, around 180 million people joined the BJP nationwide. Eighty thousand leaders and workers from various parties have joined the BJP, which aims to recruit about 100,000 leaders at national and district levels.



Through this drive, the BJP collects data about its members, including their caste, gender, age, residence, and other details. In the last decade, many influential Congress leaders, including former chief ministers and ministers, shifted to the BJP, revealing their frustration, greed and lust for power. The BJP has rewarded some of them with good positions. Notable leaders among them include Himanta Biswa Sarma, Gulam Nabi Azad, Captain Amarendra Singh, Kapil Sibal, Jitin Prasada, R.P.N. Singh, Milind Deora, and Jyotiraditya Scindia. Former Maharashtra chief minister Ashok Chavan, Ritesh Pandey, Sangita Azad, and others have recently joined the BJP.

They come from various political parties such as Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party, All India Trinamool Congress, and YSRCP. The BJP has benefited the most from members switching sides, while the Congress has suffered the most since 2014. Even after winning, the Opposition parties are concerned that the BJP will try to persuade their legislators to switch—many defectors at crucial moments, such as during government majority voting. Why do they defect? If there is



EIGHTY THOUSAND LEADERS AND WORKERS FROM VARIOUS PARTIES HAVE JOINED THE BJP, WHICH AIMS TO RECRUIT ABOUT 100,000 LEADERS AT NATIONAL AND DISTRICT LEVELS

a reason for the defectors to leave their respective parties, the BJP also embraces them without hesitating. These leaders fear becoming politically irrelevant when their party loses power. By aligning with the dominant BJP, they hope to gain control and secure a political future for their children. The BJP's successful strategy of attracting leaders from other parties is evident in the ADR analysis. It shows that 22% of re-contesting candidates who switched parties joined the BJP, followed by 10% joining the Congress and 6% joining the BSP. Over the past decade, the BJP has attracted several leaders from other parties, contributing to the rise of leaders like Himanta Biswa Sarma in the northeastern region. Why does the BJP welcome these defectors? There are three key reasons: First, it weakens the party from which the defection occurs. Second, it allows the BJP to absorb known leaders from established parties, strengthening its ranks. Third, given the BJP's lack of second-rung leaders, it is easier to absorb the defectors. It is not as if dissenters have not left the BJP. Some, like Kalyan Singh, Shankar Singh Vaghela, and Yediyurappa (all chief ministers), launched their par-

ties but returned to the BJP when they failed. The BJP's deeply ideological glue holds it together. The BJP's long-time loyal members are unhappy when newcomers get good positions while they have been faithful to the party. This has happened in the past. During Vajpayee's leadership, the party could only accommodate some, and others left. While the party has been expanding, its leadership is still dominated by the Upper caste. The BJP has strengths but receives criticism for its limited ideology, aggressive attitude, complacency, and arrogance. The BJP's upcoming membership drive will test its strength in the post-2024 poll period. Though it emerged as the single largest party, it got only 240 seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, 32 short of the majority. Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to achieve a "Congress-Free India," but it may be challenging. You cannot eliminate a 140-year-old party in a day, as the Congress showed revival instincts. The BJP must refrain from repeating the mistakes of the Congress to stay in power. (The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ACTOR VIJAY ENTERS POLITICS

Madam — Environment prevailing, political narratives set, leadership space available and the ability to convert the mass created in the film industry determine the success of a film star who turns into a political leader. Though many film stars have entered into politics only few have succeeded. While M G Ramachandran (MGR) and N T Rama Rao (NTR) can be said to have had superlative successes the both the stars have had in the 1970/80s are in no way comparable to any. For both MGR and NTR carefully built their image as a mass leader over two decades before plunging into politics. While Jayalalitha was successful she had the advantage MGR's backing and her cleverly capitalizing on MGR's image. One more leader who came very close to success was Vijaykumar who set an anti-corruption narrative and it took nearly a decade for him to become the LOP after which he died due to poor health. Superstar Rajinikanth backtracked after announcing his entry in politics citing health reasons. Seeman also from Kollywood though has his own vote bank he is yet to prove himself as a successful leader. Pawan Kalyan from Tollywood has tasted some success thanks to the alliance with BJP and TDP in AP. We will have to wait to see Vijay who has been successful as a hero in Kollywood and has a youth following, entering into TN politics when the towering leaders like Jayalalitha and Karunanidhi are absent the political narrative he sets and his ability to convert the mass following into his vote bank. Despite all these strengths the political party possess in the state, to fight the elections on its own without an alliance and form the government on its own is difficult and hence we will have to see the partners with whom he forges alliance in the 2026 TN assembly elections which he has announced to fight.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

SC ADDRESSES FARMERS' CONCERNS. Madam — The recent Supreme Court

Improve ties with neighbours



The editorial on SOSA details the need for India to be in this forum. Equally important for India is to improve its ties with its neighbours. As of now India is an island

decision to form a panel to address the farmers' concerns at the Shambhu border marks a critical step in resolving the ongoing crisis. It is essential that this panel operates with the utmost transparency and fairness, ensuring that the voices of the farmers are genuinely heard and their grievances adequately addressed. Farmers, the backbone of the nation, have been protesting for their rights and livelihood. Their demands are not just about immediate relief but also about securing the future of agriculture in the country. The formation of this panel must not be seen as a mere formality. Concrete actions must follow, with clear timelines and accountability. Moreover, this issue transcends regional boundaries and affects the entire nation. The agricultural sector's stability is crucial for food security and economic growth. A balanced and empathetic approach is necessary, where the government and the judiciary work in unison to safeguard the interests of both the farmers and the nation.

Priya Gupta | Kushinagar

in the ocean of hostile neighbouring countries. Such a situation is a lurking danger to nullify all the enviable achievements the country is boasting of. On priority India needs to ensure friendly relations with all its neighbours. Another fact to be kept in mind is that all the countries forming groups against China are too cautious in their steps as every country has its stake in China in terms of investment or imports. India's dependability on China is more. 70% of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients imported from China are inevitable to maintain the position of India as a global Pharma hub. Even Solar cells need to come from China. Therefore the so called arrangements and agreements against China are to push more weapons in the name of security. India needs to be careful not to fall in the trap of weapon mafia.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

INDIA'S NAVAL PROWESS

Madam — With the successful induction of its second indigenous nuclear ballistic missile submarine, the I.N.S. Arighat, India has once again showcased her naval prowess to the world. However, unlike I.N.S. Arighat, the recently commissioned submarine is more advanced and operational focused. In the realm of maritime security India with 172 warheads still has to cover a long distance as Russia and US with 1700 each, China (500) are way ahead of us in terms of operational warheads. Indian Ocean is being considered as a breeding ground for developing arms race as China, US, Russia and even Pakistan are flexing their muscles, should India reconsider its age old age No First Use (NFC) doctrine? India must decide whether to modernise its nuclear deterrent capabilities or remain committed to its traditional policy of minimum deterrence.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

A green tribute to mothers and the environment

Inspired by PM Modi's "Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam" initiative, the Chhattisgarh Government has launched the ambitious "People for Peepal" plantation drive in Nava Raipur



O P CHOUDHARY

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the "Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam" (a tree in the name of the mother) initiative, a deep thought process went behind it. One, to cherish the memory of our mothers; and two, to environmental conservation.



The Chhattisgarh government took it as a unique opportunity to give Nava Raipur a new identity. The Nava Raipur Atal Nagar Development Authority launched the "People for Peepal" plantation drive to transform the city into the first "Peepal Tree" city in India. We also saw it as an opportunity to address the pressing issue of climate change by establishing Nava Raipur as a "Peepal Tree" City in the coming years. This drive reflects a strong commitment to environmental sustainability and aims to set a new benchmark for urban green spaces. We envision a city where extensive tree planting and green infrastructure contribute significantly to improving the urban environment and combatting climate

change. Echoing the Prime Minister's commitment to Mother Earth, the Chhattisgarh government is together with Modi's vision of nurturing our planet the way our mothers take care of us.

The campaign, kick-started by Narendra Modi this World Environment Day on June 5, will help in reversing land degradation, recharge groundwater, prevent desertification and bring in drought resilience. The "People for Peepal" campaign aims to plant over 20,000 Peepal trees apart from 80,000 trees of other varieties throughout the city. Peepal or Ficus Religiosa, a large and fast-growing deciduous tree unique to

India that is a revered symbol of eternal life, wisdom and spirituality, has been chosen for its significant ecological benefits and cultural importance.

The massive plantation will ensure that Peepal trees become a prominent and recognizable feature across Nava Raipur. In addition to Peepal trees, which are one of the most oxygen-producing trees, the drive will include planting other key species such as Neem, Banyan, and Jamun. These trees are integral to the city's green infrastructure, enhancing biodiversity and providing additional environmental benefits. To boost community involvement, the campaign includes a "virtu-

al adoption programme". This initiative allows individuals and organizations to adopt trees virtually, fostering widespread engagement and support for the drive. This approach encourages collective responsibility towards environmental conservation and helps ensure the campaign's success.

The ultimate goal of this extensive plantation drive is to position Nava Raipur as a model city for environmental preservation and to earn recognition as the first "Peepal Tree" City of India. By expanding green spaces and promoting biodiversity, the city aims to inspire other urban areas and set a global example for sustainable urban development.

Through this initiative, Nava Raipur seeks not only to address climate change but also to enhance the quality of life for its residents, establishing itself as a leading example of environmental stewardship and green urban planning.

(The writer is the Minister of Finance of Government of Chhattisgarh; views are personal)

FIRST COLUMN

BEYOND SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

We must reconcile modern progress with sustainability by shifting to spiritually



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

The competitive world in which we are living believes in the theory of "Survival of the Fittest," meaning that the strongest one is the one who survives. However, humanity in the 21st century has perceived this in a rather different manner because, in the actual sense, the strongest people are those who are most ethical and helpful, not those who gain strength by hurting others and exploiting nature. Today, educated people all over the world are well aware of the fact that the environment across the globe has deteriorated menacingly to its lowest ebb, and if this deterioration continues further for some more time at this rate, then the very existence of the human race will be in grave danger. But today, when economic progress takes precedence even over politics, many governments are under great pressure to increase production substantially and to take major strides towards high economic evolution and growth by undertaking developmental activities on a large scale for a quick turnaround. Therefore, every government increasingly engages itself in fulfilling the goals of modernisation through rapid industrialisation and technological advancement to create more jobs and thriving economies. But the real dilemma is that if the governments accelerate developmental activities and industrialisation, then the quality of the environment will be badly affected. If they do not take visible steps towards economic growth, then they cannot compete with other nations and may face criticism from their people and ultimately have to step down. So, the challenge faced by all countries is: "How to improve or sustain the quality of the environment while ensuring a high level of economic activity and growth?"



The solution that is generally suggested is that there should be sustainable development. But is this practically feasible without affecting the social domain? There is bound to be more and more strain on the environment and the depleting of mineral and natural resources. It is, therefore, urgent and important that we realize at the earliest that it will simply be impossible for the earth to sustain us if the strain on it increases. So, for our survival in a clean and healthy environment, it is of the utmost necessity to reduce our consumption and wastage by changing our lifestyle.

With massive industrialization and economic growth, the gains of some sectors of the society inevitably create pressures on the social fabric of an erratic developing society creating a great imbalance in the consumption levels of a small number of rich and an ever-increasing downtrodden. Hence to overcome all these issues, the need of the hour is to have a simple lifestyle, which is not possible through the virtues of the capitalistic or the socialist system of economy but only through the spiritual orientation of our economic thought because survivors aren't always the strongest; sometimes they're the smartest, but more often simply the luckiest.

Hence it is better to change ourselves before time devastates us. Indeed, we can cultivate a society that prioritizes the health of the planet over short-term gains. Schools, colleges, and universities should integrate environmental education into their curriculums, teaching students not only about the challenges we face but also about the solutions that can lead us to a more sustainable future. In conclusion, the path to true survival does not lie in the outdated notion of 'survival of the fittest,' understood as domination and exploitation. Instead, it lies in our ability to live in harmony with nature and each other, fostering a world where progress is measured not by the wealth we accumulate but by the health of our environment and the well-being of all living beings. If we fail to recognize this and continue on our current path, we risk not only our future but the very survival of the planet itself.

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

Reviving the legacy of quality in teacher education



J S RAJPUT

This year's Teacher's Day celebrations carry a special resonance as they align with the enduring concerns of Dr S Radhakrishnan, who passionately advocated for quality in education

Teacher's Day celebrations this year are indeed special in the context of quality, which was the major concern expressed on several occasions by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, whose contributions are recalled with gratitude on this day every year. Necessary academic and professional preparations have been made and the Integrated Teacher Education Programme - ITEP - has already been launched in 64 institutions. This initiative is based on the recommendations of the National Education Policy -NEP-2020 - that after 2030 all of the pre-service teacher preparation programmes would be only of four-year duration and all others shall be scrapped. It would be prudent to recall an earlier experiment in quality teacher preparation which was initiated in 1965 by the then-newly established organization, the National Council of Educational Research and Training - NCERT - in its four Regional Colleges (now Institutes) of Education, located in Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, and Mysore.

It was acknowledged at the level of experts and accepted by national decision-makers that the one-year teacher preparation programmes were inadequate in preparing quality teachers and must be replaced by the four-year integrated programmes after senior secondary. The products of these four-year integrated courses established a distinct reputation for themselves in the education sector, and also in other professions as well, which they preferred to join. It is indeed heartening to note that the NEP-2020 made the recommendation on ITEP based upon the solid evidence offered by the NCERT institutions. One is convinced that the growth, development and progress of any nation would be a direct consequence of the quality of education it achieves.

This quality is invariably a product of the level of excellence achieved by the Teacher Education Institutes - TEIs - of the nation. It is the work culture of the TEIs that mandates - without ever saying so formally - the work culture of the schools. The level of competence, commitment and performance witnessed in the TEIs by the student-teachers flows directly to schools and creates practically a comparable environment for school children. It is possible to achieve comprehensive personality evolution over four years and this is well-established in India, courtesy of the NCERT.

One must hasten to add that the proposed ITEP version of the earlier four-year programmes of the NCERT must be handled with great caution and care. Any inadequacy of academic, professional physical and financial resources could inflict irreversible damage to the great initiative. The future of the planet Earth and humanity depends on how education deals with man-nature mutuality. India decided in 2020 that 'The rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thought' would be a guiding light for the NEP-2020.

It has, thus, accepted that education in India must be 'rooted in a culture committed to new knowledge.' In every alert and active culture, the tradition of knowledge quest has to remain dynamic in word and deed. It is because of this inherent strength, that Indian culture and its tradition of knowledge quest with its



ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS NEED TO POSE AN INTERNAL QUERY: ARE WE FUNCTIONING AT A LEVEL OF SELF-CONFIDENCE, CONVICTION, DETERMINATION AND PASSION THAT COULD BRING CREDIBILITY TO EACH ONE OF US AND OUR INSTITUTION?

unique objectives and vision are now receiving global attention in the world. Yes, the knowledgeable and concerned persons of the world must come together and realize that the wanton destruction of natural resources without caring for their replenishment has forced scientists to calculate how long the planet Earth could survive.

They must inspire everyone to wake up and realize the dreadful magnitude of the devastation being inflicted on nature must stop, and much more, present big plans before people, but there it all ends. There is a solution that Indians are aware of from 'ancient times: 'Aparigraha'. It was put up before the world in very simple terms in his indomitable style by Mahatma Gandhi: Nature has a sufficient resource to meet the needs of everyone but not the greed of anyone."

This is the only alternative. "To me, hope lies in the Teacher! The Teacher can do it if they resolve to do it and the 'Teachers of the world' unite! A new chapter has to be written in every discipline and an emphasis on multidisciplinary concerns of the human knowledge quest, the process of transfer and acquisition of knowledge.

Towards this, teachers shall have to realize, accept and internalize that they are makers of the future of human existence on planet Earth! It is their responsibility to shape every learner coming to them as an unaware and uninitiated person into a personality! That would shape the future generations, would prepare citizens committed to their nation, and their people but fully conscious of their role as international cit-

izens as well. The legendary philosopher, revered statesman and worthy teacher Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was one of the finest intellectual brains of the 20th century. He was a matchless interpreter of Eastern and Western thought, philosophy and the 'concept of a man'. We recall his greatness, and his multifarious contributions, but allow his philosophy and guiding principles for teachers to remain confined to a few shelves of some reputed libraries.

He pleads particularly to institutions of higher learning: "The ideal of the university is the promotion of liberty of mind and or freedom of thought. It has little to do with the protection of privilege or a call to conformity. It contests privilege which is something other than that excellence which follows on intellectual eminence or spiritual greatness. It contests conformity, for each individual has a right to develop his own convictions." Once this is accepted at each appropriate level by all those dealing with higher education, it becomes clear that the seeds for creating such an environment in institutions of higher learning have to be sown in schools!

Schools in the present context just cannot become the nourishing and nurturing grounds for the flowering of new ideas unless school teachers are well-equipped and well-endowed with the determination that every child, every learner is to be encouraged to express himself in whichever way he chooses to; may be in music, sports, mathematics, painting, imagination, creativity, and the like! In India right from the Ministry of Education to primary schools is just forgotten after

every discussion and deliberation! One is referring to the most distinct role of teacher education institutions; TEIs. Quality, ideas, innovations, and imagination are nurtured in schools and universities but how to do so is learnt, internalized and tested in TEIs. To universalize this comprehension, one must be ready with a reality test! We are proud of India of ancient times because of the universality of its culture and acceptance of the essential unity of mankind despite all the apparent diversities.

Academic institutions need to pose an internal query: are we functioning at a level of self-confidence, conviction, determination and passion that could bring credibility to each one of us and our institution? As academics 'have we accepted and succumbed to being 'teachers less original, to ambitions less exalted and to tame compliance with old forms! We were warned over seven-eight decades ago by Dr Radhakrishnan on this count: "There was a dread of venturing outside the safe limits of guaranteed ideas. The country seems to suffer from exhaustion." The future belongs to those equipped with learning that encourages ideas, imagination, curiosity and creativity. The fittest and finest tribute to Dr. Radhakrishnan and in fact to the great Indian tradition of teaching, learning and knowledge quest would be to respect teachers, and treat them as the creators of the future of not only the individual learner but of the society, community and the nation.

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion and religious amity, views are personal)

The true power and purpose of teaching in a changing world

On this Teacher's Day, let us reflect on the challenges and triumphs of this noble profession

Born into a family of accomplished women, I've often faced a question that has puzzled me for years: "Why did you choose to be a teacher?" This question, posed by family, friends, and even strangers, stems from two assumptions. First, that teaching is a lesser profession, inferior to careers like medicine or bureaucracy, which my sisters have pursued. Second, and more disheartening, is the belief held by some that only those who fail in other "proper" professions resort to teaching. The underlying notion is that teaching is easy and requires no special skills—a perception I find not just ironic but profoundly misguided. The irony lies in the fact that we all remember teachers



SWATI PAL

who profoundly impacted our lives. We recall the teachers whose classes we eagerly attended, whose kindness and encouragement shaped who we are today. Conversely, we also remember those whose classes were dull, who seemed to take pleasure in demeaning students, or who treated teaching as nothing more than a paycheck. The truth is, teaching is easy only for those who see it as mere-

ly a job—a means to an end, rather than a calling. For those who aspire to be remembered as "good" teachers, the profession is far from easy. It requires dedication, empathy, and a genuine desire to make a difference in students' lives.

Unfortunately, there has been a shift in attitudes towards teaching, influenced by a growing corporate mentality and consumer culture. Many teachers today seem more concerned with holidays, salary increments, and perks than with the students they are supposed to nurture. While it's not wrong to seek these benefits, when they become the sole focus, teaching is reduced to a transactional relationship. This attitude contributes to the neg-

ative perception of teachers in society, where they are often seen as nothing more than paid servants in an "easy" profession.

Yet, the disillusionment among teachers is not entirely self-inflicted. The idealism that once characterized the profession has been eroded by systemic issues that go beyond individual attitudes. Over the three-plus decades I've spent in education, I've witnessed changes that have not always benefited teachers or students. One of the most significant changes has been the shift from an annual examination system to a semester system at the undergraduate level. While the intention of aligning with global patterns is understandable, the semester system has

reduced teaching to a race to complete syllabi, leaving little room for individualized attention or meaningful engagement with students.

This shift is particularly ironic in an era when "quality education" is a buzzword. The question we must ask is whether the semester system truly enhances quality or merely ensures that all the boxes are ticked on time. Teachers who feel they cannot do justice to the curriculum or their students are bound to feel frustrated. Even the most resilient educators may eventually succumb to the pressures of the system, abandoning the high ideals that initially drew them to the profession. The space that the annual system once provided for exploring innovative

teaching methods has been replaced by a relentless focus on deadlines, leading to a sense of exhaustion and apathy among teachers.

The accreditation system, though well-intentioned, has also added to the burden. While it has encouraged institutions to improve infrastructure, training, and community outreach, the process itself is cumbersome. Hours are spent documenting activities and ensuring they conform to prescribed criteria for a good grade. This bureaucratic approach to education often detracts from the unique qualities of individual institutions, fostering a spirit of competition that can be more self-defeating than motivating. Another challenge is the rapid

succession of educational reforms—CBCS, LOCF, NEP, and others. While each reform is introduced with the intention of improving education, the pace of change has led to confusion, inadequate curriculum revision, and a lack of clarity about the objectives of these reforms among both teachers and students.

The result is a situation where "a little learning," as Alexander Pope warned, becomes a "dangerous thing." Instead of fostering deep understanding, these rapid changes have led to superficial learning and a sense of disillusionment among educators. Despite these challenges, I remain steadfast in my belief that teaching is one of the

most powerful professions in the world. A teacher has the potential to drive away the clouds of ignorance to teach empathy and integrity, and to guide students toward a brighter future. Rabindranath Tagore, captured this sentiment beautifully in his poem "Where the Mind is Without Fear," envisioning a world led by reason, truth, and freedom. On this Teacher's Day, I urge my fellow educators to remember the profound role we play in shaping the future. Despite the odds, we must strive to create a better world by becoming more humane and resilient, even if we are the last ones standing.

(The writer is Professor and Principal, Janki Devi Memorial College, DU; views are personal)

Grenfell tower fire: Inquiry blames UK government, industry failures

AP ■ LONDON A damning report on a deadly London high-rise fire said Wednesday that decades of failures by government, regulators and industry turned Grenfell Tower into a "death trap" where 72 people lost their lives.

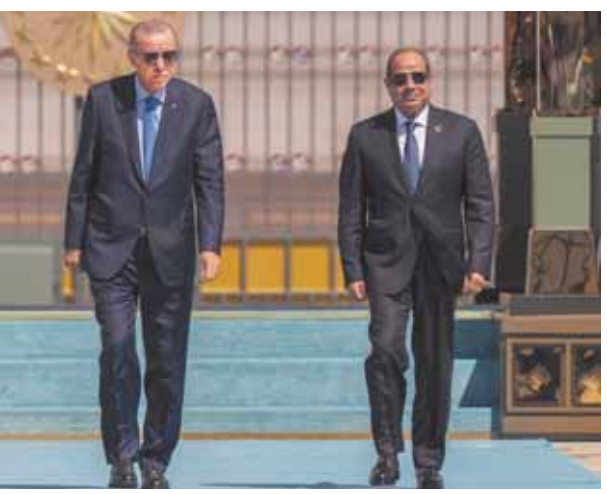
but in some cases through dishonesty and greed," he said. Prime Minister Keir Starmer apologised on behalf of British state, saying the tragedy "should never have happened" and promising the victims justice.

institutional indifference and neglect." The fire broke out in the early hours of June 14, 2017, in a fourth-floor apartment and spread up the 25-story building like a lit fuse, fuelled by flammable cladding panels on the tower's exterior walls.

a layer of polyethylene, a combustible plastic polymer that melts and drips on exposure to heat. The report was highly critical of companies that made the building's cladding. It said they engaged in "systematic dishonesty," manipulating safety tests and misrepresenting the results to claim the material was safe.

Egyptian President makes his first visit to Turkey as relations thaw

AP ■ ANKARA Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi on Wednesday is making his first official visit to Turkey since assuming power, after the two regional powers ended years of tensions. El-Sissi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan are set to discuss bilateral relations, the conflict in Gaza and escalating tensions in the Middle East, among other topics.



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, left, and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, second left, review an honour guard during a welcome ceremony prior to their meeting at the Presidential palace in Ankara, Wednesday.

he led the military's overthrow of Morsi. El-Sissi will be accompanied by a large delegation of officials and businessmen, Egyptian media reported. Egypt, together with Qatar and the United States, a key Israeli ally, has been working for months to try and broker a cease-fire and the return of the remaining 100 hostages held by Hamas.

Indian Bank Zonal Office: Delhi South 17, Parliament Street, 2nd Floor, Allahabad Bank Building, New Delhi-110001. Corporate Office: 254-260, Avvai Shanmugam Salai, Royapettah Chennai-600014. APPENDIX- IV-A' [See proviso to rule 8 (6)] Sale notice for sale of immovable properties.

Emhoff says he's 'gutted' after hostage killings in Gaza

Washington (AP) — Doug Emhoff, the husband of Vice President Kamala Harris — and the first Jewish person married to a nationally elected US leader — said he is "gutted" after the killing of American Hersh Goldberg-Polin and five other Israeli hostages taken by Hamas.

ident in November, has emerged as a prominent administration liaison to the Jewish community and a voice in countering antisemitism, particularly in the wake of Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel. About 1,200 people, including at least 40 Americans, were killed in the assault, and about 250 more were taken hostage.

his and Harris' conversation with Goldberg-Polin's parents on Sunday, a day after Israeli forces discovered their bodies in a tunnel under Gaza. He said that even while mourning the loss of their son, Rachel Goldberg-Polin and Jonathan Polin were pressing Harris about the latest on the negotiations to reach a cease-fire deal that would free other hostages.

until every hostage is reunited with their family," Emhoff added that Harris and President Joe Biden are working "around the clock to get a hostage and cease-fire deal done."

'Boko Haram militants kill over 100 in Nigerian village'

AP ■ MAIDUGURI At least 100 villagers were killed in northeastern Nigeria when suspected Boko Haram Islamic extremists opened fire on a market, on worshippers and in people's homes, residents said Wednesday, the latest killings in Africa's longest struggle with militancy.

motorcycles rode into the Tarmuwa council area of Yobe state on Sunday evening and began firing before setting buildings ablaze, according to Yobe police spokesperson Dungus Abdulkarim. The police blamed the attack on Boko Haram, which since 2009 has launched an insurgency to establish its radical interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia, in the region. Boko Haram has

since splintered into different factions, together accounting for the direct deaths of at least 35,000 people and the displacement of more than 2 million, as well as a humanitarian crisis with millions of people in dire need of foreign aid. At least 1,500 people have so far been killed in the region this year in attacks by armed groups, according to the US-based Armed Conflict Location

& Event Data Project, or ACLED. Yobe Deputy Gov. Idi Barde Gubana gave a much lower death toll of 34 from Sunday's attack. Contradictory statistics are a common trend in the security crisis, with the death toll from survivors' count often higher than the official figure. The 34 dead cited by the deputy governor were the ones buried in a single village, said a community leader.

Indian Bank ZONAL OFFICE : Delhi South 17, Parliament Street, 2nd Floor, Allahabad Bank Building, New Delhi-110 001. Corporate Office : 254-260, Avvai Shanmugam Salai, Royapettah Chennai - 600 014. APPENDIX- IV-A' [See proviso to rule 8 (6)] Sale notice for sale of immovable properties.

EU chief pushes for gender parity

AP ■ BRUSSELS European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen said Wednesday she is doubling down and pushing full steam ahead to achieve gender parity in her executive Commission team that runs the day-to-day affairs of the massive bloc — despite stubborn resistance from some of the 27 member states.



But she has been twisting arms in capitals to make sure that the original tally of 21 men and 6 women changes to at least a semblance of balance. In her first term, she achieved near gender parity among EU commissioners. "I have throughout my whole political life been fighting for women having access to decision-making positions and leading positions," von der Leyen told reporters. "My experience is that if you don't ask for it, you don't get it. It does not come naturally."

comes to gender issues, the 27-nation EU is often seen as perhaps the most progressive grouping of countries in the world, leaving behind other nations and continents where the dominance of men in political institutions is still the order of the day. She acknowledged that government leaders are often restricted in their choice by national politics giving one party the right one year, and another the next time. If not governments, parliaments can also get involved — making life even more difficult. And quality is equally important, she said. "The Commission needs competence," she said, calling it "the first and most important criterion."

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Kuleba resigns

AP ■ KYIV

Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba, one of Ukraine's most recognisable faces on the international stage, submitted his resignation Wednesday ahead of an expected major government reshuffle. Russian strikes, meanwhile, killed seven people in a western Ukraine city, a day after one of the deadliest missile attacks since the war began. Kuleba, 43, didn't give a reason for stepping down. His resignation will be discussed by lawmakers at their next session, parliamentary Speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk said on his Facebook page. Four other Cabinet ministers tendered their resignations late Tuesday, making the Cabinet reshuffle likely the biggest since Russia's February 2022 invasion. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy indicated last week that a reshuffle was imminent, with the war poised to enter a critical stage and as its 1,000-day mark looms in November.

Zelenskyy needs to keep up Ukraine's morale amid the grinding war of attrition with its bigger neighbour and steel the country's resolve for what will be another hard winter. Russia has been smashing Ukraine's power grid, knocking out some 70% of generation capacity and rupturing heat and water supplies. And Wednesday's deadly attack on Lviv — a city near the border with NATO member Poland and far from the front lines — underscored how all of Ukraine is at the mercy of Moscow's long-range capabilities. The Ukrainian army's risky incursion almost a month ago into Russia's Kursk border region raised Ukrainian spirits and

countered months of grim news from the front line in eastern Ukraine. The incursions' ultimate goals are unclear, though Zelenskyy says Ukraine wants to create a buffer zone there that would prevent cross-border Russian attacks. Russian President Vladimir Putin remains bent on pushing his army deeper into eastern Ukraine, meanwhile. Russia's onslaught in Donetsk, where Ukraine is short of troops and air defences, and long-range missile strikes that repeatedly hit civilian areas of Ukraine signal that Putin will remain uncompromising and unrelenting in his efforts to crush Ukrainian resistance. The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington think tank, said late Tuesday that Putin believes Russia "can slowly and indefinitely subsume Ukraine through grinding advances and

US military support for his country. During the war Kuleba has been second only to Zelenskyy in carrying Ukraine's message and needs to an international audience, whether through social media posts or meetings with foreign dignitaries. In July, Kuleba became the highest-ranking Ukrainian official to visit China since Russia's invasion. He has been the foreign minister since March 2020. Kuleba's successor is not yet known but is expected to be announced on Thursday. Several Ukrainian media outlets, citing unnamed sources, said Kuleba's deputy, Andrii Sybiha, would become the country's chief diplomat.

The new foreign minister will likely accompany Zelenskyy to the UN General Assembly in New York next week, which is an opportunity to lobby global leaders for

their support. More than half the current Cabinet will undergo changes, said Davyd Arakhamia, a leader of Zelenskyy's party in the Ukrainian parliament. Ministers will be resigning on Wednesday and new appointments will be made Thursday, he said. Zelenskyy's five-year mandate expired in May. He remains in power under the provisions of martial law. Meantime, the nighttime strike on Lviv injured 52 people as well as killing seven, Ukraine's Rescue Service said. The strike was carried out with a Kinzhal missile and drones and targeted defence industry enterprises, Russian news agency Tass said, citing the Russian Defence Ministry. Local officials disputed the targeting claim. Lviv Mayor Andrii Sadovyi and the Ukrainian Catholic University published a photo of a family

whose mother and three daughters were killed in the attack that struck their home. The father survived but was in critical condition, Sadovyi said. The eldest daughter, 21-year-old Yaryna, was a programme manager at the European Youth Forum, a platform of the continent's youth organisations, her colleagues wrote on Facebook. "We will neither forget nor forgive" the attack, they said in the post.

Another Russian attack injured five people in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy's hometown, regional head Serhiy Lysak said. Kuleba said the Lviv and Kryvyi Rih attacks showed Ukraine's need for more Western support. "To put an end to this terror, Ukraine's partners must promptly deliver the promised air defense systems and ammunition, as well as strengthen Ukraine's defence capabilities

and allow us to launch long-range strikes on all legitimate military targets in Russia," he wrote on X. Zelenskyy reacted to the attacks by urging Ukraine's allies to give Kyiv "more range" to use Western weapons to strike deeper into Russian territory. The attack happened a day after two ballistic missiles blasted a military academy and nearby hospital in Poltava in eastern-central Ukraine, killing 53 people and wounding almost 300 others, Ukrainian officials said. The missiles tore into the heart of the Poltava Military Institute of Communications's main building, causing several stories to collapse. Poltava is about 350 km (200 miles) southeast of Kyiv, on the main highway and rail route between Kyiv and Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, which is close to the Russian border.

US-sanctioned Serbia official meets Putin

AP ■ MOSCOW

Serbia is a Russian ally and will Sneider impose sanctions against Moscow or join NATO, the Balkan nation's deputy prime minister said Wednesday as he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The remarks by Aleksandar Vulin, a former intelligence chief who is under US sanctions, reflect persistent close relations between Belgrade and Moscow despite Serbia's proclaimed bid to join the European Union. "It's a great honour for me to have the privilege to talk to you," Vulin told Putin. "Please believe me when I say it is a great encouragement for all Serbs, wherever they may live."

Serbia has refused to join Western sanctions against Russia over the war in Ukraine though it has condemned Moscow's aggression. Populist President Aleksandar Vucic has said that imposing the sanctions wasn't in Serbia's national interest. "Serbia is not only a strategic partner of Russia, Serbia is also Russia's ally," Vulin said. "This is why pressure on us by the West is huge." Vulin's meeting with Putin in Russia's far-eastern city of Vladivostok came just days after French President Emmanuel Macron visited Serbia when Belgrade signed an agreement to buy French Rafale fighter jets, a move that was seen as possible a shift away from Moscow. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz earlier also visited Belgrade for the signing of a tentative EU deal with Serbia on raw materials needed in green transition. The two met in Vladivostok on the sidelines of an economic forum designed to attract foreign investment and showcase Russia to them. Greeting Vulin as the two sat

Four Indians burnt alive in Texas road accident

Houston (PTI): Four Indian nationals, including a woman, lost their lives and several others were injured in a tragic multi-vehicle road accident in the US state of Texas during the Labour Day weekend. According to the Collin County Sheriff's Office, the accident involving five vehicles occurred on the north-bound US 75 just past White Street at Anna near Dallas. Consul General of India in Houston D C Manjunath confirmed the identities and shared that the Consulate General of India (CGI) is in touch with the families and community organisations, providing full support during

such that the SUV caught fire and the four occupants were trapped inside which resulted in their deaths. It took days to officially identify the victims as the bodies were charred beyond recognition. Several others sustained non-life-threatening injuries though the exact number remains unclear. The victims were identified as Aryan Raghunath Orampatti from Kukatpally suburb of

Hyderabad, his friend Farooq Sheikh, Lokesh Palacharla, another Telugu student, and Darshini Vasudev from Tamil Nadu. Orampatti and Sheikh were returning after visiting a cousin in Dallas while Palacharla was heading to Bentonville to reunite with his wife. Darshini Vasudev, a postgraduate from the University of Texas, was on her way to visit her uncle in Arkansas.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Neetu Singh W/o Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh R/o F-38, Street No-2, West Vinod Nagar, Delhi-110092, declare that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Son CBSE 10th & 12th Marksheet as Vimmi Singh instead of Neetu Singh Heneforth Neetu Singh and Vimmi Singh both are the same and one person.

PD(72)C

THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine.

Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine.

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My client Smt. Rekha Chauhan W/o Sh. Gaurav Chaudhary the owner of residential plot/possession built-up on first floor measuring 262.53 sq. yds. and covered area 262.53 sq. mtrs. out of Kh. No. 552, situated at Village-Palim, abadi known as Mangla Puri Road, New Delhi from Mr. Umesh Sharma who is the owner of the above said property vide GPA, Agreement to Sale & Willing dated 12.05.2003. That our client Mr. Shikant Pandit intend to get the financial assistance from SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. if any person(s)/Institution has/has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 07 days from the date of this notice on the address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

Khatun & Khatun
A-38 Kailash Colony,
New Delhi-110048, Ph. No: 011-49774545

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New Delhi-110048, Ph. No: 011-49774545

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Muhammad Naim is the owner of built up property bearing no D-63 area measuring 15x35 sq ft out of Kh. No. 43/1 situated at Anandekar Colony, Chhatrapur, near Idgah, Andhera West, Mumbai. Registered with the Registrar of Cooperative Societies dated 14.08.2021 executed by PM-Colonies in Delhi. The above-mentioned property is going to be mortgaged with F&B Financial Services Limited. If any person/bank/financial institution having any claim/right/lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notify to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehra, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered post within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. VISHAL MEHRA, ADVOCATE E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092. Mobile No. 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Snehlata is the GPA Holder of Plot no. 8, area measuring 14 sq. yds. out of Kh. No. 593 & 594, situated in the revenue New Delhi village Roshan Pura, Delhi state Delhi colony known as Shyam Vihar, Phase-I, Z-Block, Najafgarh, New Delhi-110043. She is in possession of the above said property through GPA, AFS, dated 11.11.2023 executed by Mr. Bijender Kumar in favour of Mrs. Snehlata. Mrs. Snehlata intends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of aforementioned plot to Mr. Piyush Shukla. Subsequently, Mr. Piyush Shukla is in the process of mortgaging the said property with SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.). Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this transaction shall be treated as null and void. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated time period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44A, Sector-14, Connaught Place, Pradhesh-201301; Landline(s): +9110203101683; e-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that our Client Mr. Shikant Pandit is purchasing Plot No. 1, area measuring 50 sq. yards, out of Kh. No. 89/1/1, situated at Village-Palim, abadi known as Mangla Puri Road, New Delhi from Mr. Umesh Sharma who is the owner of the above said property vide GPA, Agreement to Sale & Willing dated 12.05.2003. That our client Mr. Shikant Pandit intend to get the financial assistance from SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. if any person(s)/Institution has/has any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 07 days from the date of this notice on the address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

Khatun & Khatun
A-38 Kailash Colony,
New Delhi-110048, Ph. No: 011-49774545

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my client Smt. Geeta Khurana W/o Shri Praveen Khurana R/o 94, Manak Vihar Delhi-110092 have requested the undersigned to issue a title search report in respect of property: 3rd Floor, with roof terrace rights, with further construction right up to the last permissible story with a common entrance, passage, staircase and lift, having its plinth covered area measuring 187.50 Sq. Mtrs, along with 1448 unoccupied individual and impartable ownership rights in the land with two car parking spaces in the basement floor with all fittings, fixtures, connections, structure, facilities and amenities provided therein, in freehold residential Property No. C-265, an area measuring 250.83 Sq. mtrs. & 300 Sq. Yds. situated in the layout plan of Jhalra Tahirpur Residential Scheme, Colony Known as Vivek Vihar, Phase I Delhi 110095. The general public is informed that persons and entities having of asserting any right, title, claim or interest by way of self, exchange, mortgage, lien charge, possession or otherwise of any nature whatsoever or any portions thereof, and are having any objections of any manner whatsoever to the mortgage of the above-mentioned properties are hereby called upon to notify the undersigned within 3 days from the date of publication of this notice and afterwards no claim of any persons whatsoever in respect of the above properties will be entertained afterwards and the undersigned will issue title search report accordingly.

Date: 31.08.2024

Mohd. Misbahuddin Siddiqui (Advocate)
Ch. No. 872, Lawyers Chamber, Saket Court Complex, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

Please read and treat "Miss Sunny Tanti Trading Udhog Proprietor: Mr. Sunny Thakur, Residential House Situated at Plot No. C-1 and D-1 (Part), Kharsa No. 770, Inside Krishna Enclave, Nauangan, Tehsil & District Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Pin-281004," in place of "Miss Sunny Tanti Trading Udhog Proprietor: Mr. Sunny Thakur, Residential House Situated at Plot No. C-1 and D-2 (Part), Kharsa No. 770, Inside Krishna Enclave, Nauangan, Tehsil & District Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Pin-281004." The rest will remain the Same and unchanged.

NOTICE OF SALE BY PRIVATE TREATY
(Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (Rule 6 & 8)

CORRIGENDUM

Please read and treat "Miss Sunny Tanti Trading Udhog Proprietor: Mr. Sunny Thakur, Residential House Situated at Plot No. C-1 and D-1 (Part), Kharsa No. 770, Inside Krishna Enclave, Nauangan, Tehsil & District Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Pin-281004," in place of "Miss Sunny Tanti Trading Udhog Proprietor: Mr. Sunny Thakur, Residential House Situated at Plot No. C-1 and D-2 (Part), Kharsa No. 770, Inside Krishna Enclave, Nauangan, Tehsil & District Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Pin-281004." The rest will remain the Same and unchanged.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of General Public that my client hereinafter Referred as "purchaser" are negotiating with Mrs. Kuldeep Kaur, R/O House no. 150 E, Ranjit Avenue, Amritsar, Punjab-143001 Referred as "seller" for purchase of its Flat No. 10, August Point, AEZ Trade Square Sec-53, Gurgaon, Gurgaon Road, Village Wazirabad, Gurgaon, Haryana measuring 1739 Sq. Ft. Any person having any claim/s or interest in the aforesaid Property, are hereby requested to inform in writing with supporting documents on the address given herein below through post and email, within 7 days from the date of this publication, failing which, it will be deemed that there is no claim against the aforesaid property and my client will be free to proceed with the transaction. No further claim of any person or entity in any nature will be entertained thereafter.

Aeshna Dahyia, Advocate
D/2666/2010
17, DDA Commercial Complex, Kailash Colony, EXT Zamrudpur, New Delhi-110048
Tel: 011-47190000
Email id: saxena.aeshna12@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that Mr. Dinesh Khatwara is residing at Sector-22, Housing Board Colony Faridabad, Sub register Gwalabi, District Faridabad, Haryana. Mr. Dinesh Khatwara S/o Mr. Hari Ram and the same is to be transferred & mortgaged with Electronic Finance Ltd. The Original Agreement Letter No. 1083 dated 11.12.1974 and Possession Letter which allotted by Housing Board Colony to Mr. Gucharan Dass S/o Mr. Ram Dass Khatwara, pertaining to the above property has been lost and complaint has been registered vide Complaint No. 13229/2023 dated 02/11/2023 with Hon'ble District Judge, Faridabad. Mr. Dinesh Khatwara & Mrs. Sweeny Chouda shall have no objection regarding mortgage of aforesaid property by Mr. Sushranta S/o. Hari Ram.

If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of the aforesaid property.

Rajharj Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts,
New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-8076188328

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client known to all that my client SMT. NISHA GOVIL ALIAS NISHA MITTAL owner of the Second Floor Front Side Without Roof Rights, Plot No. 103, AREA MEASURING 167.22 SQ. MTRS. KHARSA NO. 13/12/0, Baaj Enclave Old Palam Road Kalkaji Mor New Delhi-110078 And Smt. Nisha Govil Alias Nisha Mittal have not Originals I. Survivor Certificate of Sh. Prabhakar Singh Gandhi and 2. Survivor Certificate of Sh. Kulwant Singh Gandhi And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right or interest in the said property, then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 8 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 766, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi-75
Mobile : 9899013918

Dr. Akhlesh Das Gupta Institute of Professional Studies
Approved by AICTE & Affiliated to GGSIPU, Delhi
FC-26, Shastrji Park, New Delhi - 110053.
Website: www.adgimdelhi.ac.in, Ph: 91(11)-49905900 to 99

Invites application for the post of DIRECTOR

Send your resume in confidence to the HR-ADGIPS within 10 days by Post or e-mail: hr@adgimdelhi.ac.in

Qualification & Experience, Scale of Pay and allowances etc. for the above post will be as per AICTE Norms.

SALE NOTICE

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

Case Details	Case Details
ICIICI Bank Vs Komal Dubey, Execution (COMM) No. 361/23	Make and Model-MARUTI SUZUKI Ertiga, Vehicle No-DL-8CAZ-3880, Manuf. Yr-2019

Auction Date: 21-September-2024
Venue: Gadarav, Khetwat No.166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chowk, Behind Gyan Devi School, Sec-17, Sukhroli, Gurugram- 122022.
Contact Person- Manu Anand(9928935640)/Vijay Sharma(9372730494)

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participants are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself/ themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids. Successfully approved bidder shall have to deposit sale amount within 5 days from the approval date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT. The intending bidders may visit to ICIICI Bank Ltd, Plot No 23, Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle

Pope urges Indonesia to fight extremism

AP ■ JAKARTA

Pope Francis urged Indonesia to live up to its promise of "harmony in diversity" and fight religious intolerance on Wednesday, as he set a rigorous pace for an 11-day, four-nation trip through tropical Southeast Asia and Oceania that will test his stamina and health. Despite the gruelling itinerary, an energetic Francis joked and laughed his way through a packed first full day in Indonesia, meeting with outgoing President Joko Widodo and other Indonesian officials at the presidential palace and then greeting Catholic priests, nuns and seminarians at Jakarta's main cathedral in the afternoon.

Cannons boomed as Francis joined Widodo on the veranda of the palace along with President-elect Prabowo Subianto. A marching band, stiff-legged troops and children in traditional Indonesian dress welcomed the first pope to visit in 35 years.

In his remarks to officials, Francis compared Indonesia's human diversity to the archipelago's 17,000 islands. He said each one contributes something specific to form "a magnificent mosaic, in which each tile is an irreplaceable element in creating a great and original and precious work".

And yet, Francis warned that such diversity in a country with the world's largest Muslim population can also become a source of conflict — an apparent reference to episodes of intolerance that have flared in recent years in Indonesia as well as a broader concern about conflicts raging around the world.

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल

पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंद्धित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14.09.2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंद्धित को सूचित किया जाता है कि (1) मेसर्स मित्रल इन्फ्राकोन (दोर लार्ड्स स्टोन माईन, पार्टनर- श्री संजय अग्रवाल), ग्राम-दौर, तहसील-पाटन, जिला दुर्ग, खसरा क्रमांक- 915/2, 915/5, 916/1, 916/4, 916/5, 916/6, 917, 918, 919, 929/1, 929/2, 929/3, 929/4, 929/5, 929/6, 929/7 एवं 929/8, लीज एरिया- 4.26 हेक्टेयर, खदान उखन्न क्षमता- 69,828 टन प्रतिवर्ष (2) मेसर्स रॉक ओर मिनरल्स (पार्टनर- श्री राणा विक्रांत सिंह, पतौरा लार्ड्स स्टोन माईन), ग्राम-पतौरा, तहसील-पाटन, जिला-दुर्ग, खसरा क्रमांक- 478/1, 478/2, 479/1, 480/1, 481, 482, 541 (पार्ट), 542/2, 543, 545, 546, 547/1, 547/2, 547/3 एवं 547/4, लीज एरिया- 4.55 हेक्टेयर, खदान उखन्न क्षमता-79,804 टन प्रतिवर्ष के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु संयुक्त लोक सुनवाई बाबत छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर में आवेदन प्रस्तुत किया गया है। उक्त परियोजनाओं के संबंध में आपत्ति/सुझाव/विचार/टीका टिप्पणी, इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 30 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, मिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग के कार्यालय में मौखिक अथवा लिखित रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। इन परियोजनाओं के लिये संयुक्त लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 05/10/2024 को समय दोपहर 01:00 बजे, स्थानीय आत्मानंद उल्कर हिन्दी माध्यम, शासकीय उच्चतर माध्यमिक विद्यालय के परिसर में, ग्राम-पतौरा, तहसील-पाटन, जिला-दुर्ग में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित हो कि:-

- लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिजिकल/ सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पालन करना अनिवार्य होगा।
- लोक सुनवाई में सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा मास्क का उपयोग किया जावेगा तथा समय समय पर सेनेटाइज कर उपयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।
- लोक सुनवाई स्थल पर सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों की बैठक व्यवस्था कम से कम 02 मीटर की दूरी रखना अनिवार्य होगा।
- कोरोना वायरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरशः पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।

ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 14 सितम्बर 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंद्धित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन/पठन हेतु डाइट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यालय सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डाउन्लोड, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, इंडिया पर्यावरण भवन, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, दुर्ग, जिला-दुर्ग, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत, दुर्ग/सिला, मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, दुर्ग, जिला-दुर्ग, सरपंच, ग्राम पंचायत पतौरा, तहसील-पाटन, जिला-दुर्ग, सरपंच/ सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत दौर, तहसील-पाटन, जिला-दुर्ग, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, मिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19 नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर में रखी गई है।

सदय संविच
छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल,
नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

ROTOTOGRAPHICS (INDIA) LIMITED

Rotographics (INDIA) LIMITED
CIN : L74899DL1976PLC008036
Regd. Off: Unit No. 8, Ground Floor, Pocket-M, Sarla Vihar, New Delhi 110076.
Phone No. 011-47366000, Email Id: info@rotoidia.co.in, Website: www.rotoidia.co.in

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that 99th Annual General Meeting of members of Rotographics (India) Limited will be held on Monday, 30th September, 2024 at 01:00 P.M. through video conferencing (V/S) through audio-visual means (OAVM).

In accordance with Circular No.14/2020 dated April 08, 2020, Circular No.17/2020 dated April 13, 2020 read with Circular No. 20/2020 dated May 05, 2020 (MCA3) and Circular No. SEBI/CFD/CMD/ICIR/2020/79 issued by SEBI (the "company"), and owing difficulties involved in dispatching physical copies of the Notice of AGM and Annual Report 2023-24 has been sent to member of the company, whose email registered with Company / RTA on September 04th, 2024.

Since the AGM is being held through V/O/OAVM pursuant to the Circulars, Physical attendances of members has been dispensed with. Accordingly, the facility for the appointment of proxies by the members will not be available for the AGM.

Members holding shares in physical mode who have not registered/updated their email addresses with the Company, are requested to register/update the same with the company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent/Scrutinizer Financial Services Private Limited (herein referred as 'RTA') at compliances@skynilera.com.

Please note that the aforesaid documents are also available on the Company's website at www.rotoidia.com.in and on the website of the Stock Exchange i.e. BSE Limited and The Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India Limited and at website of NSDL also evolving@nsdl.co.in.

Notice is further given that pursuant to the provisions of section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with rule 20 of the companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 as amended and Regulations, 2015, the Company is providing its members facility to exercise their right to vote by electronic means and the business as set out in the Notice may be transacted through remote e-voting by NSDL. The members may note the following:-

- Members holding shares on e-voting on: Tuesday, 24th September, 2024 may cast their vote electronically on the ordinary business as set out in the Notice of the AGM through electronic voting system of National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL). The e-voting period shall commence on Friday, 27th September, 2024 at 9.00 A.M till Sunday, 29th September, 2024 at 5.00 P.M.
- Members of the company holding shares either in physical or in Dematerialized form, as on the Cut-off date, may cast their vote either electronically during the remote e-voting period. Members who have voted through Remote e-Voting will be eligible to attend the AGM. However, they will not be eligible to vote at the AGM.

The Company has appointed Mr. Vivek Kumar, Practicing Company Secretary of M/s V Kumar and Associates as the Scrutinizer to scrutinize the e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner.

The Register of Members and the Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Saturday, 21st September, 2024 to Monday, 30th September, 2024 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.

In case of any queries, you may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for members and e-voting user manual for members available at the Downloads sections of <https://www.evoting.nsdl.com> or contact NSDL at the following toll free no.: 1800-222-990. For any further grievance related to the Remote E-voting, members may contact NSDL at the following contact information:

Phone No. +91 22 24994545, +91 22 24994559
For and on Behalf of Board of Directors
Rotographics (India) Limited
Manish Kumar Kori
Whole Time Director
DIN : 10426839

Dated : 04.09.2024
Place : Delhi

EXTENSION OF PERIODICITY OF SPECIAL TRAINS

To clear extra rush of Passengers, during Durga Puja/Deepawali/Chhath Festival-2024 Railways have decided to extend the Periodicity of following special trains as per the details given below:-

Train No.	From	To	Days to Dep.	Notified up to	Period of Extension From To
05636	Guwahati	Sri Ganganagar Jn.	Wed	25.09.24	02.10.24 27.11.24
05635	Sri Ganganagar Jn.	Guwahati	Sun	29.09.24	06.10.24 01.12.24
02525	Kamakhya Jn.	Anand Vihar (T)	Fri	06.09.24	13.09.24 29.11.24
02526	Anand Vihar (T)	Kamakhya Jn.	Sun	08.09.24	15.09.24 01.12.24
05671	Guwahati	Anand Vihar (T)	Wed	04.09.24	11.09.24 27.11.24
05672	Anand Vihar (T)	Guwahati	Fri	06.09.24	13.09.24 29.11.24
05734	Katihar Jn.	Amritsar	Thu	12.09.24	19.09.24 28.11.24
05733	Amritsar	Katihar Jn.	Sat	14.09.24	21.09.24 30.11.24

REVISED SCHEDULE OF TRAIN NO. 01079/01080

Train No. 01079/01080 will run with revised schedule as under:-

Train No.	From	To	Days to Dep.	Earlier Notified up to	Revised date
01079	C Shivaji (T) Mumbai	Gorakhpur Jn.	Daily	25.10.24 to 07.11.24	22.10.24 to 13.11.24
01080	Gorakhpur Jn.	C Shivaji (T) Mumbai	Daily	27.10.24 to 09.11.24	24.10.24 to 13.11.24

* Rest all information will hold good.

For detailed information, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.railmadad.in

Visit RailMadad website : www.railmadad.in & download Railmadad app.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
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Sensex, Nifty tumble on global downturn

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Stock markets closed lower on Wednesday with Nifty taking a breather after a 14-day winning run and Sensex dropping by 202 points due to weak global trends on worries of potential slowdown in the US market.
The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 202.80 points or 0.25 per cent to settle at 82,352.64. During the day, it tumbled 721.75 points or 0.87 per cent to 81,833.69.
Snapping its 14-day rally, the NSE Nifty declined 81.15 points or 0.32 per cent to 25,198.70. Intra-day, it tanked 196.05 points or 0.77 per cent to 25,083.80.
Nifty has surged nearly 1,141 points or 4.59 per cent in 14 straight days.
Among the 30 Sensex firms, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, Mahindra &



Mahindra, Infosys, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finance and Adani Ports were the major laggards. Asian Paints, Hindustan Unilever, UltraTech Cement, Sun Pharma and Reliance Industries were among the

gainers.
In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong ended sharply lower. European markets were also trading in the red.
The US markets ended significantly lower on Tuesday.
“The warning signals from weak US manufacturing data added concerns about a potential slowdown in the US economy, which dragged the domestic indices.
Due to a lack of major domestic triggers, the indices will take direction based on global cues,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.
Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,029.25 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.
Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.14 per cent to USD 73.65 a barrel.

Rupee falls four paise against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI
The rupee fell 4 paise to close at 84.02 (provisional) on Wednesday amid a sharp decline in the domestic equity markets as investors stayed away from riskier assets.
However, a weak dollar against major currencies overseas and a drop in crude oil prices capped further losses in the local unit, forex traders said.
At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 83.96 and traded in the range of 83.95-84.01 during the day.
The unit moved in a tight range of 83.95-83.97 for most part of the session. However, it slipped at the fag-end of the trading hours to settle at 84.02 (provisional), 4 paise below its previous close of 83.98.
“Weak domestic markets and risk aversion in the global

markets pressurised the rupee. However, a decline in crude oil prices and FII inflows cushioned the downside. India's services PMI expanded to 60.9 in August vs forecast of 60.4 and a reading of 60.3 in July,” Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said. At the domestic equity markets, Sensex dropped 202.80 points to settle at 82,352.64, while Nifty slipped 81.15 points to 25,198.70. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was down 0.17 per cent to 101.65. Brent crude, the international oil benchmark, declined 0.46 per cent to 73.41 in futures trade.
Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Tuesday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,029.25 crore, according to exchange data.



Interest equalisation scheme for exporters extended for another month



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The government has extended the interest equalisation scheme on pre- and post-shipment rupee export credit for one more month till September 30 to promote the country's outbound shipments.
The scheme, which provides exporters interest benefits, ended on August 31. In June, it was extended for two months.
In a trade notice, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said, “Trade and industry is hereby informed that the Interest Equalization Scheme for Pre and Post Shipment Rupee Export Credit, which had

earlier been extended up to August 31 as a fund limited scheme, has been further extended for one month i.e., up to September 30, 2024.”
It said, however, this extension is applicable only for MSME manufacturing exporters.
On December 8, 2023, the Union Cabinet approved an additional allocation of Rs 2,500 crore for the continuation of the scheme up to June 30.
The scheme helps exporters from identified sectors and all MSME manufacturer exporters to avail of rupee export credit at competitive rates at a time when the global economy is facing headwinds. Exporters get subsidies under

Half of gen Z prefer solar energy: Survey



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
A recent survey conducted to gauge awareness about clean energy sources revealed about 50 per cent of Gen Z respondents prefer solar solutions, followed by Millennials at 46 per cent.
The report is based on a survey of 4,318 respondents among four age cohorts across 5 metros -- Bangalore, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, and 8 non-metros -- Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Gurugram, Guwahati, Jaipur, Kochi, Lucknow, Patna, conducted between February 2024 to March 2024.
Gen Z refers to those who are in the age group of 18-22 years, Millennials 23-38 years, Gen X 39-54 years and baby boomers 55-76.
Power Technologies MD and CEO Preeti Bajaj in a statement, said, “Owing to this shift in needs and demand trends, the Solar spectrum of New India gave us a clear picture to understand the changing consumer perceptions, limitations and opportunities that remain unaddressed



Retirement mutual funds AMC jumps 256 per cent in 5 yrs

PTI ■ KOLKATA
Rising awareness of financial planning has fueled a 256 per cent increase in retirement mutual fund AUM in the last five years, according to a report.
Factors such as rising healthcare costs, increasing nuclear families, and higher life expectancy are likely to fuel further growth in this sector, an ICRA Analytics report said.
‘Assets under Management (AUM) of these funds have

grown by over 256 per cent in the last five years, reaching Rs 29,903 crore in July 2024, compared to Rs 8395 crore in July 2019,’ it said. ICRA said the growing awareness has led to a surge in the number of folios, which has increased by 17.44 per cent in the last five years to 29.36 lakh in July 2024, up from 25 lakh in July 2019. The number of schemes has also increased from 21 in 2019 to 29 in 2024.
A retirement mutual fund is a specialized investment vehicle designed to provide a secure and comfortable post-retirement life.
These funds invest in both equity and debt, aiming to balance wealth appreciation and preservation offering a regular income stream during retirement and typically, these funds have a lock-in period of five years or until retirement.
The average compound annualised returns on these funds stood at 26.21 per cent, 12.97 per cent and 14.09 per cent for a one-year, three-year and five-year period, the analysis found.

Govt to set up special purpose vehicle to back aircraft manufacturing: Naidu

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The government will set up a special purpose vehicle to push ahead with plans to start manufacturing commercial aircraft in India, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said on Wednesday as he highlighted the potential of the country's fast-growing aviation sector.
The Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidhyayak Bill 2024, which

was passed by the Lok Sabha in August, includes provisions to regulate the design and manufacturing of aircraft, supporting the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative for self-reliance.
“The government is strongly pushing the idea of India manufacturing its own planes,” Naidu said, adding that a special purpose vehicle will be set up with industry stakeholders and others.



According to him, efforts are being to ensure that aircraft manufacturing activities can start in the next five years, he said.
“We want to be a big player for manufacturing planes and also export them,” Naidu said. India is a key market for aircraft manufacturers - Boeing and Airbus.
State-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) is already into manufacturing small civilian planes but on a smaller scale.
India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets.
Speaking at a conference organised by industry body PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Naidu also said there is a lot of potential in the country for MRO (maintenance, overhaul and repair) activities.
Noting that the Indian aviation sector is at the ‘transformative crossroads,’ the minister also said the aim is to make the country a hub for aviation, air cargo, and MRO activities.
Meanwhile, the Bill seeks to remove redundancies and replace the Aircraft Act, 1934 that has been amended 21 times at a time when India is one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets in the world.

INBRIEF

GNDU NSS UNIT LEADS SUCCESSFUL PLANTATION DRIVE
AMRITSAR: The NSS unit of Guru Nanak Dev University conducted a plantation drive today, planting over 20 saplings across the campus. The event, held under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Dr. Jaspal Singh Sandhu.

A DELEGATION FROM TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC, SINGAPORE, VISITED DWARKA CAMPUS OF GGSIPU
NEW DELHI: A delegation of 6 members from Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore, visited Dwarka campus of GGSIPU. They explored the possible collaboration in the area of Robotics, Informatics, IT, Bio Technology, Industrial Safety, Sustainability etc.

DOUBLE LINE SECTION BETWEEN SORBHOG AND BARPETA ROAD STATIONS GETS COMMISSIONED
MALIGAON: The Commissioner of Railway Safety has completed the statutory inspection of the newly laid double line section between Sorbhog & Barpeta Road stations on 03rd of September, 2024.

POWERGRID PUTS UP INDIA PAVILION AT CIGRE PARIS EXHIBITION 2024
PARIS: Power Grid Corporation of India Limited showcased its prowess and rapid strides in the power sector at the India Pavilion put up by POWERGRID at the prestigious CIGRE Paris Exhibition 2024.

LIC CELEBRATES MILESTONE OF 68TH ANNIVERSARY
NEW DELHI: LIC celebrated its 68th Anniversary on 1st September, 2024. This milestone is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the team, the loyalty of customers and has consistently demonstrated a commitment to excellence, innovation, and customer satisfaction. LIC reflects on the journey of growth, innovation, and unwavering commitment to excellence.



Flipkart expects to create 1 lakh new jobs ahead of festival season

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
E-commerce major Flipkart is expecting to create 1 lakh new jobs for the upcoming festival season sale, The Big Billion Days 2024, across India, the company said on Wednesday.
Ahead of The Big Billion Days (TBBDD) 2024, Flipkart has launched 11 new fulfilment centres (FCs) across nine cities, bringing their total number in the country to 83, the Walmart group firm said in a statement.
“With its commitment to socio-economic development, Flipkart remains focused on enabling employment opportunities, creating over 1 lakh new jobs within its supply chain across the country. This aims to strengthen Flipkart's operational capabilities while empowering local communities and driving economic growth during this year's festive season,” the statement said.
Flipkart said the new job roles will be spread across various supply chain verticals, including inventory managers, warehouse associates, logistics coordinators, kirana partners and delivery drivers.
Most of the jobs created by e-commerce companies during the festival season sale are seasonal in nature.
Flipkart said it will organise comprehensive skilling and training programmes that have been planned for the new workers in the run-up to the festival season.
“The new hires will also contribute to Flipkart's supply chain diversity vision, with a focus on employing more women, people with disabilities and those from the LGBTQAI+ community, reflecting the organisation's commitment to maintaining an inclusive workplace,” the statement said.
Flipkart added that it is leveraging innovative technology to ensure seamless supply chain operations, optimised inventory management, and improved product availability to meet the rising demand, particularly during the upcoming festivals.

India targets 1 billion dollar liquor exports

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
With the global demand for Indian spirits growing at a healthy rate, the government is planning to promote both Indian alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages in the international markets and is eyeing USD one billion (about Rs 8,000 crore) exports in the next few years.
The commerce ministry's arm APEDA (Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) said that India currently ranks 40th in the world for alcoholic beverage exports. As per estimates, the country has huge unrealised export potential.
The authority, as part of the 'Make in India' initiative, has been targeting to increase exports of Indian spirits to major foreign destinations.
“It is potentially eyeing USD 1 billion in export revenue over the next few years,” it said in a statement on Wednesday.
The country's alcoholic beverages exports stood at over Rs 2,200 crore in 2023-24. The major destinations include UAE, Singapore, Netherlands, Tanzania, Angola, Kenya and Rwanda.
APEDA also said that Diageo India (United Spirits Ltd.) is set to launch ‘Godawan’, in



the United Kingdom. It is a single-malt whiskey made in Rajasthan.
Commenting on the USD one billion target, Vinod Giri, Director General, the Brewers Association of India said that huge potential is there in the different countries for Indian products.
“While the single-malt will play a greater role in making India's reputation as a high-quality whiskey producer, the volumes will come from beverages which are more palatable taste-wise and price-wise such as premium Indian whiskeys and premium rum,” he said. Price-wise Giri added that huge export potential is there in the US, Africa and Europe.
He suggested the government to urge states to include the element of export promotion in state excise policies.

World champion Sachin Khilari wins silver in men's shot put (F46) in Paralympics

PTI ■ PARIS

World champion Sachin Sarjerao Khilari clinched a silver in men's shot put F46 event with an Asian record distance of 16.32m as the country's track-and-field athletes continued their unprecedented medal-winning run in the Paralympic Games here on Wednesday. The 34-year-old Khilari achieved his best throw of the day in his second attempt to better his own Asian record of 16.30m which he set while winning gold in the World Paralympic Championships in Japan in May. However, the effort, which was also his personal best, was not enough for the top honour as Greg Stewart of Canada defended his Tokyo Paralympics gold with a throw of 16.38m. Luka Bakovic of Croatia took the bronze with 16.27m. Khilari's silver is the 11th medal from para-athletics in the ongoing Games and took India's overall tally to 21, including three gold. Stewart had finished second to Khilari in the World Paralympic Championships in Kobe in May, and the tables were turned at Stade de France on Wednesday. F46 classification is for athletes with arm deficiency, impaired muscle power or impaired passive range of movement in arms, with athletes competing in

a standing position. "I had wanted to win the gold medal, but it did not happen. It's my best distance but I am not satisfied. I feel I could have done better. It was not my day," Khilari said after winning the silver medal. "It was a tough competition and Greg Stewart is a great player. I made small mistakes in my technique. I will work harder and I hope to beat him next time." Late on Tuesday night, Indians won silver and bronze in both men's high jump T63 and javelin throw F46 after Deepthi Jeevanji's bronze in the women's 400m T20 category. Sharad Kumar and Mariyappan Thangavelu won silver and bronze respectively in the men's high jump T63 while Ajeet Singh and Sundar Singh Gurjar took the second and third spots in the javelin throw F46 final. On Wednesday, Khilari was leading at the end of the second round but Stewart surged ahead with his third throw of 16.34m before improving further in his fifth and penultimate attempt of 16.38m. Other Indians in the fray, Mohd Yasser (14.21m) and Rohit Kumar (14.10m) finished eighth and ninth respectively. American Joshua Cinnamo, who holds the world record of 16.80m, was fourth with 15.66m. A mechanical engineering degree holder, Khilari, who had



also won a gold in last year's Asian Para Games in China, has an impaired left hand. Hailing from a farming family at Karangani village in Maharashtra's Sangli district, Khilari met with an accident during his school days. The injury resulted in gangrene of the skin on his elbow and muscle atrophy. Even after several surgeries, his arm never recovered. He also lost his mother when he was young. Despite all these setbacks, he took up javelin while he was studying to become an engineer. A shoulder injury during competition forced him to switch to shot put. Khilari was introduced to para sports in 2015 and later met well-known coach Satyanarayana who supported him in improving his game. He also worked as a visiting faculty member at various institutions, assisting students in their UPSC and Maharashtra Public Service examination preparations. The previous best show by India's track and field contingent in a single Paralympics was in Tokyo when it won one gold, five silver and two bronze medals. With 11 medals, including a gold from star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, the para athletes have bagged more than half of the country's total medals. The number of gold is, however, set to be lower than what the officials had hoped to win this time.

India achieves best ever medal haul in Paralympics

PTI ■ PARIS

India achieved its best ever medal haul in the Paralympics as it went past last edition's number of podium finishes on the back of a superlative performance by the country's track and field athletes here on Tuesday. A late evening rush of medals swelled India's tally to 20 (3 gold, 7 silver, 10 bronze) to surpass its earlier best haul of 19 medals at the Tokyo Paralympic Games three years ago. On a red-letter day for Indian para sports, the track and field athletes showcased their might for the second consecutive day at the iconic Stade de France, bagging five medals — two silver and three bronze — as the country ended day six of the quadrennial showpiece at 17th place. India had won five gold, eight silver and six bronze medals at the Tokyo Paralympics. India's javelin throwers continued to set the bar high with Ajeet Singh and world record holder Sundar Singh Gurjar clinching the silver and bronze with throws of 65.62m and 64.96m respectively in the F46 category. F46 category is for field athletes with moderately affected movement in one or both arms or the absence of limbs. High jumpers Sharad Kumar and Tokyo Paralympics gold medalist Mariyappan Thangavelu gave it their all before settling for silver and bronze in the T63 finals, with jumps of 1.88m and 1.85m respectively. T63 is for high jumpers with available movement moderately affected in one leg or the absence of limbs above the knee.



Earlier, world champion sprinter Deepthi Jeevanji ensured another bronze for India in the women's 400m (T20) event with the 20-year-old clocking 55.82sec to secure a podium finish in her debut Games appearance. She finished behind Yuliia Shuliar (55.16sec) of Ukraine and world record holder Aysel Onder (55.23sec) of Turkey. Daughter of farm labourers from Kalledda Village in Telangana's Warangal district, Jeevanji was diagnosed with intellectual impairment after being spotted at a school level athletics meet by one of her teachers. Growing up, she and her parents were subjected to taunts by natives of her village due to her disability. However, the same village has been celebrating her ever since she won a gold at last year's

Asian Para Games before breaking the world record at the Para World Championships in May this year to fetch another gold. The youngster was also assisted by national badminton coach Pullela Gopichand after she began training with her formative coach Nagpuri Ramesh. The T20 category is meant for athletes who have intellectual impairment. LEKHARA'S CAMPAIGN ENDS: However, ace Indian shooter Avani Lekhara missed out on a second medal at the Games as she finished fifth in the final of the women's 50m rifle 3 positions SH1 competition in Chateauroux. The 22-year-old, paralysed waist-down at 11 years of age owing to a car accident, shot a total of 420.6 across the three stages of kneeling, prone and

standing in a world-class eight-woman field. However, she has lots to celebrate after becoming first Indian woman to win consecutive gold medals at Paralympics following a top finish in the 10m air rifle competition last week. Germany's Natascha Hiltrop won the gold with a total of 456.5, Slovakian Veronika Vadovicova claimed silver with 456.1, and China's Zhang shot 446.0 to bag the bronze. The SH1 class is designated for athletes with lower-limb impairment for competition in rifle shooting events. Here shooters are able to hold their gun without difficulty and shoot from a standing or sitting position (in a wheelchair or chair). JADHAV ENDS 5TH IN SHOT PUT: Bhagyashri Jadhav finished fifth in the

women's shot put (F34). Jadhav, making her second appearance at the Paralympics, produced a throw of 7.28m but it was not enough for a podium finish. China's Lijuan Zou won the gold with a season's best of 9.14m while Poland's Lucyna Kornobys secured the silver with an effort of 8.33m. The 39-year-old Indian, who hails from Nanded district in Maharashtra, is an inspiring story of resilience. She slipped into depression after losing the use of her legs due to an accident in 2006. But she fought back to reclaim her life as a para-athlete with help from friends and family. ARCHER POOJA'S CAMPAIGN ENDS IN QUARTERS: World Para Championship silver medalist Pooja Jatyan beat Yagmur Sengul of Turkey in straight sets to storm into the quarterfinals of recurve women's open archery competition. However, the 27-year-old could not sustain the momentum and lost to Tokyo Paralympics bronze-medallist Wu Chunyan of China in the last-eight stage. It was a particularly painful loss to Chunyan given that Pooja led 4-0 at one stage. A winner of four Paralympics medals, including a team gold in 2016 Rio Games, the 34-year-old Chinese archer was nowhere in the picture after a disastrous opening set in which she shot twice in the 7-point red ring to aggregate 23 points. But perhaps pressure got the better of Pooja, who fumbled her chance by allowing Chunyan to make a comeback in the third set, following which the match turned on its head.



Roger Federer is back at the US Open as a fan after speaking about Sinner's "tricky" doping case

AP ■ NEW YORK

Roger Federer thinks Jannik Sinner's doping case raises questions about whether the current No. 1-ranked tennis player should have been allowed to continue competing until he was absolved of intentionally using an anabolic steroid he tested positive for twice in March. "It's not something we want to see in our sport, these types of news, regardless if he did something or not. Or any player did. It's just noise that we don't want. I understand the frustration of: Has he been treated the same as others? And I think this is where it comes down to. We all trust pretty much at the end, he didn't do anything," Federer said Tuesday in an appearance on the "Today" show to promote a book of photos of him. "But the inconsistency, potentially, that he didn't have to sit out while they were not 100 percent sure what was going on - I think that's the question here that needs to be answered." Hours later Tuesday night, Federer received a warm ovation from spectators in

Arthur Ashe Stadium when he was introduced to the crowd during the second set of the U.S. Open quarterfinal between Aryna Sabalenka and Zheng Qinwen. Federer smiled and waved as he was shown on the videoboard in the arena. It was the 20-time Grand Slam champion's first visit to the venue since he stopped competing. Federer announced his retirement in 2022; he played his last official match at Wimbledon the year before. He is the last man to win consecutive titles at the U.S. Open, collecting five in a row from 2004 to 2008. Several top players have been asked about Sinner, who is scheduled to face 2021 U.S. Open champion Daniil Medvedev in the Grand Slam tournament's quarterfinals on Wednesday. Rafael Nadal told a Spanish television show on Monday he doesn't think Sinner received preferential treatment. The International Tennis Integrity Agency said on Aug. 20 that it was determined that the banned performance-enhancer inadvertently

entered Sinner's system through a massage from his physiotherapist, and that is why the player was not suspended. Asked about the matter in New York before the U.S. Open began, Novak Djokovic said he gets why some tennis players question whether there's a double standard in the sport. "It's a tricky situation and it's the nightmare of every athlete and team, to have these allegations and these problems," Federer said, adding: "We need to trust the process as well of everyone involved." Federer said he spoke recently with Nadal, his longtime on-court rival and off-court friend, who is 38 and has played sparingly the last two seasons because of injuries, including a hip operation last year. He is sitting out the U.S. Open. There are questions about whether Nadal, who has won 22 Grand Slam trophies, will return to the tour. "He can do whatever he wants," Federer said. "He's been one of the most iconic tennis players we've ever had in our sport."

Taylor Fritz gets past Alexander Zverev to reach his first Grand Slam semifinal

AP ■ NEW YORK

As he watched one last errant forehand from his higher-ranked, more-accomplished U.S. Open opponent land wide, Taylor Fritz dropped his neon-colored racket, clenched both fists and screamed, "Come on!" Fritz gathered himself and his equipment, walked to the net for a hug with No. 4 Alexander Zverev, who twice was a Grand Slam runner-up, then stepped to the center of Arthur Ashe Stadium, spread his arms wide and yelled again, "Come on!" After years of climbing the rankings, of becoming the top American man in tennis, of coming close to making a breakthrough at one of his sport's four most important events, Fritz finally came through at home, beating Zverev 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (3) on Tuesday at Flushing Meadows to reach a major semifinal for the first time. The 12th-seeded Fritz, a 26-

year-old from California, entered the day with an 0-4 record in Slam quarterfinals. "I've had a lot of looks at the quarterfinals over the last couple of years, and today just felt different," Fritz told the crowd that supported him throughout the win, including with frowned-upon applause after some of Zverev's first-serve faults. "I really felt like it was my time to take it a step further." Now he is headed to the final four at the U.S. Open, where he will meet either No. 9 Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria or No. 20 Frances Tiafoe of the United States. Those two were scheduled to play each other on Tuesday night. "It's cool I'm in the semis. But I very much have the mindset of the job's not done," Fritz said. "A question I got asked pretty much every time I lost in my quarterfinals was, 'What's it going to take to go further?' And the answer I gave was always: Just keep putting myself in these situations, and I'll become

more comfortable in these situations and get better. That's definitely what happened now. The quarterfinals didn't feel like, I don't know, this big thing to me like it has been, I guess, in the past." A Fritz-Tiafoe semifinal - "That could be crazy," Fritz said - would be the first between a pair of American men at any major since 2005, when Andre Agassi defeated Robby Ginepri in New York. No American man has won a Grand Slam singles trophy since Andy Roddick triumphed at the U.S. Open in 2003. The other men's quarterfinals will be played Wednesday: No. 1 Jannik Sinner vs. No. 5 Daniil Medvedev, and No. 10 Alex de Minaur vs. No. 25 Jack Draper. In the women's bracket, No. 13 Emma Navarro of the U.S. Reached her first Grand Slam semifinal by taking the last six games in a 6-2, 7-5 victory over No. 26 Paula Badosa and next faces No. 2 Aryna



Sabalenka or No. 7 Zheng Qinwen. Fritz used his usual blend of big serving, winning 20 of 21 points when his first serves landed in during the fourth set, and big forehands, but he also was effective at the net - winning 16 of 24 points when he pushed forward - and returned well enough to

accumulate 10 break points. "There's still work to be done, but his transition game is getting better. The fact he's seeing it pay off, especially here at the U.S. Open in some big points ... He's starting to buy into it and believe it," said Fritz's coach, Michael Russell, specifically mentioning a volley that won a 24-stroke

exchange to make it 5-2 in the concluding tiebreaker. "It's good to see. That's a big step that we've been really emphasizing for him to win (at) these bigger stages. You can't just serve and be on the baseline." Even though Fritz only converted two of those break chances, it meant he

constantly put pressure on Zverev, a German who made it to the finals of the U.S. Open in 2020 and the French Open this year. "My backhand, I don't remember, since being on tour, hitting my backhand this badly. I just don't. I mean, I was missing shots which were in the middle of the court with no pace, and (they landed in the) bottom of the net. Terrible. Just absolutely terrible by me," Zverev said, shutting his eyes and shaking his head. "My forehand was OK, actually. My serve was OK. But my most reliable shot, the shot that I'm most known for, the shot that you normally wake me up at 3 a.m. And I would not miss, was absolutely not there today," added Zverev, who also lost to Fritz at Wimbledon in July, "and I have no words for it, to be honest." He described himself as "angry." Fritz's latest quarterfinal loss came at the All England Club

against Lorenzo Musetti. The other three? Two came against 24-time Slam champion Novak Djokovic; the other against 22-time Slam champion Rafael Nadal. One was at last year's U.S. Open against Djokovic, who went on to win the title. Djokovic was eliminated this time in the third round last week; Nadal sat out the tournament. Russell said those past stumbles were not a topic of conversation before this quarterfinal. "We would never talk about, Hey, you haven't been to the semifinals of a Slam before," because you're not really breeding the positivity factor to it," Fritz's coach said. "It's more about, 'You've been in this position before and come out here and use your weapons that you have, and use the new weapons that we're trying to create, and just go out there and play your game, use the crowd, love the excitement and the actual competition and battle, which he does, and just go feed off it."

PANT IN FOCUS ON RED BALL RETURN; SELECTORS EYE BACKUP OPTIONS

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Rishabh Pant's red-ball return will be closely monitored but the national selectors will also trace suitable backup options to frontline stars when Duleep Trophy, which precludes an important Test season, begins across Bengaluru and Anantapur on Thursday.

Pant, who returned to white-ball formats after that horrific car crash, is yet to play in a longer-duration match. His last red-ball outing was against Bangladesh in December 2022. Now, he will turn out for Abhimanyu Easwaran-led Team B against Shubman Gill-captained Team A at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Satisfying his outings in the shorter versions were, but this four-day tournament offers him a unique challenge - batting and "keeping for an undefined number of overs. Pant is the designated stumper in Team B, and it is evident that the Ajit Agarkar-led selection panel is intending to take a deep look into his role as the wicketkeeper-batter in a season that will culminate with the World Test Championship Final at the Lord's next June. But that is just one piece of the puzzle as other worthy

contenders are there for the wicketkeeper-batter's slot. The front-runner is Dhruv Jurel (Team A), who was impressive in his debut series against England earlier this year.

Then there's Ishan Kishan, who will play for Team D which is marshalled by Shreyas Iyer at Anantapur.

Kishan, though a long shot, will be eager to use Duleep Trophy as a platform to stake his claim for an India return after an unsavoury train of incidents saw him losing the BCCI central contract in the current cycle.

The return of veterans Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma for the Bangladesh series will gobble up two batting slots along with Gill at No. 3.

Hence, there will be a jostle between KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Sarfaraz Khan, who impressed all with an excellent Test debut against England, for settling into the available middle-order space.

It's imperative for Rahul, who is in Team A as a pure batter, and Shreyas to come good in Duleep Trophy as they missed a large chunk of the home matches against England - the former with an injury and the latter was dropped after the second Test at Visakhapatnam.



BOWLING BACK-UP: India have been well-served by the troika of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Mohammed Shami in Tests for a while now, but it's unwise to enter a long Test season without sufficient alternates. More so because Siraj will miss the first round of Duleep

Trophy with an illness and Shami, whose last competitive outing was the 2023 50-over World Cup final, is still recuperating after a surgery. The selectors will keep a close eye on Bengal duo of Mukesh Kumar and Akash Deep, both of whom had bright initiations into traditional format, along

with Arshdeep Singh, Avesh Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Vidwath Kaverappa, Vysakh Vijayakumar and Harshit Rana. While the pace department needs some urgent solutions, the spin has a slightly different landscape.

Ravindra Jadeja, who was released from Team B, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel form a formidable Indian spin unit. While there is no pressing demand for the support cast, the selectors would like to be ready with instant supply in case of an eventuality.

In that context, spinners such as Washington Sundar, also a capable batter, R Sai Kishore, top wicket-taker in the previous Ranji season with 53 scalps, Manav Suthar and Saurabh Kumar will be hoping to be in the range of the five wisemen's radar.

DARK HORSES: There is a litany of fringe players who would want to give a further fillip to their career after showcasing talent at various levels.

Karnataka's Devdutt Padikkal had a roaring Ranji season in 2023-24, which earned him a Test debut against England at Dharamsala.

Baba Indrajith of Tamil Nadu is a consistent domestic performer and he once again underlined his prowess making 767 runs in the last Ranji season, and Musheer Khan, younger brother of Sarfaraz, smoothly graduated to First-Class cricket for Mumbai after blazing the Under-19 circuit.

B Sai Sudharsan of Tamil Nadu, who made white ball debut for India, too has given an early indication of his readiness for red-ball cricket with a hundred for Surrey in English county cricket. He will play for Team C under Rituraj Gaikwad.

SQUADS:

India A: Shubman Gill (C), Mayank Agarwal, Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel (WK), KL Rahul, Tilak Varma, Shivam Dube, Tanush Kotian, Kuldeep Yadav, Akash Deep, Prasad Krishna, Khaleel Ahmed, Avesh Khan, Vidwath Kaverappa, Kumar Kushagra, Shaswat Rawat.

India B: Abhimanyu Easwaran (C), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (WK), Musheer Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy (subject to fitness), Washington Sundar, Navdeep Saini, Yash Dayal, Mukesh Kumar, Rahul Chahar, R Sai Kishore, Mohit Awasthi, N Jagadeesan (WK).

India C: Rituraj Gaikwad (C), Sai Sudharsan, Rajat Patidar, Abishek Porel (WK), Suryakumar Yadav, B Indrajith, Hrithik Shokeen, Manav Suthar, Gaurav Yadav, Vyshak Vijaykumar, Anshul Khamboj, Himanshu Chauhan, Mayank Markande, Aryan Juyal (WK), Sandeep Warrier.

India D: Shreyas Iyer (C), Atharva Taide, Yash Dube, Devdutt Padikkal, Ishan Kishan (WK), Ricky Bhui, Saransh Jain, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Aditya Thakare, Harshit Rana, Tushar Deshpande, Akash Sengupta, KS Bharat (WK), Saurabh Kumar.

I've worked on my defence against spinners: Gill eyes improvement in Test performance



PTI ■ BENGALURU

Shubman Gill understands that his Test career has not touched the expected peaks yet, but the right-hander is banking on an improved defence against spinners to make a mark in the upcoming season that will feature 10 traditional format matches. Gill made close to 500 runs in the home series against England this year, in perhaps, his best sustained outing in Test cricket so far, and now he wants to build on that from the two-match series against Bangladesh, starting from September 19, where he will be challenged by a set of experienced visiting spinners.

"I worked on my defence a little bit more against spinners. You should be able to defend a lot more when you are playing on a turning track against spinners, then you can play the scoring shots," Gill, who will lead Team A in the Duleep Trophy, said here on Wednesday.

"With more T20s being played...I won't say on flat tracks but on batting-friendly tracks, I think it takes away a little bit of your defensive game. So, that was my focus in the England series," he added.

Unlike in white ball formats where Gill is a storm force, the 24-year-old is yet to blaze the Test arena, and he hoped for a turnaround sooner than later.

"In Test cricket, my performance has not matched my expectations so far. But we are going to play 10 Test matches this season, and when I look back after those 10 Tests, hopefully, my expectations will be matched," he said. Gill also emphasised on his growing maturity as a person and cricketer, which he directly linked to the captaincy stints of India and in the IPL with the Gujarat Titans.

"Every match or tournament that you play, you look to learn more about yourself irrespective of whether you are captain or not the captain. More so because of the captain you will get to know about other players too. It's important for the captain to have a connect with the players.

"You should know their strength and weaknesses. Yeah, there are some changes in me especially when you are captain or vice-captain and having those conversations," he elaborated.

But does being a part of the

leadership group add an extra layer of pressure on him? "Not really extra pressure (being part of the leadership group). My role as a batsman does not really change, even if I am the captain or vice-captain. It's all about scoring runs for the team," he said.

In that context, Gill termed the Duleep Trophy, beginning here and at Anantapur from Thursday, as a fine opportunity to tune himself to the demands of red ball cricket.

"This (Duleep Trophy) is a big tournament as every match is important for us. We are playing against some players whom we generally play with in the Indian team. So, we will get to see a good competition," he noted.

Gill, who is set to open against Team B here, also said there have been some early talks between players and management about workload allocation considering the long duration of the season.

"There is definitely talk among the selectors and players about the workload. But I think everyone has played a lot of cricket to be able to understand what they need to do when they are playing the match, more so for the bowlers I would say. "I am sure the bowlers had a conversation with the selectors about how they are going to manage their workload," he said.

Meanwhile, Gill confirmed that India pacer Prasidh Krishna will not be available for the first round of the Duleep Trophy.

"Prasidh Krishna is not ready for this match," he said. The Karnataka pacer has been recuperating from surgery that he had in February this year and did not play in the recently concluded KSCA Maharaja Trophy T20 despite being roped in by eventual champions Mysuru Warriors.

Pakistan drop to 8th in Test rankings following loss to Bangladesh

PTI ■ DUBAI

Pakistan's first-ever series loss to Bangladesh has resulted in Shan Masood's team slipping down to the eighth position in the ICC Test rankings besides hitting a historic low of lowest rating points since 1965.

Pakistan were thrashed by 10 wickets in the first Test while the hosts lost the second by six wickets with Rawalpindi hosting both the matches.

"Pakistan dropped two places in the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings to go to eighth position after suffering a shock series loss at home to Bangladesh," the ICC said on its website.

"The hosts were sixth in the rankings table before the series, but back-to-back losses



have seen them drop below West Indies to eighth with 76 rating points.

"This is the lowest rating points Pakistan have had in the Test rankings table since 1965, barring a brief period where they did not have a place in the rankings due to an

insufficient number of matches." Bangladesh's chase in the second Test of 185 was also the third highest successful chase in Pakistan for any visiting side, but there was a little in terms of promotion for the "Tigers".

Bangladesh remained in ninth position and behind Pakistan despite gaining 13 rating points.

However, the 2-0 series win has bolstered Bangladesh in the points table for the World Test Championship cycle 2023-25 as they are now placed fourth behind table-toppers India, Australia at second and New Zealand at third.

Bangladesh, who will now focus their attention on a two-Test series against India starting in Chennai on September 19, have 45.83 percentage points and 33 points with three wins and as many defeats in six Tests.

In WTC, teams get 12 points for a Test win, four for a draw and six for a tie while being ranked according to percentage of points won.



Rahul Dravid set to be appointed Rajasthan Royals head coach for IPL 2025

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rahul Dravid, who masterminded India's T20 World Cup 2024 triumph, is set to take over Rajasthan Royals' head coach role in the IPL 2025.

Dravid, who is currently on a short career-break since India's victory at Barbados in June, will soon start working with the franchise on important issues such as player retention ahead of the auction later this year.

"The talks have reached the final stages and he will soon step into the head coach job," a source close to the development told PTI.

Kumar Sangakkara, who has been Royals' Director of Cricket since 2021, will continue in his role and is likely to be more hands-on with Barbados Royals (CPL) and Paarl Royals (SA20).

Dravid has a long-standing association with Royals as their captain for two seasons in 2012 and 2013 before serving as mentor for two more years.

Dravid then moved to Delhi Capitals in a similar role in 2016 and continued with the team till he assumed the role of the head of National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru.

In 2021, he moved on from NCA to take up India's head coach role from Ravi Shastri.

Now at Royals, Dravid will reunite with Sanju Samson, who is all set to be retained as RR captain for another season. Samson blossomed first under the 52-year-old.

Accidental chess player Vidit Gujrathi says it's worked out well for him

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A self-proclaimed accidental chess player, Indian Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi says he thought of sports as a more "stable" career option after watching his doctor parents being called to work at odd hours, an "error of judgement" that has ultimately "worked out well" for him.

The 29-year-old from Nashik will be turning up for Mumbai Masters in the second season of the Global Chess League, a joint venture between Tech Mahindra and FIDE, from October 3 to 12 in London.

Gujrathi was around six when he was advised to put his ambition of playing cricket on hold till he was older by a local club. He decided to pursue chess instead as he was already familiar with the sport after spending considerable time playing with his father.

"I saw it as a good opportunity to learn and beat him. It was a complete accident, but a happy one," Gujrathi recalled in a press release issued by the event organisers.



Having seen his doctor parents work at odd hours due to late-night emergencies, Gujrathi said he wanted a relatively easy-going life and thought of sports as the right option.

"I did not realise then that sports can be more volatile. I made a judgment error, but it worked out well," he quipped, referring to long hours he has to devote to training.

In 2017, he became the fourth Indian after Viswanathan Anand, Krishnan Sasikiran, and Pentala Harikrishna, to cross the 2700 Elo rating.

Gujrathi, who still holds a rating of over 2700, was among three Indians who competed in this year's Candidates

Tournament, an eight-man competition held to determine the Challenger for the World Chess Championship slated for November.

He did log some impressive results but could not win the tournament.

Talking about the upcoming league and his team Mumbai Masters, Gujrathi said, "Definitely, our eyes are on the trophy this year. But I wish to improve my performance."

Mumbai Masters retained most of their squad from the first season, with Maxime Vachier-Lagrave returning as the Icon Player while Gujrathi and Alexander Grischuk came back as Superstar Men players.

Koneru Humpy and Harika Dronavalli have joined once again as Superstar Women, with Raunak Sadhwani as the Prodigy for the franchise in the second season.

"Last year, we got along well with each other, and the team had a great atmosphere. We will be there for around a couple of weeks, and hence, it is important to also have a good time," Gujrathi said.

Sharath, Manika headline India's TT squad for Asian Championships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran Sharath Kamal and star female player Manika Batra were on Wednesday named in the India squad for the 27th Asian Table Tennis Championships, scheduled to be held in Astana, from October 7 to 13.

Sharath, the 42-year-old who recently featured in his fifth and last Olympics, is the captain of the men's team comprising Manav Thakkar, Harmeet Desai, G Sathiyam and Manush Shah. Manika will lead the women's team which also has Sreeja Akula, Ayhika Mukherjee, Diya Chital and Sutirtha Mukherjee.

"The selection process was rigorous, with the TTFI giving precedence to the world ranking, international experience, and performance at the national level as key criteria for the final squad," said the TTFI in a statement.

The Indian team has been under



the guidance of foreign expert Massimo Constantini, who has been working to fine-tune the players' skills and strategies since

his return to India in June. "I am hopeful they will put their best foot forward in the Astana championships," Constantini said.

The squad, especially the women, had done well in the Paris Olympics, reaching the quarterfinals. The men's team had lost to the mighty China in the round of 16. It was the first time that India qualified for team events at the Olympics.

As a crucial qualification event for the World Table Tennis Championships and the Asian Games, the Asian Championships hold significant importance for the Indian team.

SQUAD

Men's Team: A. Sharath Kamal (captain), Manav Thakkar, Harmeet Desai, G. Sathiyam, Manush Shah; Reserve Players: SFR Snehit and Jeet Chandra.

Women's Team: Sreeja Akula, Manika Batra (captain), Ayhika Mukherjee, Diya Chital, Sutirtha Mukherjee; Reserve Players: Yashaswini Ghorpade and Poymantee Baisya.

Karunakaran, Subramanian reach Taipei Open quarterfinals

PTI ■ TAIPEI

India's Sathish Kumar Karunakaran and Sankar Subramanian reached the men's singles quarterfinals of the Taipei Open badminton tournament but women's singles players had to deal with disappointment here on Wednesday.

In men's singles, Karunakaran was made to work hard for a win but he eventually prevailed over Kantaphon Wangcharoen from Thailand 24-22, 23-21 to make the quarterfinals.

Subramanian also had to toil but the Indian shuttler got the better of his Finnish opponent Joakim Oldorff, winning his round of 16 match 21-12, 19-21, 21-11.

In another round of 16 men's singles contest, Kiran George was in the lead when he won the first set against Indonesia's Yohanes Saut Marcellino but the latter fought back to win the contest 15-21, 21-8, 21-16 in his round of 16 contest.

Meanwhile, Indian players had to deal with disappointment in



women's singles as three of them lost in the quarterfinals to crash out of the tournament.

Aakarsh Kashyap was defeated in straight sets 19-21, 18-21 by Thailand's Porphicha Choeikeewong while the world No 3 Tai Tzu Ying from Chinese Taipei brushed aside the challenge from Taniya Hemant 21-11, 21-10 in a mere 27 minutes.

Anupama Upadhyaya began well when she won the first set against

her Lauren Lam, but the American shuttler bounced back to win the next two and the contest 17-21, 21-19, 21-11.

Later on Wednesday, Indian women's doubles' pair of Rituparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda will be in action against Hong Kong's Lok Lok Lui and Hiu Yan Tsang while Rakshitha Ramaraj will take on Japan's Asuka Takahashi in women's singles quarterfinals.