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## Supreme Court raps Air Quality Commission over stubble burning

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

"There has been total non-compliance of the Act. Please show us a single direction issued to any stakeholder under the Act. We are of the view that though the commission has taken steps, it needs to be more active. The commission must ensure that its efforts and directions issued actually translate into reducing the problem of pollution," the bench said. The Court added that the CAQM may not be holding sufficient meetings and was hardly issuing enough directions to tackle violations of environmental norms. "The Chairperson present today through VC says that three sub-committees are holding only one meeting every three months. They have been assigned important tasks.



FILE PHOTO: PTI

We wonder how they are performing those tasks by meeting only once in three months!" the Court said. SC said efforts are needed to ensure that stubble-burning alternative equipments are used at the grassroots level. The panel must immediately step into action to ensure the equipment provided by the Central Government for avoiding stubble burning are actually used by the farmers, it added. The bench directed the panel to file a better compliance report and posted the matter for hearing on October 3. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, informed the court about the steps taken, such as issuing advisories and guidelines, to control

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



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

PNS ■ MUMBAI/PATNA/SHIMLA

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

## BJP, Cong crossfire in Haryana poll

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ REWARI/ NEW DELHI

With elections round the corner, BJP on Friday latched on to alleged corruption involving Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's brother-in-law Robert Vadra when the Congress was in power in Haryana by firing a fresh salvo against the Opposition party. Modi during his campaign in Haryana recently had also revived the corruption charges involving him to slam the Congress and its leadership. Vadra has constantly denied allegations of any wrongdoing and accused the BJP of targeting him due to political vendetta. Echoing Modi's words, Union Home Minister Amit Shah too trained his guns on the grand old party, alleging that "dealers, dalaals and damaad" used to rule the State before the BJP came into power. He also asked Rahul Gandhi if he knew the full form of MSP as he underlined that the BJP government in Haryana was procuring 24 crops at the minimum support price. With the Congress seen to be putting up a strong challenge after registering an impressive performance in the Lok Sabha polls, BJP sought to know who will stop Vadra if the party comes to power again. Haryana had become a hotbed of corruption when it was in power between 2004 and 2014, he said. BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed the election in the State is a fight between "Haryana ka laal" (son of Haryana) and "dalaal" (fixer) of the Gandhi family, as it questioned the Congress leadership's silence on the corruption charges against Vadra and the party's then Government



headed by Bhupinder Singh Hooda. He said people of the State have made up their mind to elect the BJP to power for a third straight term, asserting that the central Government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the State Government headed by Nayab Singh Saini have worked for farmers' welfare. In one case, he noted, Vadra's company allegedly acquired 3.5 acres of land of farmers and the then Hooda Government changed the land use, allowing him to pocket a huge profit by selling the parcel at four times the purchase price. In another case, farmers resorted to distress selling of their land after the Congress Government in the State issued a notification to acquire their land and then denotified after a builder linked to Vadra bought their land, he alleged. Rahul on his part stressed the need for simplifying the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and opening up the banking system to small businesses to promote job creation and alleged that Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's "monopoly model" has taken away jobs in the country. Sharing a video of the "Dogri Dham with RG" event hosted by the All India Professionals' Congress (AIPC) in Jammu on Wednesday, Rahul said that the frustration in the eyes of a young start-up owner from Jammu and Kashmir reflects the struggles of most entrepreneurs and small-business owners in India. "The systematic attack on small and medium industries through incompetent policies like a bad GST and demonetisation has turned India from a producing economy to a consuming one. At this rate we can neither compete with China nor ensure prosperity for all Indians," he said, adding that India deserves better. In his rally Shah also attacked the Congress on the issue of corruption, reservation and over Article 370, which he said, the Congress wants to bring it back. Shah claimed the BJP will return to power in Haryana for third time after the October 5 polls.

## No compromise on corruption: CM to Collectors

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday sent a clear message to the district Collectors that there is no question of compromise on corruption under the BJP rule in the State.

While speaking at his maiden two-day State-level Collectors' Conference here, Majhi said he has come across several administrative irregularities during the tenure of the previous government.

"All the allegations that you might come across via MPs, MLAs, media and people may not be true, but the Collectors should take necessary steps after conducting an investigation," said he.

During its first 100 days, the new government has already taken a number of welfare projects for the people. Early start and early completion of the projects are important, he said.

"I have realised that there are corruption, irregularities and escalation of project cost due to inordinate delays. I have observed a trend that the work usually progresses at a snail's



pace throughout and there is progress in expenditure at lightning speed in the month of March. This leads to deterioration in quality of work. There is no dearth of funds and, hence, the officials should write to the concerned departments to resolve the issues. The officials can directly contact the Chief Minister. The Collectors have been asked to conduct regular monitoring of block-wise implementation of schemes along with financial and physical progress," said the CM.

He also urged the Collectors to take steps to review projects which are at various levels. They should take steps to map these projects using

technology and review things after analysing the real-time data and resolve the bottlenecks. The Collectors act as the last-mile connectivity for the government. The government can come up with policies, but Collectors have a key role to play as they can ensure that the schemes reach the beneficiaries. A Collector is government for people in other parts of the State, he said.

"The State Government wants to transform Odisha into number 1 State in the country. Odisha is rich in resources. However, there has been no proper utilisation of these resources due to several reasons," he said.

## Assault on Major, his fiancée 4 more cops to undergo polygraph test

NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR

Four more police officials, suspended in connection with the alleged custodial torture of an Army Major and his fiancée at the Bharatpur police station here, will undergo polygraph tests.

The Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) Court here on Friday granted permission for the polygraph tests of one Sub-Inspector and two Assistant Sub-Inspectors. Another police officer who was present at the station on the night of the incident, September 14, will also be subjected to the test.

The polygraph tests will be conducted in Gujarat. This decision follows a request from the Odisha Crime Branch, which sought court permission to conduct the tests as part of the ongoing investigation into the alleged custodial assault.

Earlier, the court had also approved a polygraph test for Dinakrushna Mishra, the suspended Inspector-In-

Charge of the police station, who is accused of being directly involved in the assault.

According to reports, the Major and his fiancée had been harassed and chased by a group of youths while returning home from dinner on September 14. When they sought assistance at the police station, they were met with reluctance from the officers on duty to take action against the harassers, leading to a heated confrontation.

During the altercation, the Major was allegedly beaten and detained in the lockup while his fiancée faced alleged sexual abuse by Inspector-in-Charge Dinakrushna Mishra. The incident has raised serious questions about police conduct and accountability, prompting the Crime Branch to take over the investigation.

The outcome of the polygraph tests, according to legal experts, will be a crucial step in the ongoing probe, which aims to uncover the truth behind the alleged abuse of power by the suspended police officers.

## Quality of Mahaprasad, ghee to be checked



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on Friday informed that after some unwanted things cropped up at the Tirupati temple, the SJTA and the Odisha Government have decided to ensure that the quality of Mahaprasad and other ingredients like ghee re-

mains intact. "All the articles will undergo a quality check before going to the temple's kitchen and again while Mahaprasad comes out," said Harichandan.

According to the minister, the Health Department has been urged to provide food inspectors and soon the appointment would be made. Already,

ex-Servicemen have been appointed and deployed at the temple's Ananda Bazaar.

"Food inspectors will be appointed so that the allegations which are coming up at other temples are not reported from the Jagannath Temple. There is no impurity in Lord Jagannath's Mahaprasad and it will never happen," he added.

## Social media post sparks tension in Bhadrak

3 cops hurt in mob attack; Sec 163 of BNNS imposed

PNS ■ BHADRAK

Three police officials were seriously injured as tension was sparked near Santhia in Bhadrak district during a rally against an alleged controversial post on social media on Friday.

The vehicle of the Bhadrak Tehsildar was vandalised by a mob.

The injured police personnel were identified as DSP

Anshuman Dwivedi, Bhadrak Town police station IIC Sudarshan Bag and Sub-Inspector Rozen Murmu.

Murmu was admitted to a hospital after sustaining head injuries.

As per reports, a post on Facebook triggered resentment and subsequently, a group took out a rally and staged a road blockade by burning tyres demanding immediate arrest of the person behind the post. However, when police tried to pacify them, the matter took a violent turn and stones were pelted at the police. In

the process, the three police officials sustained injuries.

In retaliation, police resorted to a lathi-charge to disperse the protestors. Considering the seriousness of the situation, as many as seven platoons of police force and three IICs were deployed at the spot. Police also conducted a flag march in the area to control the law and order situation.

Section 163 under the BNNS was imposed in the area following the incident. As per the order by the district administration, any congregation, gathering,

meeting and agitation were strictly prohibited under the proceeding area and any violation of the same would be viewed seriously.

"The Purnabazar PS IIC is hereby directed to promulgate the order through mike announcement within the jurisdiction of the PS area with immediate effect. The Tehsildar, Bhadrak is hereby deputed as Executive Magistrate and to take necessary stringent action by mobilising police force in order to disperse the violent mob," stated an order by the Bhadrak SDM.

## 'Behaviour of police must not be rude'

Practice in previous govt will no longer work: CM

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

While speaking at the Collectors' Conference here on Friday, Chief Minister Mohan Majhi cited the misbehaviour that was once meted out to him by a police officer in his native Keonjhar. The incident had taken place a couple of months prior to the conduct of the 2024 elections.

Recalling the incident, Majhi said he had to rush to the spot after getting informa-

tion that locals had blocked NH-20 over drinking water issues.

"When I went to the police station and the process was on to resolve the issue, the IIC shouted at me and said 'get out'. Who had pressurised the IIC for which he said get out? Do candidates lack the right to visit a police station? The IIC said that I did not have the right to come to police station," recalled Majhi.

He said the incident occurred one month prior to the BJP forming government.

"With Lord Jagannath's

bleeding, I became the CM. I could easily imagine what would be the condition of the concerned IIC. I forgave him as I believed that he had done it at the behest of someone's pressure. What was the definition of 'Ama Thana' in the previous government's tenure? Whenever a common man is visiting a police station, he/she should be treated properly by the staffs at the helpdesk. When a person says that he has come to lodge an FIR, they should be taken to senior officials for appropriate action," said Majhi.

The CM further said that a

lot of practices, which were being followed in the previous government, would no longer work. Adequate powers have been given to officials and they should help subordinate staffs and take stern action against those involved in smuggling of minor minerals and illegal sale of liquor.

"Several projects are not able to start due to lack of coordination between departments. As seeing is believing, I urge Collectors to undertake field visits and check status of the schemes," he added.

# In city Mystery shrouds ex-Army man's death

Family alleges murder, demands through probe  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A former Indian Army personnel was found dead under mysterious circumstances at his house in Nuasahi under the Nayapalli police station in Bhubaneswar on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Anil Chhotray, who hailed from Narendrapur in the Banpur area of Khordha district.

Following the recovery of the body, police sent it to the Capital Hospital for postmortem and informed the family of the deceased. The reason of death was yet to be ascertained.



However, the family of the deceased alleged that Anil was murdered and demanded justice.

Anil's elder brother Sunil said, "How did they take away the body without the presence of any of my family member? Police called me saying that my brother was dead for three

days. The body has been sent for postmortem; and I was told to receive the body in the morning. I want justice for my brother and answers to our questions. We want this to be investigated properly."

"When my brother did not answer the phone calls, I had called his house owner but

never heard back from them. Following this, I had sent one of my relatives to meet my brother, but I was informed that the house was locked from outside. If the door was locked from outside, how could he commit suicide? My sister-in-law, her relatives and a few others have killed him," he alleged.

# 4 members of 'Surat Gang' held in city

Involved in 9 chain-snatching cases  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Commissionerate Police on Friday arrested four members of a notorious chain-snatching gang which was allegedly involved in a number of incidents in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Commissioner of Police Sanjeeb Panda said the four arrested were members of the 'Surat Gang', which was operating in Gujarat as well as in Odisha.

The kingpin of the gang was Subhas Pradhan. He, along with his associate Amit Sarangi, was operating the gang.

Subhas entered the crime world initially in Surat and was



involved in a murder case. The duo was subsequently released on bail in 2018 and later Subhas came to Puri and was injured in an encounter. Later, he fled to Surat and returned to Odisha some months back.

The gang is involved in at least nine cases in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, said Panda.

"After the chain-snatching incidents, the Special Squad got a breakthrough after a detailed investigation and CCTV

examinations," said he.

Eight gold chains, two motorcycles, two mobile phones and some sharp weapons have been seized from the possession of the accused. Panda added.

# Saranghi appointed OPSC Chairman



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government on Friday appointed former DG of Police Arun Kumar Saranghi as the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Chairman for six years from the date

he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of 62 years, whichever is earlier.

A notification in this regard was issued by the General Administration and Public Grievance Department.

"The conditions of service of Arun Kumar Saranghi as OPSC Chairman will be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Odisha Public Service Commission (Conditions of Service) Regulations, 1952 as amended from time to time," the notification stated.

# Srikanta blasts Nadda's 'anti-national' remarks



LALIT MOHAN MISHRA ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a press meet held here at the Congress Bhawan on Friday, Odisha Congress Steering Committee member Srikanta Jena criticised the remarks of BJP national president JP Nadda during his visit to Odisha on Thursday where he described the Congress as anti-national due to its alliance with the NC in Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections.

Jena said the BJP had an alliance with the PDP in Jammu

Kashmir in the past and an alliance with the NC at the Centre during NDA period. Prime Minister Modi had also visited Pakistan without invitation. When the BJP had an alliance with local J&K parties, it claimed itself as nationalist, but when the Congress has an alliance for restoring peace in the State, the BJP paints Congress as anti-national. The BJP is worried about its loss in J&K and Haryana elections and, therefore, diverting the issue.

Taking up the social justice issue again, Jena said that

though the BJP government has completed 100 days in Odisha, it has failed to implement the demands of the SCs, STs and OBCs/SEBCs.

He demanded a caste census, 38.75%-reservation for SCs & STs in technical education, 27%-reservation for OBCs/SEBCs in higher education and jobs, special employment for two lakh OBCs/SEBCs as they were denied 27% reservation for last 20 years, construction of a hostel at Bhubaneswar for one lakh SC, ST and OBC/SEBC stu-

dents, Rs 3,000-unemployment pension, regularisation of outsourcing and contractual government staffs, a Rs 5,000-crore corpus fund for State SC-ST Development Finance Corporation. CLP leader Ramachandra Kadam expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the State and demanded immediate remedial action by the government. Steering Committee member Ananta Sethy and Biswaranjan Mohanty were present in the press conference.

# Samanta awarded Fire Engineers fellowship



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Renowned educationist, philanthropist and founder of KIIT and KISS Dr Achyuta Samanta was awarded a prestigious fellowship by the Institution of Fire Engineers India at the ongoing international conference and exhibition, "Fire India 2024," in New Delhi on Friday.

The fellowship was conferred in recognition of Dr Samanta's remarkable contributions over three decades in education, health, and social service. His name was selected for the honour by the governing council of the Institution of Fire Engineers in March of

this year.

Upon receiving the fellowship, Samanta expressed his gratitude to the institution and its Director General Dr US Chhillar. This marks Dr Samanta's sixth fellowship; he has previously received accolades from five prestigious organisations, including the ISTE, CSI, ICA, APSCH, and the London Royal Society of Chemistry.

On the occasion, an MoU was signed between Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and Institution of Fire Engineers. As per the understanding 100 students of KISS will get Fire Engineering training by the institute.

# Talk on 'Mental Health Matters' held



At DSBM  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

To raise awareness about the importance of mental health, the D.A.V. School of Business Management (DSBM), Bhubaneswar organised a skit competition themed "Breaking the Silence: Mental Health Matters."

The event aimed at encouraging open conversations within the community, contributing towards breaking the stigma around mental health. The participants showcased their talent through powerful performances based on different sub themes that highlighted various mental health challenges, disclosed myths and promoted empathy and understanding.

Additional General Manager, HR, NTPC, Bhubaneswar, Dr Debasmita Tripathy, who was a judge, applauded the participants' performances. She stressed the

crucial role of family in nurturing mental wellbeing, emphasising that a supportive home environment can make all the difference. She also urged the parents to recognise the importance of allowing their children to pursue their passions and dreams, reminding them that true happiness and success comes from following one's heart.

Assistant Professor (BJB Autonomous College) and clinical psychologist Swagatika Samantaray praised the participants for breaking down barriers and encouraging open conversations about mental health. She stressed the need to move beyond preaching to practising mental wellbeing in daily life. For those unable to find solace, she encouraged seeking professional help.

DSBM Principal Dr DN Mishra stressed the importance of addressing mental health issues with urgency, empathy and understanding in today's society.

# Meet the first woman who got Subhadra money

She's a hardworking divyang tailor  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Despite being a divyang, Anjali has stitched her dreams to success with her ability and agility over the years. She stitches her clothes to the best satisfaction of her customers and that is what has earned her a good clientele over the years. And, most importantly, she was the first woman in Odisha to get money in her bank account under the Subhadra Yojana

There's nothing that she cannot stitch. Born with a disability in her legs, she started stitching clothes from a young age. Despite being a graduate, she is supporting her parents and extending a helping hand in the family's expenses.

"Never in my dream had I thought that I would get a chance to meet PM Modi in my life. I'm not dependent on



my family. I struggle to earn whatever I can and extend a helping hand to my father," said an emotional Anjali Barik.

She attributed her success to her parents and said, "If my parents were not with me I would have never reached this stage. It is with their constant support, I'm where I'm today," she said.

"She takes care of all the expenses in the family. She is not my daughter, but my son," said Dharani Barik, father of Anjali.

Similarly, unable to control her tears, Anjali's mother said, "Initially, we were sceptical if she could manage her tailoring shop all alone. However, she is working hard and managing the family. If the Mohan Majhi Government helps her a little, she will do wonders."

# 'Barker stood for democracy, free thought'

151st birthday of renowned political scientist observed  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The AMOFOI in association with the Freethought Party of India (FPI) celebrated the 151st Birthday of the renowned political scientist Sir Ernest Barker of Great Britain on Monday. AMOFOI president Manas Jena chaired the event.

While welcoming the guests, FPI general secretary B Ramchandra CST Voltaire presented his paper: A Tribute to Sir Ernest Barker, who printed Constitution of India's "Preamble" at the forefront of his book: "Principles of Social and Political Theory".



Voltaire spelt out that Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Justice, Human Dignity which have been Western ideas almost since the French Revolution of 1789 have been nicely codified in the Preamble to the Constitution of India. Barker got pleased to see the text of the Indian Constitution of January 26, 1950, containing a cluster of high ideals in its Preamble. Barker stood in defence of democracy and freethought. So he

printed our Preamble at the forefront of his book, he said. Former bureaucrat, Aurobindo Behera graced the occasion as chief guest and opined that all serious students of Political Science should read the Book written by Sir Barker.

Paying tributes to Sir Barker Prof Biswaranjan, a noted columnist in political matters, said that Indian democracy is passing through bad days. Newspaper authorities are no

longer happy to print articles that are critical of the Government of the Day.

Former Head of the Dept of Political Science, BJB Autonomous College Kananlaxmi Patnaik said that students are no longer serious to read standard books on Political Theory and Thought. Among others, Sudhansu Dhada, MS Yadav of BSP and Prabir Mohanty from BJD participated. A book on Sir Barker was released on the occasion.

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# 'Denial of ration card due to e-KYC failure is against HC order'

Activists urge State Govt to halt e-KYC process  
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

There is widespread resentment among the people as they are facing problems for e-KYC verification.

President, Lok Shakti Abhiyan Prafulla Samantara and Sameet Panda of Khadya Suraksha Abhiyan appealed the Government not to make Aadhaar card manda-

tory for ration.

Samantara said that denial of ration card due to failure of biometric authentication is violation of Orissa High Court order. The Government must immediately give ration cards to migrant and unorganised sector workers as directed by the Supreme Court, he demanded.

Now all ration card holders of the State are directed by the Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Department to mandatorily under-

take e-KYC in a time bound manner and failure to get e-KYC of the whole family will result in cancellation of ration card and stoppage of ration.

Ration shopkeepers have been empowered to carry out the e-KYC process thereby allowing them to exercise power and discretion over it. The ration shopkeeper has absolutely no role in issuance and cancellation of ration cards as that is the prerogative of the Food Department,

said Samantara and Panda.

The mandatory e-KYC of all ration card holders are violation order of Orissa High Court in Prafulla Samantara Vs State of Odisha (WP(C) no 16579 of 2020) where the State Government has been directed (on dated 24.04.2022) to "ensure that no ration card holder is denied ration for want of seeding of Aadhaar or bank account number."

In the same case the Food Supplies and Consumer Wel-

fare Department in its affidavit filed before the HC on 18.05.2022 has mentioned that around 1.47 lakh ration card beneficiaries in the State receive their entitled ration through Aadhaar bypass mechanism without needing to submit their Aadhaar. The e-KYC drive by the State Government would exclude these ration card holders whose entitlement is protected by the order of the court, they said and demanded that the Govern-

ment immediately halt the e-KYC process to prevent further distress among ration cardholders. Further, the Government must immediately issue ration cards to all those left out of the purview of the NFSA on account of the failure of the Government of India to carry out the census of 2021 and implement the direction of the Supreme Court to issue ration cards to those having e-shram cards but without ration cards, they emphasised.

# Hope brightens over XIM Rourkela campus

Now that BJP is in power in State, Centre, inconsistencies over delayed project could be resolved

**AUROBINDA DAS ■ ROURKELA**

It was March 4, 2015, when erstwhile Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had declared the Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar's second campus at Rourkela. It had generated much op-

timism among the residents who were disheartened over the IIM issue.

Though Rourkela, fulfilling all criteria, was a strong contender for the IIM, but at the last moments, both the State and Union Governments had decided to establish it at Sambalpur, giving in to a strong lobby. So, to console the denizens of Rourkela, the ex-CM had assured for XIM campus at Rourkela with the support of the Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP).

But till date the assurance for establishment of the XIMB branch at Rourkela has not

translated into action.

Sources said that after Naveen's declaration, the then Vice-Chancellor of Xavier University, Bhubaneswar, Prof Dr Fr Paul Fernandes wrote a letter to the then Principal Secretary, Higher Education Gagan Kumar Dhal on March 9, 2015 to instruct the Rourkela Steel Plant to provide land and Rs 120 crore for establishment of the institution.

Earlier, in a tripartite meeting at the Lok Seva Bhawan, involving the State Government, the Rourkela Steel Plant and the XIMB, Bhubaneswar, the RSP had agreed to it. A copy of the VC's letter was also sent to the then Private Secretary to CM VK Pandian.

On 16.05.2015, the Higher Education Department wrote a letter to the RSP to do the needful. On 22.07.2015 replying to it, the then GM I/c (P&A), RSP PK Pradhan writing a letter to the Principal Secretary, Higher Education, mentioned that 30 acres of land had been identified but before processing it in the SAIL Board, he needed certain clarifications.

They were: Whether the land will be handed over to XIMB

on a sublease basis or through surrender by the RSP; whether a representative of RSP would be in XIMB, Rourkela unit board or not; whether 25% seats will be reserved for the children of SAIL employees or not and whether funding of Rs 120 crore would be made in one go or in five years. These were the questions he raised, but the matter remained in cold storage ever since.

Reacting to the inordinate delay of the project, noted social activist of the city AK Azad described it as unfortunate. As every year, many students

passing out from NIT-Rourkela and other institutions are going to other cities to pursue their management courses, it would be more beneficial for them if the XIMB campus would be here, he added.

So, both the State Government and RSP management, besides the local elected representatives should focus on it on priority, Azad demanded.

He further said there would be no problem now to clear the bottlenecks between State Government and the RSP management as both in State and Centre, the BJP is in power.

## In Sundargarh Family bids teary farewell to parrot 'Kunu'



**PNS ■ SUNDARGARH**

A family in Sundargarh demonstrated extraordinary love for their parrot by performing its last rites as per Hindu traditions after the pet died a few days back.

According to sources, the parrot had been with the family of Biswajit Pujari, a resident of Sundargarh town's Mahadevpara, for 28 years,

and they had immense love and affection for each other.

The parrot had flown into their home way back in 1996 and had been with them since then. The family fondly addressed it as 'Kunu'. On September 15, Kunu died, leaving the family devastated. Pujari organised a 10-day ritual as per customs at Veda Vyas in Rourkela and also arranged a feast for people at a temple, sources said.

## 3rd Brahmapur-Puri DMU demanded

**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**

Devotees and tourists of Ganjam and Khurda districts have demanded the plying of a 3rd DMU between Brahmapur to Puri, everyday.

On the day of inauguration of Vande Bharat Express from Brahmapur to Tata Nagar, former Deputy Speaker of Assembly Rama Chandra Panda submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, for running of a super fast train from Brahmapur to Delhi via Rayagada, apart from the DMU.

On the occasion of the first trip of Vande Bharat train, Panda, besides BJP State spokesman T Gopi and the Khurda DRM travelled where he discussed on extension of the 3rd DMU to Puri. Devotees of Ganjam and Khurda could visit Puri conveniently and return from Puri on the same day, after completing Darshan, availing Prasad. While lakhs of devotees will benefit from the train, the Railways will also gain revenue. It is learnt that the DRM has assured to consider the proposal favourably.

## Nalco earns dividend of Rs 918 cr for '23-'24

Smelter plant achieves highest-ever cast metal output

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**

In the 43rd Annual General Meeting held here on Friday through virtual mode, the shareholders of the National Aluminium Company Limited (Nalco), have approved the Annual Accounts for 2023-24 with a sales turnover of Rs 13,149 crore, net profit of Rs 2,060 crore and an export turnover of Rs 4,275.73 crore.

The shareholders also ap-



proved a final dividend of Rs 2 per equity share (40% on face value of Rs 5 each) amounting to Rs 367.33 crore for the FY 2023-24. Thus, the total dividend paid during the year amounts to Rs 918.32 crore, which is 45% of profit after tax (PAT).

Among the notable achievements of FY 2023-24, the aluminium major Nalco achieved

In FY 23-24, Nalco has developed and operationalised its Utkal D coal block and has also produced 2 million tonnes of coal, which is the peak rated capacity of the mine. It may be mentioned that with operationalisation of Utkal D and E and signing of lease agreement for Pottangi bauxite mines, the company has achieved strong energy and raw material security for next 30 years.

Addressing the shareholders on the occasion, Nalco CMD Sridhar Patra conveyed his heartfelt appreciation for the dedication and commitment of NALCO team.

highest-ever bauxite excavation and produced 21.24 lakh tonne alumina hydrate operating beyond 100% capacity utilisation. Similarly, on the sales front, the company registered the highest-ever metal sale of 4.70 lakh tonne and the aluminium smelter plant achieved highest ever cast metal production of 4.63 lakh MT in the FY 2023-24.

## B'swar man gets lifer for killing infant son

**PNS ■ BALESWAR**

The Special Judge OPID Biswajit Das awarded life imprisonment to a man after convicting him in a case of killing his 4-month-old infant son. The court further ordered Rs 5,000 fine and in default another 2 months jail term to the convict.

Dularam Baske (37) of Atta village under Soro police station committed the crime and his wife Gory Baske had lodged an FIR on January 19, 2023 with police alleging that her husband murdered their son.

According to her complaint, Dularam never wanted a child out of their wedlock

and he tried to remove the infant since his birth. On January 14 morning, when she was out of home, Dularam took the child out and killed him. On asking, he said that he had left the child in an Ashram school, alleged Gory.

The body of the child was found in a highly decomposed state on January 19 in a nearby field. Police booked Dularam under section 302 of IPC and arrested him following an investigation.

Dularam was tried under section of murder and the court after examining 12 witnesses and 15 exhibits, pronounced the verdict, said Special Public Prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda.

## Sivananda College of Pharmacy annual fest held

Successful students feted

**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**

The Sivananda College of Pharmacy, Brahmapur, celebrated its 20th Annual Day Celebration "RESONANCE - 2024 in its campus here on September 21.

All students, teaching and non-teaching staff members participated in the event. Vice-Chairman of the college Sudhir Kumar Padhi presided.

Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO), Ganjam, Dr



Santosh Kumar Padhi attended as chief guest of the function. He expressed his happiness observing the facilities provided by the college. BeMC Corporater Malay Kumar Bisoyi attended as guest

of honour. He appreciated the role of pharmacy profession in serving the society.

Chairman, Sivananda College of Pharmacy Dr Laxmi Kanta Padhi underlined the importance of pharmacy

profession. Dr Padmanav Moharana motivated the students and highlighted the significance of discipline in developing their career goals.

On the occasion, the college conducted various competitions among students. Prizes and awards were distributed among winners of the competitions. Toppers of the first and final year board examinations were also felicitated in the function. Sandhya, Subhankar, Sabita, Jeetendra, Krushna, Divya and other students received certificates and prizes.

## Tourism Day held by B'pur Univ dept



**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**

The Tourism and Travel Studies Department of Berhampur University (BU) marked the World Tourism Day with a series of special events on Wednesday.

The celebration, held under the guidance of BU Vice-Chancellor Professor Geetanjali Dash, centered around this year's theme, "Tourism and Peace".

A key highlight was a one-day workshop focused on the industrial prospects of camping tourism. Industry experts

CEO Saurabh Swapnil and Wonder Lustrous Company CMO Shivansh Pratap Singh led insightful discussions during the workshop. Additionally, the department organised a quiz competition and a photography contest to engage the students.

The celebration saw active participation from faculty members, including Professor Sukanta Tripathy, PG Council Chairman Professor Ritu Tiwari, Professor Iqbal Bhatt, Professor Kalpana Behera, and Professor Ranjit Singh along with a large number of students.

## Upadhyay's vision discussed on birth anniversary

**PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR**

The 109th birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay, founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (now BJP), was commemorated in Brahmapur on Wednesday with a strong focus on his philosophy of "Antyodaya" uplifting the most marginalised and his role in shaping nationalist ideologies that led to the abrogation of Article 370.

Led by former Ganjam district BJP president Kahnucharan Pati, the event saw leaders like Prabhat Kiran



Sadarangi and Sunil Kumar Sahu highlight how Upadhyay's ideals of inclusivity and national unity inspired the Central Government's decision to revoke Article 370,

integrating Kashmir fully into India. His Antyodaya principle continues to guide policies aimed at benefiting the poorest sections of society.

A membership drive was

also conducted, enrolling hundreds into the party. Similar events were held across the Ganjam district, focusing on the enduring relevance of Upadhyay's vision.

# Odisha-based BonV Aero sets world record

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**

Odisha-based India's leading aerial mobility manufacturing firm BonV Aero has entered the International Book of Records for setting a new world record in high-altitude Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) technology.

The company, a prominent supplier of heavy-lift UAVs to the Indian Army, successfully completed a hover flight test at Umling La Pass, Ladakh, noted as the world's highest motorable mountain pass, at an altitude of 19,024 feet. During this flight, BonV Aero's UAV platform carried a 30-kg payload, setting a world record for UAV operations in high-altitude regions.

Satyabrata Satapathy, Co-Founder & CEO of BonV Aero, remarked, "This world record is a proud moment for

us. Our close collaboration with the Indian Army allowed us to design and execute a UAV platform that directly addresses logistical challenges in high-altitude areas. This successful test underscores our ongoing commitment to advancing aerial mobility solutions for India's defense forces."

Get ready for the upcoming celebrations from Amazon.in's 'Get Festive Ready Store'

Bhubaneswar: The festive season is just around the corner, and with it comes the excitement of eating and sharing delicious treats and spending quality time with loved ones. Whether you're hosting a grand family gathering or simply want to make your home festive-ready, a well-planned shopping spree on Amazon's 'Get Festive Ready'



Store can help you get everything in order. From deep cleaning your home to ensuring your pantry is stocked with mouth-watering, sweet, and savory treats, from caring for your pets with premium pet-care brands, to treating yourself and your baby to the best of self and baby care products, Amazon India has got you

covered. To get the festivities started, explore and shop on Amazon's 'Get Festive Ready' Store, and avail up to 60% off on festive cleaning essentials, cashback up to Rs 150, free delivery on first order and up to 10% extra discount with subscription, coupons and more. You can avail these offers across a wide selection of

premium brands like Pidlite, Cadbury, Himalaya, Be Bodywise and more.

Shikshagraha builds on AWS to power its goal to improve one million public schools in India by 2030

Bhubaneswar: Shikshagraha, a people's education movement to improve one million public schools in India, today announced it will use cloud computing technology from Amazon Web Services (AWS) to power its technology-based improvement initiatives across India. As a people's movement, Shikshagraha will foster collaboration among government bodies, local civil society organizations (CSOs), youth, and community-based groups, so that they can lead need-based school improvement programs and solutions. The movement aims to impact 40 million children across 100

districts by 2030 and is already active in multiple states and union territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kashmir, Odisha, Punjab, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh. "At the heart of our Shikshagraha initiative is the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential. The problem Shikshagraha aims to solve - improving all public schools in India - is one of scale. While application of technology is the answer to address this challenge, we also know we can deliver the technology intervention only through cloud computing," said Vijayashree Urs, Chief Technology Officer - Shikshalokam

## Protest held by pensioners' body in B'pur



**RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR**

The Akhila Bharat Rajya Sarkari Pensioner Maha Sangh staged a protest at the RDC office here led by the Ganjam district committee of the Odisha State Retired Employees' Association on Thursday. The demonstration was participated by over a hundred pensioners and current National Pension Scheme (NPS) beneficiaries from various regions of the district.

The gathering was headed by D Mohan Rao with key speakers including secretary Shankaran Patra, joint secretary Neelanchal Mishra, former president K Nandeshu Senapati, ASN Gupta, Nirakar Sabat, Pradeep Kumar Das, Panchanan Jena and Rabinarayan Panda. The

speakers voiced strong opposition to the Central Government's pension policies, particularly the new NPS and the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS). They demanded abolition of NPS and UPS, insisting that all employees should be included under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS).

The protesters also called for uniform healthcare benefits for all pensioners in Odisha, akin to those provided by the Central Government, and urged reinstatement of concessions for senior citizens on railway tickets.

The committee urged action from the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of Odisha regarding their demands, emphasising the need for further measures to support pensioners.

## In Mayurbhanj Tusker that killed 4 people tranquilised

**PNS ■ BARIPADA**

The rogue elephant that killed four people and injured three others in villages under the Baripada Forest Division in Mayurbhanj district was tranquilised on Thursday night.

Later, the forest team led by DFO Uma Mahesh captured the tusker.

The pachyderm, separated from its herd, had strayed into Odisha from West Bengal. It killed four persons, including two women.

Meanwhile, three persons are currently battling for their lives at the Baripada PRM Medical College Hospital af-

ter being attacked by the elephant. Besides, the animal destroyed several houses and acres of standing crops in several villages. "Even after tranquilising the elephant, it managed to escape for around 1-2 km into forest. It took us around one hour to trace it as it was slowly coming out of sedation. It was a challenge for us. But we managed to tranquilise it," said the DFO.

"Our veterinary doctors, biologists, ACF and other personnel, everyone has done a commendable job. So, I really thank the whole team for helping us in relocating the elephant without causing any harm to it," he added.

# BJP slams Karnataka Government for CBI consent withdrawal

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

"Thousands of crores have been usurped in the MUDA

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Announcing the decision after a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister

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

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

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



## Dhankhar calls for multilateral action on global threats

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## India, Greece strengthen Naval ties

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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

## SC Judge addresses smuggling, counterfeiting at MASCRAGE

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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



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

# Lokpal issues accreditation norms for journalists

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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

"Applications are invited from

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

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

At all times, an accredited correspondent, temporary or

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

"Accredited correspondent, temporary/regular, shall make a serious endeavour of reporting accurate account of the information shared to him by the spokesperson of the

Lokpal without any distortions and embellishments," the norms said.

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

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

accreditation, a legal correspondent will be issued an identity card.

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

Such legal correspondent will not be extended the privileges of an accredited legal correspondent of the Lokpal unless she/he seeks a fresh accreditation by making an

application in accordance with the norms for representing the press/agency/organisation concerned, to the chairperson, it said.

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

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

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

Muizzu government's efforts to reduce the Maldives'



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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



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

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

health, underscoring the importance of maintaining a healthy liver.

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

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

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

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

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

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

# No murmurs on illegal Rohingya settlement in Jammu polls

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**  
Two days after it questioned the version put out by the Thane police over the circumstances leading to the killing of Badlapur sexual assault accused Akshay Shinde, the Bombay High Court on Friday directed the Maharashtra police to find a secluded spot to bury Shinde's body. A HC division bench comprising Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Justice M M Sathaye issued a directive to this effect after the parents of their deceased-accused son Akshay Shinde told the court that they had been refused cremation or burial spots for the past five days since Shinde was gunned down in a police van. The HC bench directed the police to inform Shinde's family once the burial spot was identified so that the death rituals could be performed. Currently, Shinde's body is in the morgue of the state-run Sir JJ Hospital in Mumbai. The HC directive to the police came during the hearing of a petition filed by Akshay Shinde's father Anna Shinde seeking space for burial of his son. During the hearing, Chief



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

police are ready to do that. It may be recalled that Akshay Shinde -- key accused in the sensational Badlapur child sexual assault -- was shot dead at a point blank range while he was being taken from Badlapur to Thane in a van for investigation in another case on Monday evening. A HC bench of Justice Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj Chavan had on Wednesday questioned the version put out by the police Shinde was shot by the police in self defence. Justice Chavan said "it is hard to believe" that a man of slight build as Akshay Shinde could be overpowered by the four policemen when he turned violent and pulled the slide back on a 9 mm pistol for firing which "requires strength".

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**  
A political war of words broke out between the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and the rival Sena (UBT) over "Dharmaveer 2", as the sequel to the Marathi biopic about the life and times of late Sena leader Anand Dighe hit the screens on Friday, ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly polls. Hours after the premiere of the "Dharmaveer 2"—at which deputy chief minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis made some remarks, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut singled out Fadnavis for criticism. "Dharmaveer 2" is a sequel to the Marathi biopic 'Dharmaveer: Mukkam Post Thane' released on May 13, 2022 that had proved to be a propaganda vehicle for senior Minister Eknath Shinde in the run-up to his rebellion within the Sena and his subsequent elevation as the chief minister of a government supported by the BJP on June 30, 2022. In 'Dharmaveer: Mukkam Post Thane', the character of

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



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

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

## BJP targets Robert Vadra over corruption

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

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

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

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

## Indian Army boosts artillery with new weapons systems

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

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



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Playing with lives

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

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



Alkem Laboratories and Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals Ltd, pose potential risks to consumers due to their substandard quality.

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

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

### PICTALK



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

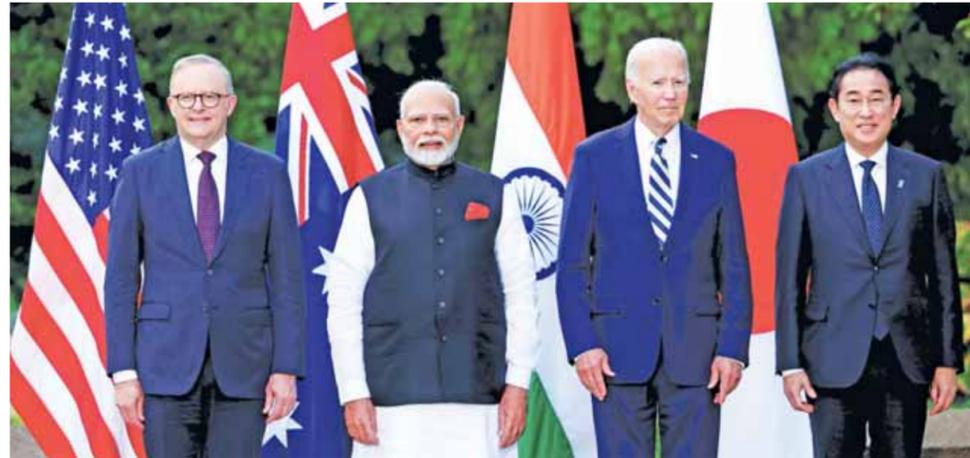
## Quad summit: Prioritising security in the Indo-Pacific



SUDHIR HINDWAN

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SIDDARAMAIAH FACES HEAT

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

#### CONCERN OVER CUSTODIAL DEATH

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

#### Ensure children's safety



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

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

#### KANGANA'S COMMENTS BACKFIRE

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

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Technology as a force multiplier in education

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

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



based education. The future of higher education thus lies in embracing technology effectively as is taught by the challenges faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, providing innovative use of e-learning platforms for an effective learning environment. With technological advancements, it is now necessary to enhance education so that it meets the interests of both students and teachers. It is very essential to build awareness about the process of technology with remarkable advances in technology. The way technological advancements are incorporated into the education system for knowledge transfer is remarkable. Thus the teach-

ing learning process has undergone revolutionary changes and posed challenges to forcibly learn the effective use of technology (teaching tools). While the education system is harnessing the several advantages of technology-based tools, it is pertinent and equally important to foresee the negative aspects emerging in some quarters and ponder over the preventive steps to be thought of in the ever-changing world of the education system. Thus Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education has become important for imparting quality education that is ethical, transparent and secure. The ICT tools have transformed how the education sector is evolving. The rapidly emerging technology and the educational field are inseparable and they are like conjoined twins to monitor and improve quality in higher education. However, one needs to address the challenges associated with digital access to transform education. Education requires continuous monitoring, brainstorming and supervision and with the invasion of technology

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



P VATSALA SWAMY



## FIRST COLUMN

### COUNTERING WORKPLACE MANIPULATION

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



SAKSHI SETHI

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

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

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



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

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

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

# Charting a course for global leadership

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



GURMEET SINGH



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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



RAJNEESH BHANDARI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

programs. The way companies evaluate job candidates is also evolving. Resumes are increasingly being replaced by portfolio reviews, where individuals can showcase their skills and creativity. The impact of AI on education is already evident. Last year, ChatGPT made headlines by passing the US Medical Licensing Exam, the law school exam, and Google's coding exam. This has sparked debates about whether AI tools should be banned in educational institutions. Nassim Taleb recently commented on this by stating, "ChatGPT passing is not a reflection of ChatGPT but of the examination system." The core purpose of education should not be to test students by limiting their resources, but

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

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

11 killed in Israeli strike on school in Gaza

AP ■ DEIR-AL-BALAH

An Israeli airstrike hit a school sheltering thousands of displaced Palestinians in northern Gaza on Thursday, killing at least 11 people and wounding 22, including women and children, the territory's Health Ministry said.



Iranian worshippers chant slogans as they hold up posters of Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group flags during an anti-Israeli rally after Friday prayers in Tehran, Iran, Friday.

Israeli forces have repeatedly struck schools, saying Hamas fighters use them as "com-

mand centres" to plan attacks. The military says it uses precision weapons to avoid civilian

casualties. The strikes have brought heavy death tolls. Tens of thousands of Palestinians are

living packed in schools across Gaza after fleeing their homes in the face of Israeli bombardment and offensives. More than 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been displaced in the nearly yearlong conflict, according to the United Nations.

Israel launched its campaign in Gaza, vowing to destroy Hamas after its October 7 attack, during which militants killed around 1,200 people and took about 250 others hostage. It blames civilian deaths in Gaza on Hamas, because the group's fighters operate in residential areas and use civilian infrastructure.

Air raid sirens sound across Israel's populous area, including Tel Aviv

New York (AP): Israel's military says it has intercepted a missile fired from Yemen that set off air raid sirens across the country's centre. Air raid sirens rang out across Israel's populous central area, including the seaside metropolis of Tel Aviv.

United Nations on Thursday evening. "The operation going on in Khartoum is meant to preserve the integrity of our country, the safety of our people and our armed forces," he said. "The military solution is the last one," Burhan continued. "We crave a peaceful solution that spares our people more suffering, more hunger, more displacement."

Kamala Harris leads Trump in several battleground states, polls say

Washington (PTI): US Vice President Kamala Harris has taken the lead over her Republican presidential rival Donald Trump in several key battleground states like Arizona, Michigan and Pennsylvania, according to various polls released here.

State against Trump, it said. "For a swing state, this margin is good news for the vice president's campaign," Rodrigo Castro Cornejo, UMass Lowell political science assistant professor and Center for Public Opinion associate director, said.

cent in Pennsylvania, the UMass Lowell's Center for Public Opinion said. "The presidential race remains very close in Pennsylvania with the coming weeks a crucial time for both campaigns," Cornejo said.

Erdogan skips mention of Kashmir at UN; focuses on Gaza

New York (PTI): Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan did not mention Kashmir in his address at the United Nations General Assembly this year, the first time he has skipped the issues since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Sudan military offensive sparks new fighting in Khartoum

AP ■ CAIRO New fighting rocked Sudan's capital on Thursday with airstrikes and drone attacks in and around Khartoum amid a worsening cholera outbreak, officials said.

heaviest in the capital area in months. Mohamed Ibrahim, the health ministry's spokesperson in Khartoum, said in a statement that four civilians were killed and 14 others wounded in the latest fighting in the Karrari district of Omdurman, a city next to the Sudanese capital, Khartoum.

United Nations on Thursday evening. "The operation going on in Khartoum is meant to preserve the integrity of our country, the safety of our people and our armed forces," he said.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE. The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED Registered Office: Aggarwal Corporate Tower, Plot No. 23, 5th Floor, Govind Lal Sikka Marg, Rajendra Place, New Delhi-110008. E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE "APPENDIX IV-A" [SEE PROVISION TO RULE 8(6)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES.

PUBLIC NOTICE. General public is hereby informed that We 1. (i) Veena Duta who late Sudeshan Kumar Dutta, (ii) Shivani Raizada who Rakesh Kumar Raizada Dio late Sudeshan Kumar Dutta, (iii) Gitika Dutta Dio late Sudeshan Kumar Dutta, (iv) Asha Rami Dutta who late Sudesh Kumar Dutta, (v) Anurag Dutta who late Sudesh Kumar Dutta, (vi) Tarun Dutta who late Sudesh Kumar Dutta, (vii) Shashi Sudan who Pradeep Kumar Sudan Dio late S.R. Dutta, (viii) Niam Sharma who Vinod Kumar Sharma Dio late S.R. Dutta, (ix) Col. Subhash Chander Dutta who late S.R. Dutta are filing application in LADO for substitution of the property No. G-88, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019 in the name of 1. (i) Veena Duta, (ii) Shivani Raizada, (iii) Gitika Dutta, (iv) Asha Rami Dutta, (v) Anurag Dutta, (vi) Tarun Dutta, (vii) Shashi Sudan, (viii) Niam Sharma, (ix) Col. Subhash Chander Dutta on the grounds of Legal Heirs.

PUBLIC NOTICE. Information is given to general public at large that Mr. Rajat Nagar S/O Mr. Gyanendra Nagar who is/are purchasing the Property No. 1/11168-A, on Second Floor, area measuring 60 Sq. Yards, Plot No. 3, Out of Kharsa No. 159, situated at Village Pochanpur, Delhi vide Gift Deed Dt. 18.10.2023 executed by Mr. Vijender Kumar, Now Mrs. Saroj is the undisputed owner of the said property.

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PUBLIC NOTICE. Builder Cancellation. This is to bring to your notice that HEMALATA YADAV/AVANISH KUMAR (borrowers) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number LBDEL00005031996 located at FLAT NO 604, 6TH FLOOR, TOWER D2, AANGAN, VILLAGE HARSARU, SECTOR- 88A/89A, GURGAON. The borrower(s) has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.

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PUBLIC NOTICE. To be known to all, Vrinda Upadhyaya who Shri Yogesh Upadhyaya R/o Flat No. 209 F, Pocket 1, Mayur Vihar, Phase 1, Delhi-110091, is the owner of Property Flat No. 209 F, Second Floor, Pocket 1, Mayur Vihar, Phase 1, Delhi-110091, has/have applied for certified copy & conversion from leasehold to freehold in DDA. The original Possession Letter of the above said Flat has been lost. An F.I.R./NCR/LR No. 2158391/2024 dated 27/09/2024 on this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE. Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Rakhi Gupta is claiming to be owner of Property bearing No. B-44 (Old No. 1450/11-E), area measuring 80 sq. yds. out of Kharsa No. 8527/77, situated in the area of Village Sikanderpur, in the abadi of Gali No. 04, Jyoti Colony, Ilaqa Shahdara, Delhi-110032, vide GPA, ATS & ATSI dated 06.12.2015 executed by Mr. Rakesh Kumar & Mr. Madan Mohan. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner wants to sell the said property to a person who wants to obtain a loan from our client against the said property. If anybody has any objections upon the ownership of above owner over the said property, its sale/mortgage/litigation & any other objections, kindly int. hereby communicated in writing on the below mentioned address within 7 days of the present. Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 209, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Rajendra Place, Delhi-110008. Ph: 011-4112327-28 legal@kumarag.com

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PUBLIC NOTICE. The following borrower(s) has/have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest towards the Loan facility(ies) availed from ICICI Bank. The Loan(s) has/have been classified as Non-Performing Asset(s) (NPA). A Notice was issued to them under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, at their last known addresses. However, it has not been served and are therefore being notified by way of this Public Notice.

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd. 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanhalli Hosur Main Road Bangalore-560068. The following borrower(s) has/have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest towards the Loan facility(ies) availed from ICICI Bank. The Loan(s) has/have been classified as Non-Performing Asset(s) (NPA). A Notice was issued to them under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, at their last known addresses. However, it has not been served and are therefore being notified by way of this Public Notice.

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ICICI Bank Branch: Lalpur Nagar Branch, A-13, 1st Floor, DDA Complex, Defence Colony, Delhi-110024. Email: L512@indianbank.co.in. (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY) Date: 24.09.2024. (Under Rule 8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002). Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the INDIAN BANK, LAJPAT NAGAR BRANCH (Br. Code-4363), DELHI under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 14.05.2024 calling upon the Borrower M/S MAHASHAKTI ENTERPRISES PROP. MUKESH KUMAR S/O SHRI ROOP CHAND & Guarantor(s) (1) Mr. MUKESH KUMAR S/O SHRI ROOP CHAND Borrower(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs 1,00,56,884.00/- (Rupees one crore fifty six thousand eight hundred eighty four only) Inclusive of interest applied upto 13.05.2024, and interest thereon from 14.05.2024 till date of repayment within 60 days from the date of said notice together with incidental Expenses. Cost Charge Etc.

MANIBHAVNAM HOME FINANCE INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED. POSSESSION NOTICE (Appendix IV) Rule 8(1). Whereas the Authorized Officer of Manibhavnam Home Finance India Pvt. Ltd. (a hereinafter referred to as "MBHF"), MBHF, which has duly been authorised by the Central Government, vide a notification dated 17.06.2021, to be treated as a Financial Institution, for the purposes of the "The Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, having its registered office at: 2nd Floor, N-2, South Extension Part-I, New Delhi-110049 under the provisions of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) (hereinafter referred to as "Act") and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrower(s) and co-borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 as per under mentioned Date.

# UK's Starmer meets Pak PM agrees to 'deepen' relations

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer met his Pakistani counterpart Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, where they agreed to deepen bilateral ties across trade, climate and security. According to a Downing Street readout of the discussions on Thursday, Starmer also congratulated Pakistan's election as a non-permanent member to the UN Security Council for the 2025-2026 term earlier this year.



"They discussed the deep relationship between the UK and Pakistan, including strong people to people links, and on trade and investment," Downing Street said of the Starmer-Sharif meeting.

"They agreed to work together to deepen these relations further, particularly on trade, climate, and security. The Prime Minister also congratulated Prime Minister Sharif on Pakistan's election to the UN Security Council and agreed on the importance of working to strengthen the multilateral system," the statement added.

The meeting came just ahead of Starmer's speech at UNGA, during which he reiterated the UK's call for an immediate ceasefire to provide space for a diplomatic settlement as the conflict between Lebanon's Hezbollah and Israel continues to intensify. The UK PM said that it "shames us all" that the suffering in Gaza continues to grow.

"I call on Israel and Hezbollah: stop the violence; step back from the brink. We need to see an immediate ceasefire to provide space for a diplomatic settlement, and we are working with all partners to that end because further escalation serves no one," said Starmer.

"This is intimately linked with the situation in Gaza where, again, we need to see an immediate ceasefire. It shames us all that the suffering in Gaza continues to grow. The answer is diplomacy, the release of all the hostages, and the unfettered flow of aid to those in need. That is the only way to break this devastating cycle of violence and begin the journey towards a political solution for the long term which delivers

the long-promised Palestinian state alongside a safe and secure Israel," he said.

In his first speech to UNGA as the UK's recently elected Labour Prime Minister, Starmer said the UN needs to "work together for peace, progress and equality" - including "preventing a regional war in the Middle East".

With reference to the UN's role, he added: "The entire framework of arms control and counter-proliferation - painstakingly constructed over decades - has begun to fall away. Iran continues to expand its nuclear activity in violation of its international commitments. Incredible new technologies like AI are being deployed for military use without agreed rules. "These are dif-

# 15 killed in landslide at gold mine in Sumatra, Indonesia

Padang (AP): A landslide triggered by torrential rains struck an unauthorised gold mining operation on Indonesia's Sumatra island, killing at least 15 people, officials said Friday.

Dozens others were reported missing. Villagers were digging Thursday for grains of gold in the remote Solok district of West Sumatra province when mud plunged down the surrounding hills and buried them, said Irwan Effendi, head of the local disaster mitigation agency office. He said at least 25 people were still buried, and that three people were pulled out alive with injuries by rescuers. Search efforts in the worst-affected area, near Nagari Sungai Abu village, were hampered by mudslides that covered much of the area, blackouts and lack of telecommunications.

"The devastated mining area can only be reached by walking for four hours from the nearest settlement," said Ilham Wahab, the agency's spokesperson. Informal mining operations are common in Indonesia, providing a tenuous livelihood to thousands who labour in conditions with a high risk of serious injury or death.

Landslides, flooding and collapses of tunnels are just some of the hazards facing miners. Much of gold ore processing involves highly toxic mercury and cyanide and workers frequently use little or no protection.

# EU moves forward on Ukraine war without US

AP ■ BRUSSELS

As the war in Ukraine enters a critical period, the European Union has decided that it must take responsibility for what it sees as an existential threat to security in its own neighbourhood and is preparing to tackle some of the financial burden, perhaps even without the United States. EU envoys have been working in Brussels this week on a proposal to provide Ukraine with a hefty loan package worth up to 35 billion euros (USD 39 billion). It was announced by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen during a trip to Kyiv last Friday. "Crucially, this loan will flow straight into your national budget," she told President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "It will provide you with significant and much-needed fiscal space. You will decide how best to use the funds, giving you maximum flexibility to meet your needs."

Zelenskyy wants to buy weapons and bomb shelters and rebuild Ukraine's shattered energy network as winter draws near. In international matters, particularly involving major conflicts, the EU rarely moves ahead without the US, but it hopes this decision will encourage others to come forward. Almost 1,000 days since their full-scale invasion, Russian forces are making advances in the east. Ukraine's army has a shaky hold on part of the Kursk region in Russia, which has provided a temporary morale boost, but as casualties mount it remains outnumbered and outgunned.

On the political front, Zelenskyy hopes to secure support for a "victory plan" that might force Russian President Vladimir Putin to the negotiating table. He's trying to persuade US President Joe Biden and other allies to help strengthen Ukraine's hand in any future talks. But a US election looms, and polls suggest that Donald Trump might return to the White House in January. Trump has been critical of US aid to Ukraine. On Wednesday, he said Zelenskyy should have made concessions to Putin before the invasion began in February 2022. Most of the 27-nation EU fears that a Putin victory would lead to deep uncertainty. Russia's armed forces are depleted and currently incapable of another war, but the prospect of a future land grab in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania or Poland remains.

The EU loans are part of a plan by the Group of Seven major industrialised nations to take advantage of interest earned on about USD 250 billion worth of frozen Russian assets, most of them held in Europe. These windfall profits are estimated at around 4.5 billion to 5.5 billion euros (USD 5 billion to USD 6 billion) a year. The profits underpin the G7 plan. The EU would stump up USD 20 billion, the US USD 20 billion, and Canada, Japan and the UK USD 10 billion together, for a combined total of USD 50 billion. The scheme expires at the end of the year, before the next US president takes office. Now, amid differences over how long the

Russian asset freeze should be guaranteed, the EU has decided to go it alone. Its offer of up to USD 39 billion in loans accounts for almost the entirety of the US share as well. The US wants to ensure that the assets are locked away for at least three years to guarantee the income. But EU member Hungary insists this should only happen in 6-month increments. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban styles himself as a peacemaker and is too close to Putin for many of his partners' comfort. The other 26 EU countries feel they must move now because time is running out.

The US election is just weeks away. The Europeans are wary of Trump's unpredictability and are testing scenarios to help protect themselves from the kind of battering, like tariff hikes, their economies received during his past presidency. But they also see the Democrats as more inward looking these days.

Biden's Inflation Reduction Act left European leaders fuming over rules that favored American products. China and war in the Middle East are the foreign policy priorities of Democrat or Republican candidates alike, and for now the US is in the grip of election campaign fever. The EU hopes that Vice President Kamala Harris, if she is elected president, would enter the loan programme as previously planned and reduce the EU's financial burden. But that remains an open question for now, and EU members say Ukraine's position is too precarious to hesitate.

# Former Defence Min Ishiba to become Japan PM

Tokyo (AP): Japan's ruling party on Friday picked former defence minister Shigeru Ishiba as leader, setting him up to become prime minister next week.



The party leadership win is a ticket to the top job because the Liberal Democratic Party's ruling coalition currently controls the parliament. Considered a defense policy expert, Ishiba has proposed an Asian version of the NATO military alliance and a more equal Japan-US security alliance. Ishiba is a supporter of Taiwan's democracy. He calls for an establishment of a disaster management agency in one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

Ishiba beat out Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi, a staunch conservative who was running to become the country's first female prime minister.

A record nine lawmakers, including two women, ran in a vote decided by LDP members of parliament and about 1 million dues-paying party members. That's only 1 per cent of the country's eligible voters. Outgoing Prime Minister

Fumio Kishida has been dogged by party corruption scandals, and the LDP wanted a fresh leader in hopes of a regaining public trust before a likely general election.

Some experts believe that party turmoil could mean that Japan will return to an era similar to the early 2000s, which saw "revolving door" leadership changes and political instability.

A succession of short-lived governments hurts Japanese prime ministers' ability to set up long-term policy goals or develop trusted relations with

other leaders. On Tuesday, Kishida and his Cabinet ministers will resign. Ishiba, after being formally elected in a parliamentary vote, will then form a new Cabinet later in the day. The main opposition - the liberal-leaning Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan - has struggled to build momentum, despite the LDP scandals. But experts say its newly elected leader, centrist former Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, is pushing a conservative shift for the party, could trigger a broader political regroupings.

# Cricket record

Singapore (PTI): Migrant workers, particularly from South Asian countries, played social cricket free in Singapore and won recognition in a Guinness Book for World Records for a tournament at a single venue, a report said on Friday. GWR recognised the Singapore Social Cricket League (SCL) as the "largest cricket tournament played at a single venue" from July 13 to September 15 involving 102 teams, 286 matches, and 2,220 players.

**SIGNALING WORKS IN KATIHAR DIVISION**

Tender Notice No.: N-2024-K-15, Date: 24-09-2024. E-Tender is invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Tender No.: N-2024-K-15; Name of Work:** Signaling work during various Engineering machine work (PQRS and Unimat machine work in Kishanganj-Old Malda Junction section) over Katihar Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 22,56,677.62/- **Earnest Money:** ₹ 45,100/-; Date & time of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. on 16-10-2024. For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 16-10-2024 in the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

DRM (S&T), Katihar  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, Harpreet Singh S/o, Gurdev Singh, R/o. M-133-136, Raghuvir Nagar, Tagore Garden, Delhi - 110027 that My Wife's name Pawan Kaur Wrongly Written in my minor daughter Brahmleen Kaur (Date Of Birth 19/04/2021) school's documents but her correct name is Pawan Kumari.**

PD(789)C

**LOST & FOUND**

**I, Mr. Siddharath Bhardwaj S/o Mr. S.P. Bhardwaj has to inform that I have misplaced the Original Share Certificate of C-102, Mayurdhwaj Apartments, Plot No.60, I.P. Extension, Patparganj, Delhi-110092 having Membership No.73 and is not traceable by my best efforts.**

PD(800)A

**कार्यालय माध्यमिक शिक्षा मण्डल मध्यप्रदेश, भोपाल**

क्रमांक/3555/2024 भोपाल, दिनांक : 26.09.2024

**निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**

वर्ष 2024-25 की परीक्षाओं में उपयोग हेतु केन्द्र, मूल्यांकन एवं अन्य सामग्री का (मय कागज) मुद्रण कर, माध्यमिक शिक्षा मण्डल, भोपाल तक पहुँचाने (परिवहन व्यय सहित) के कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है।

**महत्वपूर्ण तिथियाँ**

1. निविदा प्रकाशन तिथि :	04.10.2024
2. निविदा दस्तावेज डाउनलोड करने की तिथि :	05.10.2024 सायं 5:00 बजे
3. निविदा की अंतिम तिथि :	25.10.2024 सायं 5:00 बजे
4. तकनीकी बिड्स खोलने की तिथि :	28.10.2024 अपराह्न 3:30 बजे
5. वित्तीय बिड्स खोलने की तिथि :	30.10.2024 अपराह्न 3:30 बजे

म.प्र. माध्यम/116626/2024 सचिव

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAGISTRATE/MARRIAGE OFFICER, GAUTAMBUDH NAGAR

NO.959/ST-CM (Marriage Registration)/2024

Date: 20 September, 2024

A notice of intended marriage has been received from Mr. Siddharth S/o Mr. Haribandhu Panda R/o Flat No.-1805, 18th Floor Mahagun Maple, Sector-50 Noida, Gautambudha Nagar and Ms. Naphatalin Wichumapraphat D/o Mr. Natthiphat R/o 49/28 Village No.5 Lat Sawai Lam Luk K. Thailand in the Office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may file objection to it on any day upto 18-10-2024 in The Office of The undersigned.

Deputy Collector/City Magistrate/Marriage Officer Noida Gautambudh Nagar

**ENGINEERING WORKS IN KATIHAR DIVISION**

Tender Notice No. : KIR/Engg./38 of 2024, Dated: 19-09-2024; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Brief Description of Work:** At Radhikapur - Construction of two new lines and extension of other three short CSL existing lines to make it full CSL. **Tender Value:** ₹ 65,12,711.77/-; **Bid Security:** ₹ 4,97,600/-; **Date & time of closing of above tender at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 21-10-2024.** For complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 21-10-2024 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

DRM (W), Katihar  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT AT KATIHAR DIVISION**

**E-Tender Notice No. EL/29/10 2024/K/786 Dated: 25-09-2024.** E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Tender No. 10 2024. Name of work:** At Katihar Division:- Comprehensive AMC of Greaves make 500 KVA DA Generator Sets for schedule maintenance of Diesel Engines and its Alternator in Power Cars with enroute escorting and operation of DG sets from originating to destination and back for a period of 03 years. **Tender Value:** ₹ 3,92,75,071.19/- **Earnest Money:** ₹ 3,46,400/-. **Date & time of closing of tender: 15:00 hrs. of 16-10-2024 and opening at 15:30 hrs. of 16-10-2024.** The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 16-10-2024 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Sr. DEE (G & Cng), Katihar  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**ELECTRICAL WORK IN KATIHAR DIVISION**

**E-Tender Notice No.: EL/29/09\_2024/K/785, dated: 25-09-2024.** E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Tender No.: 09\_2024; Name of work:** At Katihar Division:- Comprehensive AMC of Cummins make 500 KVA DA Generator Sets for schedule maintenance of Diesel Engines and its alternator in power cars with enroute escorting and operation of DG sets from originating to destination and back for a period of 03 years. **Tender Value:** ₹ 12,34,25,720.22; **Earnest Money:** ₹ 7,67,200.00. **E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 16-10-2024 and Opened at 15:30 hrs. on 16-10-2024.** The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. on 16-10-2024 in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Sr. DEE/G & Cng/Katihar  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers With a smile

**कार्यालय माध्यमिक शिक्षा मण्डल मध्यप्रदेश, भोपाल**

क्रमांक/3555/2024 भोपाल, दिनांक : 26.09.2024

**निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**

वर्ष 2024-25 की परीक्षाओं में उपयोग हेतु केन्द्र, मूल्यांकन एवं अन्य सामग्री का (मय कागज) मुद्रण कर, माध्यमिक शिक्षा मण्डल, भोपाल तक पहुँचाने (परिवहन व्यय सहित) के कार्य हेतु ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है।

**महत्वपूर्ण तिथियाँ**

1. निविदा प्रकाशन तिथि :	04.10.2024
2. निविदा दस्तावेज डाउनलोड करने की तिथि :	05.10.2024 सायं 5:00 बजे
3. निविदा की अंतिम तिथि :	25.10.2024 सायं 5:00 बजे
4. तकनीकी बिड्स खोलने की तिथि :	28.10.2024 अपराह्न 3:30 बजे
5. वित्तीय बिड्स खोलने की तिथि :	30.10.2024 अपराह्न 3:30 बजे

म.प्र. माध्यम/116626/2024 सचिव

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

"Hestabit Technologies Private Limited" through its authorized signatory Mr. Prashant Gautam, is the owner of the Property bearing Flat No-12A-04 (Super area 1125 Sq.Ft.) Nandini Metro Suites, Sector-04, Vaishali, Ghaziabad ("Property") who intends to sell his property and my client Chakshu Salotra W/o Kapil Kumar R/o A-110, Chander Nagar, Ghaziabad (U.P.) 201011 intends to buy the said Property. In case any person/entity (a) have/have any claim, right, title, interest, lien or charge etc. or any other impediment whatsoever over the said property or (b) has/have any objection to such sale or otherwise has any knowledge to such claim, right, title, interest, lien or charge etc or any other impediment whatsoever over the said property, then such person/entity may inform/notify/provide its objection/claim to their undersigned along with documentary evidence within 10 days from the date of this Notice. Failing which it shall be Presumed that the above owner has absolute, clear and marketable title, free from all encumbrances and also for sale/complete the transaction of sale, of such property to my client.

Sd/-  
Anil Kumar (Advocate)  
Chamber No.-50, Tashil Compound Ghaziabad (U.P.) Mob.-9818774325

**E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024**

E-Auction additional programme for sale of Railway Scrap materials under jurisdiction of Lumding Division for the month of October '2024 is hereby fixed as under:

SN	MONTH	DATE FIXED
1	OCTOBER' 2024	01/10/2024, 30/10/2024

Interested bidders may participate in E-auction through IREPS website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

Sr. Divisional Material Manager, Lumding  
**NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY**  
Serving Customers with a smile

**kotak** Kotak Mahindra Bank

**NOTICE**

Locker Hired by MEENA BAJAJ & LOKESH BAJAJ having address at S-2-125 MAHAVIR NAGAR SEC II TILAK NAGAR JANAKPURI EAST New Delhi-110018 Delhi India with B-3/63, Ground Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058 remains un-operated from last 9 years.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to MEENA BAJAJ & LOKESH BAJAJ calling upon them to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by MEENA BAJAJ & LOKESH BAJAJ within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on December 28, 2024 at around 12p.m.

**kotak** Kotak Mahindra Bank

**NOTICE**

Locker Hired by EKTA ARORA & SANDEEP ARORA having address at 69-1 2ND FLOOR ASHOK NAGAR NEW DELHI Delhi-110018 Delhi India with B-3/63, Ground Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058 remains un-operated from last 9 years.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to EKTA ARORA & SANDEEP ARORA calling upon them to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and they are not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by EKTA ARORA & SANDEEP ARORA within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on December 28, 2024 at around 12p.m.

**kotak** Kotak Mahindra Bank

**NOTICE**

Locker Hired by MONIKA JUNEJA having address at B-4-1 SECTOR-7 ROHINI New Delhi-110085 Delhi India with Branch Janakpuri B-3/63, Ground Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058 remains un-operated from last 9 years.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to MONIKA JUNEJA calling upon her to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and she is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by MONIKA JUNEJA within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on December 28, 2024 at around 12p.m.

**kotak** Kotak Mahindra Bank

**NOTICE**

Locker Hired by AMRIK SINGH having address at WZ-9,GALI NO 1,SECOND FLOOR SHIV NAGAR, JAIL ROAD New Delhi-110064 with Branch Janakpuri B-3/63, Ground Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058 remains un-operated from last 9 years.

All the 3 letters earlier sent to AMRIK SINGH calling upon him to clear dues and to operate the locker has returned unserved and he is not contactable.

It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if dues not cleared and locker is not operated by AMRIK SINGH within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on December 28, 2024 at around 12p.m.

# Maggie Smith, star of stage, film and 'Downton Abbey,' dies at 89

London (AP): Maggie Smith, the masterful, scene-stealing actor who won an Oscar for "The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie" in 1969 and gained new fans in the 21st century as the dowager Countess of Grantham in "Downton Abbey" and Professor Minerva McGonagall in the Harry Potter films, died Friday. She was 89.



Smith's sons, Chris Larkin and Toby Stephens, said in a statement that Smith died early Friday in a London hospital. "She leaves two sons and five loving grandchildren who are devastated by the loss of their extraordinary mother and grandmother," they said in a statement issued through publicist Clair Dobbs. Smith was frequently rated the preeminent British female performer of a generation that included Vanessa Redgrave and Judi Dench, with a clutch of Academy Award nominations and a shelf full of acting trophies. She remained in demand even in her later years, despite her lament that "when you get into the granny era, you're lucky to get anything."

Smith drily summarized her later roles as "a gallery of grotesques," including Professor McGonagall. Asked why she took the role, she quipped: "Harry Potter is my pension." Richard Eyre, who directed Smith in a television production of "Suddenly Last Summer," said she was "intellectually the smartest actress I've ever worked with. You have to get up very, very early in the morning to outwit Maggie Smith." "Jean Brodie," in which she played a dangerously charismatic Edinburgh schoolteacher, brought her the Academy Award for best actress, and the

British Academy Film Award (BAFTA) as well in 1969. Smith added a supporting actress Oscar for "California Suite" in 1978, Golden Globes for "California Suite" and "Room with a View," and BAFTAs for lead actress in "A Private Function" in 1984, "A Room with a View" in 1986, and "The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne" in 1988. She also received Academy Award nominations as a supporting actress in "Othello," "Travels with My Aunt," "Room with a View," and "Gosford Park," and a BAFTA award for supporting actress in "Tea with Mussolini." On stage, she won a Tony in 1990 for "Lettice and Lovage." Her work in 2012 netted three Golden Globe nominations for the globally successful "Downton Abbey" TV series and the films "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" and "Quartet." Smith had a reputation for being difficult, and sometimes upstaging others. Richard Burton remarked that Smith didn't just take over a scene in "The VIPs" with him; "She commits grand larceny."

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

The Centre and the AAI had filed a curative petition against the dismissal of their review plea by the top court.

Prior to this, the apex court had rejected the petition of the Centre and the AAI against a Bombay High Court judgement allowing GMR Airports to upgrade and operate the Nagpur airport.

A special four-judge bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai and J K Maheshwari closed the proceedings on the curative plea against its verdict after taking note of the opinion of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the petition of the Centre and the AAI did not



fall under one of legal parameters prescribed for entertaining such pleas.

The curative plea is the last legal recourse available to a litigant and it was devised by the top court by a 2002 judgement in the Rupa Ashok Hurra case and such a plea, after the dismissal of the main case and the review petition, can be filed if there are certain violations.

They are that there should be a violation of the principle of natural justice, apprehension of bias and the abuse of judicial process.

The top law officer told the bench the curative plea may not fall under the 2002 judgement and they cannot argue that ground of bias and

analogous ground that the government was not heard.

"These proceedings cannot be made into an intra court appeal. I must own my decision.... I have not even consulted the Centre," the solicitor general said.

The law officer, however, submitted one aspect where the impugned judgement said the Centre and the AAI were not the necessary parties to the litigation may be reconsidered because of negative consequences in similar matters.

The bench appreciated views of the solicitor general, and said the curative plea is disposed of as 'not pressed'. Allowing the submission of the law officer, the bench said,

"The observation ...Of the judgment that the AAI and the Union of India are not necessary parties would not be the correct position in law."

Earlier, the bench had sought the "dispassionate views" of the solicitor general as an officer of the court and not as a lawyer of the Centre and the AAI in the case.

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

The Centre and the AAI had filed the curative plea against the 2022 order of the top court.

The special bench had taken up the curative plea in an open court for hearing.

The bench said since it was taking up the curative petition, it has to keep in mind the balance of equity as there are competing interests of the State and the private firm.

Prior to this, the bench had

directed the civil aviation ministry to submit the file notings pertaining to the tender process for the airport.

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

"We are of the considered opinion that the findings recorded by the High Court allowing the writ petition are in accordance with law. Those findings do not suffer from any illegality, warranting interference by this court in exercise of the power under Article 136 of the Constitution. All these appeals are hereby dismissed," a bench of Justices Vineet Saran, since retired, and J K Maheshwari had said on May 9, 2022.

# Government plans 4.5-6 crore textile jobs by 2030

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

Addressing a press conference on the 100-day programme of Ministry of Textiles, Singh said: "The 100-day road map we have prepared includes (attracting) investment to the tune of lakhs of crores (in the textile sector) going forward. We have prepared a road map for creation of 4.5 crore to 6 crore jobs by 2030."

He shared that the seven PM-MITRA integrated mega textile parks approved earlier will have investment to the tune of Rs 70,000 crore when fully functional, thereby creating 21 lakh jobs.

Taking a dig at previous Congress-led governments, he said, they would not do anything in the first three months whereas the Modi government has started with



a 100-day road map.

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

He said that there are plans to take the size of India's textile sector to USD 350 billion.

"To reach a size of USD 350 billion in the coming days, we need man-made fabric, whether it be synthetic, viscose or natural fibre, we are preparing for everything," said the minister, adding that over 350 brands globally

procure clothes from India and one should look not just the export figures but domestic numbers also.

Notably, India's textiles exports declined for the second year in a row in 2023-24.

The government has set an ambitious target to achieve USD 100 billion export for textile products by 2030.

Exports of textiles and apparel from India during FY24 fell 3.24 per cent at USD 34.4 billion, as compared to USD 35.5 billion a year ago.

Singh stated that efforts are underway to promote Make in India for the textiles sector, adding that neither Bangladesh nor Vietnam poses a challenge to the domestic industry.

"We are promoting Make in India for the country's textiles sector (to meet the demand of growing population). It is a different matter that our population increases by more than the size of Australia's population every year. In the last ten years, more than 21 crore people were born (in India)," he said.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

According to officials, this policy is designed to enhance investor confidence, promote seamless collaboration with the local innovation ecosystem, and position Karnataka as a global leader in AI research and development.

Crafted through extensive industry research and stakeholder consultations, it draws insights from over 500 discussions with experts and industry leaders, they said, adding, the result is a comprehensive framework that sets ambitious goals for growth, incentives, and

collaboration.

Speaking at the event, Information Technology Minister Priyank Kharge said: "Today, we proudly launch India's first dedicated policy for Global Capacity Centres (GCCs), reaffirming Karnataka's position as the top destination for innovation and business transformation.

GCCs have evolved from back-office operations to becoming critical drivers of global strategic initiatives, R&D, and technology solutions."

He emphasised that with a workforce of over 1.2 million and contributing USD 22.2 billion to the economy, GCCs have been a vital source of growth and employment for Karnataka.

"Through this policy, we expect the GCC sector to grow at a compound annual rate of 12-14 per cent over

the next decade and foresee Karnataka holding nearly 50 per cent of the National GCC market share by 2029. We are committed to creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation, supports R&D, and nurtures top talent, ensuring Karnataka remains the most attractive destination for GCCs globally," Kharge said.

According to officials, a key highlight of the policy is the establishment of Global Innovation Districts, with three new state-of-the-art technology parks - one in Bengaluru and two in "Beyond Bengaluru" clusters. These parks will feature cutting-edge infrastructure to foster collaboration between startups, tech leaders, and academia.

Anchor investors in these districts will receive special incentives, with mega projects eligible for customised packages, they said.

Pravin Kumar, the officer

Package', aimed at attracting investments and fostering development across the state.

"Our target is to establish 500 new GCCs by 2029, which will create 3.5 lakh new jobs and generate an economic output of USD 50 billion," she said.

According to officials, a key highlight of the policy is the establishment of Global Innovation Districts, with three new state-of-the-art technology parks - one in Bengaluru and two in "Beyond Bengaluru" clusters. These parks will feature cutting-edge infrastructure to foster collaboration between startups, tech leaders, and academia.

Anchor investors in these districts will receive special incentives, with mega projects eligible for customised packages, they said.

Pravin Kumar, the officer

# Government considers merging RINL with SAIL amid financial woes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is considering merger of RINL with another state-owned steel company SAIL as one of the options to ensure survival of RINL's plant and resolve the financial and operational issues being faced by the Andhra Pradesh-based steel maker, sources said.

To provide capital for continuity of operations at the RINL's steel plant, plans like sale of land parcel to NMDC and bank loans are also being worked out, they told PTI.

The DFS secretary, steel secretary and top officials of public sector lender SBI also held a meeting recently over the RINL issue. SBI has significant loan exposure to RINL.

"The government wants to provide a permanent solution to the issue. One of the options being discussed is the merger of RINL with SAIL," the sources said.

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), under the Ministry of Steel, owns and operates a 7.5 million tonnes plant at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. It holds the distinction of being India's first shore-based integrated steel plant.

SAIL (Steel Authority of India Limited) also comes under the steel ministry.

Sources further said that arranging capital for operations are also being considered, besides other measures like having talks with lenders for financial assistance and monetising assets through sale of a land parcel of 1,500-2,000 acre to NMDC for a pellet plant.

Unlike other primary steel makers, RINL never had the advantage of having captive iron ore mines. Workers union say this is one of the major reasons for the crisis being faced by RINL.

"RINL never had captive mines. All other primary steel makers who make steel



through blast furnace enjoy benefit of captive mines which helps with cost of raw material. We have always bought iron ore at market price," said J Ayodhya Ram, leader of a union protesting against privatisation of RINL.

In January 2021, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave its 'in-principle' approval for 100 per cent disinvestment of government stake in RINL, also called Visakhapatnam Steel Plant or Vizag Steel, along with RINL's stake in its subsidiaries/joint ventures

through strategic disinvestment by way of privatisation.

According to a steel ministry document, RINL is in serious financial trouble. It has been running at minimal capacity and facing continuous losses. The overall dues of RINL have gone above Rs 35,000 crore and it is at the risk of being classified as non-performing asset by banks.

The document said that the ministry is taking steps to keep RINL as a 'going concern' in consultation with the finance ministry.

# India's wedding tourism industry gears up for an exciting winter

KUSHAN MITRA ■ NEW DELHI

The 'Great Indian Wedding' has had movies and documentaries made about it, but the industry now worth an estimated Rs 50,000 crore annually and growing at an estimated 25 percent per year, it has been the driving force of more industries in India than any other. From wedding event planning to gifting and of course aviation and

hospitality. Try to get a banquet hall or even a hotel room in the months of November and December in destinations as varied from Goa to Nainital and rates are through the roof.

And countries across the world also want a piece of the pie, from cruise ships hosting large pre-wedding functions across the Mediterranean and beach resorts across South-East Asia now making

arrangements for everything like beachside mandaps and even diving excursions during weddings and top chefs from across the world now specialising in wedding food, India is also exporting large sums of money abroad thanks to weddings.

Little wonder then that Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January announced that Indians should 'Wed In India' in order to keep the



wedding industry ecosystem in India growing. But there should also be increased government support for all the start-ups in the space, from those who design cards to the thousands employed by the industry every year from make-up artists and waiters. For better or for worse, a large part of the wedding industry ecosystem is still cash-driven and outside the tax net. In fact, it

might not be a bad idea for different states to start competing for wedding traffic by offering incentives to host weddings in their states, this could be through tax incentives to hotels and catering services as well as taxi operators. The ease of doing business should apply to the wedding industry as well. It is understandable that many people find the ostentatious display of wealth

at weddings grotesque, especially since at a per capita GDP of less than \$3000, Indians are far from being rich. But the wedding industry provides employment and opportunities to millions across the country every year and authorities should do more to ensure that a majority of the funds spent remain in India.

# NBCC bags contract for IIIT Nagpur infrastructure expansion

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

NBCC (India) Ltd has bagged a Rs 75 crore contract to build additional infrastructure at Indian Institute of Information Technology, Nagpur.

The company said in a statement on Thursday it has "secured a prestigious project for the construction and development of additional infrastructure at the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Nagpur."

With an estimated project cost of Rs 75 crore, this endeavour marks a significant step forward in enhancing the educational facilities at IIIT Nagpur, located approximately 25 kilometres

from the city.

Following the successful completion of Phase I, which included an Academic Block (G+5), an Admin Block (G+2), and a Residential Block (G+11), the institute is now ready to expand its infrastructure further.

The upcoming Phase II will encompass the construction of an Academic Block B, alongside essential external development work and associated electrical and mechanical services.

Additionally, the project will feature a canteen with the capacity to serve about 200 students and a multi-purpose hall that can cater to up to 1,000 students and guests.

# New PLI scheme for specialty steel: Government

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is working on the another round of the PLI scheme for specialty steel as the response for the first round of the initiative did not meet expectations, according to Steel Secretary Sandeep Poundrik.

The top ministry official made the remarks at CII Steel Summit 2024 in the national capital on Friday.

In his address, Poundrik said specialty steel is still one area where more is needed to be done. The government

brought a PLI to incentivise specialties steel but the offtake was not as expected.

"So we are bringing another round of PLI so that we can get more interest in the specialty steel business," he said.

Later speaking to PTI, the secretary said the government had launched Rs 6,400 crore PLI Scheme for specialty steel, out of that only Rs 2,600 crore could be allocated.

Specialty steel is high grades used in sectors like defence, automobile, and electrical among others.

# Delhi Jewellery and Gem Fair returns with over 650 exhibitors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

A key attraction of the event is the DJGF Silver Show, which will showcase a stunning array of silver jewellery. The fair is expected to draw over 25,000 visitors, including major buyers, wholesalers, and retailers, providing ample networking and business opportunities. The event will also highlight



gold, Polki, and diamond jewellery, with notable brands such as Shree Ram Krishna Exports and Hare Krishna participating.

Additionally, DJGF 2024 will host a series of knowledge sessions covering topics such as responsible sourcing, retail trends, and export opportunities.

Other highlights include the Retail Jewellers Guild Awards and the 'Shakti - Honouring Women Achievers' initiative, recognizing contributions by women in the industry.



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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

Ramjas College became the first 'Eco-Conscious Champion Institute' under the initiative. The campaign aims to educate youth on e-waste management and promote sustainable practices.

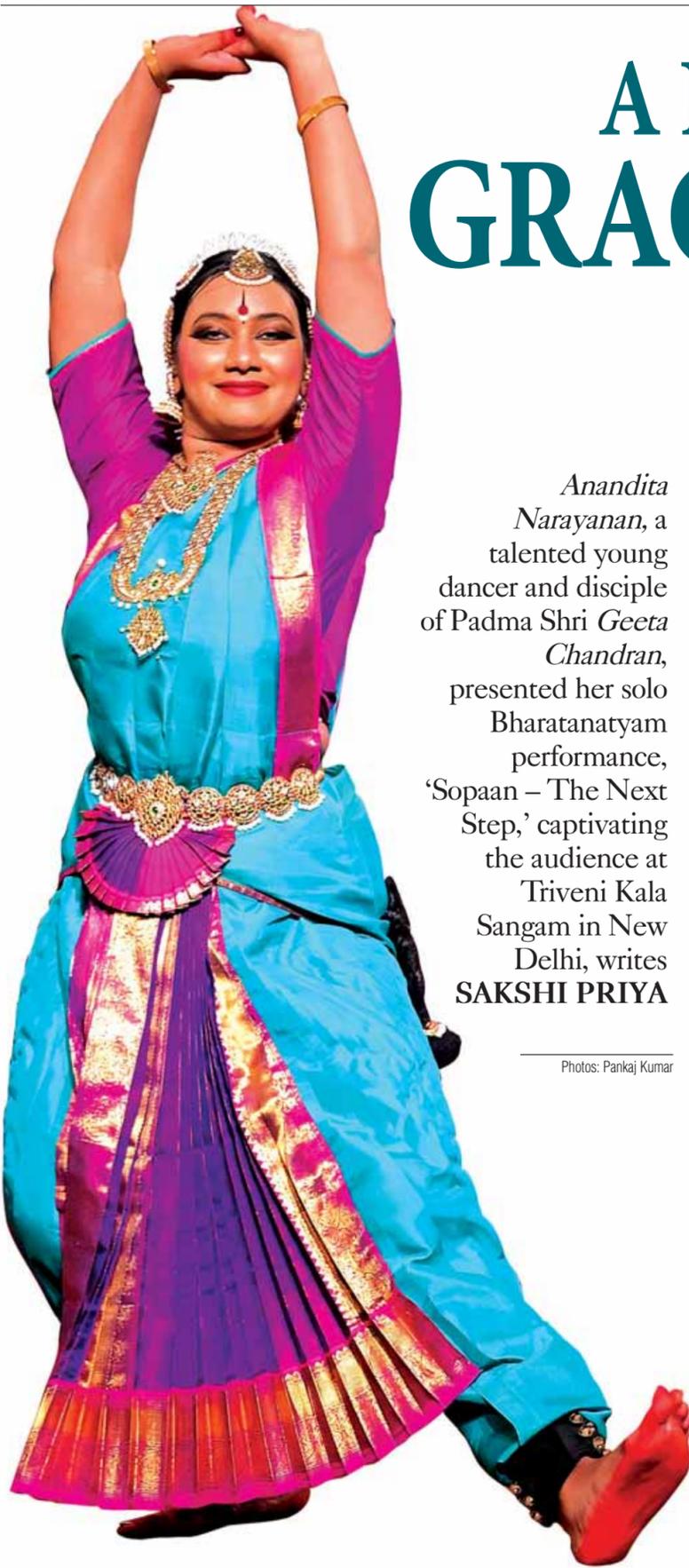
In the first phase, over 5,000 students from 1,400 institutions were selected as

Sustainability Interns, participating in green activities such as awareness sessions and surveys. The second phase focuses on the challenges of electronic waste disposal, targeting 10 lakh students by the end of 2024.

During the launch, Dr. Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairperson of the National Education Technology Forum (NETF), highlighted the importance of educating students on sustainability to drive societal change. Rakesh Bhardwaj, Head of Public Affairs at OPPO India, emphasized the role of youth in achieving India's Net-Zero vision.



# AN EVENING OF GRACEFUL RHYTHMS



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

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

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

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## THROUGH A SATIRICAL LENS Art That Reflects Reality

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

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

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



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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



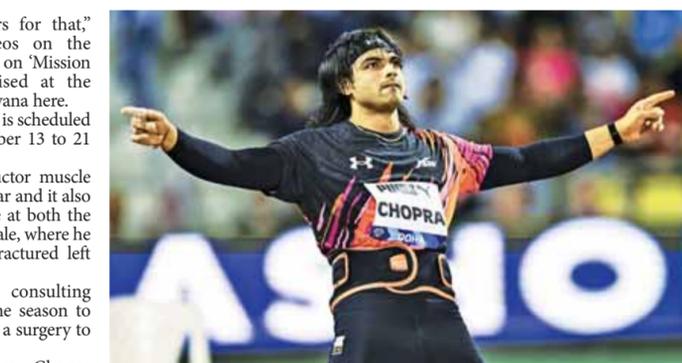
## Bravo retires from all forms of cricket, joins KKR as mentor

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## India U-17 face Nepal hurdle in semifinals

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



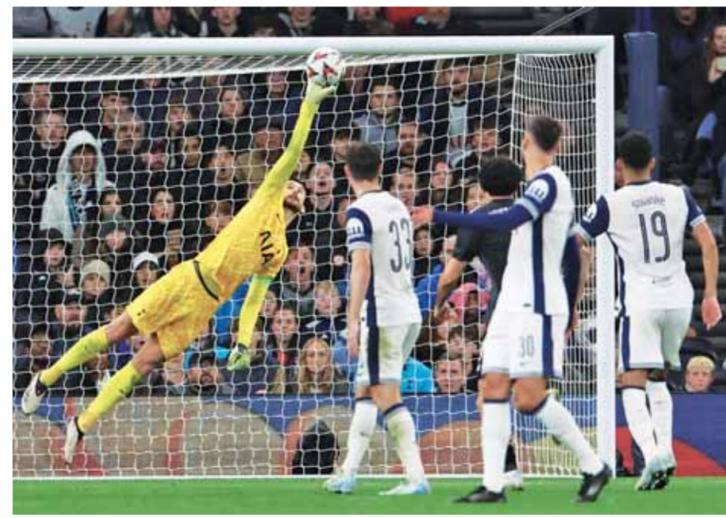
players are more about recovery and staying injury-free. "This rest is about recovering because we are playing on artificial turf. It's not easy to play and train on turf everyday. It has its negative impacts also. We've been training mostly to recover our boys. "It has been raining here everyday and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

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

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

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

win over Brentford in the Premier League and had a stoppage-time winner in a 2-1 victory over second-division Coventry the English League Cup three days earlier. Tural Bayramov wasted a golden opportunity to score from the spot when the Azerbaijan visitors were 2-0 down. Travel disruptions forced the game to start 35 minutes late. Roma blows lead Roma allowed a late goal and settled for a 1-1 draw with Athletic Bilbao following the Italian club's turbulent recent stretch that included firing coach Daniele De Rossi. Aitor Paredes headed in the equalizer in the 85th minute to offset Artem Dovbyk's first-half goal. Roma beat Udinese 3-0 in Serie A on Sunday in the first game under new coach Ivan Juric. Bilbao winger Nico Williams came on as a substitute for last 30 minutes in his return from



an ankle injury. Ajax cleans up Mika Godts had two goals, Kian Fitz-Jim and Kenneth Taylor added one each for Ajax in a 4-0 rout of Besiktas. Czech side Viktoria Plzen scored two late goals from Prince Adu and Vaclav Jemelka

to hold high-flying Eintracht Frankfurt to a 3-3 away draw. Frankfurt, the 2022 Europa League winner led 3-1 on goals from Hugo Ekitike, substitute Junior Dina Ebimbe and defender Rasmus Kristensen. Olympiacos, last year's Conference League champion, started with a 2-0 loss to Lyon in France on second half goals by Rayan Cherki and Said Benrahma. Braga rallied to beat nine-man Maccabi Tel Aviv 2-1. Romania's FCSB beat Latvia's RFS 4-1 in Bucharest. With Fenerbahce, Rangers score early wins Fenerbahce opened the competition with a 2-1 home win over Belgian club Union Saint-Gilloise with both teams finishing the game with 10 men. Defender Çağlar Söyüncü opened the scoring for Jose Mourinho's team in the 26th with a half-volley from close range and Christian Burgess' own goal in the 82nd made it 2-0 for Fenerbahce. Ross Sykes

scored in stoppage time for the visitors. Union defender Kevin Mac Allister received a red card in the 74th and Fenerbahce substitute Bright Osayi-Samuel was sent off in the final minute. Last season, Fenerbahce eliminated Union in the round of 16 of the third-tier Conference League. Europe's second tier is a familiar turf for Mourinho, who led Manchester United to the 2017 title. He took the Fenerbahce job in the offseason. With Mourinho in charge, Roma lost the 2023 final to Sevilla after a penalty shootout. In another early game, Rangers won 2-0 at Malmö. The 2022 Europa League beaten finalist didn't waste time. Nedom Bajrami scored in the opening minute. Ross McCausland scored in the second half. Rangers lost in the 2022 final to Eintracht Frankfurt. The German club will be in action

later Thursday, hosting Czech side Viktoria Plzen. As in the Champions League, the traditional group stage of the Europa League has been replaced with an expanded league phase with all 36 teams competing in a single standings. Each Europa League team will play eight games against eight different opponents through Jan.

**AFFIDAVIT**  
By affidavit I, Abadhut Sahoo 57, S/o Bhaskar Sahoo, of vill/po-Ghantapada, Ps- Colliery, Dist-Angul, declare that my wife's actual name is Fularani Sahoo mentioned on aadhar card and the voter card, pan card that I do hereby declare that my wife Fulla Sahoo and Fularani Sahoo is one and same person.