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UKRAINE CALLS ON WEST TO APPROVE LONG RANGE STRIKES ON RUSSIAN TERRITORY

SPORT 7

HARMANPREET DOUBLE DRIVES INDIA 2-1 WIN OVER PAKISTAN IN ACT HOCKEY

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CONGRESS IS URBAN NAXAL: PM

RAJESH KUMAR ■ KURUKSHETRA/
NEW DELHI

In a scathing attack on Congress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said now it is not the same old party and has become new form of urban Naxal. Modi also dubbed the Congress as the biggest "dishonest and deceitful" party in the country. Slamming the grand old party, Modi said "Its politics today has reduced to spreading 'falshoods and anarchy' in the country".

Terming the party anti-Dalit and anti-farmer, Prime Minister Modi stated, "Congress family is the biggest anti-OBC, anti-ST and anti-SC; they always hated Babasaheb Ambedkar. Who knows Congress's anti-Dalit stance better than Haryana? Every time Congress forms a Government in Haryana, Dalits face hardships." He said the Congress feels no shame in defaming the country for defaming the BJP. "So you have to be wary of the Congress and their associates."

Kicking off his party's campaign in Haryana by addressing a poll rally in Kurukshetra, he questioned the track record of Congress and said it talks big when it comes to farmers. "If the Congress has the guts, why don't they implement their farmer schemes in Karnataka and Telangana," Modi said.

Modi said the Congress has come to power in Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana by making false promises, and has now "destroyed" the States which used to be prosperous. People now repent voting for the Congress in these States, he said.

"The Congress made hue and cry over Minimum Support Price (MSP), I ask them how many crops they buy at MSP in Congress ruled States- Karnataka and Telangana? Those who trusted Congress are now regretting it. Their only agenda is to empty public coffers to win elections. Just witness the condition of Punjab. The people of Haryana must keep such parties far from power," Modi said. "Did any farmer receive money in their accounts during Congress rule?" Prime Minister asked.

Addressing the rally, Modi said, "Two years ago, the Congress Government was formed in Himachal Pradesh. But what is the situation there today? No citizen of Himachal is happy today. Congress fed lies to every section there but none of the promises made were fulfilled."

Under the Kissan Samman Nidhi, more than Rs 3.25 lakh crore has been deposited in farmers' accounts, he said while highlighting his Government achievements. "See what is happening in Karnataka. During a short period of Congress' rule in that State, about 1,200 farmers have committed suicide there," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister added, "When the nation exposed their lies, they stopped talking about the Old Pension Scheme altogether. In contrast, BJP has introduced the New Pension Scheme, guaranteeing a secure future for employees. Government



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini and others during a public meeting ahead of the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections, in Kurukshetra, Saturday PTI

employees have widely appreciated this scheme."

He also shared an emotional moment with the crowd, "Just a few days ago, we completed the third revision of the One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme, and starting this October, my servicemen brothers will begin receiving its benefits. For Congress, appeasement is their only agenda. In Karnataka, under Congress rule, even Lord Ganapati is being disrespected."

Modi also addressed the issue of

reservations, stating, "Remember, when Nehru was the Prime Minister, he opposed reservations, claiming that hiring through reservations would lower the quality of Government services. Indira Gandhi also blocked OBC reservations, and it wasn't until the Janata Party Government that the Mandal Commission was formed. But when Congress returned, they buried the report. Rajiv Gandhi too opposed OBC reservations and insulted the community. Even today, Congress continues its royal

family's agenda against reservations. But let me make one thing clear, as long as Modi is here, not a single penny of Dr Ambedkar's reservation policy will be touched. SC/ST/OBC reservations are here to stay forever."

Shifting focus to the efforts of the Government, the Prime Minister highlighted the support given to farmers, stating, "Our Government has taken many steps to reduce the burden on farmers. Take urea, for example. While a

bag of urea costs Rs 3,000 internationally, we provide it to our farmers for less than Rs 300." Expressing confidence in his party's future, Modi added, "In Haryana, BJP is working with full dedication, transforming the State into a top performer in investment and revenue. Remember when Congress limited development funds to just one district? Haryana saw how those funds vanished into the wrong hands. But the BJP has connected the entire State to the stream of progress. Where half the

homes once lacked water connections, today, Haryana is on track to achieve 100 per cent tap water connectivity."

He said the new NDA government at the Centre is yet to complete 100 days but it has already started work worth nearly Rs 15 lakh-crore. The BJP Government has approved three crore 'pucca houses' for poor, he said.

Attacking the Hooda family and previous Congress Governments in Haryana, Modi said, "We have seen that period of the Congress Government when money for development used to be limited to one district only. Not only that, in whose pockets that money used to go? Everyone in Haryana knows that."

He praised Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini for his humility and said he has dedicated himself for the State's progress. Modi said people gave him a third term at the Centre in the Lok Sabha elections, and going by their enthusiasm, the BJP is set to score a hat-trick in Haryana too. "I have come once again to ask for your support to form a BJP Government on this sacred land. You have entrusted me with the opportunity to serve in Delhi for the third consecutive time, and the enthusiasm I see here today makes it clear, BJP's hat-trick is inevitable," he urged.

The BJP is contesting the Haryana Assembly polls alone after parting ways with Dushyant Chautala-led Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) last year. Meanwhile, the Congress and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are also contesting the polls solo as the two members of the INDIA bloc could not finalise a seat-sharing deal.

PM visit: SPG team takes stock of Janata Maidan

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Commissionerate police have declared the Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar as a 'no flying zone' and a 'no drone zone' in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to the State on September 17.

The restrictions are part of the Prime Minister's security arrangement during his visit



when he is scheduled to launch the Odisha Government's ambitious Subhadra Yojana and several other projects. Modi is to visit her on his

birthday to launch the Subhadra Yojana, the State Government's flagship scheme for the welfare of women, as per the BJP's poll promise. Meanwhile, a team of Special Protection Group (SPG) officers is already in Bhubaneswar to take charge of the Prime Minister's security.

While a thick security cover would be thrown over and around the venue of the PM's event, the SPG would be responsible for providing proximate security from the PM's arrival at the airport till his departure.

The DGP and IGP have been entrusted with maintaining law and order and overseeing security arrangements. The Khordha district Collector has been directed to make necessary arrangements for the event.

No govt official can leave hqrs on holidays till Sept 16

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The government officials cannot leave the headquarters for the period of three days till September 16, 2024. The directive has been issued by the Odisha Government in view of administrative emergencies.

Through a notification, the General Administration and Public Grievances Department has stated that no government official shall be allowed to leave the headquarters during the government holidays from September 14 to 16. If required, the officials shall report to the office on short notice, the notification read.

While September 14 was a government holiday on account of second Saturday, there is a weekly holiday on Sunday. Monday (September 16) is also a government holiday on the occasion of Eid-e-Milad. Speculations are that such directives have been issued in view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Odisha on September 17.

Fresh assault in J and K

PNS ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the maiden visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address an election rally in the land-locked Doda district on Saturday, two soldiers of the Indian army sacrificed their lives while two others received injuries during a counter-terrorism operation in the Chatroo area of Kishtwar on Friday.

In another overnight operation launched in the kreeni area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district, three terrorists were gunned down by the joint team of security forces on Saturday. The security forces were able to neutralise a group of hiding terrorists after identifying their exact locations inside the building with the help of drone cameras. With this, the number of terrorists eliminated in the last three anti terrorist operations have gone up to seven.

Chinar Corps of the Indian army in a post on X confirmed, "Three terrorists have been neutralised by the security forces in the ongoing Operation. Weapons and warlike stores have been recovered. The Chinarcops has dealt some crippling blows to the terror network in North Kashmir over the past few days with significant recoveries and elimination of terrorists, inspiring confidence and assurance for upcoming events scheduled in the region."

Before the day ended, another



Security personnel during an encounter with militants at Chak Tapper Kreeni Pattan area, in Baramulla district, Jammu and Kashmir, Saturday PTI

army personnel was injured in an encounter with terrorists attempting to infiltrate across the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district.

According to a spokesman of the Nagrota-based White Knight Corps of the Indian army, "Based on the intelligence inputs, a joint operation with J and K Police was launched in Chatroo at Kishtwar. A contact was established and a scout leading the patrol exchanged heavy volume of fire with the terrorists at around 3.30 pm on Friday.

In the ensuing firefight, four army personnel were injured. Later two soldiers who have been identified as Naib Subedar Vipan Kumar and Sepoy Arvind Singh succumbed to their fatal injuries during treatment at the military hospital. It is believed these Pakistani

terrorists belong to the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorist outfit and were responsible for the terror attack on the Indian army in the Desa forest area of Kishtwar on 16 July. An Indian army captain along with three other soldiers was 'killed in action' during a fierce firefight in the area. Meanwhile, the mortal remains of the soldiers were dispatched to their native places after a solemn wreath laying ceremony.

"GOC (General Officer Commanding) White Knight Corps and all ranks salute the supreme sacrifice of the bravehearts; offer deepest condolences to the families," the Army said.

Naib Subedar Vipan Kumar, hailed from village Patrara in Sunderbani area of Rajouri district and Sepoy Arvind Singh was a resident of Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh.

Ratna Bhandar front gate to be gold-plated

NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Srimandir Management Committee has decided for gold-plating of the front gate of the Ratna Bhandar of the temple. A decision to this effect was taken in the last meeting of the committee, a source privy to the conversations in the apex governing body said.

Visitors to the Srimandir fail to identify the Ratna Bhandar as its front gate looks like any other gate.

The gold collected from the donation box (Hundi) will be used for gold-plating of the

Ratna Bhandar front gate. As per the Srimandir Hundi Act, the Chief Minister of Odisha is the caretaker of the gold and silver ornaments collected from the donation box. So, it has been decided that a letter will be written to Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, seeking his permission.

"The front gate of the Ratna Bhandar needs a new look. If it is gold-plated, its importance will be enhanced," said Madhab Mohapatra, a member of the Srimandir Management Committee.

"The gold weighing around 25 to 30 kilograms collected from the donation box has been deposited in a locker of the State Bank of India, he added.

In Bhubaneswar 500gm gold ornaments looted from scientist's flat

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

At least 500 grams of gold ornaments were reportedly looted from a scientist's flat in an apartment in the Chandaka area in Bhubaneswar. The scientist was visiting his son in Europe when the miscreants broke into his house and committed the crime.

The robbers didn't touch the laptop, mobile phone and iPad of the scientist. Moreover, they left his ATM cards untouched and only looted the gold.

"We were supposed to stay a month more with our son. We had our return tickets on October 12. But we were informed about the loot on September 12 and had to fly back home. Our neighbour informed us about the loot," said the senior scientist Narayan Parida. "Usually, our maid comes here for the cleaning. She spotted the broken lock and alerted our neighbour, who informed us," he added.

"The gold ornaments were given by my wife's parents during our marriage. Over the period, we had also bought a few grams and gold coins," he added.

In Sambalpur BJP leader accused of assaulting contractor for bribe

Says allegation false
NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

In a major embarrassment to the Sambalpur BJP, a construction work contractor alleged coerced bribery and physical assault by party district president Girish Patel and his aide Saroj Ghadai.

The victim filed a police complaint at the Town police station alleging 8% forced commission on three contract

works. As per the complainant Prasanta Kumar Dani (60), Girish Patel called him to his house on Tuesday.

The FIR read, "After the conversation, Girish Patel abused the complainant (Prasanta) in obscene languages, dragged him by holding his shirt collar, assaulted him by means of fist and kick blows and threatened to kill him in life. Tuku Mohanty who lives with Girish Patel helped the complainant and took him out of the room and



the complainant went his home. Then after, one Saroj Ghadai along with another person came to his home and demanded cheque. The complainant gave them a cheque of Rs 75,000 but they told that as per 8% the total PC was Rs

1,40,000 was to be paid otherwise they won't accept the cheque and thrown the cheque."

When contacted, Girish Patel said, "The complainant and Saroj Ghadai both are familiar to me. They asked for my suggestion to resolve the commission issue. As the incident took place at my home, my name is coming up. Police are investigating; they will find out the truth. Also, these are all fake allegations. I have never physically assaulted anyone. The medical reports

will confirm whether he has been assaulted or not. In the last three months, before and after elections, there have been multiple false allegations against me. I will clarify everything to the Press in the coming days, and there will be a defamation suit against the people conspiring against me."

SDPO (Sadar) Tophan Bag said, "The matter is under probe. We are interrogating people involved in the case. The medical report is yet to come. However, we did not find any external injury."

City schools, colleges closed on Sep 17

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi would launch the Subhadra Yojana in Bhubaneswar on September 17. Due to this, there would be huge rush in the capital city on that day.

Keeping this in mind, all the schools and colleges would remain closed on the day. Besides, the State Government has also decided that all the government offices would remain closed in the first half of the day.

In Jagatsinghpur dist BDO roughed up by BJD members

FIR lodged
PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR
Jagatsinghpur district's Kujang Block Development Officer (BDO) was allegedly assaulted by the Block Chairman and his supporters during a public meeting. The matter came to the fore after BDO Deepak Prasad Swain lodged a written complaint in this connection. At the public meeting at the



block office, an altercation broke out between the BDO and the Block Chairman after the latter accused him of not passing the bills. Things took

a violent turn after the Block Chairman along with BJD workers manhandled the BDO and abused him in filthy language.

The situation further escalated after BJP workers present at the block office came to the BDO's aid, leading to a clash between the BJD and BJP supporters. Both the parties have filed two separate cases against each other. "I do not know why they manhandled me. I have lodged a complaint with police. A probe is on. I request police to take necessary action as per law," said the BDO.

Subhadra assistance First installment on Sept 17

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
Amidst chaos and long queues, Deputy Chief Minister Pravat Parida on Saturday clarified that the women applicants who applied for the Subhadra Yojana on or before September 15 would get their first installment after the launch of the scheme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 17.



Over 50 lakh women in Odisha have already applied for the scheme till now, the Deputy CM stated. All these women will get their first installment of Rs 5,000 on September 17, the birthday of PM Modi. "The money will be directly debited to the account of the applicants," she added. This apart, the Prime Minister during his visit to Odisha is also scheduled to lay foundation for several projects worth Rs 3,800 crore.

In city 4 injured in jail returnee's sword attack

Accused Chintu Mohanty held
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
In yet another glaring example of the increase in hooliganism in the city, a habitual offender spread terror at a Ganesh Puja Mandap under the Badagada police station in Bhubaneswar by attacking people with a sword.



As many four people were injured when he chased and attacked anyone who came on his way. As per sources, he was drunk. The notorious criminal, Chintu Mohanty, had recently been released from jail. A video of Chintu's hooliganism captured on camera has gone viral on social media. Based on complaints by the injured persons, the

Open innovation workshop held at IIT BBS

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
The Research and Entrepreneurship Park (REP) of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised a two-day open innovation workshop on September 13 and 14. The objective of the workshop was to prepare corporate leaders to collaborate effectively and gain insights into emerging trends, technological breakthroughs, and disruptive strategies that could reshape the innovation landscape. Organised in association with India Accelerator, the workshop aimed to equip corporates and entrepreneurs with open innovation methodologies, enabling them to harness the collective intelligence of external stakeholders and startups to develop forward-thinking solutions and address industry challenges. The event brought together corporate leaders, innovation managers, and R and D teams from leading companies such as NTPC, Tata Steel, Grid Controller of India, and Bajaj Electricals. Addressing the participants,



IIT Bhubaneswar Director Prof Shreepad Karmalkar highlighted that the concept of capacity building in the modern context should include skill development, research capability and entrepreneurship. Highlighting the initiatives taken by the institute towards achieving objective of developing entrepreneurship mindset, he said, "The IIT Bhubaneswar, through its Re-

'Odisha's pride, Idgah Ground's importance almost forgotten'

PNS ■ CUTTACK
While the call for a debate on Revenshaw name change with regard to the Revenshaw University has created a flutter across the State, it is unfortunate that the Idgah Ground where Utkal Sammilani held its historic meetings during 1903-04 that led to the creation of a separate province for Odisha has been forgotten, said Thinkers Club president Barada Prassana Das. "None has discussed or

thought over it. It is to be said here that, Kulabruddha Madhusudan started his fight for a separate State from this historic place and it took nearly 36 years to see Odisha as an independent State based on language. The Government has issued a ROR to the Utkal Sammilani but nothing spectacular took place at the site," lamented Das. It was expected to construct at least a memorial structure at the spot. The Governments of the past have forgotten the

site and paid no heed to it. Several patriotic organisations have issued request letters and memorandums to bring the place to the limelight. Still today, no work is carried at the site, he said further. On August 15, Das has presented a memorandum to the Deputy CM stating the importance and the efforts needed to give due importance to the site. Das urged the intellectuals of the State to think deeply over the issue and suggest appropriately to

the State Government. The Cuttack Development Authority constructed a pedestal with a plate in the year 2003 and completed its responsibility. Das requested the Ministers, intellectuals and other conscious citizens to visit the historic place of importance and rekindle the spirit of patriotism in their heart. "As an Odia, all of us should feel proud for this heritage site and make effort to bring due glory to it," he added.

In Cuttack Woman killed by 2 sons over family feud



One accused held
PNS ■ CUTTACK
A woman was brutally killed allegedly by her two sons in the Mahanadi Vihar area in Cuttack city on Saturday over some family feud. Sources said that the accused sons allegedly killed their mother by slitting her throat. The exact motive behind the woman being killed was yet to be ascertained.

On getting information, senior police officials reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident. Sources said that there was some dispute in the family which could have led to the brutal murder. The woman was staying with her two sons. Police have detained one of the accused while another is still absconding. Earlier, the deceased's daughter had committed suicide.

20th Annual Convocation of KIIT Youths leading nation's transformation: Governor

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
The country is going through both a challenging and exciting phase. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the vision of transforming the country into 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. It is estimated that Bharat will become the 3rd largest economy of the world by 2030," said Odisha Governor Raghuraj Das while addressing the 20th Annual Convocation of KIIT Deemed to be University here on Saturday. Students of KIIT have excelled not only academically but also in sports, he noted, highlighting that many students from the institute have participated in the Olympics. "Dr. Achyuta Samanta has done unparalleled work in establishing such an institute of professional and higher education. He has effectively used education as a tool for empowerment, helping underprivileged people integrate into the mainstream of society," Das



stated. In her Convocation Address, delivered virtually, Oleksandra Matviichuk, Nobel Peace Laureate (2022), Ukraine said the KIIT has become one of the most prominent institutions in India and globally in a short time. "Achyuta Samanta's example in building institutions and his efforts in reducing inequalities remind me of one simple truth - ordinary people have

much more impact than they can even imagine. Ordinary people can do extraordinary things", she stated. On the occasion, the KIIT-DU conferred Honoris Causa D.Sc. and D.Litt. degrees upon four eminent persons from different walks of life. They are Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman, Asian Institute of Gastroenterology & AIG Hospitals; Dr Chandra Bhanu

Satpathy, eminent writer, spiritual thinker; Kishor Patil, Co-Founder, MD & CEO, KPIT Technologies Ltd; and Ashirbad Behera, secretary, Odisha Athletics Association and Football Association of Odisha. As many as 7,283 students received degrees at the convocation. They included 5,455 Bachelors, 1,597 Masters and 186 PhD degrees.

In Mayurbhanj Large python beaten to death by villagers



4 arrested after video viral
PNS ■ BARIPADA
A 15-foot-long python was beaten to death by villagers at Souri village under the Kuliiana Forest Range of Mayurbhanj district on Friday. The snake was crossing a road in the village when villagers spotted it and bludgeoned it to death with sticks and stones. A video of the incident has gone viral, sparking outrage among nature lovers and animal conservationists. The video shows the youths climbing over the snake after kill-

ing it and dragging it on the road around the village. The v video has landed the villagers in trouble as it is illegal to kill snakes and is a punishable offence as they are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Illegal hunting, killing or possession of protected snakes is punishable offences and can lead to several years in prison. Unaware of the law, the villagers, mostly tribals, beat the snake to death. The Forest Department has taken the matter seriously and is on the hunt to nab the people involved in the killing of the python. Latest reports said four people were arrested by the forest officials.

Odisha's unemployment rate higher than nat'l avg

Lack of utilisation of both natural and human resources is considered as an important reason behind poverty. It is the duty and responsibility of the State to accelerate its initiatives to utilise both of these resources in order to reach the pinnacle of development. In case of Odisha, the rate of utilisation of both natural and human resources is miniscule. According to a recent report tabled in the Assembly, the unemployment rate of Odisha was 3.9 per cent, which was higher than the national average of 3.2 per cent as per the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2022-23 conducted by the National Sample Survey Office. With regard to unemployment rate, Odisha was in the 21st position among all States and Union Territories of the country. It's a matter of great concern that, while the people from rural



SITAKANTA TRIPATHY
areas are migrating to the urban areas in search of job opportunities, the unemployment rate in the rural areas has paradoxically decreased, whereas the problem has become very grave in urban areas. The same is reflected in case of Odisha where the unemployment

rate in the urban areas is 6.2 %, whereas it is 3.6% in rural areas. A total number of 3,86,699 females and 7,17,530 males, registered their names in different employment exchanges in the State till May 31, 2024. However, this report is silent about seasonal unemployment, unemployment among the home makers, and unemployment rate in different age groups. Ideally, the working age group is confined to 16-64 years. However, a person might spend more than 22 years for the completion of the academic studies. On the other hand, in post retirement period, the person may also come to the unemployment age slab. Generally, the workers are divided into three broad categories; skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. They also have many alternative ways to avail the jobs like Employ-

ment Exchange, advertisements, placement agencies or job contractors and personal contacts etc. It has been found that, only a small percentage of workers get jobs through Employment Exchange. In Odisha, only 8,401 people have got employment through the State's Skill Development and Employment Exchange over the last 10 years. The last fifteen years (2008-09 and 2023-24) has witnessed 412 job fairs by which 2, 05,980 people were given appointment letters. People who are self employed like mechanics, construction workers, plumbers, electricians and carpenters on the one side and the researchers, private tutors, architects and photographers on the other--all rely mostly on their personal contacts. According to them, their works and skills are their ad-

vertisements. In this age of mobile phones and social media, it has been much easier for them to come across a wider scope of job opportunities. But, the job recruitments for the factory workers take a different pattern. Earlier, many workers got their jobs through contractors or brokers. Now-a-days, the importance of the contractors has come down with the increasing role of trade unions, but it has continued its importance in the field of casual migrant workers. The placement agencies become more vibrant to provide jobs in various places including abroad. There are chances of torture and harassment while the workers are employed in far off and unknown places. While projecting the unemployment status of the State, authorities should be very careful in defining the term 'unemploy-

ment'. First of all, unemployment needs to be categorised on the basis of age, skill, working day and education. In the labour markets of the urban areas, a considerable number of daily wagers return back to their homes without getting any work. On the other hand, areas like agriculture and handloom works, where age and education are secondary affairs, do not provide full time jobs. The gravity of unemployment issues among the reserved categories and minorities need to be understood not only from numerical point of view but also from the grassroots socio-economic and political perspectives. It is important to find out how many home makers are confined to domestic work with no opportunity to work beyond the confines of their homes for various

reasons. Otherwise, it may show the multiplicity of unemployment among women. While migrating to other areas in search of job, the casual labourers need to register their names in the District Labour Office or inform the Panchayat officials by which it will be easier for the officials to trace them in case of any crisis. The awareness campaign may be accelerated in this regard. The loans and subsidies provided for many Income Generation Programmes need to be scrutinised at regular intervals through social audit system of Panchayati Raj Institutions to achieve the specified targets. Finally, different action plans need to be undertaken for the arrangement of both seasonal/short term and long term employment.

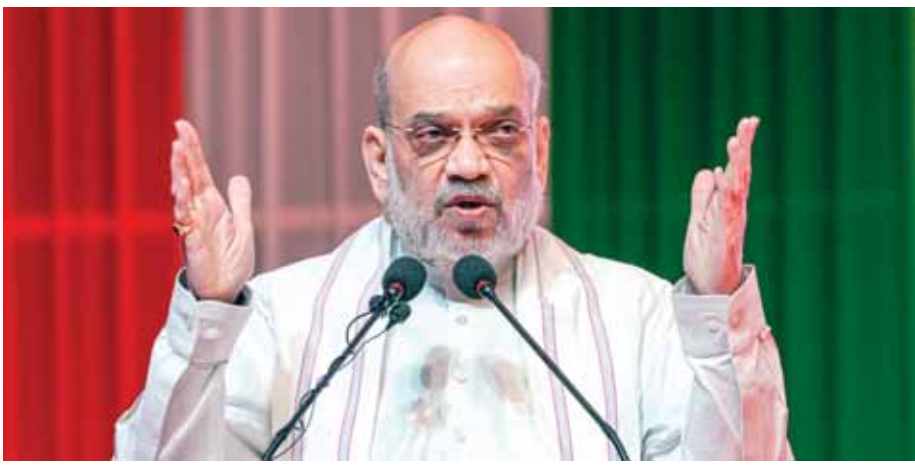
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Hindi, other Indian languages are friends: Shah PM to visit three states to inaugurate various projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

There can never be a competition between Hindi and other Indian languages because official language Hindi is their friend and they complement each other, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday on the occasion of Hindi Diwas.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the people of the country on this occasion. "Best wishes to the people of the country on Hindi Diwas," Modi said in a social media post in Hindi.

Hindi Diwas is celebrated every year on September 14 to mark the adaptation of Hindi as the official language by the Constituent Assembly on September 14, 1949. Addressing the fourth Akhil Bhartiya Rajbhasha Sammelan on the occasion of Hindi Diwas, Shah also said the promotion of the official language Hindi cannot happen until all other Indian languages are strengthened and the official language does not establish a dialogue with all of them. The home minister said the Hindi Diwas is an occasion to take a pledge to make Hindi a

communication language, a common language, a technical language and now an international language. "We are celebrating Diamond Jubilee to mark the completion of 75 years of Hindi as the official language. By accepting Hindi as the official language and connecting all the local languages of the country through Hindi, we are moving towards preserving and promoting our culture, languages, literature, art and grammar," he said. Shah said Hindi is more of a geo-cultural language rather than a geo-political language.

He said all communications through files of his two ministries. Home and Cooperation are done through Hindi. "It took three years to reach this stage," he said. Earlier, extending greetings on the occasion of the Hindi Diwas, Shah also said it was the spirit of the Constituent Assembly that all citizens of the country should communicate with each other in an Indian language, be it Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam or Gujarati. "By strengthening Hindi, all these languages will also become flexible and prosperous and with the practice of integration,

Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil or Bangla, every language strengthens Hindi and Hindi strengthens every language," he said. Shah said if the Hindi movement is looked at carefully whether it is Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lala Lajpat Rai, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose or Acharya J B Kriplani, all of them hailed from the non-Hindi speaking areas. He said the committee formed under the leadership of N Gopalaswamy Ayyangar and K M Munshi had presented a report to the Constituent Assembly to recognise Hindi as the official language and give strength to Hindi and all other languages. "Both these leaders also hailed from non-Hindi speaking areas," he said. The home minister said under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, a lot of work has been done to strengthen Hindi and local languages in the last 10 years. Shah said Prime Minister Modi has given a new life to Hindi and all Indian languages by giving an important place to imparting primary education in mother tongue in the new education policy.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Jharkhand, Gujarat and Odisha from September 15 to 17 during which he will lay the foundation stone and inaugurate various projects worth more than Rs 12,460 crore. On September 15, Prime Minister Modi will travel to Jharkhand and flag off the Tatanagar-Patna Vande Bharat train at Tatanagar Junction Railway Station around 10 am, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement. Around 10:30 am, he will lay the foundation stone and dedicate to the nation various railway projects worth more than Rs 660 crore through video conference and also distribute sanction letters to 20,000 Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) beneficiaries in Tatanagar. He will also lay the foundation stone for the Madhupur Bypass line in Deoghar district and the Hazaribag Town Coaching Depot in Hazaribag district. After its completion, the Madhupur Bypass line will facilitate avoiding the detention



of trains on the Howrah-Delhi mainline and also help in reducing the travel time between Giridih and Jasidih. The Hazaribag Town Coaching Depot will help in facilitating the maintenance of coaching stocks at this station, the statement said. Prime Minister Modi will also dedicate to the nation the Kurkura-Kanaroan doubling which is a part of the Bondamunda-Ranchi single-line section and part of the Rourkela-Gomoh route via Ranchi, Muri and Chandrapura stations. The project will help in the increased mobility of goods and passenger traffic considerably. Apart from this, four

road under-bridges (RUBS) will also be dedicated to the nation. The Prime Minister will flag off six Vande Bharat trains. These trains will improve the connectivity on the Tatanagar-Patna, Bhagalpur-Dumka-Howrah, Brahmapur-Tatanagar, Gaya-Howrah, Deoghar-Varanasi and Rourkela-Howrah routes. On September 16, at around 9:45 am, Modi will interact with the beneficiaries of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in Gandhinagar. Thereafter, he will inaugurate the 4th Global Renewable Energy Investor's Meet and Expo (RE-INVEST) at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar. Around 1:45 pm, the prime minister will inaugurate the Ahmedabad Metro Rail Project and take a metro ride from Section 1 to GIFT City station. Around 3:30 pm, he will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than Rs 8,000 crore in Ahmedabad. The prime minister will lay the foundation stone of several key projects.



PM welcomes a calf, 'Deepjyoti' at his house

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 7, Lok Kalyan Marg residence has a new resident - a calf named 'Deepjyoti'. In a social media post, the Prime Minister informed that 'Gau Mata (cow)' has given birth to a calf at the PM's 7, Lok Kalyan Marg residence premises. He also shared a video of himself spending time with

the calf at his residence. "It is said in our scriptures - 'Gaavh Sarvasukh Pradaah'. A new member has auspiciously arrived at the Prime Minister's residence premises at Lok Kalyan Marg." "At the Prime Minister's residence, the beloved mother cow has given birth to a new calf, on whose forehead there is a mark of light. Hence, I have named it 'Deepjyoti'," Modi said in a social media post in Hindi.

"A new member at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg! Deepjyoti is truly adorable," he said in another post. The prime minister also shared photographs in which he is spending time with the calf at his residence. In the video montage put out on his X handle, the prime minister is seen carrying the calf at his residence, sitting with it at his temple in the house and taking it out to the garden.

Onion prices drop amid Government intervention

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs on Saturday said the government's subsidised onion sale initiative, launched on September 5, has led to price drops in major cities within days. In Delhi, retail onion price fell from Rs 60 to Rs 55 per kg, while Mumbai saw a decrease from Rs 61 to Rs 56 per kg. In Chennai, the retail price reduced from Rs 65 to Rs 58 per kg, the ministry said in a statement. The government initiated the sale of onions at a subsidised rate of Rs 35 per kg through mobile vans and outlets of NCCF and NAFED. The program, which began in Delhi and Mumbai, has since expanded to other major cities including Chennai, Kolkata, Patna, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, and Guwahati. Responding to the growing demand, the government has decided to increase the quantity of subsidised onion and expand distribution channels to include e-commerce platforms, Kendriya Bhandar outlets, and Mother Dairy's SAFAL stores. The government has also initiated wholesale disposal of onion in major cities.

It has already commenced in Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai, with plans to extend to Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Kolkata and eventually all state capitals. A dual transportation strategy involving both road and rail networks is being implemented to improve logistics efficiency and reduce post-harvest losses. The Department of Consumer Affairs is working closely with state governments to ensure targeted supply based on demand and price trends. With a buffer stock of 4.7 lakh tonne of onions and increased kharif sowing area compared to the previous year, "the government expects onion prices to remain under control in the coming months," the ministry said. The combination of enhanced retail and bulk sale strategies is anticipated to stabilize prices and ensure widespread availability of affordable onions, it added. The department has been monitoring price for 22 essential commodities (rice, wheat, atta, gram dal, tur (arhar) dal, urad dal, moong dal, masur dal, sugar, gur, groundnut oil, mustard oil, vanaspatti, sunflower oil, soya oil, palm oil, tea, milk, potato, onion, tomato and salt).

No floor price for basmati rice, onion exports

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant step to boost export of basmati rice, a premier GI variety rice of India, the government has removed the floor price on export of basmati rice and onions, a move that will ensure good returns to farmers, ministry of commerce and industry said in a notification on Saturday. Hailing it, Home Minister Amit Shah said the Narendra Modi government is increasing exports to ensure fair price to the farmers for their crops so that they can get maximum price for their crops. Shah also said keeping the interests of farmers paramount, the government has taken three important decisions, including removing the minimum export price (MEP) of onions and Basmati rice. "The Modi government has decided to remove the minimum export price (MEP) on onions and reduce the export duty from 40 per cent to 20 per cent. This will increase onion exports, which will increase the income of the onion producing farmers," he wrote on social media in Hindi. The home minister said the government has also decided to abolish the MEP on Basmati



rice which will enable the farmers producing Basmati rice to earn more profits by exporting it. "Also, the Modi government has decided to increase the import duty on crude palm, soya and sunflower oils from 12.5 per cent to 32.5 per cent and the duty on their refined oils from 13.75 per cent to 35.75 per cent. This will help India's soyabean farmers get better prices for their crop and increase their income," he said. According to the ministry communication, it has been decided to remove the current minimum export price (MEP) of \$950 MT for issuing registration-cum-allocation certificates (RCAC) for export of Basmati rice. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) will closely monitor export contracts to prevent any non-realistic price

of basmati rice and ensure transparency in export practices, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The decision came in response to ongoing trade concerns and adequate domestic availability of rice. A floor price of \$1,200 per metric tonne (MT) was introduced in August last year as a temporary measure in response to rising domestic rice prices in the wake of tight domestic supply situation of rice and to curb any possible misclassification of non-basmati rice as basmati rice during exports, in view of the export prohibition on non-basmati white rice. After discussions with the trade bodies and stakeholders, the government had then rationalised the floor price to \$950 per MT in October 2023, amid concerns that higher prices were hurting outward shipments.

Shahi calls for increased agricultural innovation



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a call for greater collaboration and investment, Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi highlighted the critical need to enhance agricultural innovation during a conference organized by the Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII). Held as part of FSII's 8th Annual General Meeting, the event gathered experts to discuss key agricultural issues, including self-reliance in oilseeds, cotton, and maize, as well as intellectual property rights (IPR) implementation. Shahi highlighted the importance of modern agricultural technologies in transforming farming practices, emphasizing the unique role of Uttar Pradesh in India's agriculture sector.

"Technology is the cornerstone of agricultural prosperity. With UP contributing a third of the nation's wheat production, we aim to establish a seed park and a common resource center for advanced research, in line with PM Modi's vision for a Viksit Bharat," said Shahi. He also announced the creation of a state-of-the-art seed park in Lucknow, which will span 200 acres and focus on providing farmers with high-quality, climate-resilient seed varieties. "This initiative will not only boost productivity but also contribute to a prosperous future for our farmers," Shahi added, inviting the private sector to collaborate through public-private partnerships (PPP). Experts at the event stressed the necessity of aligning poli-

cies between the state and central governments to leverage new technologies. Ajay Vir Jhakar, Chairman of Bharat Krishak Samaj, noted, "Investments in agricultural R&D are crucial for sustainable progress, as is the development of climate-resilient crops." FSII Chairman Ajai Rana emphasised the role of policy and regulatory frameworks in fostering agricultural growth. "Strengthening IPR and encouraging public and private investments are essential to achieving India's agricultural goals," said Rana. As India strives for agricultural self-reliance and resilience during the transformative Amrit Kaal, collaborative efforts in research and innovation will be key drivers in shaping the future of the sector.

BJP terms Mamata meeting with doctors a photo opportunity

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Saturday termed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's surprise visit to the protest site of junior doctors as "photo-op" and alleged that she was there to sow the "seeds of suspicion" among the medical fraternity. The remarks came after Banerjee made a surprise visit

to the protest site and assured the junior doctors that she would look into their demands and take action if anyone was found guilty. Addressing the protesting doctors amid chants of 'we want justice' outside the Swasthya Bhawan in Salt Lake, Kolkata, Banerjee said she was spending sleepless nights as the medics were agitating on the road amid rains. "Mamata Banerjee went to



the site of junior doctors' protest on her way to Swasthya Bhawan, made a 5 minute speech, only to be accosted by slogans for justice," said BJP co-in-charge for West Bengal Amit Malviya on social media. She did not interact or for that matter even heard the protesting doctors, he claimed. "This was just a media photo-op to sow seeds of suspicion among the medical fraternity,"

Malviya added. The BJP leader accused Banerjee of being "sly and insincere" and said that she must be condemned for this in the strongest possible terms. "She clearly lacks intent to resolve the impasse and deliver justice to the rape and murder victim of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. Her inflated ego is damaging West Bengal's public health-care sector," he added.

Activists demand disability, transgender rights in medical curriculum

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concerns over the exclusion of key provisions from the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPDA), 2016, and the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act (TPA), 2019, in the National Medical Commission's revised Competency-Based Medical Education (CBME) Curriculum, activists in the sector have sought intervention of Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar in the matter. In a letter to the Minister, Central Advisory Board on Disability Chairperson Dr Satendra Singh and Association for Transgender Health in India CEO Air Commodore (Retd.) Dr. Sanjay Sharma, lamented that the new curriculum fails to address critical issues affecting



marginalized groups. They pointed out that it was outdated and in contradic-

tion with Supreme Court judgments and previous guidelines. Although the revised curriculum was re-released, the activists said they were disappointed as it has failed to reintegrate essential disability competencies and address transgender health issues adequately. Despite a senior NMC member acknowledging the oversight, the curriculum remains unchanged on these fronts. Also, they rued, key terms such as "dignity" and "transgender" are absent from the 466-page document, and while the curriculum now includes eight hours dedicated to sports, it has removed the previously mandated seven hours of disability competencies. "Outdated terms like "gender identity disorders" persist in psychiatry, and intersex variations are still described as "abnormalities," they said. The letter underscores that the RPDA mandates integrating disability rights into educa-

tional curricula for medical professionals, and the omission of these competencies undermines India's commitment to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 10), which aim to reduce inequality. It also emphasises the importance of addressing transgender-specific health issues as required by the TPA, 2019, including the creation of a health manual for sex reassignment surgeries. The current curriculum's focus on a binary understanding of gender neglects the health needs of transgender individuals entirely, they added. Activists have now urged Dr Kumar to ensure the reintroduction of mandatory disability competencies before the new MBBS session starts on October 14 and to incorporate case studies on disability, transgender, and queer persons into the longitudinal ethics curriculum.

Former J and K CM Omar Abdullah reacts strongly to accusations of PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and Vice President of the National Conference Omar Abdullah Saturday reacted strongly to the accusations made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing his maiden election rally in Doda ahead of the first round of polling on September 18. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi should focus on the 'deteriorating' security situation in Jammu and Kashmir instead of raising the bogey of dynastic politics", Omar hit back. In his over 40 minute long speech Modi said political dynasties in Jammu and

Kashmir have destroyed the region and not allowed new leadership to grow. On the other hand, Congress also accused the Centre of failing to end terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir and claimed that terrorism has returned stronger in union territory where it had been eliminated many years ago. Paying back in the same coin, Omar Abdullah said the BJP has no qualms in forming alliances with these parties and questioned the Prime Minister's silence over the death of two army soldiers in an encounter in Kishtwar. "The PM made a speech in Doda... It has not been 24 hours since the attack (in Kishtwar) in which two brave army soldiers lost their lives while an encounter is going

on in north Kashmir "He talks about dynasties to mislead people. He should have talked about the present situation," Abdullah told reporters in south Kashmir's Kulgam district. The NC leader said when Article 370 was revoked on August 5, 2019, the people of the country were told that the violence in Kashmir was because of the special status and that once it was revoked, the impact of the gun would "vanish". "It has been five years, but encounters are still going on," he said. Asked about Modi's attack on the "dynastic politics" of the NC, the Congress, and the PDP, Abdullah said the BJP does not see anything wrong in forming alliances with



these parties to come to power. "When the BJP needed one of these families, that time we were not responsible for the destruction (of J-K). When

the BJP had an alliance with the PDP, that time they did not see anything wrong with the PDP. When (former prime minister) (Atal Bihari) Vajpayee had to make a

minister and he picked me, there was nothing wrong with us. Now, during the elections, they say that we are wrong," Abdullah said. The NC leader said if the BJP does not have the required numbers to form the government after the polls in Jammu and Kashmir and the PDP decides to support them again, "Then they (BJP) won't see anything wrong in that". "It is a matter of time, such political rhetoric goes on, and then these things are forgotten after the elections are over," he added. Addressing a press conference at the party office in Srinagar, the party's spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said there have been 25 terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir in the 98 days since Prime Minister

Narendra Modi was sworn in for his third term. "Huge claims were made that after August 2019, peace will be established in Jammu and Kashmir. I will not talk about the time since 2014 or 2019, but it has been 98 days since Modi was sworn in. In the last 98 days, there have been 25 terror strikes in J-K in which 21 security personnel were martyred, while 28 others were injured," she said. Shrinete said 15 citizens of the union territory have also lost their lives in these terror attacks, while 47 people were injured. "Who will answer for it? Jammu was peaceful, the insurgency had ended there, but now, we are again witnessing terror attacks in Jammu's Doda, Reasi, and

other areas," she added. The Congress spokesperson paid tributes to the two soldiers who lost their lives in an encounter with terrorists in the Kishtwar district of Jammu on Friday. She alleged the prime minister has not been offering his tributes to the fallen soldiers since 2019. "PM tweets on small issues, discovers new countries on the world map to travel to and wishes happy birthday to people, but since 2019, Modi has stopped sending tribute or sympathy messages. Our officers, and soldiers lost their lives, Jammu and Kashmir police personnel were killed, but Modi has not uttered a single word to offer tributes or sympathies after 2019," Shrinete alleged.

RAINS, WATERLOGGING MAKE LIVES MISERABLE



Vehicles pass through the waterlogged NH 24 after heavy rains, in Moradabad, Saturday



Indian Navy commissions Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility Vinetra in Visakhapatnam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility (Vinetra) was commissioned on Friday by Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, at INS Satavahana, Visakhapatnam, navy said here on Saturday. Giving details, officials said the facility aims to enhance the escape capabilities of crew from a distressed Kalvari-class submarine and has been indigenously designed and developed. Constructed by M/s L&T Defence as a turnkey project, the Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility is equipped with a five-meter

escape tower integrated with an adjacent diving basin. This state-of-the-art facility will be utilized for imparting both basic and refresher escape training to the crew of Kalvari-class submarines, ensuring that they are proficient in escape procedures in the event of a submarine distress situation. The facility "Vinetra" meaning "Trainer" represents a significant step forward in building confidence among submariners, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills and training necessary to escape in case of any underwater emergency. This training facility also reinforces the operational readiness, safety protocols and training infrastructure of the Indian Navy.

Maharashtra pivotal in spreading values of Buddha across India: Kiren Rijiju

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Union Minister for Minority Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijiju said here on Saturday that Maharashtra, where there is substantial Buddhist population, stood as a pivotal region for spreading the values of Lord Buddha across the country. Addressing a day-long conclave 'Buddha's Middle Path - Guide for Global Leadership' at Nehru Science Centre - hosted jointly by the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs and International Buddhist Conclave, Rijiju said that strengthening Buddhism in Maharashtra could reflect positively across the country. Dwelling upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent initiatives, including the extensive celebration of Buddha Purnima, Rijiju said that the Centre's initiatives underlined its commitment to promoting Buddhist values. "The Prime Minister's speeches at the United Nations and European Union consistently underscore the values of Buddha - benevolence and compassion join hands, a country can become a global leader and the absence of such values will only create global issues but not peace", the minister said that there significant Buddhist population in Maharashtra and urged for a concerted effort to influence more individuals to embrace the values of Buddha. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, whose meticulous drafting of the Indian Constitution remains a testament to his dedication to the country's



framework and people. He also outlined several government welfare schemes aimed at supporting the Buddhist community. Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation, Shartse Khensur Jangchup Choede expressed profound respect for the teachings of Buddha. Emphasizing the transformative power of Ahimsa (non-violence), the Secretary General spoke about delving deeply into this principle that leads to the cultivation of Daya (compassion) and Karuna (mercy and empathy). He also underscored the belief that only the teachings of Buddha offer a viable solution to the pressing problems faced by the world today. Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities, Iqbal Singh Lalpura spoke on how India has been the birthplace of many faiths and religions and how it always stood to preach love and compassion while the rest of the world were focussed on acquisition of power. Dr. Milind Kamble, Founder Chairman, Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry stressed on the need for adherence to the teachings of Buddha, emphasizing the principle of being one's own light. He said that late Dr. Ambedkar, despite facing numerous challenges, never endorsed violence throughout his life.

CBI-FBI bust advanced cybercrime syndicate, arrest one from Mumbai

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major breakthrough, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) -working in tandem with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) USA -- has busted a sophisticated virtual asset and bullion-supported cybercrime network and arrested a key accused from Mumbai. After conducting raids in Mumbai and Kolkata on Thursday and Friday as part of the ongoing Operation CHAKRA-III, the CBI has arrested key accused Vishnu Rathi from the country's commercial capital. Having registered a case on September 9 2024 against Rathi and other accused under sections 120-B and 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), as well as Section 66D read with 75 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, the International Operations Division of the CBI launched investigation into the cyber crime network that was targeting victims in foreign countries since 2022. According to the CBI, Rathi



and other accused had -- between June and August 2022 -- conspired to target a U.S. citizen by gaining unauthorized remote access to the victim's computer and bank account. Under the pretext of offering tech support services, they falsely informed the US based victim that her bank account had been compromised. Claiming that the funds were at risk, they allegedly manipulated the victim into transferring USD 453,953 to crypto currency wallets controlled by them. After it registered the case, the CBI conducted extensive searches at multiple locations associated/ linked to the accused, which yielded substantial incriminating evidence. "Searches conducted by CBI at seven locations across Mumbai

and Kolkata on September 12(Thursday) and September 13, 2024 (Friday) have revealed that this transnational cyber-enabled financial crimes network was channeling proceeds of crime through virtual assets and bullion," the CBI said. During search at the residential premises of accused Vishnu Rathi, 57 gold bars of 100 gm each, cash amount of Rs.16 lakh, mobile phone, laptop used to manage crypto currencies, details of lockers and other incriminating documents were recovered. The CBI is continuing its investigations to identify victims of crime and proceeds of crime. It is coordinating with FBI and law enforcement agencies in multiple countries through INTERPOL for follow up on leads. Operation CHAKRA-III has been initiated by CBI to combat and dismantle organized cyber enabled financial crime networks through a globally coordinated law enforcement response leveraging INTERPOL channels.

Undiagnosed fever in Kutch, Gujarat; Centre sets up surveillance mechanism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Alarmed at the undiagnosed fever claiming 15 lives in Gujarat's Kutch, the Centre has set up a surveillance mechanism to immediately respond to such outbreaks and alerts have been issued at the points of entry such as airports, land ports and seaports to monitor the disease. An effective surveillance mechanism through the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), IHIP network and also through the One Health Mission to immediately respond to any such outbreaks has been established. According to the Gujarat Government as many as 48 new cases of fever had been detected in the affected villages of Lakhpur and Abdasa talukas. The deaths, which occurred between September 3 and 10, included four children. To meet any emergency, the



ICMR's network of laboratories will take care of diagnostics and there is enough capability to step up the supply of diagnostic kits if required, said sources in the Union Health Ministry. Under the PM-Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), the government has strengthened tertiary care across the country through AIIMS institutes, apart from bolstering emergency services through critical care blocks. Also, sufficient medical oxygen is available for any

such exigency, the sources added. The Gujarat government has deployed specialist doctors and 50 medical teams in and around seven villages of two talukas in Kutch district after the outbreak of the undiagnosed fever. Samples of the infected patients have been sent to the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC) in Gandhinagar and at the National Institute of Virology in Pune to identify the exact cause of the fever and the subsequent deaths.

Congress names three as AICC senior observers for Haryana Assembly elections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday named Ashok Gehlot, Ajay Maken and Partap Singh Bajwa as the AICC senior observers for the October five Assembly elections in Haryana. The party has announced the names of 89 candidates for the Haryana polls and left one seat, Bhiwani, for the CPI(M). A statement by the Congress

said party president Mallikarjun Kharge has appointed Gehlot, Maken and Bajwa as senior observers for the Haryana polls. While Maken is the party's treasurer, Gehlot is a former chief minister of Rajasthan and Bajwa is the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab assembly. The 90-member Haryana assembly is scheduled to go to polls on October 5 and the counting of votes will be undertaken on October 8.

S Jaishankar takes a jibe at LoP Rahul Gandhi over his khata-khat in Geneva

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in an apparent jibe at Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, has said life was not "khata-khat" (easy job), and it needed hard work and diligence. Rahul Gandhi had repeatedly used the "Khata-khat" phrase during the Lok Sabha elections while promising swift transfer of money into the accounts of women if Congress was voted to power. Jaishankar made the remark while he was speaking on the

infrastructural development undertaken by the Narendra Modi-led government at an event in Geneva. Addressing the Indian community, Jaishankar said, "Until you build infrastructure and human resources, have those policies in place, it is hard work. Life is not 'khata-khat', life is hard work and diligence." "Anybody who's held a job and laboured at it, knows it. So that's my message to you, that we have to work hard at it," he further said. Gandhi's 'khata khat' punch line had become a social

media trend and was used even by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attack the Congress over alleged lack of development during the UPA regime. Jaishankar said a country cannot be a major power without developing its manufacturing capabilities. "And there are...people who say that we are incapable of it, we should not even attempt it. Can you actually be a major power in the world without manufacturing? Because a major power needs technology. Nobody can develop technology without

developing manufacturing," he said. Recently, Rahul Gandhi, during an interaction with students at the University of Texas, said China's dominance in global manufacturing had shielded it from an unemployment crisis, which plagues India and most Western countries. "The West has an employment problem, as does India. But many countries, like China and Vietnam, don't face such a challenge because they are production hubs," Rahul Gandhi said.

Harmanpreet double drives India 2-1 win over Pakistan in ACT hockey

PTI ■ HULUNBUIR (CHINA)

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh made the difference as he converted two penalty corners to hand unbeaten India a close 2-1 win over arch-rivals Pakistan in their final league match of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament here on Saturday. It was India's fifth consecutive win in the six-team round-robin competition. Pakistan took the lead through Ahmad Nadeem (8th minute) before Harmanpreet (13th, 19th) converted two penalty corners to lead India to win. It was Pakistan's first loss in this tournament. Both India and Pakistan have already qualified for the semifinals. The victory also enabled India to maintain their supremacy over Pakistan since 2016. In their previous meeting at the Hangzhou Asian Games last year, India thrashed Pakistan 10-2. A few months before that, the Indians beat

Pakistan 4-0 during the Chennai edition of the ACT. At the Asia Cup in Jakarta (2022), a relatively young Indian side held Pakistan to a 1-1 draw while at the 2021 ACT in Dhaka, India defeated Pakistan 4-3 to clinch the bronze medal. As like any Indo-Pak hockey match, the first quarter saw end-to-end action with both the teams giving their all to gain the bragging rights. The Indians started brightly dominating the early share of exchanges but Pakistan grew in confidence as the match progressed. India were at the receiving end for the first time in the tournament when Pakistan drew the first blood. It was a selfless Hannan Shahid whose brilliant work from the midfield split the Indian defence and Nadeem found himself at the right place to direct the ball into the Indian goal. A stunned India kept up their composure and patiently built their attacks and secured their first penalty corner in the 13th



minute and skipper Harmanpreet scored with a powerful drag-flick to the left of a hapless Pakistan goalkeeper Munneeb. The Indians continued to press in the second quarter and gained their second penalty corner in the 19th minute and once again Pakistan defence had no answer as Harmanpreet was bang on target as India went up 2-1. While India were the better side in terms of possession in the second quarter, Pakistan also had their chances, penetrating the rival circle on quite a few occasions. Just 45 seconds from half-time Pakistan had an opportunity to draw level through a penalty corner but they wasted the chance as Sufyan Khan's flick, which hit the top of the bar, was rejected for a raised ball. The Indians sustained possession after the change of ends and secured their third penalty corner in the 37th minute, but Pakistan defended bravely.

Thereafter, a sustained spell of attacks helped Pakistanis to bag four penalty corners in quick succession but lacked the firepower to breach the Indian defence. In the last quarter, both the sides stitched relentless attacks and India secured three more penalty corners but failed to convert. The match also witnessed a heated encounter between Harmanpreet and Pakistan's Ashraf Waheed Rana after the latter shouldered Jugraj Singh inside the Indian circle. Jugraj was felled by the impact and was seen grimacing in pain. Harmanpreet and Jarmanpreet Singh were quick to counter the offender. The on-field umpires and Pakistan captain Butt and other players of both teams rushed in to control the situation but Rana was shown yellow card, which resulted in a 10-minute suspension after the umpire went for a referral for a serious misconduct. Meanwhile, in the first match of the day, Malaysia and Korea played out a 3-3 draw.

Indian set-up operates by itself and goal will be to protect that: Morne Morkel



What isn't broken shouldn't be mended" is the mantra of new India bowling coach Morne Morkel, who loves how the Indian cricket set-up runs on autopilot, and says his new assignment will involve helping that system "get better in small ways". Morkel, who has worked with current head coach Gautam Gambhir in Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), has been in India enough times and seen it from close quarter to understand how it works and where he would fit into the ecosystem. "Coming here, this is a set-up that operates by itself and so to protect that and make it better in small ways is going to be the goal," Morkel told BCCI.TV, making it clear that his focus is on minor tweaks rather than overhauling what works. He also feels that super seniors like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah will always lead the charge and his job will be to be the sounding board as part of the support staff. "We are quite lucky to have quality senior players and they will lead the charge. Our responsibility is to support them and give them best sort of advice that we can give," said Morkel, who turns 40 soon and has played alongside

legendary Dale Steyn. Morkel, who has 544 international wickets across three formats with 309 of them coming in Tests, was "blown away" by how Indian cricketers went about things and "how professional they were". "That's a good sign and hope we can build on that," Morkel said. He joined the pre series camp in Bangladesh and currently, he wants to build a trust with players and see how he can help them. "For me, this is important to connect well with the guys, played a lot against some of the players, seen and connected with some of the guys during IPL and to be in the camp and form friendships and relationships with players is very important," said the former Proteas speedster. "...Trying to understand the guys and their strengths and weaknesses and help them set goals for the upcoming series." He hoped that he can channelise the enormous level of talent that Indian cricketers possess. "It's one thing having talent and skill and how can you make those guys feel welcome in an intimidating environment. India playing in blue shirt is a lot of expectations, so for me, having the experience, going through that, passing that sort of knowledge and helping

them settle in will be the goal," Morkel said. "As soon as players have that comfort and feel they belong here, that's when the performance comes. I am looking forward to that and obviously up-skill them and get them up to the standard. "I understand that there will be expectations of winning and luckily I have experienced that in my playing days and I can share that knowledge," he added. Morkel said that after his discussions with the BCCI about the bowling coach's job were finalized, it took some time for the confirmation to sink in. "So when I ended the call, I sat for about five minutes in the room. I spoke to my dad first and didn't even go to my wife. Normally, they say you tell the wife first, so quite a special moment for me," he said in jest. "I enjoyed it 5-7 minutes with myself and then shared with the family about the opportunity and about eventually what might happen, so happy that we eventually got things over the line and this happened, looking forward to great journey and time with India." Morkel is also a fan of Indian cuisine. "I love Puri, breakfast I love my dosas, malai chicken but as a coach you need to show players that you eat healthy, players would follow," he said.

Corruptors are looking at entry through leagues managed by home boards: Outgoing ICC ACU chief

PTI ■ DUBAI

Elite cricket is mostly "safe and clean" but outgoing ICC Anti Corruption Unit (ACU) chief Alex Marshall feels that potential corruptors are eyeing entry through local T20 leagues which are outside global body's ambit managed by respective boards of member nations. The former British cop didn't specify which particular local leagues or which member nation he was referring to. "I am confident that the cricket you watch is safe and clean," Marshall told ESPN Cricinfo. "But I am also absolutely sure that corruptors are constantly looking for a route into the game, particularly in badly-run lower-level franchise leagues. The threat to the game is corruptors won't go away while there

is always money to be made and they will look for weakness in the system to get in." Marshall said that he is happy to find that more and more players are reporting corrupt approaches with the ICC ACU, ensuring them to keep the game clean. "I am proud of the significant increase in trust from players who now report approaches to us frequently whereas there was a time when they lacked confidence in confidentiality and the action that will be taken," Marshall said. "They have now seen corruptors being disrupted, named, banned when they get involved in cricket. And the education we now do with players shows them who the corruptors are, what their methods are, so everyone is much better equipped and protected to keep corruption away from the game."



During his seven years in ICC, some of the significant milestones of ICC ACU under Marshall would be to ensure punishment for former Bangladesh skipper Shakib Al Hasan, who didn't report a corrupt approach by Indian bookie Deepak Aggarwal and former Zimbabwe skipper late Heath Streak. One thing that gave Marshall satisfaction was weeding out corruption from Sri Lankan cricket with the help of local authorities with multiple cases of former international and domestic players being involved in alleged shady dealings. "Sri Lanka turned out to be a good news story because there were serious issues which were addressed locally and with ICC," he said. "Now with the legislation and stronger measures Sri Lanka is in a much better place to keep the corruptors away."

Sable finishes ninth in his maiden Diamond League final

PTI ■ BRUSSELS

National record holder 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable finished ninth in the season-ending Diamond League final with a below-par time here on Friday. Birthday boy Sable, who turned 30 on Friday, clocked 8 minute and 17.09 seconds to finish ninth in the 10-man field in his debut DL final. Amos Serem of Kenya emerged as the Diamond League champion with a time of 8:06.90, while reigning Olympic and world champion Soufiane El Bakkali (8:08.60) of Morocco was second in the season-ending finale. Mohamed Amin Jhinaoui of Tunisia was third with 8:09.68. World champion and Paris Olympics silver medalist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will be in action on Saturday. Sable had finished 11th in the Paris Olympic Games with a time of 8:14.18. He had finished 14th in the overall Diamond League standings with three points from two meetings. But four



athletes ranked higher than him — Lamecha Girma (injured) of Ethiopia, Geordie Beamish of New Zealand, Ryuji Mura of Japan and Hillary Bor of the USA — pulled out, allowing him to sneak inside the top 10 cut-off. Five meetings out of the 14 in the DL series across the world this season had men's 3000m steeplechase event. Reigning Asian Games

champion Sable had finished sixth with a national record time of 8:09.91 -- bettering his own earlier mark -- in the Paris leg of the Diamond League on July 7. He was 14th at the Silesia leg with a time of 8:29.96 on August 25. Each Diamond League season finale champion is awarded a 'Diamond Trophy', USD 30,000 prize money and a wild card for the World Athletics Championships.



Indian men outwit Hungary B; women go past Switzerland

PTI ■ BUDAPEST (HUNGARY)

India men dropped their first point, but carried enough steam to beat Hungary 'B' 3.5-0.5 to maintain a clean slate in the ongoing 45th Chess Olympiad here. In the open section, the hero for the Indian men was Arjun Erigaisa who played a brilliant attacking game against Peter Prohazka and ended with a checkmate after a queen sacrifice. However, Vidit Gujrathi had to settle for a quick draw against Papp Gabor and it was the first time an Indian men's player failed to notch a win in this event. But D. Gukesh outclassed Adam Kozak, while R. Praggnanandhaa made most of his chances in the endgame as Tamas Banusz was

gradually outplayed. Earlier, a shock defeat for D. Harika on the top board did not deter the other Indian girls as R Vaishali, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agarwal scored crushing victories to ensure a 3-1 victory for the team that kept them in joint lead on six match points. Harika lost to recent-migrant Alexandra Kosteniuk who gave up her Russian citizenship and joined the Swiss team. A former world women's champion Kosteniuk was in her elements and scored the full point after Harika misplayed the middle game that appeared even from the bird's-eye-view. Vaishali gave no chances to other migrant Ghazal Hakimifard who left her Iranian citizenship.

A new era in Asian soccer begins Monday when the AFC Champions League Elite debuts

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The first edition of the AFC Champions League Elite begins Monday with stars such as Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar and Riyad Mahrez looking to lead their Saudi Arabian clubs to success in Asia. Al-Nassr, Al-Hilal and Al-Ahli are among the favorites to win next May's final and reinforce the ambitions of the Saudi Pro League (SPL) of becoming one of the best in the world. In the summer transfer windows of 2023 and 2024, SPL clubs spent over \$1 billion on transfers to bring top-level players from the big European leagues. Al-Hilal midfielder Ruben Neves joined Al-Hilal in 2023 from Wolverhampton Wanderers of the English Premier League for a fee of around \$60 million and has no

doubt that the SPL has enough quality. "I have said this a few times - if you compare my data from English football to Saudi football, I run even more, but with the difference that I run in 40 degrees (Celsius, 104 Fahrenheit)," Neves said after helping Portugal to a 2-1 Nations League win over Scotland on Tuesday when Ronaldo scored the winning goal. "I am in good shape physically. Both Cristiano and I proved today that Saudi football has quality." Al-Hilal is the most successful team in Asia with four continental titles and starts its campaign against Al-Rayyan of Qatar. Ronaldo won five UEFA Champions League but has yet to win a major trophy with Al-Nassr and he will face Iraq's Al-Shorta while Mahrez and Al-



Ahli hosts Persepolis of Iran in Jeddah. As well as the big stars, also reinforcing the chances of the giants from Jeddah and Riyadh, is that from the quarterfinal stage on, all games will take place in Saudi Arabia. There are bigger changes however. The Elite version replaced

the AFC Champions League as the continent's top tournament. The number of teams participating has reduced from 40 to 24. Instead of 10 groups of four, there are two groups of 12, divided into east and west geographic zones, with teams playing eight games with the top

eight progressing to the second round. In the east zone, China, South Korea and Japan all have the maximum allocation of three teams though Australia has only the Central Coast Mariners. Clubs from the A-League have struggled in the Champions League in recent years but if the Mariners can succeed, there may be more places for Australian teams in the future. "We know if we perform and we carry out our game plan and play our way, we know we can compete," Central Coast head coach Mark Jackson said. "We've shown that. Whether we can compete consistently on that front, again with the size of squads these teams have, how they can travel because I'm sure these teams travel in a different way to how we travel." The Elite tournament has become more lucrative with the

winner receiving \$10 million in prize money, an increase from \$4 million last season.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI

WORKS DEPARTMENT
Short Tender call Notice
E-mail: serbpuri@yahoo.co.in

Bid Identification No. SE (R&B) Puri-15/2024-25

The Superintending Engineer, Purī (R&B) Division, Purī on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in single cover system in ONLINE MODE from the eligible class of contractors registered with the State Governments and contractors of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government / Railways:

1. Nature of Work	: Road Work
2. No of Work	: 7 Nos
3. Tender Cost	: Rs. 6000.00(On-Line)
4. Class of bidders	: D Class/ C Class/ B Class
5. Availability of Bid document in of the Website	: From 10.00 AM of Dt.17.09.2024 to 05.00 PM Dt.24.09.2024
6. Last Date of receipt of tender	: Dt.24.09.2024 up to 05.00 PM
7. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt.25.09.2024 at 11.00 AM

8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in> . Any Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Superintending Engineer
Puri (R&B) Division, Puri

OIPR-34064/11/0012/2425



MUSKURAIYE JANAAB, AAP LUCKNOW MEIN HAIN!

A CELEBRATION OF RICH TRADITIONS AND FLAVOURS



The *Lakhnawi Dastarkhwan* at Crowne Plaza Mayur Vihar offered an immersive journey into Lucknow's rich culinary and cultural heritage, recreating iconic locations and combining traditional dishes with cultural elements for an authentic experience, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

The *Lakhnawi Dastarkhwan* Food Festival at Crowne Plaza Mayur Vihar was nothing short of a culinary journey, expertly designed to transport visitors straight to the heart of Lucknow. What made this event truly exceptional was how it went beyond merely serving food, embracing the cultural depth of Lucknow, bringing together flavours, ambiance and tradition in an immersive way.

AN AUTHENTIC LAKHNAWI EXPERIENCE

Upon entering the festival, guests found themselves amidst a scene straight out of Lucknow. The ambiance meticulously recreated iconic locations like *Hazratganj Chowk*, the *Qaisar Bagh* Palace and *Aminabad's* bustling food streets. Visitors could not help but feel like they had stepped back in time, transported to the regal and storied city, complete with a charming vintage single-screen theater that paid homage to Lucknow's cinematic legacy.

A FEAST OF FLAVOURS

At the heart of the festival lay a menu that was a tribute to Lucknow's culinary richness. Diners were treated to signature

dishes like *Galouti Kebabs*, which melted in the mouth with the perfect blend of spices. Accompanied by Awadhi classics such as *Murgh Awadhi Qorma*, *Gosht Nalli Qorma* and *Aloo Bukhara Kofta*, each bite celebrated the deep flavours and heritage of the Nawabs. But it wasn't just the dishes that stole the show, traditional breads like *Sheermal*, *Warqi Parantha* and *Ulta Tawa Parantha* provided the perfect pairings. Especially intriguing were the varieties of rotis: the *Biscotti Roti*, with its biscuit-like texture; *Bakarkhani Roti*, thick and rich and the sweet *Khandari Roti*, each adding a unique twist to the meal. Street food lovers weren't left out either, as the festival brought Lucknow's bustling bazaars to life with delicious snacks like *Tokri Chaat*, *Aloo Tikki* and *Pani Ke Batash*, offering a taste of the city's vibrant food markets right in the heart of Delhi. And to wrap up the feast, guests indulged in traditional sweets like *Shahi Tukda*, *Badnam Kulfi*, *Malai Gilauri* and *hot Jalebis*, offering a delightful sweet ending to an unforgettable culinary journey. The *Lakhnawi Dastarkhwan* festival was a rich exploration of



Lucknow's culinary and cultural heritage. Guests enjoyed melt-in-your-mouth *Galauti Kebabs* and relished main courses like *Arvi Ki Nemaali*, *Ameer Handi Lazeez*, *Chingri Shabnam* and the iconic *Shahi Biryani*. The drinks menu added a playful twist, with *Chulbuli Begum* offering a tangy, bold flair, *Lalla Ki Lemonade* serving as a refreshing burst of tradition and *Pyaar Ka Panchnama* presenting a sweet, rosy charm. *Nawab Ka Ghoonghat* brought a minty, spicy surprise reminiscent of Nawabi secrets, while *Aangan Ki Chai* provided the comforting warmth of a Lucknowi home. Together, the food and drinks created a truly immersive experience, making guests feel as though they had stepped right into the heart of Lucknow. The festival's theme, "Mezban Kadardan



A TASTE OF LUCKNOW'S CULTURE

But the *Lakhnawi Dastarkhwan* festival went beyond just serving exquisite food, it truly immersed guests in the vibrant culture of Lucknow. As they entered, they were warmly greeted by a traditional *Paan counter*, where the sweet meetha paan quickly became a favourite, setting a delightful tone for the evening. Nearby, a *Pandit Ji* added a touch of

Khansam, was a nod to Lucknow's Nawabi culture, *Mezban* represented the gracious hosts, *Kadardan* symbolised those who appreciate the art of food and *Khansam* honoured the master chefs of Lucknow. Executive *Chef Roushan Sharma*, who curated the menu, fondly shared his childhood memories of Lucknow and the intricate process of perfecting dishes like the *Galauti Kebab*.



authenticity with complimentary hand readings and astrological insights, offering a unique and engaging experience for those curious about their fortunes. A Bollywood cinema corner, featuring posters from films shot in Lucknow, brought a touch of nostalgia, evoking the spirit of the city's cinematic history.

The festival also featured colourful stalls bursting with *jhumkas* and *bangles*, perfectly recreating the bustling shopping streets of Lucknow. These vibrant displays contributed to a rich, immersive atmosphere that made guests feel as though they had been transported directly to the heart of the city. Adding to the charm, a vintage letterbox that echoed Lucknow's postal history provided a nostalgic touch, making the event not only entertaining but also deeply memorable. Each thoughtfully curated detail helped create an experience that celebrated the essence of Lucknow's culture, making it a truly unforgettable evening.

In wrapping up, the *Lakhnawi Dastarkhwan* Food Festival at Crowne Plaza Mayur Vihar was a delightful dive into Lucknow's heart and soul. The festival was more than just a feast - it was a warm, immersive experience that captured the spirit of Lucknow perfectly. If you missed it, don't worry, keep an eye out for the next one. It's definitely worth the experience!

NEW OFFERINGS

OPHELIA LAUNCHES BOLD TURKISH MENU

Ophelia, located in The Ashok Hotel, Delhi, introduces an exciting Turkish-inspired menu that merges traditional flavors with modern flair. As a member of the esteemed Campbell India family, *Ophelia* is celebrated for its elegance and culinary expertise. The new menu, crafted in collaboration with renowned Turkish chef Mehmet Emin Yalçin, features highlights like Turkish Potato and Mezze Platter, Lamb Nazik Kebab, and Turkish Garlic Roast Chicken. Complementing the dishes are signature cocktails by Head Mixologist Avesh Negi. *Ophelia's* vibrant Turkish decor and immersive experiences make it a must-visit for food enthusiasts.

Location: Ophelia, Hotel Ashok, 50-B, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, Delhi 110021
Timings: 12:30 PM to 1 AM



GUPPY'S 11TH BIRTHDAY: SPECIAL MENU & FESTIVE FUN!

Join *Guppy*, part of the Olive Group, as it marks its 11th anniversary with a vibrant celebration of Japanese culinary artistry. Enjoy a special birthday menu curated by Head Chef Saurabh Sharan, featuring fresh, inventive dishes. Toast with unique dessert cocktails crafted by



Nishant K Gaurav. Celebrate with fun activities, including live music, a tarot card session, DIY sushi kits, and a Japanese pottery workshop. The little Japanese haven is offering a flat 25% off and a bottle of wine if the number '11' is in the birthdate or birth month of the guest! Discover why *Guppy* remains a beloved culinary gem!

Dates: August 19 - September 30, 2024
Address: 28, Main Market, Lodhi Colony, New Delhi
TIMINGS:
Lunch: 12 PM - 4 PM
Dinner: 6 PM - 12 AM
Price for Two: INR 3000 (without alcohol), INR 5000 (with alcohol)
Reservation: 011 24690005 / 6, +91 9650185005

EXHIBITION: BEYOND THE SURFACE

Beyond the Surface: A Journey Through Form and Abstraction invites viewers to explore the intersection of form and abstraction in contemporary art. This exhibition features the works of Vinod Daroz, Somu Desai, Himanshu Joshi, Tapas Biswas, Gaurishankar Soni, and Bhuwal Prasad, each pushing the boundaries of their media. From ceramic interpretations of sacred union to

metallic reflections on societal facades, and mixed-media reimaginings of urban consciousness, the show challenges initial impressions and encourages a deeper engagement with the layers of artistic expression. Experience a thought-provoking journey through the complexity of surface and substance.

Date: September 13, 2024 - September 30, 2024
Time: 6 PM onwards
Venue: A29/5, DLF Phase 1, Gurugram, Haryana 122002



Bumrah to Promote Healthy Snacking



PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR

TEAM VIVA

Indian cricket star *Jasprit Bumrah* joins hands with American Pistachio Growers for the 2024-25 season. The partnership aims to highlight the nutritional benefits of pistachios, aligning Bumrah's focus on fitness. *Jasprit Bumrah*, the celebrated Indian fast bowler, has been announced as the new brand ambassador for American Pistachios Growers (APG) for the 2024-25 season. This collaboration highlights a focus on healthy snacking, aligning *Bumrah's* athletic achievements with the nutritional benefits of

California-grown pistachios. *Bumrah*, known for his precision and fitness on the cricket field, will now represent a snack rich in protein and healthy fats. Speaking about the partnership, *Bumrah* shared, "I'm pleased to work with American Pistachio Growers. As an athlete, good nutrition is key to maintaining performance, and pistachios offer an ideal balance of protein and healthy fats. They've become my go-to snack to stay at my best." The association between *Bumrah* and American pistachios underscores a shared commitment to

promoting a healthy lifestyle. *Sumit Saran* from APG remarked, "India is an important market for American pistachios, and with *Jasprit Bumrah* as our ambassador, we aim to raise awareness about their nutritional benefits among health-conscious consumers." This collaboration is expected to boost the popularity of pistachios as a nutritious snack option for both fitness enthusiasts and cricket fans. *Dr. Siddhant Bhargava*, a nutrition expert, also emphasised the value of pistachios, stating, "American pistachios are rich in

antioxidants, protein and essential fats, making them a great choice for muscle recovery and overall health. They can support optimal performance, which is especially important for athletes like *Bumrah*." With American pistachios now readily available through major e-commerce platforms and retailers across India, this partnership arrives at an opportune time. Whether you're enjoying a match or simply looking for a healthy snack, pistachios offer a nutritious option that aligns with *Bumrah's* approach to fitness and well-being.

"Despite hanging up my racing wheels over a decade ago, I still get a buzz when we enter an Olympic and Paralympic year"
— Tanni Grey-Thompson



PARIS PARALYMPICS

PARA ATHLETES BASK IN GLORY AND GOLD

The accomplishments of para athletes at Paris Paralympics are not just sporting success but a story of grit and determination, a story of indomitable spirit that soars high despite hardships and challenges, writes RISHABH MALIK

The Paris 2024 Paralympics will go down as one of the most celebrated sporting moments in India's history. The Indian contingent's extraordinary performances were not just a display of athletic prowess but also a powerful reminder of human resilience, willpower, and the ability to triumph against all odds. From setting new records to inspiring millions, the Indian athletes left a remarkable imprint on the global stage. India's Paralympians wasted no time in making their presence felt at Paris 2024. In 12 days of competition India registered 29 medals including 7 gold, 9 silver, and 13 bronze. India's medal count marked significant landmark and breakthroughs in Indian history of Paralympics. India's first medal in the Paralympics came in the 1972 Games, with Murlikant Petkar winning a gold medal in swimming. Up to the recent 2024 Games, India have won 60 medals across all Paralympic Games, with the most successful Paralympic campaign being the Paris 2024 Games with 29 medals. Shooting has traditionally been one of India's strong suits in both the Olympic and Paralympic arenas. In Paris, India's para-shooters continued their stellar run from previous Games. Avani Lekhara, a name that had already become synonymous with Indian Paralympic shooting, won gold in the women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 category. Avani's calm demeanor and laser-focused concentration were on full display as she once again climbed to the top of the podium. This win made her a two-time Paralympic champion and reinforced her place among the world's elite shooters. India's shooting success didn't end there. Her performance was another testament to India's dominance in precision sports, along with Rubina Francis in the same women's 10m air pistol category clinched bronze in shooting. India witnessed some historic milestone in the Paralympics event, For the first time India won 17 medals in athletics, with Dharambir winning gold and Pranav Soorma taking silver in the men's club throw F51 event. Dharambir also established a new Asian record of 34.92 metres. Later, Praveen Kumar set an Asian record by winning the high jump T64 championship, giving India its sixth gold medal at the Paralympics. Mariyappan Thangavelu became the first Indian to win medals at three successive Paralympic Games when he won a bronze in the T42 high jump event. He took home silver in Tokyo 2020 and gold in Rio 2016. With a personal best time, Preethi Pal won bronze in the women's 100-meter T35 competition. It was the first-ever medal for India in a Paralympic track event. Being the only athlete from India to win two medals at the Games, her bronze in the 200m made her the most successful competitor. India finished the



Paris 2024 track season with four medals overall. Among them was Deepthi Jeevanji, who won a bronze in the women's 400m T20 class to become the first intellectually disabled Indian athlete to earn a Paralympic medal. In archery, records were also broken. In the ranking round, armless archer Sheetal Devi in short time broke the world record before coming in second. However, she later joined up with Rakesh Kumar to win the compound mixed team qualifying event with a world record score. Together with Rakesh, Sheetal, at just 17 years old, won bronze in the mixed team event to become the youngest medalist from India ever. Eventually, Harvinder Singh became the first-ever Paralympic archery champion for India. Another athlete who made headlines was Sumit Antil, the javelin thrower who had previously set a world record in Tokyo 2020. In Paris, Sumit not only defended his title but also shattered his own record, throwing an unbelievable 70 meters in the F64 category. His performance earned him his second consecutive Paralympic gold, establishing him as a global force in the sport. Delhi boy Navdeep Singh genetically short in height 4ft tall

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DELHI BOY NAVDEEP SINGH GENETICALLY SHORT IN HEIGHT 4FT TALL (DWARFISM) NAVDEEP WHO HAILS FROM HARYANA EMPLOYED AS INSPECTOR IN THE INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT. THE 23 YEAR OLD WON A HISTORIC GOLD IN DAY BEFORE THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF PARIS PARALYMPICS. FROM BEING BULLIED TO NATIONAL CHAMPION AT F41 JAVELIN THROW EVENT WHICH WAS A ASTONISHING TURN OF EVENT BEFORE THE PODIUM AFTER HE WAS CONFIRMED TO SILVER MEDAL HIS IRANIAN COMPETITOR GOT DISQUALIFIED BEFORE HIS THROW WHICH AUTOMATICALLY UPGRADED HIM TO GOLD MEDAL.
”

(Dwarfism) Navdeep who hails from Haryana employed as Inspector in the Income Tax Department. The 23 year old won a historic gold in day before the closing ceremony of Paris Paralympics. From being bullied to national champion at F41 javelin throw event which was a astonishing turn of event before the podium after he was awarded to silver medal his Iranian competitor got disqualified before his throw which automatically upgraded him to gold medal. There are ups and downs, there are also descents, Suyash Jadhav, (Asian para games gold medallist) in the men's 50m butterfly (S7) fell short in the competition finished fifth in Heat 1 with time 33.47 although he didn't qualify for final but his fight against the strong contenders from the U.S. and Ukraine gave a solid remark of ginger to younger athletes. IAS officer Suhas Yathiraj came in Paris to achieve the previous best in Tokyo Paralympics 2020 but restricted to silver medal in SL4 badminton. After returning from Paris on Tuesday with India's best ever medal tally ever (29) and ranked 18th on team's tally athletes received grand welcome surrounded

by huge numbers of supporters greeted with showering of flowers on them. The Indian contingent met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his residence on Thursday in New Delhi, where PM Modi interacted with all para-athletes of Indian contingent and congratulating the medal winners of Paris Paralympics 2024. Athletes shared their journeys and challenges to overcome the stereotypes of the society. Paralympic Gold Medallist Avani Lekhara gifted her signed jersey to PM Modi. Rewards were announced by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya of 75 lakh to gold-medallists, 50 lakh to silver winners and 30 lakh to bronze-medallists in the games and pledges full support from Government for the LA 2028 campaign. While the Paris 2024 Paralympics was a roaring success for India, it also showed the challenges that continue to plague the country's para-sporting ecosystem. Access to training, medical support, and sponsorships remains uneven, with athletes in rural areas particularly disadvantaged. A Movement, not just Medals Paris 2024 Paralympics should not be seen as an isolated success but as part of a larger movement towards inclusion, empowerment, and equality. India's Paralympians have shown that they are not defined by their disabilities but by their abilities. Their victories are symbolic of a changing India, one that is slowly

but surely starting to embrace diversity in all its forms. As India commemorates this new chapter in athletic prowess, the effect of these players will continue to resonate, pushing the Government to provide greater support, recognition, and growth for para-sports. India's achievement at the Paralympics is more than simply a moment of glory; it is the start of a future in which the country's differently-abled athletes will continue to smash barriers, demonstrating that with spirit and drive, nothing is impossible. Famous Columnist Akhileshwar Sahay stated in his article Khel Vaani India's Paralympic Rise: A Beacon for a More Inclusive Future
NEXT STOP: MISSION TOP FIVE AND MISSION INCLUSIVE REVOLUTION
It's time to jumpstart two missions to be accomplished in four years: Mission Top Five Rank at Los Angeles and Mission Inclusive Revolution to make India disabled-friendly. For the first mission, India must broaden its participation base across the 550 events—both in terms of events participated in and the number of sportspersons per event. No country has a larger pool of disabled individuals than India, with “55 to 90 million,” according to a recent World Bank estimate. This demographic presents a potential goldmine of “Khojo-Paralympians” and a driving force for “Kheho Paralympics”. The lowest-hanging fruit? Track and field events, where the investment per sportsperson is low and the potential return high. All Bharat needs to join the elite Top 5 club is 100 medals at the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympics. It's eminently doable, and the time starts now. Considering that in the last three years (2021–2024), between Tokyo and Paris, Indian Paralympians have amassed 48 medals, 100 medals in 2028 is not a far-fetched dream.





DUBLIN'S HIDDEN GEM

Discover a hidden gem in the Irish capital overlooking the water in the revitalised Silicone Docks. Here, a unique facet of Dublin unfolds, where the historic charm of the city seamlessly intertwines with modern vibrancy

BY AKANKSHA DEAN

Even for locals, this area feels distinctly refreshing, offering a different perspective of Dublin while ensuring that all of its iconic landmarks remain conveniently accessible. Embrace the fusion of old and Dublin's Docklands, affectionately dubbed the 'Silicon Docks,' serve as the European headquarters for tech giants like Facebook, Google, and Airbnb. At the heart of this dynamic district stands Anantara The Marker Hotel, a striking geometric marvel that has become its unofficial emblem. The name 'The Marker' pays homage to the Grand Canal's rich trading history. The canal, stretching 82 miles, was once adorned with cast iron markers indicating the distance to the journey's end. The hotel stands proudly at the site of the last of these markers. Situated on the south bank of the river Liffey, the hotel commands stunning views of Grand Canal Dock and the vibrant Grand Canal Square, featuring the striking Bord Gais Energy Theatre, designed by Daniel Libeskind. At night, the plaza comes alive, illuminated in captivating hues of red and green. This dynamic locale is at the heart of Dublin's thriving tech industry, with one area even dubbed 'Googletown'. Conveniently, the hotel is just a 20-minute drive from Dublin Airport and a mere 15-minute stroll to the city centre, making it an ideal base for exploring the capital's rich offerings.

MODERN ELEGANCE AWAITS

All the design elements at Anantara The Marker tell a story, much like the vibrant neighbourhood surrounding it. The Docklands continues to evolve as a thriving part of the city. As I step into The Marker, I'm immediately struck by its vibrant atmosphere that resonates throughout. The luminous lobby leads into colour-infused bedrooms, each exuding modern elegance. I notice young Dubliners gathering in the atrium for drinks, fostering a lively social scene that pulses with energy. On sunlit days, the rooftop bar becomes a buzzing hub, offering breath-taking views—a perfect retreat amid the city's bustle. Originally opened in 2013 and recently rebranded under Anantara in 2023 after an extensive renovation, this hotel stands as a beacon of modernity. Its striking chequerboard façade, inspired by the Cliffs of Moher, welcomes me into a mesmerizing 67-meter-long atrium with a cantilevered ceiling reminiscent of the Giant's Causeway, where public spaces, including a bar, lounge, and restaurant, invite relaxation and enjoyment. Embodying the Anantara philosophy, the hotel seamlessly integrates the brand's three core pillars—Indigenous, Expertise, and Authentic Luxury—throughout its offerings. Each of the 187 rooms and suites offers breath-taking views of the city, Grand Canal, Dublin Bay, or the mountains, enhanced by floor-to-ceiling windows. The accommodations are thoughtfully designed with ergonomic furnishings,



technology, and luxurious bathrooms for an indulgent experience. The Junior Corner Suite proved to be the perfect refuge for my stay. With ample space to work, unwind, or simply relax, I enjoyed the gentle sunlight streaming onto my Eames-style chair at the desk. A freshly brewed espresso awaited me, a delightful touch to start my day. I was pleasantly surprised to find a bar of Co Wexford's Bean and Goose chocolate by my bedside, boxy on the breakfast menu, and an 'Irish Wine Geese' section on the wine list. The fusion of striking architecture and local storytelling in this 187-bed haven feels refreshingly new. I balanced work and rejuvenation effortlessly. Prioritizing wellness, the award-winning spa provides an array of rejuvenating body treatments and massages, complemented by a 75-foot indoor infinity pool, a steam room, a eucalyptus-infused sauna, and a whirlpool tub. This was the perfect way to begin my mornings before venturing out. One of my favourite retreats was the chic rooftop bar and terrace, which



boasts breath-taking panoramic views. Each evening, I found myself captivated by the skyline, capturing the stunning sunsets that bathed the city in warm orange hues. At the heart of Marker's culinary journey is the vibrant new Forbes Street by Gareth Mullins. As a fan of Gareth's weekly cooking segment, I eagerly anticipated the experience. I began with exquisite Flaggy Shore oysters on crushed ice paired with a delightful Bloody Mary. Next, the marbled rib-eye, flawlessly seared, accompanied by zingy Chimichurri, house-cut chips, and a rocket salad, was a delight. For dessert, creatively

presented North County Dublin rhubarb, with smoked vanilla and crispy potatoes, encapsulated the essence of simple yet exceptional dining.

STORIES OF DUBLIN

Unlike the traditional luxury of the Merrion, Westbury, and Shelbourne, The Marker embraces bold architecture while ensuring substance accompanies its style. Anantara's mantra, 'Life is a journey,' resonates through its various activities like docklands walks and sea swimming. What truly distinguishes are its unforgettable bespoke experiences, meticulously designed to immerse visitors in the local culture and lifestyle. For food enthusiasts, the signature Spice Spoons journey with Executive Chef Gareth Mullins is a delightful highlight. Guests spend the day with Mullins exploring the charming fishing village of Howth, just 30 minutes from Dublin, and embark on a chartered fishing boat around Dublin Bay, where they might spot dolphins and seals. Afterward, a visit to Kish Fish, one of Ireland's

premier salmon smokehouses, precedes an enriching lesson in baking traditional Irish soda bread back at the hotel. Other curated experiences include Wild Swimming in a popular local spot under the guidance of an open-sea coach, an insightful deep dive into equine culture at the Irish National Stud and Gardens with a renowned horse trainer, and Afternoon Tea: Poetry and Places, which celebrates Ireland's literary heritage. For me, the highlight was the Docklands Storytelling Tour led by Derek Brennan, the hotel's Irish storyteller and guest experience manager. His captivating narratives weave together the rich history of the Docklands, bringing the area's past to life through his engaging tales, a connection forged since the hotel's inception in 2013.

SIP, STROLL, EXPLORE

A trip to Dublin is incomplete without exploring its rich offerings. A must-visit is EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, conveniently located within walking distance of the hotel. This interactive museum delves into the history of the Irish

diaspora and emigration. Just around the corner lies The Ferryman Townhouse, a lively pub where locals warmly welcome visitors, eager to share a table and demonstrate the art of enjoying a pint in under ten seconds. For those with a sense of adventure, Grafton Street, The Temple Bar, and Trinity College Dublin are a leisurely 30-minute stroll away. Be sure to reserve an evening for the renowned Guinness Storehouse, where a guided tour reveals the brewing process, and guests can even create a 'stoutie,' a selfie on the frothy beer head. This fusion of modernity and community encapsulates the essence of Dublin's evolving urban landscape, making it a must-visit destination for locals and travellers alike.

Akanksha Dean is an independent food & travel writer, a chef and a catalyst and is the first Indian to have trained at Osteria Francescana, in Modena, Italy, rated as the world's best restaurant in the World's 50 Best Restaurants, in 2016 and 2018 and currently in the Best of The Best Category.

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF INDIAN ACCENT

A Journey Through Taste and Tradition

Indian Accent's 15th anniversary marked a memorable evening, celebrating its rich legacy with a blend of nostalgic classics and inventive culinary creations, says SAKSHI PRIYA

As Indian Accent New Delhi celebrated its 15th anniversary, the occasion paid tribute to its remarkable culinary journey. With softly dimmed lighting and elegant candlelit tables, the ambiance set a warm and inviting tone for the evening. The sophisticated atmosphere, combined with a touch of nostalgia, created a perfect backdrop for a dining experience that was both refined and memorable. Walking into Indian Accent felt like stepping into a space where the charm of tradition and the excitement of modernity seamlessly merged, crafting an unforgettable experience. The evening featured a nostalgic look back at Indian Accent's inaugural tasting menu from 2009, allowing guests to revisit beloved classics that had been instrumental in shaping the restaurant's journey. Dishes like the Whole Wheat and Semolina Puchkas, Paneer Tikka Chaat and Khakra Mille Feuille served as a heartwarming reminder of the restaurant's evolution and enduring appeal. The journey began with Chef Shantanu Mehrotra at the helm, who crafted a menu that would soon become a

sensation. Reflecting on those early days, Chef Mehrotra recalls the excitement and challenges of the original menu. While some dishes met with mixed reviews, others quickly captured the hearts of diners. Today, Indian Accent is celebrated for its pivotal role in bringing modern Indian cuisine to the global stage. The celebration commenced with a sensory feast, beginning with the Blue Cheese Naan. This dish was a revelation, a delightful twist on a classic favourite. The crisp texture combined with the bold, creamy blue cheese offered a unique start to the evening. Paired with the Mushroom Shawarma, subtly spiced with garam masala, it was a comforting yet adventurous introduction that set the tone for the meal to come. The evening begins with a nod to the past through a selection of appetisers that have become icons of Indian Accent's innovative approach. The Whole Wheat and Semolina Puchkas provided a playful yet refined take on street food. The trio of waters - mint and coriander, tamarind and jaggery and buttermilk - offered a delightful balance of flavours, beautifully encapsulating Indian Accent's



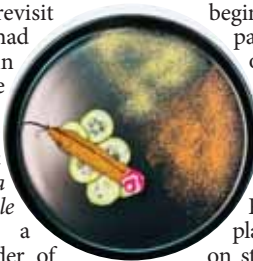
approach to blending traditional elements with modern sophistication. Chef Shantanu Mehrotra's talent was unmistakable throughout the tasting menu. His creations, such as the Paneer Tikka Chaat and Khakra Mille Feuille, were perfect examples of his ability to blend textures and flavours in imaginative and delightful ways. The Beetroot and Peanut Tikki with Caper Wasabi Chutney was particularly memorable, showcasing his knack for transforming humble ingredients into something truly remarkable. The main courses continued to impress with their inventive twists on both classic and global flavours.



The Bharwan Mirch with Goat Cheese Mousse and Chilli Aam Papad Chutney was a revelation, blending bold flavours with finesse. The Paneer Lasagna with Smoked Aubergine and Goji Berry Makhni offered a creative and comforting take on a beloved classic. The Turkish Sultanas and CousCous Ki Tahiri with Anar Avocado Raita was a brilliant example of how global influences can be seamlessly integrated into modern Indian cuisine. The grand finale of the evening was nothing short of a dessert lover's dream come true. The Indian Accent Kulfi Sorbet was like a refreshing burst of icy goodness, cleansing the palate with a playful,

creamy touch. But hold on tight, things got even sweeter with the Kinnaur Apple Shakarpara Crumble. Imagine the crunch of perfectly baked apple crumble mingling with the smooth, homemade vanilla bean ice cream—every bite was a joyous celebration of texture and flavour. And just when you thought it couldn't get any better, the Coconut and Jaggery Brulee with Ruby Grapefruit Pops Amarula Ki Chuski arrived, turning dessert into an art form. The rich brulee, with its luscious coconut and jaggery notes, paired with zesty grapefruit pops and a hint of Amarula, was an explosion of taste that left us craving more. Complementing this sweet finale was the Daulat Ki Chaat, which emerged as a standout. Its saffron-infused elegance, adorned with almonds and a hint of sugar, was both a visual delight and a burst of refined flavours. This dish exemplified the restaurant's commitment to creative excellence and its ability to elevate even the most familiar flavours into something extraordinary. Each dessert was a playful, indulgent end to a meal that was nothing short of spectacular!

Reflecting on this milestone, it became clear that the 15th anniversary was not just a celebration of Indian Accent's rich history but also a vibrant showcase of its future. The event honoured the restaurant's legacy while highlighting its ongoing dedication to culinary excellence and innovation. Chef Shantanu Mehrotra's passion and creativity were evident in every dish, underscoring the restaurant's status as one of New Delhi's most cherished culinary destinations. Indian Accent's 15th anniversary celebration was a memorable reflection on its past, with a touch of nostalgia, while also offering a glimpse into its future. The evening was all about elegance, creativity and exceptional flavours. Chef Shantanu Mehrotra's innovative approach and remarkable talent shone through in every dish, proving that Indian Accent is more than just a restaurant - it's a symbol of innovation and sophistication in the culinary world. This anniversary wasn't just a milestone, it was a celebration of a remarkable journey filled with flavour, creativity and lasting excellence.



THE BEST COMEDY COMES FROM A SPECIFIC VIEW POINT, AND THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE INDIAN CULTURE HAS ITS OWN TAKE ON THE WORLD
— BRIAN QUINN



FROM WHEELS TO WINGS

The story of transport through time is showcased meticulously at the *Heritage Transport Museum* and is a nostalgic journey for the grownups and curious potent for the young, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

Nestled in the heart of Gurugram, the Heritage Transport Museum offers a vivid glimpse into India's rich transport history. It is not merely a museum but a living narrative of how India's transportation systems have evolved over the years. From early bullock carts to vintage cars, each display in the museum is a portal to a time when travel wasn't just about the destination but the experience itself. India's transport history offers a vivid reflection of the country's broader cultural and social transformations. The evolution of transportation—from traditional bullock carts and hand-pulled rickshaws to modern vehicles and advanced public transit—parallels significant societal, technological, and economic changes. Various modes of transport illustrate the evolution of cultural practices and daily life. For example, traditional transport methods like palanquins and bullock carts reveal historical social structures and regional customs, while the advent of motorized vehicles signifies a shift toward modernization and globalization. The Heritage Transport Museum is a treasure trove of historical gems, each piece providing a unique window into India's transport legacy. The Museum in Gurugram offers a fascinating glimpse into the evolution of transportation in India. As India's first comprehensive transport museum, it showcases a wide array of unique items that reflect the country's rich history in this sector. Among the standout exhibits is an extensive collection of vintage cars, including iconic models like the Ford Model T and the Rolls-Royce Phantom. Each vehicle tells a story, with plaques detailing their origins, ownership histories, and their journeys through India's roads. The museum also houses an impressive collection of two-wheelers, featuring everything from early Royal Enfield bikes to classic Vespa scooters. These vehicles capture the changing dynamics of transportation in India, from rural commutes to urban lifestyles. A particularly unique feature is the railway exhibit, which includes vintage carriages,

We hope to instil a respect for our heritage: Tarun Thakral

Tarun Thakral, the founder & managing trustee of Heritage Transport Museum is also the Executive Director at CJ International Hotels Ltd, New Delhi that owns and manages Le Meridien New Delhi. Tarun started his career in the Hospitality business in 1986. In 1990, he won the French Government scholarship to pursue MBA program in International Hospitality Management from 'Institut de Hotelier Management International', Paris. To pursue his hobby and passion in vintage and classic cars, in 1996 Tarun founded Heritage Transportation Trust (HTT) - a registered not-for-profit trust to promote the preservation of modes of transportation that have been used in India. As its Founder and Managing Trustee, HTT has developed India's first comprehensive Transport Museum, Heritage Transport Museum, which opened to visitors in December 2013. Since its opening Museum won many prestigious awards - The National Tourism Award for being the most innovative and unique tourism project in the country, the 2016 and 2018 Travellers Choice Award by TripAdvisor, International PATWA award for innovation at ITB, Germany, the BITB Tourism Excellence Award, SATTE Tourism award for innovation, and more. He talked to Gyaneshwar Dayal about his

passion and labour of love, The Heritage Transport Museum: **What inspired you to create the Heritage Transport Museum? Was there a specific moment or experience that ignited your passion for preserving India's transport history?** India did not have a comprehensive transport museum until the Heritage Transport Museum opened its doors to visitors. Given the presence of remarkable transport museums worldwide, I often wondered why India didn't have one of its own. As my personal collection of transport memorabilia expanded, managing it became increasingly difficult. We launched the Heritage Transport Museum in December 2013, and it remains India's sole transport museum to this day. **How did you go about collecting such an impressive and diverse array of transport artefacts? Were there any particularly challenging or memorable acquisitions?** In 1994, I purchased my first vintage car from Ramgarh Shekhawati, Rajasthan, which was in a state of disrepair. The process of restoring this vehicle over nearly a year brought me immense joy and ignited a passion for collecting and preserving vehicles from being scrapped. My collection soon grew to include cars, two-wheelers, bicycles, carriages, and carts. In 2002, I came across an advertisement from Indian



Railways about scrapping several 1930s railway saloons. I quickly contacted the Railway Board, expressing my interest in purchasing and preserving one of these saloons. Since the Railways had never before sold such items to private individuals, it took over a year of negotiations. Ultimately, I succeeded in acquiring and restoring the saloon, which now proudly stands at the museum on a recreated vintage railway platform. **What criteria do you use to select the items displayed in the museum?** The Heritage Transport Museum features a diverse array of transportation modes used for both private and public transport throughout history. Our aim is to display the full range of transportation, encompassing cars,

buses, two-wheelers, traditional transport methods, non-motorized vehicles, railways, trams, aviation, and maritime. We choose items based on their historical importance, popularity, and how they complement our existing collection. We also carefully evaluate how each object will engage and benefit our visitors. **What are the biggest challenges you've faced in preserving and restoring some of the older or more delicate items in the museum's collection?** Many items, especially those that are decades or even centuries old, face natural deterioration over time. Components can become fragile or worn, making the restoration process both meticulous and delicate. For vintage vehicles and machinery,

locating original or compatible parts can be extremely challenging, often necessitating custom fabrication or innovative solutions to replace missing or damaged components. Restoring complex items, such as early aviation or railway equipment, requires specialized knowledge and skills, and finding experts with the necessary experience can be difficult. **What are your future plans for the Heritage Transport Museum? Are there any upcoming exhibitions or expansions that visitors can look forward to?** We have several exciting initiatives in store for the Heritage Transport Museum to enrich its offerings and continue captivating our visitors. One of our key plans is to introduce an experience centre that will provide a unique, multisensory experience. We're also expanding our exhibitions to feature rare artefacts that showcase various aspects of transportation history. To keep up with the latest technological advancements, we aim to incorporate more interactive and immersive technologies, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and advanced simulation tools, to make the exploration of transport history even more engaging. **What drives your passion for curating and expanding the museum's collection? How do you stay motivated in continuing this labour of love?**

A deep passion for history, culture, and education, coupled with a strong commitment to preserving and sharing important stories and artefacts for future generations. The continual excitement and inspiration of discovering new ways to present these treasures and enhance the museum's narrative. The joys of seeing visitors engage with, learn from, and appreciate the museum's offerings. The profound personal fulfilment derived from working in a field I genuinely love and enjoy. And, of course, the pride in contributing to the museum's enduring legacy. **What kind of experience do you hope visitors take away from the museum? Is there a particular message or feeling you want them to leave with?** One of the greatest compliments we've received is being recognized as a world-class museum in India. Many visitors leave with a profound sense of nostalgia, feeling moved, inspired, and reflective. They depart with a deeper understanding of the evolution of transport, and the museum continues to ignite curiosity and further interest in its visitors. We hope to instil a respect for our heritage, encouraging visitors to think about ways to preserve it for future generations. For younger visitors, we aspire to inspire them to develop hobbies that bring them fulfilment and satisfaction.

signaling systems, and detailed replicas of early Indian trains. Visitors can explore the interior of these carriages and get a sense of the grandeur of rail travel during the colonial period. For aviation enthusiasts, the museum features models and artifacts from India's early civil aviation history, including scaled replicas of early Indian aircraft. Another intriguing exhibit is a full-size 1950s Piper J3C Cub aircraft, providing a rare close-up view of mid-20th-century aviation. One of the more immersive experiences is the display of

maritime memorabilia, with detailed models of ships and boats that were integral to India's naval history and trade routes. The museum's art and design installations also deserve mention, with sections devoted to the design evolution of vehicles, showcasing how aesthetics and functionality have shaped modern transport. Besides, the Museum has also a 3D virtual reality ride on a rickshaw over the China wall which is a big hit with the children and elders alike. The development of transportation also mirrors India's economic progress. The transition

from horse-drawn carriages to trains and automobiles highlights the country's industrial growth and enhanced connectivity, which has facilitated trade and mobility. Additionally, transportation innovations have been crucial in driving social change. The introduction of public transportation systems such as buses and metro rails has influenced urbanization, accessibility, and social integration, affecting how people live and work. The Heritage Transport Museum plays a crucial role in enriching our understanding of India's

history by preserving and showcasing these transportation milestones. Through its diverse collection of transport artifacts, the museum offers visitors insights into how transportation has both shaped and been shaped by the broader socio-cultural context. It effectively connects the past with the present, providing a tangible link to India's rich history and its ongoing evolution. The museum houses an impressive collection, thoughtfully curated to spark fascination. The assortment ranges from classic vintage cars to steam engines, traditional

bicycles, and even airplanes. Visitors can explore artifacts that depict the evolution of transport—some centuries old, others representative of the industrial age. There is also a segment dedicated to maritime history, complete with beautifully preserved models of ships, giving the experience an almost encyclopaedic richness. What truly sets the Heritage Transport Museum apart is the meticulous passion with which it has been curated. The layout of the museum is designed not just to showcase relics but to narrate stories. Interactive displays,

lifelike dioramas, and thematic galleries transport visitors into the very eras these machines were part of. Each exhibit is placed within a larger cultural and social context, enabling visitors to appreciate its significance beyond the mechanics. It's not just a collection of vehicles; it's a carefully woven tapestry of India's transport evolution, enhanced by attention to detail. For anyone with an interest in history, innovation, or transport, the Heritage Transport Museum is a must-visit, where every exhibit is a labour of love, offering a journey through time.

THE MONSOON'S WHISPER IN EVERY NOTE

Vidushi Sunanda Sharma's *Boondan Phuhaar* concert celebrated the monsoon with enchanting Indian classical music, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

There is something undeniably timeless and evocative about Indian classical music, especially when performed by an artist as deeply rooted in tradition as Vidushi Sunanda Sharma. On a beautiful evening at the Stein Auditorium in New Delhi, Sharma brought the monsoon season to life with her performance, 'Boondan Phuhaar.' The concert was not merely a display of musical mastery but a heartfelt celebration of nature, tradition and the human spirit. Sharma, a vocalist of the Banaras Gharana, captivated her audience with her soulful

voice that seemed to capture the very essence of the rainy season. Each note felt like a raindrop, each melody a breeze dancing through the trees. She was accompanied by a gifted ensemble, including Pt. Vinay Mishra on the harmonium, Pt. Mithilesh Kumar Jha on the tabla and U. Ghulam Ali on the sarangi, who together created an atmosphere that was almost spiritual. Their performance reminded everyone present of the unique power of live music to evoke deep emotions and transport listeners to another world. What stood out most was not just the technical excellence on display but the depth of



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

feeling in every note. There was a genuine joy and emotional connection to the monsoon season that resonated throughout the performance, making the audience feel the beauty and poignancy of the rains. In a world that often feels dominated by digital and impersonal entertainment, this concert was a poignant reminder of the impact of live music and its ability to make people feel truly alive. The evening was also a celebration of India's rich cultural heritage. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's reflections on Varanasi's spirit and its deep-rooted connection to the classical

arts underscored the importance of preserving these traditions. Sunanda Sharma's commitment to her craft and her work with the Girija Darshan Trust, named after her revered Gurus, Smt. Girija Devi ji and Pt. Sudarshan Sharma, is commendable. Through her efforts to nurture young talent and provide a platform for established artists, she ensures that this exquisite form of music remains vibrant and relevant, not just a relic of the past. More than just a concert, 'Boondan Phuhaar' felt like a journey into the heart of the monsoon - a gentle escape from the rush of daily life.

The performance offered a rare chance to slow down, to be present and to savour the profound beauty of music that is so intricately connected to nature. Sunanda Sharma's devotion to her heritage and artistry was evident in every note, making the evening a memorable and moving experience. In an age where life often moves at a relentless pace, this event was a timely reminder of the importance of taking a moment to appreciate the simple, yet profound joys - a rain-soaked evening, a beautiful melody and a shared experience that brings people closer to the essence of life itself.

I'M A CULINARY GANGSTA WITH A VERY SPIRITUAL SIDE, SO WHEN I WAS INTRODUCED TO THE 'SPIRITUAL GANGSTER' LINE, I HAD TO HAVE IT — GUY FIERI

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This moment marks a significant phase of transformation and opportunity, signaling a time when momentum swings in your favor, particularly in endeavors where you've been actively investing your efforts. You may encounter opportunities for financial advancement or serendipitous gains, underscoring your knack for realizing ambitions and cultivating prosperity. It's essential to approach this period with boldness, as the conditions are ripe for pursuing significant goals. Yet, remember the inherent fluctuations of life's cycles; what ascends will eventually find its balance. Capitalize on this favorable phase by consolidating your strategies, and setting a foundation for enduring achievement. Anticipate and adapt to any rapid changes, relying on your adeptness to manage them. This week, your influence over your circumstances is amplified, making it an excellent time to embrace opportunities that resonate with your objectives.

Lucky number 15 | **Lucky colour** Blue
Lucky day Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This period suggests a phase of introspection and reconsidering your usual approach. It often marks a moment where forward motion might feel paused, yet this is actually an opportunity for deeper reflection and discovering fresh perspectives. For someone known for their dynamic and confident demeanor, this week is a call to adopt a more relaxed and open-minded stance. It's an invitation to release tightly held plans and explore different viewpoints. This shift can feel uncomfortable or counterintuitive but embracing this time of stillness can lead to significant personal growth and a better understanding of your aspirations. Approach this phase with curiosity and openness, rather than frustration. By welcoming new ideas and embracing flexibility, you'll uncover insights that will assist in advancing with renewed clarity and purpose after this reflective pause.

Lucky number 9 | **Lucky colour** Yellow
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This period highlights a phase where your internal fortitude and compassion are crucial in shaping your experiences. It's essential to harness this inner vigor with elegance and understanding, focusing on the equilibrium between assertiveness and tenderness. The current time encourages you to confront challenges with tranquility and persistence, utilizing your inherent charm and resilience to manage obstacles effectively. This week, your capacity to exhibit care and affection, for both yourself and others, will play a pivotal role in surmounting difficulties and achieving your aspirations. The influences at play suggest that your genuine intentions and empathetic approach will navigate you through any adversities. Embrace this opportunity to showcase your internal robustness and to motivate those around you with your sympathetic and brave spirit.

Lucky number 20 | **Lucky colour** White
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week marks a crucial phase of introspection and overcoming self-imposed barriers. It's a period where you might feel hindered by negative thought loops and detrimental habits. Often, these obstacles manifest as feelings of entrapment or limitation, which can stem from emotional, mental, or practical issues in your life. You might be battling with self-doubt, persistent worry, or feeling stuck in a repetitive cycle that seems insurmountable. Now is the time to scrutinize areas in your life where fear or insecurity may be dictating your choices. Recognizing and confronting these discomforts is vital, as they can skew your decisions and hinder your true potential. This phase encourages you to face these challenges directly, perhaps by seeking support or adopting healthier routines to free yourself from these binds.

Lucky number 6 | **Lucky colour** Fuchsia
Lucky day Wednesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week marks a pivotal moment for harnessing your inner strength and determination to drive forward towards your aspirations. It's a time to effectively manage your focus and direct your energies toward your goals. You are called upon to resolve any conflicting interests or divergent paths by adopting a disciplined and strategic approach. This period challenges you to utilize your extensive knowledge and analytical prowess to navigate through potential obstacles. By aligning your actions with your clear intentions, you are set to make substantial progress. Embrace the momentum that surrounds you, as it aids in propelling you towards achieving your ambitions. This is an excellent opportunity to assert your resolve and make decisive advancements in both your personal and professional journeys.

Lucky number 11 | **Lucky colour** Teal
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This period may feel like a time of emotional turmoil, marked by an emphasis on what feels lacking rather than what has been accomplished. During this phase, there's a tendency to dwell on past setbacks or areas where expectations weren't met, leading to feelings of emptiness or dissatisfaction. This reflective mood can make it difficult to see the gains you've made or the opportunities still available. It's crucial to confront these feelings, yet it's important to pivot your attention towards the constructive aspects of your situation. Encourage yourself to focus on the support and success that still exist in your life. By seeking a more balanced outlook and appreciating the present assets, you can begin to overcome feelings of shortfall and direct your energies toward actions that foster growth and renewal.

Lucky number 22 | **Lucky colour** Rust
Lucky day Monday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This period may be marked by challenges and rivalries that bring differing viewpoints into sharp focus. You could find yourself in the midst of debates or disputes in various areas of life, from professional environments to personal relationships. These situations, filled with tension and disagreement, also offer a chance for growth and enhanced understanding. Embrace these challenges constructively and handle conflicts with a mindset geared towards resolution. Although such disagreements can induce stress, they also provide opportunities for gaining valuable insights and developing innovative solutions if handled with patience and tact. Instead of succumbing to frustration, strive to find common ground and work collaboratively to resolve any underlying issues. Your capacity to effectively communicate and navigate through diverse perspectives will be essential.

Lucky number 10 | **Lucky colour** Plum
Lucky day Sunday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week, you are poised to tap into a profound source of personal power, enabling you to realize your ambitions effectively. This period highlights your capacity to utilize your intrinsic resources and connect with your unique energies to shape significant outcomes. You possess the necessary abilities and insight to transform your dreams into tangible results. Your enhanced persuasive skills and strategic mindset will play pivotal roles in guiding scenarios to your advantage, fostering the achievement of your objectives. It is crucial, however, to exercise this influence with integrity, steering clear of any unethical tactics. Emphasize genuine intentions and align your actions accordingly. Harness the dynamism of this time by directing your energies with intention and clarity, allowing you to not only fulfill your goals but also achieve a deep sense of personal satisfaction and growth.

Lucky number 13 | **Lucky colour** Mustard
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week heralds a period of fresh beginnings and a vibrant pursuit of personal ambitions. You find yourself at the early stages of accomplishment, with promising opportunities for advancement in your financial and professional life. There's a wave of enthusiasm and a readiness to absorb new knowledge, making it a prime time to set forth new intentions and establish a foundation for future achievements. A prevailing sense of discipline enhances your ability to take decisive, practical steps toward your goals, securing a robust framework for lasting success. You may discover blessings in the guise of new resources or chances that bolster your ambitions, encouraging you to delve into your capabilities and undertake new responsibilities confidently. Furthermore, maintaining your ethical standards is crucial, ensuring your actions consistently reflect your deepest values.

Lucky number 7 | **Lucky colour** Orange
Lucky day Saturday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Your hard work and efforts are about to be recognized and celebrated, drawing you into gatherings with friends, family, or colleagues. It's an ideal time for social events and joyful reunions, whether you're celebrating a personal milestone, a professional accomplishment, or simply the pleasure of shared experiences. This period encourages you to indulge in these moments of triumph, to embrace the positive atmosphere, and to fully enjoy the sense of accomplishment and togetherness. It's also a time to express gratitude and acknowledge the support of your loved ones. By embracing your achievements and strengthening your bonds, you will improve your relationships and increase your overall sense of joy and satisfaction.

Lucky number 2 | **Lucky colour** Green
Lucky day Thursday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This period marks a significant emphasis on heritage and established beliefs, steering you towards a deeper exploration of time-honored traditions and spiritual frameworks. You might find yourself more inclined to connect with authoritative figures or institutions that can offer guidance and support. This phase is ripe for introspection, urging you to contemplate how your personal principles align with long-standing practices. Engaging with mentors or participating in community rituals could provide the clarity and direction you seek. Your keen desire to delve deep into these subjects will be beneficial, as it allows you to absorb and respect the wisdom shared by seasoned paths. By dedicating yourself to this journey of understanding and respect, you set the stage for substantial personal growth and equilibrium.

Lucky number 1 | **Lucky colour** Brown
Lucky day Friday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This period may feel like you're sailing through misty waters, where emotions swirl unpredictably, and clarity seems just out of reach. You might find yourself wrestling with doubts and fears that are difficult to pinpoint as if navigating a landscape obscured by fog. These feelings can lead to a sense of restlessness, urging you to question what's real and what's merely a reflection of your inner uncertainties. During this time, it's crucial to engage deeply with your inner self, peeling back the layers of your emotions to confront what lies beneath. Trusting your inner voice becomes essential, as it will help you discern truth from illusion. By embracing introspection and patience, you can turn this challenging phase into a profound journey of personal discovery, leading to a newfound sense of balance and insight.

Lucky number 10 | **Lucky colour** White
Lucky day Friday

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Do you pray?

Divine dawns within you when you pray. A deep prayer can work miracles. Be sincere when you pray, pray for the happiness of all!

GURUSPEAK



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
Spiritual Guru

Prayer is a vital tool to improve your life. Wherever you can put your effort, put it. Where you cannot, pray for it! Whatever you do, know that a Higher Power has the final say and you can tap that power through your prayers.

You don't need any special qualifications or abilities to pray. Whether a fool or a wise person, whether rich or poor, anybody can pray. Prayer doesn't mean just sitting and chanting some words. It's about being in that serene, calm, and meditative state. That is why, in the Vedic tradition, dhyana (meditation) is done before prayer as well as afterward. When the mind is focused, the prayer becomes far more powerful.

Prayer is the cry of a soul. To whom you pray is not important. Whereas religion puts words to the prayer, and adds symbols and rituals to it, the prayer itself transcends them. It happens on the subtle level of feelings; and feelings transcend words and religion. The act of praying itself has



the power to bring transformation. When you pray there should be total involvement. If the mind is preoccupied elsewhere then that is no prayer at all. When there is pain, there is more involvement. That's why people

turn to prayer when they are in pain. Prayer happens when you feel grateful or when you feel utterly helpless. In either case, your prayers will be answered. When you feel helpless, prayer happens by itself. That's why in

Hindi we say 'Nirbal toh Balam'. If you are weak, God is your strength. Prayer is that moment when you come in touch with your limitations and your boundaries.

In today's fast-paced world, people often pray out of fear and greed. Usually, when you love something, you want to possess it and you pray for it. True prayer, however, is just the opposite of wanting to possess. It's about honouring and offering everything to the Divine. Honouring brings devotion and leads to surrender. Devotion brings a healing touch to life.

Devotion and faith are at the core of a sincere prayer. A true prayer can't happen without devotion and faith. Having faith is to realize that God's protection is there for you. Devotion is inner flowering. Devotion starts from where you are. Unless you are lit in devotion to the Divine, your life will remain restless. In devotion, longing will arise in you. And when there is longing, true prayer happens by itself.

Be sincere in your prayers. Do not try to outsmart the Divine. The mind has the tendency to forget the Divine. What type of time do you give the Divine? Usually, you give the leftover time; when you have nothing else to do, no guests to attend to, no parties to attend to, you go to the Divine.

This is not quality time. Give prime time to the Divine. You will be rewarded. If your prayers are not answered, it is because you have never given quality time.

Four types of people go to God. One, is those who seek the truth (knowledge and freedom). Two, the wise ones (gyanis). Three, the ones who seek material comforts (wealth). Four, the ones who are in misery. The wise one does not pray for something. His life itself is a prayer.

If at all you have to pray for something, pray for the happiness of all the people in the world. 'Loka Samastha Sukhinou Bhavantu' (May Everybody Be Happy).