



OPINION 6

MODI@74: A JOURNEY OF TRIUMPHS AND CHALLENGES

WORLD 8

CANADA CUTS STUDY PERMITS FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

MONEY 10

BANKING SECTOR TO PLAY MAJOR ROLE IN INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT: FM

Published From DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 18 Issue 260 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

DEHRADUN, FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

Established 1864



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



ASHWIN-JADEJA TANGO SAVES INDIA
12 SPORTS

From Beej to Bazaar-Farmers Empowered



109 New High Yielding Crop Varieties, Special Subsidy on DAP Fertilizer, Increase in Kharif MSP and Expansion of Storage Capacity to further **Farmers' Prosperity**

100 Days of Modi 3.0
Paving the Path to Viksit Bharat

CBC 22.2017/13/0016/2425

Cong, NC celebrated in Pak: Modi

JAMMU AND KASHMIR ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a roadshow for J and K Assembly elections, at Katra in Reasi district, Jammu and Kashmir, Thursday

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ KATRA

Training his guns on the alliance partners — Congress and the National Conference, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday launched a fierce attack saying that Pakistan is doing 'balle-balle' over their manifesto for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing an impressive poll rally after conducting a road show in the Katra township, base camp of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, PM Modi said, "Nobody is giving them (Congress and National Conference) any importance here. But in Pakistan, inki balle balle ho rahi hai (they are being celebrated)." Modi also accused the alliance partners of aligning with Pakistan's interests. The Prime Minister's remarks follow Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's statement in an interview in which he said that Pakistan and the NC-Congress alliance were on the same page on the restoration of Article 370.

"They (Congress-National Conference) are declaring that they will bring back Article 370. They want to return to the era of bloodshed. The neighbouring country is asking questions about it. Pakistan seems to be happy with the Congress-National Conference's manifesto. The Defence Minister of Pakistan has openly supported it. The agenda of Congress and the National Conference aligns with Pakistan's agenda," PM Modi said at the rally in Katra. He said that Pakistan has itself exposed the Congress and the National Conference. He went on to say that the BJP government will not allow the implementation of Pakistan's agenda in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Pakistan itself has exposed the Congress and the National Conference. They wanted to implement Pakistan's agenda here... We will not allow the implementation of Pakistan's agenda in Jammu and Kashmir. No power in the world can bring back Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir." PM Modi also sounded a note of caution saying that a vote for Congress would lead to the reinstatement of Article 370, which he said would pave the way for violence to return to the Valley.

"Every vote given to Congress will implement the manifesto of PDP and NC. PM Modi said that the upcoming elections will be a turning point for the region, framing the choice as one that will define the future of Jammu and Kashmir. This election is

about choosing Jammu and Kashmir's future," PM Modi said.

Addressing another rally earlier inside the fortified Sher-i-Kashmir stadium in Srinagar PM Modi praised the high voter turnout in the first phase stating that it represents a rejection of parties that 'sympathise with stone pelters and terrorists'.

Modi said that the three families want to deprive Kashmiris of their fundamental rights, and that "it is their agenda from the very start." The three families, Modi said, think they shouldn't be questioned, "but, J&K will not remain in the grab of these families," said Modi.

"They have only given violence to the people of J&K," he said as he continued his attack against them.

The youth of J&K, Modi said, is now challenging dynastic politics. "It is the same youth that these parties didn't allow to move forward," Modi said.

"The three families considered J&K politics as their family property. They didn't let anyone else take the stage." This is why, Modi said, these families stopped the Panchayat elections from happening as they thought new people would come and replace them. This resulted in youth losing trust in democracy, Modi said.

"They thought whether they would vote or not, power would remain with these three families." Modi in his trademark style questioned the audience about the past, saying, "Do you remember how elections used to take place in the past?" Everything closed down after evening while door-to-door campaigning was not possible, said Modi. "Your rights were snatched while they lived in luxury," Modi highlighted.

This is the first time, Modi said that the elections in J&K are not being held under the "shadow of terrorism."

Naming prominent religious places in the valley namely Hazratbal shrine, Charar-i-Sharief, Khwaja Sahab's Shrine, Shankaracharya, and Kheer Bawani temple, Modi said that during the reign of three families, these places of sanctity weren't safe either.

"Film shooting was barred, cinemas were locked, while hoisting tricolour in Lal Chowk was equal to playing with fire. However, the picture has changed now," Modi said.

Before, going to Lal Chowk was scary, but today, there is a buzz till late evening. From shopkeepers to Shikara wala (boatman), everyone is earning his livelihood with ease now, claimed the Prime Minister.



The Vishwakarmas of today can become entrepreneurs of tomorrow.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi

PM Vishwakarma One Year of Progress

Various benefits received under PM Vishwakarma across the country during the last one year

- Successful registration of 20 lakh Vishwakarmas
- Skill training to 8 lakh Vishwakarmas
- Loans worth ₹1,400 crore approved for 1.6 lakh Vishwakarmas

Digital release of benefits under PM Vishwakarma

by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**

- E-distribution of Identity Cards and Certificates to one lakh PM Vishwakarmas
- E-distribution of Skill Certificates to one lakh PM Vishwakarmas
- E-approval of loans to 75,000 PM Vishwakarmas

Foundation stone Laying of PM MITRA Park in Amravati

Launch of Maharashtra Government's Acharya Chanakya Skill Development Scheme and Punyashlok Ahilyabai Holkar Women Startup Scheme

CBC 25113/15/0067/2425



Uttarakhand Government

Uttarakhand: A Divine Tourist Destination



Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Sankalp
NAYE UTTARAKHAND KA

HOMESTAY SCHEME IN UTTARAKHAND

A Chance to Be Immersed in the State's Culture for Real

Due to the double-engine government, new tourism schemes in Uttarakhand have been launched, which has generated employment for the people. The initiative has also played an important role in developing the state's economy.



Uttarakhand is called the 'Land of Gods'. The state not only boasts of breathtaking natural beauty, but also provides a unique opportunity for travelers to experience local culture and traditions through homestays. In such a situation, the homestays running under the 'Deendayal Upadhyay Griha Awasi Yojana' have not only provided self-employment to the local people, but it is also making a significant contribution to the economy of the state. 'Deendayal Upadhyay Griha Awasi Yojana' started by the Uttarakhand government. The homestay system has gained momentum under the 'Aawasi Yojana'. The aim of this scheme is to uplift

the economic condition of the local people by providing them a permanent source of income. Under the scheme, local people get an opportunity to host domestic and foreign tourists in their own homes. In this way, tourists get an opportunity to understand the indigenous cuisine, local culture, historical heritage, traditional hill lifestyle and art of Uttarakhand. Through this, they are reaching such places, which they had not heard about earlier. Currently, there are about 5000 registered homestays listed with the Uttarakhand Tourism Department. These homestays range from cozy cottages nestled in the lap of the Himalayas to traditional wooden houses, which reflect the architecture of the region. Every homestay provides a comfortable and hospitable environment to the tourists, allowing them to connect with the local community. The development of homestays in Uttarakhand has had a positive impact on the economy of the state. These accommodations not only provide unique and personalized experiences to the tourists, but are also promoting local businesses by creating employment opportunities. As a result, their contribution strengthens the local economy. Homestay owners often collaborate with nearby artisans, restaurants and service providers. This promotes local supply chains and sustainable development. Homestays have played an important role in preventing migration from the state. It must be said that this scheme has provided a solid basis for local people to avoid migration and promote and develop their communities along with increasing income. This has helped in preserving the cultural heritage and traditions of the state. The generations to come will remain connected to their roots.

The popularity of homestays in Uttarakhand is a proof that this scheme is touching the hearts of the travellers. Tourists are not only looking for comfortable accommodation, but they are also liking to strengthen their relationship with new destinations and people. The homestay scheme is actually presenting a new image of the state in the minds of tourists along with connecting them with the local customs of the state. They are going back with happy memories after staying here



Prime Minister Narendra Modi says that rural areas are becoming centers of tourism. Also, every tourist destination can develop its own revenue model. We need to promote businesses like homestays and small hotels to boost the rural economy of new Uttarakhand

UTTARAKHAND TOURISM POLICY 2030:

A transformational initiative to promote sustainable development

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the able leadership of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, tourism in Uttarakhand is developing as a thriving industry and is attracting tourists from all over the world by setting new standards of development.



Nestled in the lap of the snow-clad Himalayan mountain range, Uttarakhand has been known for its spiritual and natural beauty since ancient times. Now, as per Uttarakhand Tourism Policy-2030, the state is all set to become a 'global tourism hub' to provide new experiences to tourists. This visionary policy aims to not only expand the state's potential for tourism but also to give a boost to its sustainable development. The main objective of this policy is to empower all the stakeholders

involved in tourism sector so that they can benefit from the development of Uttarakhand. The goals and objectives of various stakeholders are discussed in detail. While fulfilling the interests, the policy provides an integrated framework, which paves the way for tourism development. Leaving behind the traditional image of Uttarakhand as a religious destination, the new tourism policy of the state is making tourism even more attractive. There is a big step towards making it a part of tourism. Heritage, religion, nature, wildlife, health and welfare schemes are being made a part of tourism. The Uttarakhand government wants to provide an unforgettable experience to the tourists coming here. Through this policy, through this policy uttrakhand in the coming future, will have the capacity to attract tourists all year round. In such a situation, it is logical to call this policy a policy to promote Uttarakhand tourism. The main objective of this policy is to focus on the construction and development of tourism related things, which will mesmerize the tourists. The unique heritage of the state, such as its cultural heritage and natural beauty, is to be kept at the center and the aim of the tourism policy is to develop it as a tourist cluster and circuit. This initiative will promote the linking of new tourist destinations. Through this, emphasis will also be laid on meeting the needs of tourists so that they can have a new experience in Devbhoomi. The policy also gives importance to the preservation of the environment and cultural heritage of Uttarakhand with full focus on the environment. The effort to preserve the natural beauty, wildlife and timeless heritage is an integral part of the state's tourism development. The policy emphasizes on ensuring the revival of lost natural and cultural heritage so that Uttarakhand remains a safe and tourist-friendly destination for years to come. The policy gives priority to reaching tourists in the comfort of their homes by leveraging technology. This includes using online platforms for promotion, marketing, booking, reservations and information dissemination. By using digital tools, the Uttarakhand government aims to provide comfort and confidence to tourists, allowing them to have a better experience during their trip. Recognising the role of the private sector in tourism development, this policy encourages private sector investment in hospitality and tourism projects. The State Government aims to reduce its role in areas where private sector participation can be encouraged. This collaborative approach between the public and private sectors is expected to bring new opportunities in the industry. It will promote rapid development and innovation. This policy lays special emphasis on improving tourism and ensuring that Uttarakhand's tourism sector becomes sustainable and there's minimal impact on culture and environmental status. This includes benefiting local communities through this policy while promoting inclusive strategies. Infrastructure such as parking facilities, toilets, signage, ATMs and health services will be improved to enhance the overall tourist experience. The state government is committed to providing the necessary infrastructure and connectivity, reducing travel time and ensuring that tourism projects are resilient to natural disasters. Tourism Policy-2030 has a lot of importance in the area. With the strategic target of contributing USD 10 billion annually to the economy and attracting private sector investment, the state aims to establish a 'sustainable tourism ecosystem'. The policy also includes generating employment opportunities with a focus on skill development and inclusiveness. The state government wants tourists to stay longer in the state. The key objective is to give a global boost to tourism by increasing the average duration of stays and increasing the number of foreign tourists visiting the state.



Under the Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2030, the state is set to witness a paradigm shift in the tourism sector. By adopting innovation, sustainability and comprehensiveness, Uttarakhand is ready to emerge in a new form on the Indian tourism scene

To book homestays in Uttarakhand, the Tourism Department has started an online booking portal www.uttarastays.com. Homestays located in the state can list their homestays free of cost on this booking portal. The Tourism Department is trying to increase the income of all the homestays of the state by connecting them through this portal and providing online booking facility.

State government's initiative
for online booking
Uttarastays.com

BJP releases Sankalp Patra ahead of Haryana Assembly polls

Promises 2 lakh Government jobs, ₹ 2,100 monthly for women, job guarantee for Agniveers, 10 new industrial towns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ROHTAK/NEW DELHI

BJP national president JP Nadda on Thursday released the party's 20-point manifesto, "Sankalp Patra", for Haryana ahead of the Assembly poll, promising two lakh government jobs, Rs 2,100 monthly assistance to women and government job guarantee to Agniveers...

Among 20 main points in the manifesto, the BJP promised Rs 2,100 per month for all women under the Lado Lakshmi Yojna. The ruling party said two lakh government jobs will be given to the youth without 'kharchi-parchi', a reference to the alleged corruption prevailing earlier under the Congress regime.

The BJP also announced to give cooking gas cylinder at Rs 500 under the Har Ghar Grihini Yojna. Notably, the state government is already giving cooking gas cylinder at Rs 500 under the Har Ghar Grihini scheme to BPL and antyodaya families in the state.



The BJP also promised setting up of 10 industrial cities on the line of Industrial Model Township Kharkhoda, and said industrialists will be given special incentive for giving 50,000 jobs to local youths in every city.

Under the Chirayu-Ayushman scheme, each family will be given free medical treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh and an elderly person above 70 years of age in each family will be provided free medical treatment of up to Rs 5 lakh.

The BJP also promised employment opportunities for 5 lakh youths and monthly stipend through the National Apprenticeship Promotion scheme. According to the manifesto, the party will set up welfare boards for backward classes and a sufficient budget for their

welfare. Sports nurseries will come up in every district for the Olympic Games, the manifesto stated. Tourism was also the focus in the manifesto with the party promising an Aravalli Jungle Safari of international level in South Haryana.

BJP faces electoral challenge in Gurgaon amid internal strife

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Gurgaon, a long-time Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stronghold, may prove to be an electoral challenge for the BJP as Haryana prepares for the October 5 Assembly elections. The party, thanks to six-time parliamentarian and senior leader Rao Inderjit Singh, has successfully maintained a strong grip on the Gurgaon Lok Sabha seat...



seats, except for Badshahpur, which elected independent candidate Rakesh Janghu alias Daultabad. Rakesh had beaten BJP's Manish Yadav by a margin of 10,000 votes. The Gurgaon seat has historically been an urban seat and a mixture of Punjabi, Brahmin and Vaishya (Baniya) castes.

Kejriwal to launch AAP campaign in Haryana ahead of Assembly elections

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal will join the party's campaign in poll-bound Haryana with a roadshow in the Jagadhri constituency on September 20, AAP national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak said on Thursday.



The AAP is contesting all 90 seats in Haryana after talks with the Congress over a seat-share agreement broke down. It is clear that "the BJP is going to be completely wiped out from Haryana", Pathak claimed.

term?" Pathak asked. Alleging that unemployment was at its peak in Haryana and inflation was record-breaking, he stressed that there was rampant "misgovernance" in the state. "Haryana first gave a chance to one party for five years, then to another for 10 years and then 10 years to a third party. Haryana gave a chance to all the parties, there is no party in Haryana that can say they have not got a chance. No one can complain," Pathak said.

Flood situation in WB worsens as Didi blames Centre

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as the flood situation in Bengal worsened with large swathes of lands in Hooghly, Burdwan, Howrah, East and West Midnapore going under water following the release of lakhs of cusecs of water by the dams controlled by the Damodar Valley Corporation, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee once again lambasted the Centre for "planning to inundate Bengal."



has not taken place as yet as a result of which the Ghatat town and the remaining areas sink every year ... will this continue year after year," she asked. Banerjee alleged how North Bengal gets flooded when there is heavy rains in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim alleging nothing is done in that respect.

Doctors refuse to end cease work, allege arm-twisting by Government

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The West Bengal Medical Council, the umbrella body of the doctors in the State on Thursday removed the name of former RG Kar Medical College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh --- who is presently in the custody of the Central Bureau of Investigation in connection with the rape-murder case of a woman doctor at the hospital --- from the list of registered medical practitioners.

sources said adding the step was taken under various provisions of the Bengal Medical Act 1914. Ghosh has been arrested by the on charges of corruption and destruction of evidence in the rape and murder case. The Enforcement Directorate too has lodged cases against him under Prevention of Money Laundering Act.



withdrew their services amid allegations that they were asked to do so by the State police. "They came and forcibly took away the tents, bio-toilets, fans, camp cots and other

things that were being used at the demonstration site," said Dr. Ankush one of the agitators alleging, "though they would not say anything in public we were told that they had pressure

from the police and the Government to do so. Though a major portion of the doctors' demands had been accepted by the Government during a meeting with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee they had still been insisting on the fulfillment of the "fourth and fifth demand that entails the removal of State Health Secretary NS Nigam and ensuring of safety and security inside the medical colleges and hospitals where some vested interests with high political connection perpetrate a syndicate raj and threat culture extorting lakhs of rupees from the students after failing them in exams ... or selling honours courses for

Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders begin final round of seat-sharing talks

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

With more than a fortnight to go for the announcement of the schedule for the Maharashtra Assembly polls, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders -- belonging to the Congress, NCP (Sharad Pawar) and Shiv Sena (Uddav Thackeray) -- have begun their final round of seat-sharing talks for the polls.



NCP (SP) and UBT have already held several rounds of preliminary seat-sharing talks. In the final round of seat-sharing talks that began on Wednesday, the three constituents of the MVA will decide on the number of seats to be contested by each party and the identification of the constituencies from which each party will field their candidates.

in a big way to the candidates belonging to the Congress and NCP (SP). In an effort to avoid differences over the leadership during the seat-sharing talks, the three MVA constituents have decided to go to the Assembly polls under the joint leadership of three parties. It may be recalled that on September 4, NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar -- who is considered the architect of the MVA -- had said that the Opposition's grand alliance would declare its nominee for the chief minister's post based on which constituent party wins the maximum seats in the State Assembly polls.

taking part in the seat-sharing talks comprises among AICC general secretary Ramesh Chennithala, state Congress president Nana Patole, Congress legislature party leader Balasaheb Thorat, while Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray and his aide Sanjay Raut are representing the Shiv Sena (UBT). Sharad Pawar and his party's state unit president Jayant Patil are involved in the talks. Since there were serious differences in the sharing of seats like Kolhapur, Sangli, Bhiwandi and seats of Mumbai in the recent Lok Sabha polls, the leaders are trying their best to paper over their differences.

PIL against Manoj Saunik appointment as MahaRera Chairman to be heard on September 23

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A public interest litigation challenging the appointment of Manoj Saunik, a retired IAS officer and husband of current State Chief Secretary Sujata Saunik, as the chairman of the Maharashtra Real Estate Regulatory Authority (MahaRera), will come up for hearing in the Bombay High Court on September 23.



interest of the consumers in the real estate sector, and is expected to adjudicate the disputes between the consumers and developers. The record of Mr. Saunik while in administration is tainted with mala fides and corruption, is certainly not free from blemish," Wategaonkar alleged. "The Additional Chief Secretary (Housing) and convener of the Selection committee has failed to respond to the notice issued to him," the petition stated in his PIL.

Saunik's appointment as the MahaRera chairman. "The act lays down that the chairperson shall be appointed by the government on the recommendations of 3-member selection committee, consisting of the Chief Justice of the High Court or his nominee Judge, the Secretary, Housing Dept., and the Law secretary," Wategaonkar said. "The law provides eligibility for Chairman of a person as 'who is or has been' in the service of the state Government and has held the post of Additional Secretary. The words 'who is or has been' have been authoritatively construed as meaning one 'who is or has been' in service 'without any blemish whatsoever,'" the petitioner said. Wategaonkar said that he had issued a notice on August 19, 2024, to the convener of the Selection Committee and Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Housing alleging "illustrative instances of misconduct of Shri Manoj Saunik."



FIRST COLUMN

APPLY SPORTS ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE

The lessons learned through sports cultivate a healthier and productive work environment



SAKSHI SETHI

Sports have since long been a crucial element of human culture, teaching participants important life skills and values. The discipline, teamwork and perseverance developed in sports can easily be translated into a professional setting, where these qualities often lead to success. Applying sports values to the workplace creates a healthier and more productive environment that benefits individuals and teams alike.

The term 'resilience' is one of the core values in sports, where athletes regularly face challenges, setbacks and failures. Whether it's losing a game, dealing with injuries or facing tough competition, athletes learn to recover, adapt and continue working toward their goals. The similar value is crucial in the workplace, where employees encounter stress, failed projects and unexpected obstacles. Resilience helps employees bounce back from difficulties and maintain a positive attitude despite setbacks. It encourages them to see failure as an opportunity for growth rather than a reason to give up.

There is no denying the fact that athletes exhibit tremendous commitment and passion for their sport, dedicating hours of practice, maintaining a strong mental focus and striving to overcome challenges. At the workplace, too, similar commitment is essential for both personal as well as organizational success. Employees who are passionate about their work are more engaged, motivated and willing to go the extra mile. Just as athletes work toward improving their performance, committed employees consistently seek opportunities to learn, grow and contribute to their team.

When talked about the Paralympics, these athletes provide a powerful



source of inspiration when it comes to work ethics. They demonstrate exceptional dedication, resilience and perseverance—qualities that can directly inspire and shape one's approach to professional life. The lessons learned from their incredible journeys highlight the importance of maintaining a strong work ethic, overcoming adversity and striving for excellence in any field. Passion fuels innovation and creativity, leading to breakthroughs and a sense of fulfillment in one's job encouraging professionals to remain committed to their goals even when facing challenges at the workplace. It teaches us that obstacles, whether personal or professional, can be overcome with time, effort and persistence.

The values learned through sports are not only essential for athletic success but also for professional growth and productivity in the workplace. By embracing these values, individuals and teams can foster a work culture that promotes collaboration, perseverance and a drive for excellence. Recognizing progress, no matter how small reinforces one's belief that effort pays off and celebrating these victories along the way keeps the individual motivated and energized to continue. Instead of shying away from difficulties, one must see them as opportunities to learn and grow. When an individual approaches obstacles with the belief that effort leads to improvement, they build resilience and perseverance. As stated above, undoubtedly, Paralympians have to cope with significant adversity, whether it's learning to use a prosthetic limb or recovering from a life-altering injury. In the workplace, this means that failures, mistakes or even unexpected challenges are not the end but an opportunity to bounce back stronger. In the workplace, adopting a mindset that welcomes challenges rather than avoiding them is a key part of developing a strong work ethic. It pushes professionals to take on difficult tasks, expand their capabilities and evolve in their careers. Sports values do provide excellent lessons that can be transferred to the workplace, promoting personal growth, team cohesion and overall success. (The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

Sri Lanka's pivotal presidential election

With traditional parties in decline and new alliances emerging, this election may spring surprises. The outcome will determine Sri Lanka's capacity to address its urgent challenges



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

Sri Lanka faces a pivotal moment in its political history as it prepares for the presidential election this Saturday, 21 September. This election, the ninth for the executive presidency, unfolds amid severe political polarisation, sharply contrasting with the last election in November 2019. The decline of traditional political parties and the rise of various political alliances are prominent features of this election, with three main candidates competing in a manner distinct from the two-horse races of previous presidential contests. The fragmentation of political parties, the absence of anti-defection laws, and the formation of new alliances driven more by personal interests than by cohesive agendas pose significant risks to democratic stability and governance. The 2019 presidential race featured two main candidates and a notable but relatively minor third-party candidate. It saw a record voter registration of 15,992,096 and a turnout of 83.72% (13,387,951), surpassing previous highs of 81.52% in 2015 and 81.06% in 1982. Despite this high turnout, 135,452 votes were invalid, leaving 13,252,499 votes as valid. Gotabaya Rajapaksa of the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna won with 52.25% of the valid votes (6,924,255), while his main opponent, Sajith Premadasa of the National Democratic Front, received 41.99% (5,564,239). Anura Kumara Disnayake of the National People's Power secured a mere 3.16% (418,553 votes). In the subsequent general election on 5 August 2020, Premadasa and Disnayake faced off again for parliamentary seats. Premadasa won 305,744 votes, while Disnayake received 49,814 votes.

In the 2015 parliamentary elections, Premadasa garnered 112,645 votes from Hambantota, whereas Disnayake, contesting from Colombo, secured 65,966 votes. Ranil Wickremesinghe, one of main three main contenders, in this year's race but absent from the 2019 presidential election, leads the United National Party. His party received 249,435 votes (2.25%) in the general elections, including 30,875 from Colombo and 28,282 from Gampaha. Although his party did not win a parliamentary seat, Wickremesinghe was appointed to a national list position. Amid severe social upheaval caused by economic mismanagement, which resulted in the resignation of both the President and Prime Minister, Wickremesinghe, a seasoned politician and six-time Prime Minister, capitalised on the moment to make his comeback. After Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa was forced to resign, Wickremesinghe was appointed as Prime Minister.

However, protests demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa led to his dramatic escape, first to Trincomalee by navy ship, then back to Colombo by air force chopper, and finally to the Maldives by air force cargo flight. Rajapaksa officially resigned on 14 July 2022. Subsequently, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe was appointed as President by the constitutional process. Wickremesinghe's appointment highlights the complexities of Sri Lanka's political system. According to the constitution, the President must appoint a Prime Minister who commands the majority's confidence in Parliament, illustrating the considerable unchecked powers inherent in the executive role. Rajapaksa's assumption that Wickremesinghe, who came to Parliament through the national list, was the candidate who earned the majority's confidence reflects the intricate dynamics of Sri Lanka's



THE FRAGMENTATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, THE ABSENCE OF ANTI-DEFLECTION LAWS, AND THE FORMATION OF NEW ALLIANCES DRIVEN MORE BY PERSONAL INTERESTS THAN BY COHESIVE AGENDAS POSE SIGNIFICANT RISKS TO DEMOCRATIC STABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

politics. However, Wickremesinghe has effectively stabilised the situation after the social upheaval. In this context, Wickremesinghe has emerged as a major candidate, yet the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna has nominated its candidate, Namal Rajapaksa. Reports suggest that Rajapaksa's ambitions to secure the prime ministership were opposed, leading a faction of his party to break away from Wickremesinghe. Rajapaksa's candidacy appears more focused on maintaining his family's political lineage rather than presenting a genuine bid for leadership. Nonetheless, his endorsement of supporting Sajith Premadasa, where he appeals to supporters to cast their second vote for Premadasa, could be a decisive factor in the election outcome. Meanwhile, the NPP, initially opposed to the public uprising that led to Rajapaksa's removal, has become a significant political entity. Anura Kumara Disnayake, who ironically led his political party into alliances with traditional parties to secure ministerial positions over the past few decades, has skillfully capitalised on widespread dissatisfaction with corruption and the growing anger towards conventional politicians to bolster his standing. His alliance's emotionally charged propaganda has infiltrated every corner of society, despite its lack of deep ideological substance. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), his original party, has skillfully harnessed this discontent to challenge the status quo. However, Disnayake's path to victory remains uncertain, especially with three major candidates in the race. Voter statistics reveal additional obstacles: with 17.1 million registered voters and an anticipated 80% turnout (13.7 million), a candidate would need approxi-

mately 7 million votes to secure the presidency in the first count. The NPP's past performance shows limited success, receiving 418,553 votes (3.16%) in 2019 and 445,950 votes (3.84%) in parliamentary elections in 2020. The party faces challenges in Tamil-majority districts like Nuwara-Eliya, Jaffna, Wannu, Batticaloa, and Trincomalee, and in areas with lower voter counts, such as Polonnaruwa and Matala. To succeed, the NPP must secure substantial votes from Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Kandy, and Kurunegala, requiring an estimated 700,000 to 800,000 additional votes. Given these dynamics and the competition among three candidates, the NPP or JVP may struggle to achieve significant success in this election. However, the election remains crucial in determining the country's social and governance structure. Conversely, Sajith Premadasa appears to have significant potential to garner a majority of the votes, while Wickremesinghe has also gained substantial ground. Therefore, it is unlikely that any candidate will secure over 50% of the vote in the first round of counting, which may necessitate counting the second votes. This uncertainty could trigger a new wave of political instability if major alliances and key candidates fail to manage the results effectively and refuse to accept the people's verdict. Despite flashy manifestos and hefty campaign budgets, none of the candidates have provided a clear plan to tackle the staggering \$100 billion national debt. They all parrot the same old IMF rhetoric, yet almost none offer a concrete strategy beyond this worn-

ward path for the incoming leader to steer the country out of its deepening crisis. As of 1 July 2024, about 24.8% of Sri Lanka's population lives in poverty, with rates varying dramatically between districts—3.5% in Colombo versus 44.2% in Nuwara-Eliya. Poverty in rural areas has surged from 15% to 32%, while urban poverty has tripled from 6% to 18%. A recent survey revealed that 31% of the population is impoverished, with 33% skipping meals and 47% cutting back on meal sizes. Malnutrition affects nearly one-third of children under five, and over 40% of women aged 18-60 are overweight or obese, reflecting severe economic and health issues. Regardless of the election's outcome, Sri Lanka's entrenched political divisions threaten to entrench a fragmented legislative body, where effective governance and decisive action may become increasingly elusive. Such divisions risk entrenching a cycle of delays and inefficiencies, potentially leading to a state of perpetual gridlock that hampers national progress. Antonio Gramsci's notion of passive revolution becomes pertinent here, warning of significant changes that merely preserve existing power structures. Hannah Arendt's insight that "The most radical revolution may become a conservative the day after the revolution" cautions against decisions driven by emotion over reason. Thus, the question looms: can this election transcend emotional politics to instigate genuine reform, or will it simply entrench the status quo? Regrettably, the candidates' manifestos seem to hint at the latter. (The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal)

Chronicles of compliance: The missing case diaries in money laundering probes

Money laundering poses a significant threat to society, undermines democratic institutions, and fosters criminal activities and corruption

The international community established the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to combat money laundering and terrorist financing through international standards. The FATF's 40 Recommendations provide a comprehensive framework for countries to prevent and address these financial crimes. India enacted the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in 2002, effective from July 1, 2005, in alignment with its international obligations. The PMLA aims to combat the laundering of illicit funds, including those from activities such as drug trafficking, thereby safeguarding the country's financial integrity. **The Role and Importance of the Case Diary:** The case diary, as mandated under sec-



PRAKHAR BAJPAI

tion 172 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), maintains a chronological record of the investigation process conducted by the police officer. This detailed documentation includes every step taken during the investigation, such as the date and time of receiving information about the crime, the start and finish times of the investigation, locations visited, witness statements recorded, and evi-

dence collected. This comprehensive record ensures continuity and transparency in the investigation, serving as a crucial handover document when different officers handle the case at various stages. The case diary is essential for maintaining continuity and transparency in the investigation process, offering a comprehensive overview of progress to courts and defence lawyers. This transparency is indispensable for maintaining procedural integrity and accountability in the investigation process. **Concerns Regarding the Absence of a Case Diary under PMLA:** In contrast, the PMLA mandates thorough investigations into money laundering but does not specify the need for a



detailed case diary as in the CrPC. This absence raises concerns about potential misuse by the Enforcement Directorate. Without a mandated case diary, there is no obligation for investigators to maintain a comprehensive, chronological record of their actions. This lack of documentation could reduce accountability and allow for the manipulation or selective presentation of evidence without a transparent trail of how and when it was obtained, compromising the investigation's integrity. This can lead to biased or unjust conclusions, undermining the integrity of the investigation and in cases where multiple officers are involved in different stages of the investigation, the absence

of a detailed case diary can result in inconsistent handovers. Critical information might be lost or altered, impacting the continuity and coherence of the investigation. This ultimately leads to violations of individual rights and compromise on due process of law. **Case Diary Maintenance:** It is important to understand that the accused under CrPC does not have an automatic right to

view the case diary. Access to the case diary is at the discretion of the Court or the police officer. However, the significance of maintaining a case diary as noted above lies in its ability to keep investigating agencies diligent and accountable throughout the investigation process. Furthermore, under the criminal law procedure, it is considered a dereliction of duty if the Magistrate does not request and review the case diary before authorizing any form of custody to the accused which means the perusal of the case diary by the magistrate is essential before any remand, whether judicial or police custody and haphazard maintenance of a case diary discredits those responsible and defeats the very purpose for

which it is required. Therefore, it is suggested that similar practice needs to be followed under the PMLA cases as well. Mandating ED to maintain a case diary ensures that it adheres to the due process of law during investigations and thereafter, the court will become entitled to use the case diary during trials or inquiries as an aid in the inquiry or trial, thereby holding the ED accountable for its investigative procedures, doing this the magistrate will be getting aid and true picture of the detailed record of the investigation proceedings conducted by ED till date in a narrative form, recorded promptly, with sufficient detail, and in chronological order and thus, will be able to objectively decide whether to remand the accused or not. The Supreme Court is set to review 2 aspects of PMLA in July 2024, firstly, the FIR which is akin to ECIR under PMLA should be supplied to the accused or not. Secondly, the reversal of the presumption of innocence. It is to be noted that giving a case diary a statutory requirement under PMLA and thereby, mandating the ED to maintain one will be crucial in shaping the final judgement, which could fundamentally impact the legal framework for money laundering investigations in India. A ruling in favour of maintaining a case diary would enhance the fairness and transparency of PMLA proceedings, ensuring the accused's right to a fair trial. (The writer is a law student; views expressed are personal)



A DIVINE JOURNEY

SHARANYA CHANDRAN'S *Hymns to Hara* was more than a performance, it was a profound tribute to Lord Shiva, blending tradition, personal devotion and artistic grace in a moving return to the stage, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

The stage was set, the lights dimmed and the air filled with anticipation as Sharanya Chandran stepped gracefully onto the Stein Auditorium stage. What followed was not merely a dance performance but a spiritual journey, an exquisite expression of devotion, emotion and divine energy. In her solo Bharatanatyam presentation, *Hymns to Hara*, Sharanya Chandran paid tribute to Lord Shiva. The term *Hymns to Hara* refers to devotional songs or praises dedicated to Lord Shiva, who is often called "Hara," meaning "the remover" or "destroyer of evil" in Sanskrit. This title perfectly encapsulated the performance, as it was a spiritual offering through dance, celebrating the multifaceted aspects of Lord Shiva, his power, love and divine qualities. From the very first moment, it became evident that this was much more than a dance, it was a deep exploration of the divine, a celebration of devotion and a portrayal of the complex emotions evoked by Lord Shiva. Sharanya's depiction was powerful and moving, capturing the essence of Shiva's multifaceted nature.

As the daughter of the renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Geeta Chandran, Sharanya has long been admired for her ability to infuse



depth and emotion into her performances. In *Hymns to Hara*, she explored the many dimensions of Shiva, his compassion, his wrath, his fearlessness and even his more unsettling aspects. Each emotion was brought vividly to life through

Sharanya's precise movements, her expressive face and her profound understanding of the Bharatanatyam tradition. What made this performance particularly meaningful was the personal connection Sharanya

brought to it. After a hiatus from the stage, *Hymns to Hara* marked her return to performing and it was clear how much the experience meant to her. The performance was a tribute to her grandparents, both devout followers of Lord Shiva, making it a poignant expression of familial love and devotion. Additionally, the evening carried personal significance for Sharanya as it coincided with her ten-year anniversary at J-PAL South Asia, where she successfully balances a career in development alongside her passion for dance.

The beauty of *Hymns to Hara* lay in Sharanya's ability to work together with various elements of Indian culture. Drawing inspiration from poems and verses in Tamil, Maithili and other languages, she crafted a vivid portrayal of Shiva's complex character. The traditional Bharatanatyam pieces were carefully selected, creating a cohesive and visually captivating performance. Throughout the evening, Sharanya was accompanied by her mother and guru, Geeta Chandran, who provided the rhythmic beats of the Nattuvangam. The live music, featuring K Venkateshwaran on vocals, Manohar Balachandirane on the Mridangam, Varun Rajasekharan on the ghatam and G

Raghavendra Prasath on the violin, enhanced the emotional depth of the performance, adding an even greater spiritual resonance to the evening. What set Sharanya's performance apart was not just her technical prowess as a dancer but her ability to connect with the audience on a deeper level. Her dual life as a policy professional and a dancer gave her work a unique perspective, adding richness to her portrayal of themes such as duty, devotion and the search for meaning. In *Hymns to Hara*, Sharanya Chandran did more than just perform Bharatanatyam, she invited the audience into her world, a world shaped by family, faith and art, where tradition and personal history beautifully intertwined. It was a performance that touched the heart, leaving the audience not only in wonder of her talent but deeply moved by the sincerity and emotion she poured into every step.

Photos: Pankaj Kumar

EXPLORING THE ARTISTIC SPIRIT

The Capital Art Show in Delhi is a vibrant celebration of artistic expression, showcasing the rich diversity and creativity of Indian artists through over 80 stunning artworks and sculptures, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Delhi, a city full of cultural richness, has become a vibrant place of artistic energy, blending its historic heritage with modern creativity. As visitors entered The Claridges for "The Capital Art Show," they were immediately immersed in Delhi's vibrant artistic spirit. The exhibition unfolds as a space of mesmerising beauty, where every artwork tells a unique story that goes beyond language. This curated collection stands as a tribute to the artist's mastery, each piece reflecting their inner world with precision and passion. The exhibition celebrates the artist's world, where every piece is a masterpiece that touches the soul. It's a space where everyone wants to be included, as artists have a special way of expressing what words cannot, painting straight from the heart.

The Capital Art Show is more than an exhibition, it's a compelling display of human creativity and expression. Each piece offers a distinct appeal, drawing visitors into a space where emotions, memories and nature blend seamlessly. The gallery's peaceful yet vibrant atmosphere makes it feel as though the artworks are alive, quietly engaging with those who appreciate them. This collection, rich in diverse styles and mediums, invites deep reflection and enriches a profound connection. It pulls you into the artist's world, much like M.F. Hussain's bold acrylic strokes, which capture the energy and complexity of Indian life in a single painting. The show, curated by the renowned Rahul Kumar and featuring the debut of Sameera Anand, offers a fresh perspective on Delhi's evolving art scene. Her collection masterfully blends works from past legends with emerging talents, showcasing both legacy and innovation. Attendees were treated to



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

masterpieces by iconic artists like F.N. Souza, S.H. Raza, B. Prabha and Krishen Khanna, along with dynamic pieces from contemporary artists such as Jeram Patel. With over 80 stunning artworks and sculptures, the exhibition celebrated the rich diversity and creativity of India's artistic landscape. The exhibition left no doubt that in the world of art, everyone yearns to be

included. Through the universal language of visual expression, The Capital Art Show had created a space where attendees could feel truly alive, connecting with the indescribable and experiencing the profound beauty of human creativity. It was, in every sense, a masterpiece of curation and artistic expression. The gallery was thoughtfully arranged into thematic

sections, each offering a unique yet interconnected view of artistic expression. "Post-Modernism & The Indian Approach" challenged Western conventions with abstract and figurative works rooted in Indian identity. "Memory as a Tool," featuring Viswanath Kuttum's evocative pieces such as *What Do We Want to See in the World - (2024)* and *Ellora Caves Series (Set of 6) (2024)*, explored

recollection through materials like paraffin, beeswax, resin and brown powder on paperboard, creating a dreamlike experience. In "The Self," N. Ramachandran's mixed media boxes captured childhood memories, revealing different stories when opened or closed, with nostalgic engravings. "In Celebration of Nature," highlighted by KP Pradeepkumar's *Flower Seasons (2020)*, used mixed media including watercolours, gouache, tempera and pastels to honour the beauty and fragility of the natural world. In "Ecology & Environment" showcased Pankaj Chouhan's compelling watercolour on paper, addressing environmental degradation and human impact. "Changing Architecture," represented by Sunil Yadav's *Geometric Paradox (2024)* in pastels on paper, blended geometric and organic forms to explore how spaces shape emotions. "Abstracted Forms" featured deep sentiments manifested in non-representational works, with notable pieces like Kumaresan Selvaraj and Yuwan Bothisathuvar's *Nothing From (2022)* on Canson paper and plywood, evocative art. Finally, "Progressives & Associates" paid tribute to the pioneers of Indian modernism, celebrating their bold innovation and influence on the future of Indian art.

The Capital Art Show was a deeply moving experience. It felt as though each artwork was speaking directly to us, creating a dialogue that spanned across time and personal boundaries. The art didn't just hang on the walls, it seemed to breathe and interact, inviting us to see our own reflections in its depths. The show made the beauty of human creativity feel personal, reminding us that in the world of art, we all have a place. It was truly an immersive journey that left a lasting impression.

A RICH TRIBUTE TO THE DHRUPAD MAESTRO

18th Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Music Festival Celebrates the Legacy of Dhrupad

By **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

The 18th edition of the Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Music Festival paid a grand tribute to one of the most revered figures in Indian classical music.

The festival honoured the life and legacy of Pandit Siyaram Tiwari, a maestro of the ancient Dhrupad tradition. Dhrupad, the oldest form of North Indian classical vocal music, has roots in the chanting style of the Samaveda, a sacred Sanskrit text dating back over 3,000 years. This meditative and contemplative genre, once confined to Hindu temples and royal courts, has evolved into a sophisticated art form over the centuries. A key feature of Dhrupad is its deep connection to nada yoga, the practice of exploring the inner sounds and vibrations of the body, believed to be the fundamental building blocks of the universe. Dhrupad vocalists cultivate an extraordinary resonance, enabling them to express a wide range of tones and microtones.

It is this ancient tradition that Pandit Siyaram Tiwari, a leading exponent of the Darbhanga gharana, championed throughout his life until his passing in 1998. Born on March 10, 1919, Pandit Siyaram Tiwari was celebrated for his mastery of Dhrupad and was particularly known for introducing fast-paced laykari (rhythmic play) within the genre. His contributions were recognised with prestigious awards such as the Padma Shri in 1971 and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in 1984, India's highest honor for musicians. The Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Memorial Sangeet Trust, under the curatorship of Dr. Sumeet Anand Pandey, organised this festival to preserve and promote the rich tradition of Dhrupad. Dr. Pandey, Tiwari's maternal grandson and an acclaimed Dhrupad vocalist, continues to uphold the family's musical legacy. As the co-founder and secretary of the Trust, Dr. Pandey is committed to sharing the timeless beauty of Dhrupad with a wider



Photos: Pankaj Kumar



audience. This year's festival featured captivating performances, beginning with Shashi Kant Pathak, who delivered a mesmerising solo on the Pakhawaj, a classical Indian drum. Pathak's performance earned him the "Navodit Kalakar Samman" award. He was accompanied by Rajesh Mishra on the Sarangi and Dr. Pandey himself on vocals. The evening concluded with a masterful Sarod recital by Pandit Biswajit Roy Chowdhury, who performed ragas from the Malhar family, accompanied by Pandit Durjay Bhaumik on Tabla. The noted music critic Pandit Vijay Shankar Mishra served as the compère for the event, guiding the audience through the evening's rich offerings. Speaking at the event, Dr. Pandey said, "It's a great honor to continue the legacy of my grandfather, Pandit Siyaram Tiwari, through this annual festival. Dhrupad is a timeless tradition that deserves to be celebrated and shared with the world. We hope that this festival will inspire new generations to appreciate and learn this beautiful art form." This year's festival held particular significance as the Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Memorial Sangeet Trust marked its 10th anniversary. Over the past year, the Trust organised 10 festivals across India, showcasing the beauty of Indian classical music. Two notable initiatives, Geetam Vadyam Nrityam and Vani Veena Venu, received widespread acclaim. Additionally, Dr. Pandey launched the "Naya Swar" series in Delhi, featuring performances by young maestros, with plans to expand to cities like Kolkata, Mumbai, and Bengaluru in the coming year. The Darbhanga school, to which Pandit Siyaram Tiwari belonged, is known for producing versatile vocalists skilled in Dhrupad, Khayal, Thumri and Bhajans. Pandit Tiwari's exemplary mastery in these forms continues to serve as a guiding light for future generations of musicians. Dr. Pandey's dedication to his craft extends beyond India. He has been invited as a Fulbright visiting fellow for 2024-25 at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he will engage in teaching, research, and concerts. His recent tour of seven European countries, where he presented Dhrupad on prestigious stages, further solidifies his role in taking Indian classical music to a global audience. As the 18th Pandit Siyaram Tiwari Music Festival concluded, it not only celebrated the enduring legacy of the Dhrupad maestro but also reaffirmed the vibrant future of this ancient musical tradition.

ASHWIN, JADEJA TANGO SAVES INDIA AFTER HASAN MAHMUD'S EARLY STRIKES

PTI ■ CHENNAI
Seasoned off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin sparked on home turf with his sixth Test hundred as he combined with Ravindra Jadeja to steer India out of trouble and post a formidable 339 for six on day one of the first Test against Bangladesh here on Thursday. Ashwin (102 batting) and Jadeja (86 batting) added 195 runs (174 minutes, 225 balls) for a riveting unbroken seventh wicket stand after young pacer Hasan Mahmud (4/58) reduced India to 144 for six, despite Yashasvi Jaiswal making a solid 56. The ebb and flow of the day's proceedings was quite remarkable and mostly revolved around Ashwin, Jadeja and Mahmud, who made his Test debut in March this year and was just three games old in the format before this match. In a stunning first spell of 5-2-6-3, the 24-year-old Mahmud accounted for the cream of Indian top-order -- Rohit Sharma (6), Shubman Gill (0) and Virat Kohli (6) -- before snapping Rishabh Pant's return to Test cricket (39 off 52 balls) in the initial moments of the second session. KL Rahul, another Indian batter who is re-entering the Indian Test establishment, fell for 16 to off-spinner Mehidy

Hasan Miraz as fortune's pendulum stayed firmly in Bangladesh's quarter. But then came the two gladiators who know Chepauk like the back of their hand -- Ashwin by birth and Jadeja through his long association with the Chennai Super Kings. One more wicket at that stage would have extended the dominance of Bangladesh, but such thoughts hardly disturbed Ashwin and Jadeja. Ashwin went off the blocks with a flurry of boundaries, a firm validation of his oh-so-smooth timing born out of fluent hand movement through shots and precise footwork. There was this ramp shot off Mahmud, who tried to rattle Ashwin with a short-pitched delivery that climbed onto his body. But the veteran player arched himself back ever so slightly to gain space to execute the ramp over the slip -- fabulous in conceptualisation and execution. At times, he scored at a strike rate in excess of 100 and was not hesitant to travel the more uncultured way. A slog sweep that went for six over mid-wicket off left-arm spinner Shakib Al-Hasan testified that. Jadeja was a tad different in his approach. Sensing that Ashwin was in good touch, the left-hander had the simple job of keeping his end going and he



did that with minimum fuss. A past master in operating from behind the giant shadows of superstars, Jadeja looked extremely comfortable doing that once more, providing the assurance Ashwin needed. But there were moments, the showman in Jadeja came forth and Shakib was the aggrieved party, getting hammered for three fours. Bangladesh's star of the day Mahmud, too was not spared as Jadeja, who raised his fifty off 73 balls, played a drag-pull off the pacer to send him for a six. Other times, he wing-heeled across the pitch for those ones and twos to keep the Bangladesh bowlers frustrated. The spectators eventually witnessed the moment that they had been waiting for when Ashwin reached the hundred with a single off Shakib, and they welcomed it with applause, cheers and loud bugling. It was his second consecutive hundred at his home ground after going past the three-figure mark here against England in 2021. And it could not have come at a better time as well. But before the epic fightback, the Indian innings resembled a crumbling rampart. It's not often that a team winning the toss would elect to bowl first here as that translates into a fourth-innings chase. But Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto bit the bullet while going against the trend, and was rewarded for it too. Rohit, who was saved by DRS when he was on 1, was the first to depart. The Indian skipper had little choice other than playing a wobble seam delivery that came at him on a tight angle as he edged to Shanto at second slip. Gill lasted just eight balls but he would count himself unlucky, feathering Mahmud's down the leg side delivery to stumper Litton Das. Kohli walked into the Chepauk amid loud cheers and looked confident. But an old failing resurfaced to haunt him. Mahmud pitched one just short of the length outside the off-stump, and the length was not suitable for a drive. But the star batter chose to play an expansive one with the ball nestling in Litton's gloves after taking a healthy edge off his bat. Jaiswal and Pant added 62 runs for the fourth wicket to temporarily check the free fall before both perished in close succession in the middle session. Bangladesh might have thought the effort was good enough to keep the home side flat on the ropes, but Ashwin and Jadeja made them wiser as to why it is so tough to keep India on the back-foot at home for long.



Indian women crush Georgia; Gukesh leads men to victory over China

PTI ■ BUDAPEST
Grandmaster R Vaishali and Nana Dzagnidze put up impressive performances as Indian women defeated Georgia while World Championship challenger D Gukesh led the men to victory over China in the seventh round as both teams continued their unbeaten streak in 45th Chess Olympiad here. Vaishali and Nana notched wins against Lela Javakhishvili and Bella Khotenashvili as Indian women thumped second seeds Georgia 3-1, while the men eked out a 2.5-1.5 over China. On a day that saw D Harika settling for a draw with Nana Dzagnidze and Divya Deshmukh being held by Nino Batsiashvili from a better position, it was Vantika who handled her time pressure extremely well to play almost 20 moves with just about a minute on her clock to win her game and seal India's seventh straight victory. The Indian women took their tally to an impressive 14 points out of a possible 14 and stretched their lead to two points over nearest rivals Poland, Kazakhstan and France who all have 12 points apiece. In a surprising turn of events a blunder by Olivia Kiobasa of Poland against Nataliya Buksa of Ukraine cost the Polish team dearly in the sixth hour of play as what looked like a certain victory became a 2-2 draw. In the open section, Indian Grandmaster Gukesh showed the way. Playing the white side of a Closed Sicilian Gukesh reached a drawn endgame after nearly five hours of play but he remained focus to find one mistake that was made by Chinese top board Wei Yi. Speculation were rife about a possible clash between D Gukesh and Ding Liren - the two contestants in the next World Championship for a final showdown ahead of their match in Singapore in November. However, the Chinese think

tank decided to rest the reigning world champion. That was already a shock for the pundits of the game. R Praggnanandhaa played out a quick draw as black against Yangyi Yu of China while P Harikrishna pressed for some time before the position petered out to be equal in the ensuing rook and pawns endgame against Wang Yue of China on the fourth board. Earlier Arjun Erigaise went for the kill against an alert Bu Xiangzhi and the latter found a nice piece sacrifice to force a draw through repetition. With just four rounds to come, the Indian men have done everything correct thus far and are sitting pretty with a 100 percent score like their female counterparts. Iran is the only team in close pursuit of the leaders on 13 points while a pack of four teams - Serbia, Hungary, Armenia and defending champions Uzbekistan share the third spot on 12 points each. In the next round now, the Indian men will take on Iran while the women are pitted against Poland. **RESULTS ROUND 7 OPEN:** India (14) beat China (11) 2.5-1.5 (D Gukesh beat Wei Yi; Yu Yangyi drew with R Praggnanandhaa; Arjun Erigaise drew with Bu Xiangzhi; Wang Yue drew with P Harikrishna); Iran (13) beat Vietnam (11) 2.5-1.5; Lithuania (10) lost to Hungary (12) 1.5-2.5; Uzbekistan (12) beat Ukraine (10) 3-1; Serbia (12) beat Netherlands (10) 3-1; Armenia (12) beat England (10) 2.5-1.5; France (11) drew with Georgia (11) 2-2. **Women:** India (14) beat Georgia (11) 3-1 (D Harika drew with Nana Dzagnidze; Lela Javakhishvili lost to R Vaishali; Divya Deshmukh drew with Nino Batsiashvili; Bella Khotenashvili lost to Vantika Agrawal); Ukraine (11) drew with Poland (12) 2-2; Azerbaijan (10) lost to Kazakhstan (12) 1-3; Armenia (11) drew with United States of America (11) 2-2; Mongolia (11) drew with Germany (11) 2-2; Spain (10) lost to France (12) 1.5-2.5.

Kevin de Bruyne injury scare as Man City is held 0-0 by Inter Milan in the Champions League

AP ■ MANCHESTER
Manchester City faces a new injury concern for Kevin de Bruyne ahead of a showdown with Premier League title rival Arsenal after the playmaker was substituted at halftime of Champions League match against Inter Milan. The Belgium international looked in discomfort after making a run late in the first half. After receiving treatment, De Bruyne didn't return for the second half and was replaced by Ilkay Gundogan. The game ended 0-0. City hosts title rival Arsenal at Etihad Stadium on Sunday. City manager Pep Guardiola said he didn't know the extent of De Bruyne's injury, but was informed by the club doctor the playmaker could not carry on in the second half. "I didn't speak with the doctors yet," Guardiola said about De Bruyne's availability for the weekend. "He will be assessed tonight, maybe tomorrow. We will have more info tomorrow." De Bruyne endured an injury-disrupted campaign last season when he was sidelined from August to January with a hamstring problem. He returned to help the club secure a record fourth straight English title. He has started every game this season and scored in City's 4-1 win against Ipswich last month. City held off challenges from Arsenal in each of the last two seasons to lift the title. The north London club is expected to be City's main rival again this term. Arsenal has its own injury



problems ahead of the game after captain Martin Odegaard was ruled out with ankle ligament damage. Without De Bruyne, City failed to find a breakthrough against Inter and was shut out at home in the Champions League for the first time since a 0-0 draw with Sporting Lisbon in March 2022. It was only the second time in all competitions since then that Guardiola's team failed to score at home - the other coming in a 0-0 with Arsenal in the league in March. City extended its unbeaten home run in European games to 32, dating back to a 2-1 loss to Lyon in 2018. Haaland locked on 99 Erling Haaland has looked unstoppable this season with nine goals in his first four games of the campaign before Wednesday match. But that run was snapped by Inter with the Norway striker stuck on 99 goals for City. Haaland also failed to score against the Italians when the teams met in the Champions League final in 2023, which City won 1-0 to lift the trophy for the first time in its history. "They are masters of defending," Guardiola said. With his contract expiring at the end of the season, Guardiola sounds like he's still loving life at City. Asked by an Italian journalist if he could see himself working in Italy in the future, Guardiola said: "I really enjoy being here. I love English football, it is fantastic, really enjoyable. They leave you alone to get on with the job. That doesn't happen anywhere else."



PSG's post-galactico era begins with a last-gasp win

AP ■ PARIS
It took a huge blunder to gift Paris Saint-Germain victory in the first Champions League match of its post-galactico era. PSG scraped a 1-0 home win over tournament newcomer Girona on Wednesday with a stoppage-time goal, which came when goalkeeper Paulo Gazzaniga let a left-wing cross from Nuno Mendes trickle under his hands and through his legs. For the first time in more than a decade, PSG began its Champions League campaign without at least one star player, known in soccer as a "galactico." But after the likes of Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Edinson Cavani, Neymar, Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi came and went without winning Europe's elite club competition, PSG started this campaign with a new identity based on more French players and greater teamwork. It was also PSG's first Champions League game without Mbappé for seven years after France's star joined Real Madrid, scoring for his new club on Tuesday. Mbappé was reproached by his critics for not tracking back or closing down enough when he played up front for PSG. Yet PSG coach Luis Enrique could be heard shouting when his players failed to close down properly and, at one point, Girona kept the ball for 2 1/2 minutes with PSG's ball-watching players chasing aimlessly. "They defended well and we struggled to create clear-cut chances," Enrique said. After 34 minutes, whistles could be heard from the crowd at a subdued Parc des Princes. Aside from half-chances from midfielder Warren Zaire-Emery and Marco Asensio, who went off injured late in the first half with an apparent hamstring injury, there was scant attacking play. "All the teams have things to improve," Zaire-Emery said. "We have new players coming into the team who need to settle in." Yet this was even more the case for a Girona team that lost several key players from last season, including striker Artem Dovbyk, winger Savinho and right back Yan Couto. Girona defender Ladislav Krejci made a brilliant tackle on Ousmane Dembélé after the PSG attacker went clean through on goal in the first half. But with moments left, Gazzaniga's howler spared PSG. "We didn't play very well, and we have to say it," PSG midfielder Vitorino said. "We had trouble keeping the ball. You have to give Girona credit, but we need to look at what we didn't do well."

Malvika beats Kristy Gilmour to enter China Open quarterfinals

PTI ■ CHANGZHOU (CHINA)
Young Indian shuttler Malvika Bansod continued her fine form as she cruised to her maiden Super 1000 quarterfinal after eking out a hard-fought victory against higher-ranked Kristy Gilmour in the China Open here on Thursday. Malvika, ranked 43rd, toiled hard for one hour and five minutes before pulling off a 21-17 19-21 21-16 win over the two-time Commonwealth Games medalist and world number 25 from Scotland in a women's singles round-of-16 contest. "This is the first time I will play a quarterfinal of a Super 1000 tournament so it is a dream come true and the biggest achievement of my life so far," Malvika said after the match. "I dreamt about this before the tournament that how would it be if I reached the quarters and now I'm top 8, so it's a great feeling," she added. Talking about the match, the Indian, who now leads head-



to-head against Gilmour 3-2, said "There is a lot of drift from this part so I found it difficult to control in the last parts of the last game and second game as well. But I'm glad god helped me." The win comes a day after the 22-year-old defeated Paris Olympics bronze medalist Gregoria Mariska Tunjung of Indonesia. The Nagpur shuttler feels she has been able to control the shuttle in the tricky conditions here. "My retrieving is working well, I am able to control the shuttle better than the others. The conditions are a bit tricky

for both players but I'm able to handle it better," she said. She added that she has focused on enhancing her strength, and it is yielding positive results. "This circuit is very tough because if you are entering a Super 500 or 1000 you end up playing a top 10 in the first round as I'm not seeded yet. So, I need to be physically strong from the beginning itself. I have been working on that." However Malvika, who is the lone Indian shuttler remaining in the competition, has a tough challenge ahead of her as she will be up against fourth seed and two-time world champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in the last eight stage. Although the Japanese shuttler has won both the outings against Malvika, the Indian had come close to defeating Yamaguchi and hopes she can cross the line this time round. "Hope for the best. I am in good form let's see how it goes tomorrow. I will give my best," she said.