



OPINION 6 INDIAN ECONOMY THRIVES AMID GLOBAL CHALLENGES

WORLD 9 SHOOTING AT WEST BANK-JORDAN BORDER KILLS 3 ISRAELIS

MONEY 10 RELIANCE, TCS LEAD MARKET VALUE SLUMP

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WE DESERVE SAME RESPECT, SAYS NAVDEEP 11 SPORTS

Paralympics: Warriors of India write history and victory

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

India has scripted history with its remarkable performance and determination to achieve glory at the 2024 Paris Paralympic Games...

200m on Sunday after the heroics of Navdeep Singh in javelin where he achieved gold medal upgraded from silver followed by the disqualification of his opponent and Simran's bronze in the Women's 200 m T12 final on Saturday.



winner Muralikant Petkar bringing India's first gold medal in the Paralympics. This year's Paralympic event, starting from shooting saw many stellar performances by

Indian athletes. Avani Lekhara became the first Indian woman athlete to win two gold medals at the Paralympic Games. Historic Wins: Archer

Sheetal Devi despite not having arms targeted to get the medal with partner Rakesh in mixed team event. IAS officer Suhag Yathiraj got back to back silver medals in

Paralympics in Men's single SL4 (badminton), Sumit Antil became the first Indian athlete to defend his title of winning gold in this Paralympic by beating his previous record by clinching 70.59 meters, creating a new Paralympic record in javelin...

Paralympic event uplifts its global presence in the sports. The performance helped to motivate and inspire people with disabilities to come forward and participate in sports and accomplish their dreams.

international competitions, and were guided by international officials. Rehabilitation centre: For the first time, a recovery centre was established in the Games Village specifically for Indian athletes to provide full support for injury rehabilitation during the competition.

Continued on Page 8

India steps into the Theatre of War

NSA Ajit Doval lands in Moscow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval will visit Moscow for two days starting September 10 to hold discussions focused on resolving the Russia-Ukraine conflict.



to play in resolving the conflict. What must not happen is to think that the conflict can be resolved by abandoning Ukraine to its fate," she said, according to reports in Italian media.

According to sources, it was during this phone call that the leaders decided that NSA Doval would travel to Moscow for peace talks.

"Vladimir Putin shared his principled assessment of the destructive policies of the Kiev authorities and their Western patrons, and went on to highlight Russia's approaches to resolving this conflict," the Russian Embassy said about the phone call.

PMO release said. The Prime Minister reiterated India's firm commitment to support an "early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict" on his official social media handle.

Resignation over Rape, West Bengal on the burn

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday got its first major political shock amid the ongoing statewide movement post rape and murder of a lady doctor in Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College Hospital...



to stay away from the people's protest rallies on the RG Kar issue. Lakhs of people thorough out the State have been descending on street in demand of justice for the victim doctor and steps from the administration to stop repetition of similar incidents.

On whether he had received any communication from the Chief Minister he said he would not comment as "that is an inside issue."

Traffic woes to end soon

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to decongest, and ensure maximum utilisation of its capacity, private as well as Government interstate buses will have to pay the same amount of parking fee for using the bus bays at inter-state bus terminals in the national capital.

Table with 4 columns: Buses, Rate, Penalty for total stay exceeding 25 minutes, Total. Rows include State Government buses, AITP Buses, and various timing penalties.

speed up traffic-pedestrian and vehicle movement outside ISBTs, and generate more revenue for the transport department.

Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena inspected the Maharana Pratap ISBT at Kashmere Gate on August 31 and subsequently held a high-level meeting that was attended by Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot.



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath meeting injured people at the Lok Bandhu hospital on Sunday, a day after the collapse of a building in Transport Nagar area.



Monkey Pox arrives in India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rising Mpox (Monkeypox) cases globally, including in neighbouring Pakistan, India on Sunday reported its suspected first case at a designated hospital here.

Continued on Page 8

Woman gang-raped, attacked with brick

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two men allegedly took turns raping a woman, who was also attacked with bricks as the perpetrators



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Tuli Das to Tuli Asnani and is now known and identified by this name. My date of birth 10.10.1970 is wrong and the correct one is 27.09.1967. Tuli Asnani S/o Late Chetram Asnani R/o 14/102-A, Civil Lines, Kanpur Nagar 208001.

NOTICE

Donation receipts of Saroj Krishna Modern School, Khambhar Kheda, District Kheri, from serial no. 1 to 2100, have fallen and got lost somewhere between the school and Sankata Devi Police Station, Lakhimpur... whose use will be considered illegal

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Farahdeba to FARADEBA W/o Mohammad Aijaz Ansari R/o 132/295 Babupurwa, Kanpur for all future purpose

NOTICE

This is to inform that my name is Mamta. It is also mentioned in my Aadhaar and PAN card. But in bank passbook it is mentioned as Mamta Devi. Both Mamta and Mamta Devi are my name's and from today onwards my name be read as Mamta. Mamta W/o Lavkush Sharma D/o Ramchandra Sharma R/o 123-E, Usmanpur Juih Colony, Kanpur.

NOTICE

* "Original Allotment letter No. 18/D.Bhu dated 11/04/1989 in favour of Ram Sanwar, Original Freehold Deed No. 4686 dated 31/03/2006, Original Possession letter issued by KDA, Original Power Attorney No. 1949 dated 20/07/2013 and Original Sale Deed No. 5660 dated 24/04/2006 regarding Plot No. 212 Block S/S, Scheme Barr07, Barra-7, Kanpur Nagar area 36.75 Sq.Mtr. have been lost in Court Compound, Kanpur Nagar on 05/09/2024. Please inform, if found. Any unauthorized use of aforesaid document shall be void and illegal.

NOTICE

In my ascetic life, my guruji had got my name mentioned in my passport as Kutashanand S/o Parmanand. But in my Aadhaar and other documents, my name is mentioned as Jagdeo Prasad S/o Ram Shanker. Both names are of same person. Now I should be known and identified by this name. Jagdeo Prasad, Daulatpur Banger, Amraudha, Kanpur Dehat - 209112.

NOTICE

Everyone is informed that earlier my name was Ambika Nitin Chaurasia, which I have changed to Ambika Jaiswal. In future I may be known as Ambika Jaiswal. Ambika Jaiswal daughter of Ramesh Chandra Jaiswal Resident - 5/18/149/A4 State Bank Colony Sultampur Bachhra Faizabad-Ayodhya (U.P.) pincode 224001

NOTICE

I, NEELU CHAURASIA R/o 9 KAILASH NAGAR SIWAN TENARY JAJMAU KANPUR NAGAR PIN: 208010 UTTAR PRADESH have changed my minor son's name from NIDHISH CHAURASIA to AADVIK CHAURASIA for all purposes.

NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that in some of records my name is mentioned as KM. BHARATI DEVI D/O BAL MUKUND and in some records my name is mentioned as KU. BHARTI DEVI BRAHMAN D/O BAL MUKUND TIWARI and in some records my name is mentioned as KU. BHARTI DEVI BRAHMAN D/O BAL MUKUND TIWARI all the above names are mine in future, I should be known and recognized by my correct name BHARATI DEVI D/O BALMUKUND. It is also certified hereby that all the legal formalities in relation to the above has been completed by myself. Bharati Devi D/O Bal Mukund Tiwari Add. Hajariya Mohalla gram P.O. Pali Pan Teh. Lalitpur, Pali Rural Lalitpur, Uttar 284403

intended to kill her to conceal the crime, police said on Sunday. The incident was reported in Bakshi Ka Talab on the night on September 7. The girl was found by her parents who rushed her to a hospital and later filed a complaint against the accused. The police identified one of the miscreants as Aish from same village in BKT, while the identity of another is yet to be ascertained. As per reports, the victim went out to have fast food near Asti crossing around 8 pm when the accused met her. The duo started stalking her and on finding her on a lone road stretch, they caught hold of her and dragged her into thickets where they raped her. "They dragged me towards a deserted road and then into the thickets. Aish and his companion started making

Wolves continue to elude forest team

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Forest department continues its search for two elusive wolves, despite the animals successfully evading capture. In an effort to reassure local villagers, the department has set up camera traps at abandoned wolf dens in Sisayya and Sikandarpurwa to confirm that these locations are no longer being used by the wolves. DFO (Bahraich) Ajit Singh said that around 1 am on Sunday, they traced the location of the wolves to Sisayya village and set traps, but the wolves managed to escape. Additionally, the department received reports of a wolf attack in Angrola Dhubia village the same night. However, upon investigation, no evidence was found to substantiate the claim that the attack was caused by a wolf. The DFO acknowledged that the recent wolf attacks have led to numerous false alarms in the district. "The confusion often arises because villagers misidentify jackals as wolves. Minor injuries reported in these so-called attacks often contribute to the confusion. It's important to note that a genuine wolf attack is deliberate and aims to hunt prey. If unsuccessful, it results in

amorous advances towards me used obscene words. They raped me by taking turns. One of them gagged me while the other forced himself upon me," the victim alleged. She said the accused also hurled casteist remarks on her when she warned them of a police complaint. "They picked up a brick and attacked me with it with the intention to kill me. They continued to hit me till I passed out and left, considering me dead," the victim alleged. She said she regained consciousness after a while and somehow reached her home, where she narrated her ordeal to her family. While the police were tightlipped, sources said Aish knew the victim and he used his familiarity to take her to the lone stretch where he and his friend raped her.

SP may offer two seats to Cong in UP bypolls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party is all set to decline the Congress demand for contesting five assembly seats in the coming by-elections to 10 assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh. Congress, part of the opposition INDIA bloc, is seeking five assembly seats out of the 10 in the bypolls which are expected to be conducted alongside assembly elections in Maharashtra. According to party insiders close to the leadership, there has been an exchange of letters between UP Congress president Ajay Rai and Samajwadi Party leader Uday Veer Singh. Both the leaders have pointed out the seats they want to contest. The SP leader has conveyed that the party is not willing to give more than two seats to Congress. He added, "Ajay Rai sent a letter to which Uday Veer Singh has replied. They want us to have the seats which we had won, and want to take all the remaining seats where they don't have

much presence. This is illogical." An SP leader involved in seat-sharing negotiations said "whatever be the Congress demand about seat-sharing, our leadership is not willing to give more than two assembly seats." An SP insider in UP said, "Congress could get Ghaziabad and Khair assembly seats. But they could lose both the seats. In Ghaziabad, Congress is not even in the contest." A political analyst said, "The bypoll is seen as a litmus test for the Bharatiya Janata Party; if they are able to retain the number of seats they had won earlier, they may be able to stand up straight. But even if they lose one seat, the opposition will start building pressure on them on the narrative front. The BJP has a comfortable majority in the House, it won't matter to them though. But the loss would show the decline in the saffron camp's popularity in the bypolls, as they lost more than 40 Lok Sabha seats. Therefore, the BJP will plan it well and try to retain all their seats."

Atal school's girl student selected for ISRO visit

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Varanasi (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision of empowering underprivileged children through the Atal Residential School is coming to fruition, as young minds from destitute and poor families are reaching for the stars - literally. Shweta Sate, a class 7 student from Atal Residential School in Karsada, Varanasi, has emerged as the school's topper and is now set to embark on a journey to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). She has been selected for an exclusive tour of ISRO, where she will have the opportunity to meet scientists and explore the mysteries of the universe. This opportunity is part of the Utkrishi Atal programme, a 15-day workshop held in May 2024, aimed at honing the skills and talents of students through exposure to modern technologies and space science. Principal Amarnath Rai of Atal Residential School expressed pride in Shweta's achievement.

Minor kidnapped, gang-raped

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a shocking incident, a 15-year-old girl was abducted and gang-raped in Meerut. Police have registered a case and constituted three teams to nab the rapists. The girl had gone to attend her sewing class and did not return home on Saturday evening. The family members were worried and started searching for her and found the girl in a nearby vacant house, bleeding and unconscious. According to neighbours, a boy had brought the girl to the house and later several other boys joined him. It is alleged that the girl was subjected to a brutal gang-rape, leading to her losing consciousness. The perpetrators reportedly fled the scene, leaving the girl in a critical condition. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has slammed the state government and demanded justice for the victim. "The inaction of the government and administration in the matter of gang-rape of a minor in Meerut is as reprehensible as the incident itself. There should be justice!" Yadav posted on X in Hindi. Meanwhile, in another tragic incident reported from Bulandshahr district, a man, identified as Hasrat Ali, hanged himself to death. He was under severe financial and emotional distress. Ali's daughter-in-law had

accused him of rape and demanded Rs 10 lakh for a settlement, a sum that Hasrat Ali was unable to pay. Hasrat Ali's death has shocked family members and neighbours. Facing allegations of rape and unable to meet his daughter-in-law's substantial financial demands, Hasrat Ali wrote a detailed suicide note before taking his own life. According to sources, the note revealed his anguish over the financial pressures and the accusations he faced. The suicide note is a crucial piece of evidence in understanding the circumstances leading up to his tragic decision. The family members claimed that the demand for Rs 10 lakh from his daughter-in-law, which came at a time when Hasrat Ali was already struggling with a dire financial situation and mental trauma of rape accusation, placed an unbearable burden on him, exacerbating his stress levels. Depressed with it, he finally decided to end his life. The local authorities have launched a thorough investigation into the case to unravel the exact details of the financial and legal pressures that culminated in this tragic event, with the aim of understanding the circumstances that drove Hasrat Ali to such a desperate measure. Officials said that if rape charges were found to be false, action would be taken against the complainant.

Lord Ganesh idol at Pili Kothi adorns 'leheriya'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Ganesh pandal at Pili Kothi in the city showcases the rich tapestry of India's handicrafts. Mohita Shukla, the key organiser of the Ganesh Utsav at Pili Kothi and a former student of the Arts College at Lucknow University, is the brain behind this initiative. Each year, the idol of Lord Ganesh is adorned with a different handicraft from across the country. This year, Mohita has chosen to dress the idol in 'leheriya', a traditional fabric worn during the month of Sawan in Gujarat, enhanced with intricate gota-patti work. She explained, "I've always noticed that handicrafts don't receive the attention they deserve. Many people are not aware of these crafts, and even if they are familiar with them, such as chikankari, they often cannot distinguish between handmade and machine-made versions. If we continue to neglect these crafts, our cultural heritage could gradually fade away, which should not happen." By featuring different handicrafts on the Ganesh idol, Mohita aims to draw public attention to these traditional arts. "I've observed that people are increasingly curious about the garments adorning Lord Ganesh, and this growing inter-



est is helping bring these handicrafts into the limelight," she added. In addition to showcasing handicrafts, Mohita personally creates the Ganesh idol. This year's idol, standing 14-feet tall, has been meticulously crafted over the past month and a half. "A distinctive feature of our Ganesh Utsav is that the idol is not sourced from elsewhere; it is made entirely by us. Many other pandals use idols imported from Maharashtra," she noted. Mohita further explained that the entire idol is made of black clay, which is a significant accomplishment considering its height. "While most idols are made from Plaster of Paris, our eco-friendly black clay idol is a more sustainable choice. We also use only reusable materials for decoration, and during the visarjan, we immerse the idol in river water, allowing the clay to return to the river's natural cycle," she said.

Youth, accomplices attack rival

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth and his accomplices attacked a rival, whom he had previously warned against talking to his rumoured female friend in the PGI police station area. The attackers, travelling in two SUVs (Scorpio and Thar), lured the victim, identified as Kishan Singh, under the pretense of resolving their differences. Once there, they assaulted him with sticks and rods. According to Kishan, when he attempted to flee, the attackers fired in the air to prevent his escape. "They forced me into one of their vehicles, beat me, and then threw me out before speeding off the scene," Kishan alleged. He mentioned that he had been called to the meeting via phone. The police have registered a case based on Kishan's complaint. Originally from Pratapgarh district, the victim, Ram Krishna Singh alias Kishan, is currently residing in Vrindavan Yojana (Sector 18) while preparing for competitive

exams. He is friends with several girls, including some who are known to the primary accused, Divyanshu Patel. At 7:49 pm on Saturday, Kishan received a call from an unknown number. When he answered, Divyanshu Patel began abusing him, prompting Kishan to disconnect the call. Divyanshu then repeatedly called, demanding that Kishan meet him at the gate of his colony to settle their dispute. When Kishan arrived with his cousin Aditya around 11 pm, he found Divyanshu and more than a dozen armed individuals waiting in a car. The group, armed with weapons and sticks, attacked Kishan as soon as he approached. When Kishan tried to escape, Divyanshu and his associates fired shots in the air to stop him. The attackers then forced Kishan into their vehicle, beat him, and drove about two kilometres before throwing him out. They attempted to run him over with the car and left him severely injured.

The police recovered bullet shells from the scene and registered a case against the accused. Kishan reported that in May, Divyanshu had warned him against talking to girls and threatened to kill him if he did. Divyanshu did not provide the girl's name and only continued to abuse him over the phone, leading Kishan to block his number. The PGI police confirmed that a case had been registered based on the victim's complaint, and efforts to locate the accused were underway.

FOUR INJURED IN ANIMAL ATTACK

Four people were injured in a suspected animal attack in Sambhal, police said on Sunday. Ram Beti (45), Maya Devi (60) and two children were injured in the incident at Swarajpur village in the Behjoi area on Saturday. Maya Devi's condition was stated to be serious as the animal bit off a part of her hand, District Magistrate Rajendra Pesia said. The animal's pugmarks suggest that it was a jackal or some dog, he added.

'Football ground in JMP fit to host int'l matches'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The newly made football ground within Janeshwar Mishra Park (JMP) is now deemed suitable for hosting international matches and is equipped with robust infrastructure to serve as an academy. Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) Vice-Chairman Prathmesh Kumar said recently. This claim comes in response to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's recent emphasis on the need for high-quality grounds for football. During a function where he addressed the members of two rival teams that played a match at a local stadium last week, the chief minister highlighted the importance of excellent facilities for the sport. The Sports Authority of India (SAI), which supervised the development of the football ground, has declared it 100 per cent fit for national and international events. The facility is designed to accommodate up to 1,000 people, including coaches, trainees, players, and officials, making it

ideal for an academy setting. The chief minister had advocated for a football academy of professional excellence, supported by experienced coaches to enhance the skills of young players. He also emphasised the importance of regular matches with rival teams to cultivate a winning mentality. Initially, the plan was to develop a lush green football ground to address the city's lack of a full-length football field. However, based on SAI's recommendation, the then VC Indramn Tripathi was advised to convert the field into an academy. SAI officials noted that while the city already had two hockey academies, it lacked a football academy. The former VC agreed to this proposal, leading to the development of the facility as a football academy. The current VC, Prathmesh Kumar, mentioned that an appointment with the chief minister would be sought to move forward with the proposal.

LU to confer Honoris Causa degree on Desai

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Esteemed engineer and space scientist Nilesh M Desai will be honoured with the Honoris Causa degree during the 67th convocation of the University of Lucknow on September 16. Desai is recognised for his significant contributions to space technology and applications. According to LU spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava, Desai's

work includes key roles in the development of microwave radar satellites, the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (NAVIC), quantum key distribution, and the Chandrayaan-3 mission. He has been Director of the Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad, since January 2021. Born on April 1, 1964, in Navsari, Gujarat, Desai completed BE in Electronics & Communication from LD

College of Engineering, Gujarat, with top honours. He has been instrumental in ISRO's Microwave Remote Sensing Programme since 1986. His contributions include the design of RISAT-1, Oceansat-2, Scatsat-1, and key components of Chandrayaan-3. Desai also advanced VLSI and semiconductor manufacturing in India and was pivotal in developing the country's first indigenous ASIC and Satellite Based

Quantum Communication (SBQC). Desai's career is marked by numerous accolades, including the ISRO Performance Excellence Award (2018) and the IESA Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Award (2023). He has represented ISRO globally and actively contributes to professional societies, including serving as national president of ISRS (2020-2022) and vice-president of ISSE-Ahmedabad Chapter.

ANNUAL MAJLIS

Lucknow (PNS): The annual majlis and Bazm-e-Musalma were organised by Prof Syed Ali Hamid & Syed Masoom Raza at Soltan Manzil. As many as 14 poets from different parts of the country recited their offering to Ahlebaity based on misr-e-tarah - "Sajjad aaj qaid se azaad ho gaye". The programme began with recitation from Holy Quran by Qari Nadeem Najfi followed by a majlis addressed by Maulana Syed Saqlain Baqri. The programme concluded with the presentation of Khan Bahadur Nawab Syed Hamid Husain Khan Award to Hilal Naqvi.

Man forced to sell 2-year-old son to settle medical bill

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a heart-wrenching incident reported from Kushinagar district, a man was forced to sell his two-year-old son to settle the hospital bill and secure the release of his wife and newborn. Harish Patel, the father, lacked the money to pay the hospital's Rs. 4,00,000 bill. Desperate, and advised by hospital staff, he sold his second child to a couple for Rs 20,000. Financial desperation led to this tragic decision. Harish Patel's wife gave birth at a private hospital in Kushinagar. However, unable to pay the modest hospital bill, Harish was faced with an unimaginable decision. The hospital staff allegedly refused to release his wife and newborn until the bill was settled. Under immense pressure, Harish sold his two-year-old son, a heartbreaking choice made out of sheer desperation. On getting information, the authorities quickly responded and recovered the child safely. Five individuals, including the couple who 'purchased' the child and two hospital employees, have been arrested. The police confirmed that the 'sale' of the child was facilitated through fake adoption documents. The accused, including Bhola Yadav (the buyer), mediator Amresh Yadav, Tara Kushwaha and hospital staff, have been detained. Meanwhile, Bharatiya Janata

Party leader Manoj Singh's gunner Ratnesh Prajapati died from a gunshot wound in Jaunpur district on Sunday morning. The employees present there said that the constable committed suicide by shooting himself. The police said that there was a possibility of the gun going off while being cleaned. BJP leader Manoj Singh has a farm house in Baburi village under Barsathi police station where the incident took place. Manoj Singh was not present at home. His two gunners were present at the farm house. Both of them slept after having dinner on Saturday night. Reports said that of the two gunners, Ratnesh Prajapati came out and sat in the verandah after waking up on Sunday morning. After some time he got up and went to the back side of the farm house where he allegedly shot himself. Hearing the gunshot, the other gunner, Rajat Pandey, and employees posted at the farm house rushed there and saw Ratnesh Prajapati lying on the ground and writhing in pain.

It is informed that the correct name of my daughter in the educational records is Amrita Mishra D/o Sandeep Kumar Mishra. In the Adhar card number 3531 936 9303 of my daughter, her name mentioned as Lakshmi. Which is wrong. My daughter should be known and recognized by her correct Amrita Mishra D/o Sandeep Kumar Mishra. It is also certified that all the legal formalities in relation to the above have been completed by myself. Amrita Mishra Daughter of Shri Sandeep Kumar Mishra, resident of village-Belaaha, Post Kankari, District Sitapur. Mobile number 7380608087

सेन्ट बिलाल कॉन्वेंट स्कूल
ग्राम- गनेशपुर, तहसीर-सीतापुर 3080 (अल्पसंख्यक संस्थान)
(सम्बद्ध, लखनऊ विश्वविद्यालय लखनऊ)
बै0ए0: सत्र 2024-26 द्वितीय पाठ्यक्रम में प्रथमकीय कोटे के अन्तर्गत प्रवेश हेतु प्रवेश परीक्षा के लिए आवेदन पत्र आमंत्रित है।
शैक्षिक योग्यता: कला/विज्ञान वर्ग में स्नातक/परस्नातक उपाधि में 50% व तकनीकी शिक्षा में स्नातक/परस्नातक में 55% (सामान्य/अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग) एवं 40% (अनुसूचित जाति/जनजाति) वर्ग के अर्थोयोग्य हेतु।
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ग्राम- गनेशपुर, तहसीर-सीतापुर 3080
D.El.Ed. 2024-26 में प्रथमकीय कोटे में प्रवेश हेतु नियमानुसार ऑनलाइन आवेदन करें। अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय को वरीयता दी जायेगी। मानक एवं अर्हता एन.सी.टी.ई./एस.सी.ई.आर.टी. के मानकानुसार। प्रवेश हेतु समयसारिणी निम्नवत् है-
1 ऑनलाइन पंजीकरण प्रारम्भ होने की तिथि 09.09.2024
2 ऑनलाइन पंजीकरण की अंतिम तिथि 24.09.2024
3 आवेदन शुल्क जमा करने/पूर्ण आवेदन के प्रिंट आउट लेने की अंतिम तिथि 28.09.2024
Website:- www.saintbilalschool.com
Mo. 9305024195, 9369911674

CM forms 3-member panel to probe building collapse

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after the building collapse in Transport Nagar, which resulted in the deaths of eight workers and injuries to over 24 others, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced the formation of a three-member committee to investigate the incident. The committee will be chaired by Home Secretary Dr Sanjeev Gupta, with Secretary of Housing and Urban Planning Balkar Singh and Chief Engineer (Central Zone) of the Public Works Department Vijay Kanaujia serving as members. CM Yogi has instructed the committee to conduct a

thorough investigation and submit their findings as soon as possible. Following his return from Gorakhpur, Yogi went directly from the airport to Lok Bandhu Shri Raj Narayan Combined Hospital to meet the injured victims and check on their well-being. He also met officials at his residence to discuss the tragic building collapse in detail. The chief minister received a comprehensive briefing on the unfortunate incident. Expressing deep sorrow over the tragedy, he reiterated his commitment to a full investigation by the newly-formed committee. At the hospital, CM Yogi visited the injured, met each

patient, and inquired about their health. He instructed the hospital administration to ensure they receive the best possible care and spoke with the patients' families, assuring them full support from the state government. Yogi emphasised that no patient should face difficulties and directed hospital staff to provide excellent care. He reassured the attendants and relatives that the government stands with them during this challenging time and promised all necessary assistance. Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, MLA Rajeshwar Singh, Principal Secretary to the CM Sanjay Prasad, DGP Prashant Kumar, Divisional Commissioner

Roshan Jacob, Municipal Commissioner Inderjit Singh, and other officials accompanied the chief minister. On his official X handle, CM Yogi shared an update about his visit to the hospital, stating that he enquired about the victims' well-being and treatment progress. He emphasised the government's commitment to providing proper treatment and support. "In this difficult time, the Uttar Pradesh government stands with the victims and their families with full readiness and sensitivity. We want to reassure them that we are here to support them in every possible way and pray for their speedy recovery," he wrote.



NDRF personnel on Sunday during relief work a day after a building collapse killed eight people in Lucknow. PTI

Owner booked for negligence, culpable homicide

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after the collapse of a commercial building in Transport Nagar, which resulted in the deaths of eight workers and injuries to 24 others, police have registered a case against the building's owner, Rakesh Singhal. The charges include criminal negligence, use of substandard construction materials, and culpable homicide. The case was registered following a complaint given by Sub-Inspector (SI) Mahesh Kumar Singh, who is in charge of the Transport Nagar police outpost. According to the complaint, around 4:35 pm on September 7, the police were alerted to the catastrophic event. Upon receiving the urgent information, police forces, along with rescue and relief teams, were dispatched to the scene. They arrived to find a scene of devastation. The building had crumbled entirely, accompanied by a loud explosion that reverberated through the area. The scene was chaotic, with widespread panic and fear. Screams for help were heard from those trapped under the

debris, and the situation was further compounded by the frantic efforts of people running helter-skelter. Rescue operations were launched immediately, involving the fire brigade, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and other emergency personnel. Their primary objective was to save those buried under the rubble. Despite their valiant efforts, the task proved daunting. A total of 35 individuals were eventually rescued from the debris, all in unconscious and critical condition. Unfortunately though, eight of them succumbed to injuries, while the survivors were rushed to local hospitals. In his preliminary investigation report, SI Singh revealed several critical findings. The investigation uncovered that the building had been constructed with materials of exceptionally low quality. Witnesses at the scene reported that Singhal had opted for substandard construction materials to reduce costs, as he intended to rent out the building. This cost-

cutting measure resulted in the building's structural integrity being severely compromised, leading to its rapid deterioration. Further inquiries revealed that Singhal had been made aware of the building's defects by various individuals working in the premises. Despite these warnings, Singhal took no remedial action to address the safety concerns. His inaction and negligence were deemed responsible for the building's eventual collapse. The SI highlighted that the collapse was not merely an accident but a result of Singhal's deliberate and reckless choices. The building's poor construction quality was evident even from the debris left behind, confirming that it was built with substandard materials. Residents and business owners who operated in the building had trusted Singhal's assurances that the structure was safe, despite the visible defects. Singhal's failure to rectify the building's issues and his continued assurances that the building was safe were deemed irresponsible.

The SI noted that Singhal's actions, driven by a desire to maximise profit, led to the dangerous state of the building. This negligence directly contributed to the tragic outcome, including loss of lives and serious injuries. The SI's report concludes that Singhal's conduct constitutes a severe criminal act. By ignoring safety standards and failing to act on known defects, Singhal not only jeopardised the lives of those working in or renting the building but also demonstrated a blatant disregard for human safety. The building's collapse was a foreseeable consequence of his negligence. As a result, a case has been registered against Rakesh Singhal under relevant sections of the law pertaining to criminal negligence and culpable homicide. The legal proceedings aim to hold Singhal accountable for the grievous harm caused by his reckless and negligent actions. This case underscores the critical importance of adhering to construction standards and ensuring the safety of all building occupants.

UP to host Semicon India at Expo Mart Inauguration by PM Modi on September 11

Lucknow/Greater Noida (PNS): In a significant step towards promoting semiconductor manufacturing, the Uttar Pradesh government is gearing up to host Semicon India 2024 at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida from September 11 to 13. This event, organised in partnership with SEMI, Messe Muenchen India and the Electronic Industries Association of India-ELCINA, aims to bolster India's semiconductor industry, positioning the nation as a key player in the global market. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the event on September 11. The semiconductor industry in India is rapidly emerging, with projections indicating that the regional chip market could surpass \$55 billion by 2026. Recognising this potential, the UP government is actively courting semiconductor industries to invest in the state.

Semicon India 2024 will feature a comprehensive exhibition from September 11 to 13, showcasing the latest advancements in semiconductor technology. Manufacturers from around the globe will set up stalls, offering insights into the industry's future. The event will kick off with the inauguration by Prime Minister Modi, followed by workshops on smart manufacturing and presentations on India's semiconductor ecosystem. The second day of the event will focus on cross-regional partnerships, flexible hybrid electronics, supply chain management, and sustainable practices within the industry. The final day, September 13, will feature a presentation by Micron on package manufacturing, a bootcamp on semiconductor fabrication by ISA, and a session on the semiconductor industry's journey thus far by IESA.

The Semicon India exhibition and conference will be held in conjunction with Electronica India and Productronica India, the largest electronics industry fairs in Southeast Asia. This landmark event will bring together a host of domestic and international companies, offering them a platform to explore India's rapidly expanding semiconductor ecosystem and uncover new business opportunities. Semicon India 2024 will feature a wide array of comprehensive exhibitions, insightful programmes and exclusive networking opportunities. Participants will have the chance to engage with local leaders and government officials, gaining valuable insights into the nation's semiconductor landscape. To advance technological development in the country and meet domestic demand, the India Semiconductor Mission (an initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information

Technology) has attracted big companies like AMD, Applied Materials and Micron Technology to invest in its chip sector. Recognising the vast potential for semiconductor manufacturing in Uttar Pradesh, the state government has introduced its first-ever UP Semiconductor Policy, offering a range of lucrative incentives to investors. Key highlights of the policy include a 50 per cent additional capital subsidy on top of the capital subsidy approved by the Government of India. Additionally, the policy offers a 75 per cent land rebate for industries involved in compound semiconductors, silicon photonics, sensors, ATMP and OSAT. Chief Minister Yogi has invited investors, urging them to tap into the immense potential of UP as the state works towards its ambitious goal of becoming a \$1 trillion economy.

Yogi: Running a govt requires heart, mind and passion

PNS ■ AMBEDKAR NAGAR /LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday emphasised that running a government requires heart, mind and passion, adding that while power can be inherited, wisdom cannot. He pointed out that those who once treated power as their family inheritance now realise they won't return to Uttar Pradesh, which is why they are engaging in conspiracies. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating and laying foundation stones for 6,778 development projects worth ₹1,231 crore in the Katehari assembly constituency, the chief minister reassured the state's youth of the government's commitment to providing job opportunities, urging them to start preparing for government jobs. "The double-engine government plans to provide two lakh job opportunities, a testament to our commitment to the youth's future," he stated. He also distributed sports kits to Yuvak Mangal Dal and Mahila Mangal Dal members on the occasion. The chief minister mentioned that six and a half lakh youth have been given government jobs in the last seven and a half years. Currently, over 60,200 police recruitments are under way, including 15,000 women. Once this recruitment is complete, another 40,000 police positions will be opened, he informed. Additionally, the Subordinate Services Selection Commission will soon issue 40,000 appointment letters, he added.

The chief minister also announced that the Uttar Pradesh Education Commission has been established, and recruitment across primary, secondary, higher, technical, and vocational education will proceed swiftly. "During the SP government, there was a veritable army of criminals whom the SP leaders considered their protégés. The more notorious the criminal, the higher the position they would receive in SP. The SP leaders took pride in this. Back then, the police were on the run while the goons and mafia were in pursuit. Today, the situation has reversed - now it is the mafia on the run, with the police chasing them down." Commenting on the Sultanpur



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath addresses a rally organised for the inauguration and foundation stone laying of multi-crore public welfare projects in Ambedkar Nagar on Sunday. PTI

encounter, he subtly pointed out that when a criminal is eliminated, it upsets SP leaders, as though their most vulnerable spot has been struck. They appear disturbed by the police action against dacoits, he added. Speaking on the protection of women, Chief Minister Yogi emphasised that every daughter is the responsibility of the entire society. He reminded the public of the SP leader's actions towards the Nishad daughter in Ayodhya, SP leaders are shielding the accused who outraged her majesty, he remarked. Similarly, he mentioned that the individual responsible for an atrocity against a minor girl in Kannauj is also an SP leader, and the party is openly trying to protect him. Under the SP regime, goons and mafia brazenly grabbed the lands of the poor and businessmen. In contrast, the current government is seizing these illegal properties and redistributing them to the needy, the chief minister added. Chief Minister Yogi further stated that those who once threatened the safety of daughters and businessmen have disappeared, and the remaining mafia are preparing for their inevitable end. He asserted that the double-engine government would deal sternly with anyone attempting to take the law into their own hands. He also criticised those engaging in caste-based politics, accusing

them of undermining public safety. Hitting out at the Samajwadi Party and the Congress, Chief Minister Yogi remarked: "Whenever they gained power, they indulged in appeasement and fueled chaos, even inciting riots during festivals. The SP and Congress are trying to divide people along caste lines, but now is the time for unity and collective participation in the development process." Chief Minister Yogi stated that before 2017, Uttar Pradesh was plagued by parallel governments run by mafia networks nurtured by the Samajwadi Party and Congress in every district. For instance, the murder of the president of Hindu Jagran Manch in Tanda went unaddressed. Since 2017, Uttar Pradesh has been freed from the mafia's grip, he remarked. He criticised the SP and Congress for their lack of commitment to development and public welfare. Chief Minister Yogi highlighted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has presented a vision of a developed India with a comprehensive 25-year action plan. In line with this, the double-engine government ensures employment and agricultural water access for all. Chief Minister Yogi emphasised that the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya fulfils the aspirations of the country's majority faith. He noted that today, 15 crore peo-

ple in Uttar Pradesh benefit from ration services, 56 lakh underprivileged individuals have been provided with homes, and 10 crore people receive free treatment under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana. Additionally, tablets and smartphones are being distributed to two crore youth in the state. He assured that caste, religion, or personal affiliations do not influence government schemes. Chief Minister Yogi urged the state's youth to start their businesses, announcing that the government will offer interest-free loans of Rs 5 lakh in the first phase and Rs 10 lakh in the second phase. He also criticised the SP for internal conflicts and warned that attempting to harm ordinary people would result in police intervention. In a significant announcement, Chief Minister Yogi revealed that the double-engine government plans to renovate Maharaja Suheldev's fort in Ambedkar Nagar. The government will engage with the Archaeological Survey of India for this project and construct a grand memorial for Maharaja Suheldev within his fort. State government ministers Swatantra Dev Singh, Dr Sanjay Nishad, Om Prakash Rajbhar, Girish Chandra Yadav, Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu', zila panchayat chairperson Shyam Sundar Verma 'Sadhu', MLC Dr Hariom Pandey and others were present at the programme.

Action guaranteed on negligence in resolving public issues: CM



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the Janata Darshan programme in Gorakhpur on Sunday. PTI

FATEHPUR WOMAN'S UNUSUAL REQUEST BRINGS SMILES

During the Janata Darshan, Chief Minister Yogi encountered a unique request that brought a smile to his face. Among the many complaints and pleas brought forward, a woman, Mainshree from Fatehpur, made an unusual request - to have her photo taken with the chief minister. Mainshree, who has a physical disability related to her height, said that a photo with the chief minister would go viral on social media. For this, Mainshree told the chief minister, "Maharaj Ji! I want to get a photo taken with you. The photo with you will go viral." Amused by the request, Chief Minister Yogi immediately granted her wish, posing for a photo and even agreeing to take a selfie with her. In another instance, a woman from the Gola area of Gorakhpur sought financial assistance. The chief minister took her application and directed the district magistrate to ensure that her request was addressed with respect and urgency. The woman expressed deep gratitude for the chief minister's prompt and compassionate response. During his visit to Gorakhnath temple on Sunday morning, Chief Minister Yogi followed his traditional routine. After offering prayers to Guru Gorakhnath and paying respects at the samadhi of his guru, Brahmalin Mahant Avaidyanath, he visited the gaushala, where he spent time with the cows, feeding them jaggery.

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed officials to ensure a transparent and fair resolution of public grievances. He emphasised that every issue should be handled with sensitivity, and swift, effective action must be taken to address concerns, ensuring no injustice occurs. Strict action will be taken against any official found negligent in resolving public matters, he warned. These directives were issued during the Chief Minister's Janata Darshan held at Mahant Digvijaynath Smriti Bhawan

auditorium on Gorakhnath temple premises on Sunday morning. The chief minister met and heard problems of around 400 people at the Janata Darshan. Chief Minister Yogi went to the attendees, listening to their grievances patiently and collecting their applications. He also assured them of effective action to address every issue, reiterating the government's commitment. Specific instructions were given to officials present for the timely resolution of each complaint. In cases related to crime, Chief Minister Yogi directed police officials to take firm action

against criminals. He also stressed that those involved in land-grabbing and the displacement of vulnerable individuals should face strict legal consequences. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath assured full support to those seeking financial assistance to treat severe illnesses. He emphasised that no medical treatment would be hindered due to a lack of funds. He directed the administration to promptly prepare and provide estimates for the advanced treatment of those in need, so that the required funds could be released.

BJP membership drive intensifies in Kashi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Intensifying the ongoing membership campaign of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Uttara Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH, Food Safety and Drug Administration Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' visited Mahmoorganj area here on Sunday. He went door to door in Sant Raghuvhar Nagar Colony and urged the residents to accept the BJP membership. The minister also apprised the residents of the achievements of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led central and state governments and approached them to enrol in the party by giving a missed call on 880002024.



UP minister Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' on Sunday approaching residents in Sant Raghuvhar Nagar Colony in Varanasi to join the BJP.

During his campaign, Dayalu also provided many with membership cards and congratulated them on becoming a member of the world's largest political organisation. The minister said that former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna

Atal Bihari Vajpayee is completing 100 years on December 25 this year. On this occasion, as per the decision of the party's organisation, the campaign will be celebrated as 'Atal Parv' on Sundays falling during the membership campaign period and under this he went door to door and approached the common people to join the party. The AYUSH minister said that seeing the hard work and enthusiasm of the workers towards the campaign and the spontaneous respect for Bharatiya Janata Party among the common people, he is not only hopeful but also has confident that BJP will achieve the target of two crore

membership in the state before the last date. Under the National Membership Festival of BJP, which started from September 2, the state Bharatiya Janata Party unit has launched a comprehensive membership campaign to connect the common people with BJP in the entire state with the target of two crore memberships. Minister's Public Relations Officer (PRO) Gaurav Rathi, Avinash Upadhyay, Sheetal Ambast, Papinder Singh Chhabra, Ramesh Baranwal, Sapna Ambast, Manish Tiwari, Anil Pandey, Sagar, Akash etc were also present during the campaign.

Man stabs 2 daughters to death, hangs self

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A man after allegedly stabbing his two minor daughters to death with a knife hanged himself in Ramman Ka Pura under Dhoomanganj police station here on Sunday afternoon. His wife came to know about it when she returned from the market around 2:30 pm. The deceased Lalla alias Manish used to do painting work and lived in a rented house with his wife and two daughters. On Sunday afternoon his wife went to the market. When she returned around 2:30 pm, she found the door locked from inside. When she did not get any response even after calling several times, she somehow peeped inside

through the window and found both the daughters lying dead on the ground in a pool of blood and her husband hanging from the noose. However, no suicide note was found from the spot. The police is investigating the matter. The neighbours came after hearing the noise and they informed the police about the incident. The top brass, including DCP Deepak Bhukar, reached the spot with police force and forensic team. The DCP said the reason for the incident is not clear yet. The wife is also not able to tell anything. Prima facie it appeared that the man killed two daughters aged five years and three years respectively and then committed suicide by hanging himself. At the

time of the incident, the mother had gone to the market. When she returned she found the daughters lying on the ground in a pool of blood, while her husband was hanging from the noose, the DCP added. **GOOGLE SOLUTION CHALLENGE:** A team of talented students from IIT Allahabad under the name Debug Dynasty has garnered international recognition by securing a spot in the top 50 and top 100 of the Google Solution Challenge 2024. Their innovative project, Ecobloom, addresses a crucial gap in the current landscape: the absence of a unified platform that facilitates the creation and participation in campaigns focused on societal betterment.

BJP scared of PDA formula: SP MP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A group of minority community organised a felicitation ceremony here on Saturday. The chief guest of the programme was Samajwadi Party (SP) MP from Chandauli Virendra Singh while special guest was former MLA Abdul Samad Ansari. It was presided over by former city president of SP Vishnu Sharma.



exploited and deprived society, where everyone is sure to get justice. In the BJP-led government, the exploited and deprived people of the society have been neglected from the beginning", he said, appealing to the minority community to connect with the PDA platform and earn their trust, only then will the PDA achieve its objective. Rizwan Ansari, corporators Mumtaz Khan and Tufail Ansari, Anwarul Haq Ansari, Shamim Ansari, Shadab Ashraf and Ahmed Ansari were among those who were also present in the programme.

mula itself as SP chief Akhilesh Yadav has raised the voice of PDA in the whole country", said Virendra Singh. While addressing the workers, the MP said that PDA is a platform to provide justice to all those

Prizes distributed to distributors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kapila Krishi Udyog Limited, manufacturers of Milkmore cattle feed, organised its distributors meet at Mussoorie with fanfare and enthusiasm. CEO Saurabh Shivhare inaugurated the meet by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Distributors from different states of the country took part in the meet. Addressing the gathering, he said, apart from being business partner, distributors are also our family members and company's strength. As you have deep relations with Kapila Krishi Udyog, this made you affiliated with the company for the past several years". He said the company had provided the facility of Badho App for the shopowners to facilitate them place orders and obtain benefit of schemes. On the occasion, a colourful cultural

programme was also organised. He also distributed prizes to distributors and felicitated them. Director Samir Shivhare said Kapila Krishi Udyog was trying to provide means for regular livelihood to the small and medium farmers. At the same time, the company also felicitated its top sales staff including Abhay Singh, Pankaj Kumar and Neeraj Gupta with the medals. Amit Bajpai, Ashok Soni, Harshit Patel, Ravi Narain, Hiranam Verma, Ashish Bajpai, Imran Sheikh and Brijendra Singh were awarded medals for their best performance. Among other prominent dignitaries, Rajeshwari Shivhare, Suryansh Jain and Rishi Singh were also present.

Tribute paid to Kamalapati Tripathi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Rich tribute was paid to former Union Minister Pandit Kamalapati Tripathi on his 119th birth anniversary at Yoga Sadhana Kendra in Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU) here on Sunday. The chief guest and Vice-Chancellor (V-C) of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) Prof ADN Bajpai said that Pt Kamalapati's politics cannot be the introduction of his entire personality. "Politics is relevant, if he was not a politician, if he was not a member of the Constituent Assembly, if he was not a Chief Minister, he would still have been respected in the same way because his personality was like this. His life defined Indian culture and values as he was one of the founders of this institution (SSU)", he said. Prof Bajpai said this university is very ancient and till date this institution is doing the work of taking the culture and Sanskrit of Kashi to the entire nation and to the global level. "Today this institution, by celebrating the birth anniversary of its founder, points towards its culture



and gives a special message to all of us", he said, adding that on coming to this campus, one feels energy and pride. Presiding over the function, SSU V-C Prof Bihari Lal Sharma said the series of memories related to Pt Kamalapati, who had a multifaceted personality and rich deeds, is endless. "There is a rich tradition of celebrating the birth anniversary of Pt Kamalapati on the dates of both Samvat and AD, who was born on the day of Rishi Panchami on the holy land of Banaras in 1905. A person who is born on the day of Rishi Panchami is a Rishi", he said and added that Pt Tripathi was not only the pride of Kashi but also of the country. Senior politician Dr Vijay Shankar Pandey said Pt Kamalapati was the brand ambassador of Kashi and one of the founders of the SSU. On the occasion, the SSU planted a sapling and garlanded the statue of Pt Kamalapati by applying sandalwood tilak. Besides, three books published by the publication unit of SSU were launched by the guests present on the stage. SSU V-C felicitated Prof Shailesh Kumar Mishra and Prof Raghavendra Dubey with garland, angavastram and coconut. Prof Ramkishore Tripathi welcomed the guests while the function was conducted by director of Prakashan Sansthan Dr Padmakar Mishra. The vote of thanks was proposed by Prof Raghavendra Dubey. On the occasion, university professors Ramkishore Tripathi, Rampujan Rajnath, Shailesh Kumar Mishra, Vidhu Dwivedi, Hetram, Harprasad Dixit, Ramesh Prasad, Hariprasad Adhikari, Raghavendra, Vidhu Dwivedi, Vijay Kumar Pandey etc were also present.

Body of 19-yr-old youth found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The body of a 19-year-old youth was recovered from the roof of a tubewell, 500 metres away from his house. On information police reached the spot and sent the body for the postmortem examination. The deceased Ravi Maurya worked as a waiter in a restaurant in Phaphamau. Family members said that on Friday

morning he had come home after taking a three-day leave from the restaurant. The father of the deceased said that Ravi left the house at 9 pm while talking on the phone on Friday evening. After Ravi Maurya was not found the family had filed a missing report at the Mauaima police station on Saturday. On Sunday morning his body was recovered from the roof of a tubewell located

500 meters away from the house. His father Panna Lal Maurya has registered a case against unknown killers at Mauaima police station in this regard. Police forensic and dog squad team reached the spot and investigated the case. Meanwhile an elderly man was killed and three others were injured after being hit by a car at ADA Colony turn in Naini, Yamunanagar.

Officials apprised of provisions of Right to Information Act



State Information Commissioner addressing a meeting at KDA conference room.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

State Information Commissioner Girjesh Kumar Chaudhary addressed a review/orientation meeting at the conference room of Kanpur Development Authority (KDA). Apart from KDA Vice-Chairman Madan Singh Garbyal and Secretary Abhay Kumar Pandey, public

information officers, assistant public information officers and counter assistants of all the departments were also present at the meeting. He apprised the officials of the provisions of Right to Information Act, 2005, and UP RTI Guidelines 2015 asking them to inform applicants within one month of their applications. He also answered the queries of employees/officers and taught them of their duties and responsibilities. He distributed the official book of the Act and Guidelines to them. Kanpur Development Authority V-C Madan Singh Garbyal extended gratitude by presenting a memento to him.

Lord Jagannath idol's Pran Pratishtha ceremony held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Sarveshwar Mandir in the Alok nagar township of NTPC Auraiya witnessed a momentous event with the successful completion of the Lord Jagannath Murti (idol) Pran Pratishtha ceremony. Organised by the Mandir Committee, this three-day celebration was marked by a series of traditional rituals and community gatherings that highlighted the spirit and devotion of the township. The ceremony was highlighted by the gracious presence of Jayadev Parida, HoP Auraiya and Sanghamitra Parida, President, Jagriti Mahila Mandal along with AGMs and



HODs of various departments. The festivities commenced with the Dhanya Adhibas ritual, setting the stage for the spiritual observances. This was followed by the 'kalash yatra', a grand procession that carried sacred pot from the Guesthouse to Sarveshwar Mandir, symbolising the sanctification of the space for the divine presence. The ceremonial events continued with the Mandala Puja and Surya Puja, both of which were conducted with great reverence and precision. This ceremony saw enthusiastic participation from all residents of the township, reflecting the community spirit and devotion.

UPSIDA addressing all facets of industrial development

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In order to optimise the vision of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, UPSIDA is addressing all facets of industrial development in Uttar Pradesh, paving the way for a future of innovation, growth, and opportunity. Ex-LIDA Master Plan 2041 is envisaged by UPSIDA to boost industrial growth and development in the region. The emerging trends of industrialisation along Lucknow-Kanpur national highway, a stretch of approximately 80 km is emerging as one of the fastest-growing economic corridor in Uttar Pradesh. Ex-LIDA Master Plan 2041 constitutes the notified area of 85 villages (45 villages of Lucknow district and 40 villages of Unnao district) spanning over an area of nearly 300 sq.km. School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, has been appointed as a consultant to undertake this assignment. Ex-LIDA Master plan 2041 has seamlessly integrated the upcoming/ongoing state-level transportation infrastructure projects such as Kanpur Lucknow Expressway, Ganga Expressway and Lucknow Ring Road with existing NH - 27. The Master Plan addresses and identifies such integration points as multimodal transit hub and multimodal logistics hub serving as crucial points in the supply chain, allowing for seamless transfer of goods between different transportation modes. The Master Plan

2041 consists of five zones each is identified as per prevailing activities/characteristics such as warehousing agglomeration, residential growth, upcoming infrastructure such as expressways, ring roads. These include the Lucknow-Kanpur Highway, Lucknow-Kanpur Expressway, Ganga Expressway, Lucknow Outer Ring Road, and Kanpur Ring Road. These developments will significantly enhance connectivity between Lucknow and Kanpur, addressing previous logistical challenges and streamlining transportation between the two cities. Stakeholder consultation on draft of Master Plan 2041 has been conducted with various state government departments such as UPEIDA, UPDIC, Panchayati Raj office, CTCPC, State Tourism Department, UPPCB, Lucknow Development Authority, Commissioner-Lucknow and Unnao Shuklaganj Development Authority. Stakeholders have emphasised the need for infrastructure development, better industrial facilities and environmental considerations. They also highlighted specific concerns like the impact of existing leather industries, the inclusion of Nawabganj bird sanctuary as a tourism site and the reconsideration of road widths. These feedbacks and suggestions have been incorporated in the Master Plan. Further, public suggestions and objections are invited on the master plan to ensure transpar-

ent, comprehensive and inclusive development. The development of the Lucknow-SCR (State-Central Region) is poised to serve as a counter magnet to major urban centres like Delhi-NCR, attracting private investment and generating a significant multiplier effect for the surrounding hinterland. According to government officials, "The SCR will alleviate congestion in Lucknow by creating attractive job and self-employment opportunities across the constituent districts, thereby reducing the migration of youth to larger cities in search of work." The SCR initiative will enhance transport, logistics and infrastructure facilities in the region. Many districts in Uttar Pradesh are already well connected through expressways and air routes, which will support the growth of local agricultural and traditional industries. The integration of a high-speed dedicated freight corridor linking Lucknow and Kanpur will provide a solid foundation for the SCR's development, accelerating progress once the detailed roadmap is implemented. UPSIDA's vision for the Ex-LIDA Master Plan, 2041 has been derived, envisioning an integrated warehousing and logistics hub that fosters sustainable economic growth, generates employment, promotes inclusive development, and enhances competitiveness. UPSIDA remains fully committed to driving industrial and economic growth in Uttar Pradesh.

Customers felicitated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Bank of India (BOI) organised its 119th foundation day celebrations in Kanpur Zone with fanfare and enthusiasm. On the occasion blood donation, general health check up and eye camp were also organised at the zonal office in which a large number of staff and customers participated. Under the CSR, the bank also distributed equipment to 75 Divyangs at the ALIMCO office. Besides, the bank also distributed six joystick wheelchairs to Divyangs. A tree plantation drive 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' launched by the government was also held and customers' meet was organised in all the branches of the Kanpur Zone in which the bank felicitated the customers.



Bank of India distributed joystick wheelchair to Divyangs.

Zonal Manager Ranvir Singh said the bank was committed to building a self-reliant country through its customers. Deputy Zonal Manager Jugal Kishore, Assistant General Manager (AGM) Amitabh Shukla, Chief Manager (Marketing) Pankaj Singh and other officers were present.

ToT certification course organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In a bid to enhance the quality of education and ensure effective implementation of the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) Certification Course was organised by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in collaboration with the Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM) under the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India. The event was hosted by Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre (SPSEC), Kamla Nagar. The training programme saw an enthusiastic participation of 64 educators from Kanpur and neighbouring cities, all of whom had nominated themselves as CBSE resource persons. Principals from across the region also attended the event. The certification course was specially designed, developed, and delivered by ISTM for CBSE resource persons. The training focused on expanding the pool of expert trainers across various educational levels and subjects to ensure standardised and high-quality content delivery. The course also emphasised the role of trainers in implementing the NEP 2020 guidelines, particularly in developing future-ready students. Head, CoE, Prayagraj, Dr Akhilesh Kumar, who was the chief guest, inaugurated the event and highlighted the importance of empowering



educators with modern training methods that emphasise self-directed learning, collaborative teaching practices and the integration of digital tools. He also underscored that teachers' continuing professional development is integral to India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047, as envisioned during the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations. The sessions were facilitated by trainers including Puneet Kumar Sharma, Deputy Director, ISTM, DoPT, Government of India, UC Joshi, recognised TNA Consultant, DoPT, Government of India, IJ Mittal, National Facilitator for the Ethics and Values in Public Governance Course and Balwinder Singh, CBSE City Coordinator, Kanpur. The facilitators focused on various modern educational practices and emphasised building a pool of trained resource persons to improve the overall performance and service delivery of educational institutions. The course covered a range of topics from training fundamentals, systematic approaches to training (SAT) and learning methodologies to coaching, group exercises and feedback mechanisms. The focus was on enhancing trainers' ability to design and conduct training sessions that improve teachers' competency and align with NEP 2020 objectives. Bhawna Gupta, Principal of Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre and the venue director welcomed the guests and participants. She emphasised the need for continuous improvement and growth in education, echoing the course's objective of equipping trainers with the necessary skills to conduct effective training and mentor teachers. The first day of the event culminated on a high note, with participants expressing gratitude for the insightful training, which equipped them with valuable tools and knowledge to effectively mentor their peers and enhance the overall teaching-learning experience.

Prof Dubey encourages students to participate in co-curricular activities

Varanasi (PNS): The Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University (IM-BHU) organised 'Aagman-an introductory event' here on Saturday under the aegis of cultural club for the students of the batch 2024-26 who were recently inducted into the management programme. The event began with the garlanding of the bust of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya followed by lamp lighting and recital of Kulgeet and Ganesh Vandana. In his address, Dean of

Management Faculty Prof SK Dubey encouraged the students to participate in co-curricular activities and not limit themselves to the boundaries of academics only. He said these events contribute to the overall development of personality and versatility is an important requirement of the corporate world. Student advisor Prof Shashi Srivastava expressed her appreciation for the students for taking the initiative to successfully organise this programme on a grand scale.

Redress public grievances on priority: DM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam directed the officers to redress public grievances on priority and said that negligence will not be tolerated in this direction. The DM was resolving public problems at Pindra tehsil headquarters on the occasion of Sampoorna Samadhan Diwas on Saturday. The DM directed the officers to ensure that the applications received on the day are disposed of in a quality manner within a week. "If quality disposal is not found, strict action will be taken against the officer/employee concerned", he warned, directing the officers to provide good governance to



the people of the district within the stipulated time frame as per the intention of the government. He said that the complainant's words must be heard seriously. While inspecting the revenue and land case complaints on the spot, signatures and photographs of the complainants or persons present there must be

taken. He directed the officers that all the department heads should ensure settlement of complaints to the satisfaction of the complainants at their department level itself. As most of the cases brought there were of land and revenue disputes, he directed a joint team of kanungo, lekhpal and police personnel to conduct on-site inspection, verification and settle the matter within a week. Out of the total 113 applications received, nine were settled on the spot and the remaining applications were directed to be disposed of by the officers of the department concerned in a quality manner within the stipulated time limit.

Parliament breach sought to discredit India's democracy: Delhi Police chargesheet

Accused aimed to gain global fame, usurp power, planned attack for two years before executing gas attacks

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The December 13, 2023 Parliament security breach accused wanted to discredit India's democracy, gain instant global fame, usurp power and achieve "richness and glory" by targeting the "very symbol of democracy", according to the chargesheet filed in the court by Delhi Police.

The accused first met on social media and planned their move for nearly two years before executing it last year on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament attack. According to the chargesheet, a source said, their first in-person meeting was held in February, 2022 at Mysuru.

Citing from the chargesheet, sources told PTI, that in total they held five meetings in Mysuru, Gurugram and Delhi to decide to finalise their plan and arrive at a modus operandi.

The chargesheet, spread over 1,000 pages, was filed before the Patiala House Court in June and the court took its cognisance last month. A supplementary was filed in July.

The chargesheet mentioned that the group of young people, led by Manoranjan D, a resident of Karnataka, met on social media.

Manoranjan is among the six accused arrested by the Delhi

Police Special Cell, sources said.

Manoranjan, according to the chargesheet, is suspected to be among the main conspirators of the parliament breach, who allegedly "instigated and motivated" the young people by promising them "richness, glory and wealth" and by targeting the "very symbol of democracy".

While citing the chargesheet, a source said that driven by his "ultra Maoist-inspired thinking" Manoranjan decided to target the Parliament building to gain immediate and lasting attention.

The source said the accused wanted to send out a wider message that the "Indian Democracy is ineffective and needs to be replaced".

The major security breach took place on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament terror attack. The accused launched coordinated gas attack both inside and outside the parliament house during the Zero Hour on December 13, 2023.

Two persons — Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan D — jumped into the Lok Sabha chamber from the public gallery and opened canisters that released yellow gas in the House. They also shouted slogans before parliamentarians overpowered them.

Outside the Parliament



premises around the same time, two other accused -- Amol Shinde and Neelam Azad -- also sprayed coloured gases from canisters while shouting "tanashahi nahi chalegi (dictatorship won't be allowed)".

Manoranjan, Sagar Sharma, Amol Shinde and Neelam Azad were arrested on the same day as they were caught soon after their acts. Lalit Jha and Mahesh Kumawat were arrested on December 15 and 16, respectively. All the accused are lodged in the Bihar jail. They have been booked under sections 16 and 18 of the

Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and other sections of the Indian Penal Code by the Delhi Police's anti-terror unit, Special Cell.

Citing the chargesheet, a source said that Manoranjan dropped out of an engineering course and travelled to Cambodia in 2014 where he

stayed for eight months.

The source said that after coming back to India, he travelled to Ladakh on a motorcycle in 2015, which "mirrors" the famous "Motorcycle Diaries" penned by Che Guevara, a Cuban revolution communist icon. During his trip to Ladakh, a

Chinese student, who was then studying at Hyderabad, also accompanied him as a pillion rider to Delhi, via Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Citing the chargesheet, the source further said the first meeting of the accused was held in February, 2022 in Mysuru at a flat of Manoranjan's friend which was attended by 10 people including Manoranjan D, Sagar Sharma, Amol Shinde, Lalit Jha and Mahesh Kumawat.

In this meeting, Manoranjan showed some videos of violent protests to the participants, and floated the idea of building an organisation. They discussed the idea of using the "protective gel" while executing their design inside and outside the Parliament, the source said.

They also discussed usurping power using "tear gas previously used in March 2018 in Kosovo", the source added.

Their second meeting was held at a hotel in Gurugram in August, 2022, which was attended by seven people as some of the members had already "backed out" knowing their "nefarious" plan, another source said. He said that in this meeting, they decided to include a woman in their plan and that is how they inducted Neelam into their group. In their third meeting held at

a hotel in Paharganj in central Delhi in August 2023, they decided to use the smoke canisters for their act in the Parliament. This meeting was attended by all the six accused arrested in the case, the source said.

They met again at the same Paharganj hotel in September, 2023 and discussed getting entry passes and the use of smoke canisters inside Parliament. They also decided to enter into the Parliament during the winter session, the source said. Their last meeting was held at Gurugram and subsequently, near the Delhi's India Gate on December 13, 2023, the final day of the execution of their plan.

The four accused -- Manoranjan D, Sagar Sharma, Amol Shinde and Neelam Azad -- broke their SIM cards and handed them over to Lalit Jha, who was tasked to destroy them all, the source said.

Jha was also given the task of recording Shinde and Neelam as they executed their plan at the Parliament gate and upload the video on social media. The police also said in the chargesheet that the accused were members of a social media page "Bhagat Singh Fan Club", and they mostly used the signal app to communicate, according to the source.

Former BJP MLA's wife, son join BJP just before Haryana Assembly polls



PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Ahead of the Haryana assembly polls former BJP MLA Umesh Agarwal's wife Anita Agarwal and son Samarth Agarwal joined the BJP on Sunday. Anita Agarwal and Samarth Agarwal joined the BJP in the presence of the

party's Gurugram district President Kamal Yadav and State President of Mahila Morcha Usha Priyadarshi. Apart from this, Kamal Yadav also appointed Pawan Yadav as District Media Head at the party office Gurukulam in Gurugram on Sunday. After joining the BJP, Anita Agarwal told

The Pioneer that she "felt proud" and said she would work with other leaders to ensure the party back to power in Haryana for a third time. "It is my good luck that I am standing here today. I and my son was planning to join the saffron party and that auspicious day finally has come today and we both inducted in the party. I

like the ideology of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the saffron party which is constantly working in favour of people of the state," Anita Agarwal said. She pledged continuous contributions towards the party pledged to work for the party.

"As the Haryana assembly elections scheduled on October 5 she will connect voter of the constituency to vote in favour of the BJP," she said.

Welcoming the two to the party, the BJP's distinct president Kamal Yadav said there was a "wave in favour of the party" in Haryana and the people of the State were eager to form a BJP government for the third time in a row.

"She was planning to the party for the past couple of months but today she finally joined the party," he said. Meanwhile, the former BJP MLA said he has no knowledge of his wife and son joining the BJP. He further said a divorce proceedings are underway between them.

Agarwal, had won the 2014 election from the Gurugram seat with the highest margin in the State that year, but was denied a ticket by the BJP in 2019. Later in March 2022 Agarwal had joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Agarwal told The Pioneer if the party give him ticket he will definitely fight the upcoming assembly elections from Gurgaon constituency on AAP's ticket.

Liquor shops near national highways to be relocated: Tripura CM

PTI ■ AGARTALA

In a bid to check fatal road accidents caused by drunken driving, Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Sunday directed law enforcement agencies to prepare a comprehensive report on liquor shops operating within 100 metres of national highways following which his government would take steps to relocate the outlets.

In December 2017, the Supreme Court banned the sale of liquor within 500 metres of the outer edge of national and state highways and the limit was reduced to 220 metres for locations with a population of 20,000 or less. "Tripura recorded 1,340 deaths and 3,724 injuries in 3,307 road accidents in the last six years. Although the number of road accidents



seem less in the state compared to the number of vehicles (7,87,203), police and other law enforcement agencies must work to reduce fatal road mishaps," he said at a programme here on road

safety. Saha said law enforcement agencies must prepare a list of liquor shops functioning within 100 metres of the outer edge of national highways as drunken driving also contributes to fatal road accidents.

The chief minister also asked the police to enforce the use of seat belts while driving cars, which he said was not being practiced in the state. "Prepare a comprehensive report on the liquor shops functioning within 100 metres of national highways and the government will take steps to shift these outlets," he told the senior officials present at the function.

Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury, while voicing concern over road accidents, underlined the need for awareness to avoid such mishaps in the northeastern state.

Will win each battle with people's blessings: Vinesh Phogat

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Wrestler and Congress candidate Vinesh Phogat on Sunday said she expects to win each battle with the blessings of people as kicks off her campaign for the upcoming assembly election.

Phogat (30) has been fielded from the Julana assembly segment for the upcoming assembly poll. Polling in Haryana will take place on October 5 while the counting of votes for the elections to the 90-member assembly will take place on October 8.

Phogat was accorded a warm welcome when she reached Julana as her supporters, including elderly people and women and members of various 'Khaps', greeted her with garlands and gave their blessings.

The Congress had on Friday released its first list of 32 candidates for the Haryana Assembly polls, naming her among the party candidates. Olympians Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia, who were at the forefront of the wrestlers' protest against then WFI chief and former BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh,



entered the political arena on Friday by joining the Congress.

Standing atop a car, Phogat took the blessings of people who surrounded her four wheeler to get a glimpse of her. Amid beats of a 'dhol', her supporters chanted 'Vinesh Phogat zindabad'. Replying to a question on former BJP MP and then Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, Phogat said, "Brij

Bhushan is not the country. My country stands by me. My loved ones stand by me and they matter to me." Brij Bhushan on Saturday alleged that Phogat and Bajrang Punia were used by the Congress as "pawns" in a "conspiracy" to take control of the WFI and attack the BJP. To a question, Phogat said, "My loved ones supported me. Like they ensured victory in wrestling (during her sports career), they will con-

tinue their blessings here (electoral contest) and with their blessings, we will win every battle."

Replying to another question, she said the pain of not getting an Olympic medal subsided that very day when the citizens of the country showered love on her after she landed at the airport.

"I have to reduce their (people) pain and it is my responsibility," she added. "I am 30 years old and I have come through many challenges. When people are with you, one can overcome any challenge," Phogat said. Replying to another question on contesting the elections, she said, "I am feeling happy and I will try to live up to their expectations."

Phogat became the first Indian woman wrestler to reach the Olympics final, the stage where she was disqualified in Paris after being found overweight by about 100 grams in her 50-kilogramme category weigh-in. She subsequently announced her retirement from the sport. While the wrestler hails from Balali in Charkhi Dadri district, her in-laws' home town is Julana.

Security in Manipur tightened

PTI ■ IMPHAL

Security was heightened in Manipur on Sunday following the fresh bout of violence that left several people dead, officials said. The situation was tense but under control, they said. "No new incidents of violence have so far been reported on Sunday. SPs of various districts in coordination with security forces are continuously monitoring the situation," an official said. The Assam Rifles has deployed anti-drone systems in the fringe areas of the Imphal Valley to repel any "rogue drones," he said. The CRPF handed an anti-drone system to the state police for deployment, he added. The use of drones to mount attacks was new to the ethnic clashes in Manipur that left over 200 people dead since May last year. The use of the remote-controlled small flying device as a weapon was first seen on September 1 in Koutruk village in the Imphal West district. In the attack, in which guns were also used, two persons were killed and nine others injured. Drones were used again in Senjam Chirang, around 3 km away, the next day, injuring three persons.



PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP president and Union Coal Minister G Kishan Reddy on Sunday visited flood-hit areas of Khammam district of the state and assured the people that the Narendra Modi government would fully support those affected in every possible way. He said the Centre has told the Telangana government to first use the Rs 1,345 crore available in the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to help the flood-hit people. The amount is available with the state as an advance from the Government of India, he said.

"Soon after the havoc caused by heavy rains and flood, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. PM Modi asked him (Revanth Reddy) to utilise the advance of Rs 1,345 crore in the SDRF. There should be no politics over flood relief," Kishan Reddy said, after visiting the Munneru flood victims in Khammam district on Sunday.

As many as 29 people lost their lives in the recent heavy rains and flooding in Telangana. The state government has urged the Centre to declare the recent spell of heavy rains and flood in the state as a national calamity and to release immediate assistance of Rs 2,000

crore. It has put the losses at Rs 5,438 crore as per preliminary estimates, due to the rains and floods.

Kishan Reddy, who visited and assessed the flood-affected areas of Dhamsalapuram and Thirumalapalem in Khammam, said he interacted with people affected by the devastating floods and inquired about the flood relief and rehabilitation efforts.

In a post on 'X' he said "Also learned that the victims were not receiving adequate support from the state government."

Khammam witnessed unprecedented floods, rendering a lot of people homeless.

Both the state and the Central governments would stand with the victims and render all assistance, the Union Minister assured. Kishan Reddy also promised to build a retaining wall along the Munneru stream in the surrounding area to prevent future flooding. He visited the relief camp at Agrapharam Colony and interacted with the displaced people. He distributed relief material and blankets to them.

Telangana Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, BJP MPs Eatala Rajender, Konda Vishveswar Reddy and other officials were present.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Admission of guilt

After being in a state of denial for 25-odd years, Pakistan admits its army's role in the Kargil war for the first time

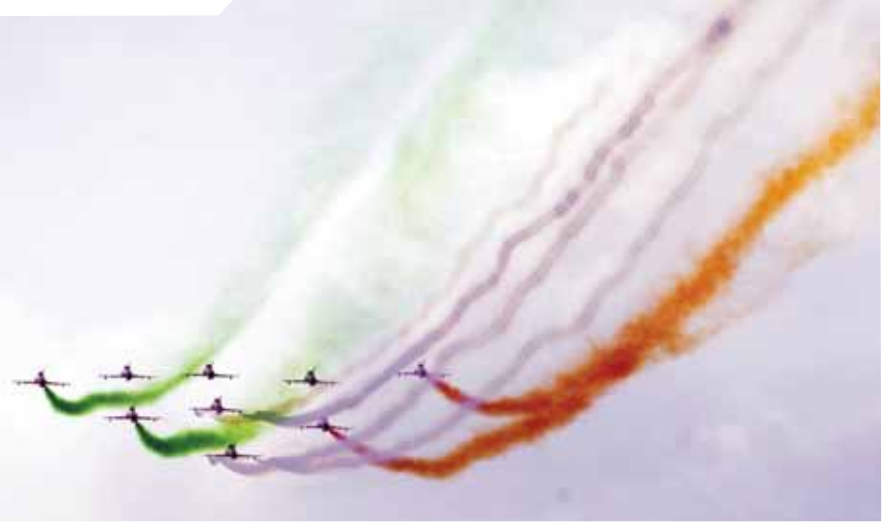
Pakistan has, for the first time, officially acknowledged the role of its army in the Kargil War of 1999. Speaking at an event to commemorate Defence Day, Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir said several Pak soldiers died in the 1999 Kargil War against India. This is the first time that Pakistan acknowledged active role in the war in a surprising departure from its elusive stance. Previously, Pakistan had maintained that the Kargil operation was carried out by mujahedeen or "freedom fighters" and local insurgents, distancing its military establishment from the war. However, this newfound candor could potentially reshape not only the country's internal discourse but also its relations with India and the broader international community. Indeed, India and the world knew it all along and there was not an iota of doubt about the role the Pakistan army under General Musharraf played in the Kargil war. It was orchestrated by the then Pakistan army chief General Musharraf who went ahead with his machinations without even taking the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif.



The Kargil War, fought between India and Pakistan from May to July 1999, erupted after Pakistani soldiers and militants infiltrated the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir. Their goal was to seize strategic heights, from where they could disrupt supply routes to India's northern military outposts, including the Siachen Glacier. India was initially caught by surprise but responded with full-scale military operations to reclaim the territory. Indian forces mounted a determined counter-offensive, which eventually forced Pakistan to retreat. Multiple independent sources, including captured Pakistani soldiers and intelligence reports, indicated that regular units of the Pakistani Army were deeply involved. But the big question is why now? This change is likely driven by internal and external factors, including evolving political dynamics, growing transparency within the military establishment, and changing geopolitical realities. By acknowledging its role, Pakistan may be seeking to rewrite its narrative, demonstrating a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths in its military history. This admission could have several important implications for Pakistan, India, and the region as a whole. The official acknowledgement could prompt a deeper examination of the internal decision-making processes that led to the Kargil War. By owning up to its role, Pakistan could potentially build trust in future diplomatic engagements. This admission could further influence Pakistan's military strategy, possibly encouraging more caution and restraint in future operations. Pakistan's recognition of its army's involvement could alter its approach to the Kashmir dispute, leading to more diplomatic, rather than military, efforts to resolve the issue. While the scars of Kargil will not heal overnight, this acknowledgement opens up the possibility for greater introspection and, potentially, reconciliation in the future.

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PICTALK



Indian Air Force aerobatics team Surya Kiran performs at exercise 'Tarang Shakti', in Jodhpur

Indian economy thrives amid global challenges



SUDHIR HINDWAN

While global powers struggle with economic slowdowns, India's strategic reforms, thriving startup ecosystem, and growing middle class continue to fuel its growth

India's economic landscape remains one of remarkable resilience and potential, despite the challenges it faces. Although the recent GDP data for the last quarter of the current year indicates a decline from the anticipated 8% growth to 6.7%, the country continues to lead among the fastest-growing global economies. This achievement is an indicator of India's gradual economic aggrandizement, positioning it as a global player in economic growth and development. While major economies around the world experience slowdowns, India's economic growth has remained robust.

However, one of the key challenges facing the Indian government is the growing need to create more employment opportunities. The number of unemployed and underemployed citizens has increased over the years, and the problem has been exacerbated by rapid globalization. This has introduced a new era marked by the principle of "perform or perish," impacting public sector enterprises and businesses worldwide. India's public sector has not been immune to this trend, but the abundance of cheap labor and a proactive push towards Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) have given the country a promising future.

Despite India's initially cautious approach to economic reforms, the government has gradually implemented a range of confidence-building measures. These initiatives not only promote economic growth but also aim to ensure the equitable development of various societal sectors. The framework of socio-economic justice that India has developed has helped build trust within the country and abroad, as has its progress with export-oriented special economic zones (SEZs). The share of India's global trade was just 0.7% in the early stages, but efforts to strengthen the country's medium-term export strategy between 2002 and 2007 have yielded positive results. Additionally, the economic reforms of 1991 gave India a significant boost, marking the beginning of its economic liberaliza-



tion. Although some East Asian economies and China receive higher levels of foreign direct investment, India's superior corporate governance and the high quality of its commercially driven companies have allowed it to achieve better returns on investment. India's success has also been driven by its business experts and investors, who have made their mark overseas, particularly in fields like information technology, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare. These sectors have become areas in which even advanced economies must catch up. Additionally, India's indigenous entrepreneurship and industries have provided the country with a significant advantage over other economies that rely heavily on foreign direct investment. A prime example of this is China, where the export-led manufacturing boom is largely fueled by FDI, which is not a substitute for home-grown entrepreneurship. India, on the other hand, has focused on building strong internal markets. The complexities of financial dealings are another challenge that India has handled well. For instance, Japan has faced severe economic issues due to a malfunctioning financial system in recent years, highlighting the importance of constant monitoring by competent authorities. India's mature financial markets and the robust regulations govern-



A PARTICULARLY PROMISING DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA'S ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE IS THE RECENT RISE OF STARTUPS. IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS, THE COUNTRY HAS SEEN MORE THAN 10,000 STARTUPS EMERGE, CREATING OVER 100,000 JOBS, BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY

ing them have provided investors with confidence and stability. Additionally, while China may lead in savings rates, infrastructure, and manufacturing, India's services-driven growth and institutional stability, rooted in democracy and pluralism, set it apart.

A particularly promising development in India's economic landscape is the recent rise of startups. In the last five years, the country has seen more than 10,000 startups emerge, creating over 100,000 jobs, both directly and indirectly. This success has been attributed to a robust strategy that has expanded operational and support networks from rural to urban areas. The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) reported that these startups have significantly contributed to employment generation, further solidifying India's economic prospects.

Foreign investors have also recognized India's potential. Over the past two decades, more than \$60 billion has been invested in Indian stock markets. Additionally, over 600 investors have been granted permission to trade on Indian stock exchanges. This influx of investment has resulted in a 125% growth in the Sensex and a 148% rise in the Bombay Stock Exchange. India's remarkable progress in the IT industry has opened

new doors for Indian companies, which are now aggressively expanding into overseas markets. The country's compliance and regulatory authorities have ensured that foreign investments are secure and that economic transactions are monitored thoroughly. Despite the challenges posed by a tough global economic climate, India's G20 Presidency has provided an opportunity to position itself as a key player in global manufacturing and as a reliable partner in various sectors. The cooperation among G20 nations has also fostered the development of new strategies to meet the needs of vulnerable countries, fostering a more inclusive global society. This cooperation could lead to a positive shift in international relations, promoting greater harmony and collaboration.

India's impressive progress is largely attributed to its immense talent and strategic foresight. However, the country must continue to navigate social and political pressures to maintain its growth momentum. By addressing these challenges, India can further solidify its position as a global economic powerhouse, capable of driving growth not only within its borders but also across the world.

(The author, recipient of Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE US ELECTIONS

Madam — A section of media has reported Hindu groups support for Donald Trump against Kamala Harris which sends mixed signals as both Republicans and Democrats have sizable strength cadres of expats from India. How far does the support call for Donald Trump go, there is a distant possibility that Hindus will be benefitted by such a skewed political approach.

In earlier US elections also, Hindu Americans' support has never been so explicit publicly. US collaborations, trade and technology, defence ties and agreements and its support in geopolitical challenges from China in South Asia and the Indian Ocean are very crucial for India. Therefore, a restrictive narrative of Hindu support may turnaround the US policies for immigrants as Hindus or at large Indian expats in the US are entirely different community absolutely loyal to US or any other countries where they have settled.

The most powerful country US must be credited for giving opportunity to Indians to achieve the highest positions in their ruling, governance, business, corporate ladder and society. I hope wisdom will prevail on American Indians and particularly Hindus to play their significant role in the Presidential elections.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

COURTS AS THE LAST RESORT

Madam — There are two things which are to no one's liking, one is inflation and the other is litigation.

Indian courts are piling up with cases for reasons that one can state that every household has got a case or the other. The most complicated creatures are human beings and reason why there are two extremes as the behavioral scientist often recorded. No animals ending up in suicides than humans is an undisputed fact. When the top most court's advocacy from various legal luminaries is that there is nothing to substitute an out of the court settlement, the litigants never

Ambulance in traffic jam



I am writing in reference to the article, "When Golden Hour is Lost in a Stuck Ambulance" (September 7). The scenario of an ambulance caught in a traffic jam is a grave concern with potentially life-threatening consequences. Every minute of delay reduces a patient's chances of survival, highlighting the critical need for prompt medical intervention.

Urban traffic congestion, particularly in metro cities, often obstructs the swift movement of emergency vehicles. Compounding this issue is the lack of awareness and compliance from other drivers,

who frequently fail to yield the right of way. Inadequate road infrastructure, such as narrow lanes and poorly designed intersections, further intensifies the challenge.

To address this, dedicated ambulance lanes or corridors should be established to provide emergency vehicles with a clear path. Implementing intelligent traffic management systems, such as smart traffic signals and real-time monitoring, could optimize traffic flow during emergencies. Public awareness campaigns and driver education initiatives would also be instrumental in fostering a culture of giving priority to emergency vehicles.

Additionally, modern technology like GPS tracking and intelligent traffic signal prioritization could ensure ambulances are directed along the fastest routes, minimizing delays at intersections. Such systems would allow for more efficient routing, taking real-time traffic conditions into account.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

THE REBEL TROUBLE

Madam — This refers to the news, Rebel trouble for the BJP in Haryana and BJP MLA in tears after being denied ticket (Sept 6/7). After the issuance of 67 BJP candidates in Haryana and Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini's clarification for not changing the tickets, the rebel leaders should now set aside their differences and work in the interest of the party. Instead they are adopting the Aya Ram Gaya Ram approach.

There can be many other reasons behind ticket denial viz low chances of winning, counter allegations against senior leaders, neglect of some areas development, condemning the internal matters of the party outside, lack of discipline within the party and decreasing popularity at the ground level. No party is untouched by casteism and nepotism. It is a tough task for the ruling and opposition parties to appease all communities.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Bihar's special land survey: A step towards resolving land disputes

This ambitious project aims to digitise and map land records, addressing longstanding issues of land disputes and enhancing transparency in land dealings

Bihar is undergoing a significant transition with the commencement of a Special Land Survey covering 45,000 villages across the state. To expedite this process, the government has deployed 10,000 officials, aiming to complete the survey by August 2025.

The Department of Revenue and Land Reforms has already digitized 64 million revenue documents. The digitisation of an additional 160 to 200 million documents is expected to be completed within the next year. These documents will be available to the public for a nominal fee.

The primary goal of the survey is to digitize and map the state's land data to enhance transparency in land dealings and address the persistent land disputes that overwhelm Bihar's courts. "Our main focus is to prepare accurate land records, including Kistwar (Plotting) and Khanapuri, to ensure legitimate land ownership," states Vinod Kumar Singh, Additional District Magistrate of Vaishali district.



Singh emphasizes the importance of this initiative, noting that 60% of land-related crimes in Bihar arise from missing or inaccessible Record of Rights (RoR) documents. Fraudulent claims on land titles have also contributed to the problem. Regarding the Vanshavali (Pedigree) Form, Singh clarifies that approval is not required from the Sarpanch (Panchayat Head). Individuals can certify and submit the form themselves along with Self-Declaration Form-2 (Prapatra 2). This form is particularly crucial for ancestral properties, regardless of the type of ownership, such as Khatiyani or Property Sale Deed. Vipin Kumar Yadav,

Settlement Officer (Bandobust Adhikari) of Vaishali, adds that if land is in the father's name and agricultural rent is being paid, a Vanshavali form is not necessary. However, if the father wishes to distribute the property among his children, the form must be completed along with Self-Declaration Form-2. Khatiyani is a legal document that records rights related to Khata (Account) number, Kheasara (Plot) number, Mouza (area), tenant's name, and land area. It specifically pertains to ancestral immovable property. The digitization and mapping efforts through the Special Land Survey are commendable. By reducing

land disputes, these measures will enable farmers to focus on enhancing agricultural productivity instead of engaging in protracted legal battles. Given that agriculture contributes 18% to India's GDP, improving land record management is crucial for the sector's growth. In conclusion, Bihar's Special Land Survey represents a crucial step towards modernizing land management and resolving persistent land disputes.

By digitizing and mapping extensive land records, the initiative aims to enhance transparency, reduce legal conflicts, and empower farmers to focus on agricultural productivity. With the goal of completing the survey by August 2025, this project underscores the state's commitment to improving land administration and supporting the agricultural sector, which is vital for Bihar's economy. As digitization progresses, stakeholders can look forward to a more efficient and equitable land management system.

(The author is a columnist, views are personal)



GYAN BHADRA



FIRST COLUMN

GANESHA: THE MASTER OF RIDDHI AND SIDDHI

As the first deity, Ganesha guides the soul toward deeper spiritual experiences



ASHWINI GURUJI

Lord Ganesha is the swami of Riddhi and Siddhi. Riddhi is the force responsible for prosperity and abundance – material riches and luxury pertaining to the five senses. Siddhi refers to spiritual powers, like extra-sensory perception, clairvoyance, clairaudience, premonition, thought manifestation etc. Ganesha was born of the dirt of Mata Adi Shakti, as she took a bath indicating that all the riddhi and siddhi in creation are nothing but a spec of dirt of the phenomenal force of the Mother. Ganesha is the deity closest to physical creation, the swami of riddhi and siddhi, which are nothing but Maya, unreality.

They are temporary and bound to leave. The majority spend their life chasing these forgetting the temporary nature of these forces and oblivious to what lies beyond... Ganesha is the first deity, pratham puja, just the first step to the phenomenal experiences of the world of spirit. Ganesha manifested at a time when impurities started creeping into the society. In due course of time as worldly desires took precedence over spiritual pursuits in ordinary men, different mantras and sadhnas were prescribed to invoke different aspects of Ganesha, to fulfil specific desires in the realm of the physical, the grossest layer of creation.

Uchchhishta Ganapati is invoked through specific mantras as a giver of boons, as a protector of the motherland or to develop mastery over the five senses. Heramba is the five-headed form of Ganapati, golden in colour and riding a lion. This ten-armed deity is invoked for fearlessness and to defeat one's enemies. Mahaganapati form corresponds to wealth and pleasures, the bestower of bliss. The red-golden Balaganapati is called upon for good health and a bright future. Haridra Ganapati with his turmeric complexion and yellow vestments is the harbinger of prosperity and protection.



Shwetark Ganapati is white and is said to exist in the root of the madar plant, a rare variety of madar that bears white flowers instead of the common purple flowers of Madar. Shwetark Ganapati brings vitality, vigour, strength when kept in the bedroom, intelligence, and concentration in the study room, spiritual powers when worshipped in the puja room, bring luck and prosperity and free the house from evil influences all the time. These sadhnas are extremely potent. They are given according to one's requirement and capacity by the Guru, who is himself a Siddha and does not charge you a fee.

They are a personal relationship between the guru and shisha, not to be discussed and never taught en masse. When the Guru gives the mantra, blessings follow but then it's imperative to balance out that karma, since every action has an equal and opposite reaction, every pleasure has a pain attached to it, for which the Guru shows the way. Guru guides the practitioner on which mantra to practise, for how long, the correct charan and bhava and practices to complement the mantra. After the mantra sadhna, a yagya is performed for the siddhi of the mantra. One of the safest mantras to practice for the manifestation of the shakti of Ganesha is 'gama ganpataye namah' but this too has to be channelized by the Guru for the desired effects.

The success of the sadhna is indicated by the manifestation of the deity in the yagya agni. Sadhaks at Dhyan Ashram who have been seriously practising the various mantra siddhis have had physical manifestations of the multiple gods (see image). Ganesha Chaturthi is the night of Siddhi mantra and mantra diksha under the sandhya of a Guru. To experience the power of mantra sadhana and Vedic yagya for the manifestation of thought on Ganesha Chaturthi.

(The writer is a spiritual Guru, a guiding light of Dhyan Ashram; views are personal)

Soviet moves on the Afghan Chessboard



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

The Soviet Union's botched attempt to poison Afghan leader Hafizullah Amin in 1979 set off a chain of events that reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Afghanistan

The failure of the poisoning attempt to kill Hafizullah Amin led Soviet officials to reconsider their strategy. Soviet doctors, unaware of the assassination plot, treated Hafizullah Amin for food poisoning at his palace. The KGB did not report this failed attempt in their confidential records, deeming it an ineffective method for removing Amin. Consequently, Soviet authorities concluded that a military operation was the only viable option. Karmal and his allies were forced to return to the Soviet Union as the plan was re-evaluated. Ultimately, a decision was made to execute Amin through a carefully planned military assault. The operation on December 25, 1979, saw Soviet special forces, disguised as Afghan soldiers, storm Darul Aman Palace, resulting in significant Soviet casualties, including over 100 special forces personnel and their commanding officer, Colonel Grigory Boyarinov.

The KGB concealed the death toll to protect its reputation, but Vasili Mitrokhin, a senior KGB archivist who defected to the UK in 1992, later exposed the grim details of the operation. His defection, revealing extensive Soviet espionage activities, marked a pivotal moment in the Cold War. The interplay of internal espionage and foreign intervention in Afghanistan, with ineffective Afghan intelligence and CIA-supported Mujahideen, highlighted the geopolitical manoeuvring that exacerbated Afghanistan's instability, including the assassination of Hafizullah Amin and the rise of Babrak Karmal, setting the stage for prolonged conflict. Karmal's rise to power after Amin's assassination marked a period of intensified Soviet control in Afghanistan. He sought to justify his regime by denouncing Amin as a CIA agent and framing himself as the rightful defender of the Soviet-backed revolution. Karmal's administration, supported by Soviet intelligence and military aid, aimed to stabilize the country but instead deepened its social and economic problems.

This period underscored the broader geopolitical struggle and the impact of external powers on Afghanistan's turbulent history. Taraki's Stalinist purge of the Afghan political party led to widespread imprisonment and execution, with some members exiled or appointed to distant posts. Karmal, who had been the Afghan ambassador to Czechoslovakia, used his position to plot against Taraki. Faced with the threat of arrest or death if he returned to Afghanistan, Karmal sought asylum from the Czechoslovakian government. The Czechoslovak authorities, concerned about the diplomatic repercussions, consulted with the Soviet Union, which advised granting Karmal asylum and preventing his return to Afghanistan. This marked the start of Karmal's complex political manoeuvring. After being granted asylum, Karmal and his family were relocated to a secret location near Kreislitz, under constant surveillance by Czechoslovakia's STB.

Despite a confirmed assassination plot against him, Karmal evaded capture by frequently relocating and maintaining Soviet contact. By December 1979, following Amin's assassination, Karmal became Afghanistan's leader with Soviet backing. His tenure, marked by increased instability and Soviet manipulation, saw him misinterpret domestic unrest as foreign interference and downplay Soviet military presence. Committed to Marxist ideologies, Karmal's conflicts with parliament over religious issues highlighted his dedication to communism. The Soviet intervention starting December



THIS POWER STRUGGLE CONTINUES TO HARM AFGHANISTAN. MAHMUD TARZI (1865-1933) NOTED THAT 'THE PROGRESS OF A NATION DEPENDS ON ITS ABILITY TO MOVE BEYOND IGNORANCE AND EMBRACE KNOWLEDGE AND REFORM'

28, 1979, under Karmal's regime, worsened Afghanistan's turmoil, leading to widespread devastation and secretive reporting of casualties, revealing internal KGB struggles. Karmal's leadership, heavily reliant on Soviet military support, ultimately proved ineffective in stabilising Afghanistan. The continuous conflict led to the rise of the Mujahideen, supported by the US and Pakistan, further destabilising the country. Karmal was replaced by Mohammad Najibullah in 1986, who continued to rule until 1992 when the Mujahideen took control of Kabul, marking the beginning of the first phase of Taliban rule. Karmal's life ended in 1996 in Moscow, and his tenure is remembered as a period of profound strife and political manipulation in Afghan history.

This power struggle continues to harm Afghanistan. Mahmud Tarzi (1865-1933) noted that 'the progress of a nation depends on its ability to move beyond ignorance and embrace knowledge and reform.' He observed that while Europe advanced through education and modernization, the Muslim world remained entrenched in outdated traditions. Tarzi emphasized that intellectuals should guide their societies from darkness to modernity.

This transition from enlightenment to darkness accentuates a deeper issue rooted in Afghanistan's turbulent political history. The events following the 1973 coup, which brought the foreign intelligence agencies of the KGB, CIA, and ISI into Afghanistan's political sphere, illustrate how external powers have long manipulated the country's fate, contributing to its ongoing strife. The overthrow of Mohammad Zahir Shah in 1973 marked the beginning of a period of significant destabilisation in

Afghanistan. Zahir Shah, who had a nuanced understanding of Afghanistan's needs and implemented substantial social reforms, was succeeded by Mohammad Daoud Khan. Despite Daoud Khan's attempts to seek American assistance, the refusal of support set the stage for Soviet intervention, exacerbating the country's instability. Zahir Shah's return to Afghanistan after the collapse of the Taliban in 2001 symbolised a nostalgic yearning for stability and unity. However, his exclusion from significant political decisions by Hamid Karzai highlights the challenges of integrating historical figures into contemporary politics without disrupting the prevailing power dynamics. The failure of both the Soviet Union's intervention and the subsequent U.S. involvement in Afghanistan underscores a profound lesson about the limitations of foreign military power in achieving lasting political stability. The Soviet Union's reliance on sheer military might and neglect of social and political trust is mirrored by the U.S. and its allies' inability to implement meaningful reforms.

The eventual resurgence of the Taliban and the disgraceful withdrawal of foreign forces, leaving behind modern weapons, epitomises the failure to address Afghanistan's underlying issues. This pattern of short-term military solutions and inadequate attention to genuine structural reforms has led to repeated cycles of conflict and instability, reflecting a broader failure to understand and address the complex socio-political realities of Afghanistan.

External influences, notably from China and powerful Arab states, crucially affected Afghan politics during the Soviet-Afghan War. Amid the China-Soviet ideological rift, Mujahideen groups led by

Ahmad Shah Massoud fiercely resisted both Soviet forces and the Pakistan-backed Taliban. Massoud's declaration, "We will not be pawns in someone else's game, we will always be Afghanistan," underlined his commitment to Afghan sovereignty. Henry Kissinger's covert 1971 visit to China, aimed at undermining Soviet influence, marked a significant Cold War strategy shift. Despite massive Soviet and U.S. investments, Afghanistan's political instability persisted due to the lack of a coherent strategy to address its complex social and administrative issues. Ultimately, the failure of both superpowers to grasp Afghanistan's intricate social fabric and implement effective governance solutions led to prolonged instability. The U.S. and its allies' focus on aligning with extremist factions, coupled with the Soviet Union's pursuit of a monolithic socialist state, failed to address the real needs of the Afghan people. The resulting chaos not only perpetuated a cycle of conflict but also laid the groundwork for the rise of the Taliban. This historical narrative accentuates the profound consequences of using small nations as pawns in geopolitical games, raising pressing questions about the future of Afghanistan's over forty-one million people under continued turmoil and social repression. The Taliban, ultimately, are not the sole symptom of the decades that Afghanistan plunged into an abyss. As a South Asian nation, Afghanistan's future depends on proactive collaboration with neighbouring countries and strategic efforts to establish strong people-to-people connections, rather than succumbing to isolationism.

(The writer is a journalist and author. Views expressed are personal. Concluded)

India ramps up preparedness against monkeypox amid global surge

WHO declares the outbreak of monkeypox as a public health emergency of global proportions, underscoring need for preparedness

India is enhancing its preparedness to tackle Monkeypox (Mpox) by raising awareness, strengthening surveillance, setting up isolated wards, and expanding diagnostic testing capacity. Although a pandemic-like situation has not emerged, all mechanisms are being put in place to curtail the spread of Mpox and its menace. Since January 2023, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has reported more than 27,000 suspect Mpox cases and more than 1,300 deaths. Clade I Mpox occurs regularly, or is endemic, in DRC. The current outbreak is more widespread than any previous DRC outbreak, and Clade I Mpox has spread to some neighbouring countries, including Burundi, the Central



MANOJ VARGHESE

African Republic, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda, and a travel-associated case in Kenya. On August 14, 2024, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). This is the WHO's highest level of global alert, and the decision recognizes the potential threat this virus poses to countries around the world.

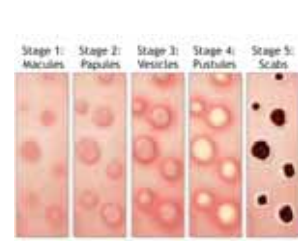
The declaration focuses international attention on acute public health risks that require the coordinated mobilization of extraordinary resources by the international community for prevention and response. Monkeypox is a virus that transmits from animals to humans. Technically, it is known as a 'viral zoonosis'. Its symptoms are similar to smallpox and cowpox, but fortunately, Monkeypox is less severe.

Cases have been emanated from Central Africa and are reported to be spreading fast across the globe. Common symptoms of Mpox are a skin rash or mucosal lesions which can last 2-4 weeks accompanied by fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes.

So far, no cases have been reported from India.

The Monkeypox virus was discovered in Denmark (1958) among monkeys kept for research. The first reported human case of Mpox was in a nine-month-old boy in the DRC in 1970. Following the eradication of smallpox in 1980, Mpox steadily emerged in central, east and west Africa. In 2003, an outbreak in the United States of America was linked to imported wild animals (Clade II). Since 2005, thousands of suspected cases have been reported in the DRC every year.

In 2017, Mpox re-emerged in Nigeria and continues to spread among people across the country and travellers to other destinations. The natural reservoir of the virus is



unknown – various small mammals such as squirrels and monkeys are susceptible. In May 2022, an outbreak of Mpox appeared suddenly and rapidly spread across Europe, the Americas and then all six WHO regions, with 110 countries reporting about 87 thousand cases and 112 deaths. The global outbreak has affected primarily gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men and has spread person-to-person through sexual networks. The global Clade II

Monkeypox virus (MPXV) outbreak that began in 2022 demonstrated the pandemic potential of Mpox. Clade I MPXV is endemic in several Central African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Clade I is generally associated with higher case fatality rates (CFRs) (1.4% to >10%) compared with Clade II MPXV (0.1% to 3.6%).

MPXV can spread to persons from contact with infected wildlife, or through close, prolonged contact with persons infected with MPXV. During 2023-2024, DRC has reported an unprecedented number of suspected Clade I MPXV infections. Clade I MPXV transmission in DRC is more commonly reported among children. Widespread trans-

mission is reported because of zoonotic reservoirs, household occupants, and unhygienic resources.

Diagnosis and reporting of Clade I MPXV infections to health officials are important for limiting onward transmission by aiding early containment measures, including contact tracing, isolating patients, offering the JYNNEOS vaccine to contacts, and strictly adhering to recommended infection prevention and control practices in health care settings.

An additional benefit of vaccination is protection against Clade I MPXV infection. According to Dr A K Narula, Pharmacy expert of GGSIPU, Tecovirimat is typically the first therapeutic that should be considered for patients with Mpox other than supportive

care. In 2014, the West Africa Ebola virus outbreak demonstrated the risks associated with a delayed global response to a serious pandemic threat. Identifying Mpox is a difficult task, as other infections and conditions look similar.

It is important to distinguish Mpox from chickenpox, measles, bacterial skin infections, scabies, herpes, syphilis, other sexually transmissible infections, and medication-associated allergies. For these reasons, testing is key for people to get treatment as early as possible and prevent further spread.

(The writer is former editor Free Press Journal and presently media advisor to GGSIPU; views are personal)

Political slugfest getting murkier in poll-bound J and K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In poll-bound Jammu and Kashmir as the electioneering is peaking the political slugfest is getting murkier in the run-up to the first phase of polling on September 18. In Kashmir, two mainstream regional parties National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have locked horns with each other in a bid to consolidate their support base in their pocket boroughs. The arch-rivals first clashed with each other after some of the members belonging to the Jamaat-e-Islami (banned organization) decided to contest the Assembly polls as Independent candidates. PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti also taunted Omar Abdullah for contesting from two Assembly segments. "Omar Abdullah was reiterating one

thing from the last 3-4 years, that he would not contest elections till the time statehood is restored in J&K. Now he is contesting from two seats. This shows the difference between what he says and what he does. This is what his family has done since 1947, Mehbooba reminded. On Sunday, she once again launched a frontal attack on the party claiming if her party had not been there, the National Conference would have been functioning in a dictatorial manner in Jammu and Kashmir. "If Mufti Mohammed Sayeed had not founded PDP then the National Conference would still be functioning in a dictatorial manner. People are very angry and upset with the National Conference," she added. On the other hand, National

Conference President and former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah trained his guns on the Bharatiya Janta Party after the Union Home Minister Amit Shah claimed the NC-Congress alliance wanted to spread terrorism, snatch reservations of Gujjars, Bakarwal, Paharis, and Dalits, release criminals, and start LOC trade with Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir. After paying tributes to the party founder Sheikh Mohd Abdullah on his 42nd death anniversary at Naseembagh mausoleum, Dr Farooq Abdullah told reporters on Sunday the BJP top brass was focussing its election campaign on Jammu as they want to "intimidate" the Hindu voters of Jammu and Kashmir by creating false fears. He also accused the BJP of misleading the people by claiming that terrorism would



rise again if the National Conference and Congress alliance came to power in Jammu and Kashmir. "They (BJP) want to threaten the Hindu community. They think the Hindus will vote for them but today the Hindus have changed. First, they (BJP) sought votes in the name of Ram and now they want to intimidate them," Abdullah charged. In Jammu, the BJP unit demanded the Election Commission of India (ECI) to reject or cancel the nomination of former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for threatening the people. Addressing the media persons, J & K BJP Chief Spokesperson Sunil Sethi here said, "A former Sarpanch of

Ganderbal, with consent from Omar Abdullah, has threatened that those who do not support the flag of NC would be killed." Omar has filed his nomination from the Ganderbal Assembly constituency. Sethi said that ADC has already filed a complaint and BJP will also approach ECI to file a complaint against Omar Abdullah demanding the cancellation of his nomination. "Our legal experts are exploring various legal options and soon we will approach ECI demanding cancellation or rejection of Omar Abdullah's nomination from Ganderbal," Sethi said, adding, "There is no way that former Sarpanch could have threatened the people without the consent of Omar." "Sadly, Omar is questioning the decision of the Supreme Court on the hanging of Afzal Guru, who was

involved in the attack on the Indian Parliament," Sethi said, adding, "Raising the issue of the terrorist Afzal Guru during elections shows that NC has no issue." Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also campaigned for the BJP candidate in Banihal on Sunday. Addressing an election rally in the Ramban assembly constituency in support of BJP candidate Rakesh Singh Thakur, the Defence Minister asked the residents of Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) to come and join India as "we consider you our own unlike Pakistan which treats you as foreigners". Singh asserted there is a sea change in the overall security situation in Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. The senior BJP leader came

down heavily on the National Conference-Congress alliance over its poll promise of restoring Article 370 and said it is impossible as long as the BJP is there. He said the "sea change" witnessed in the overall security situation in J-K since August 2019 means that youths now carry laptops and computers in their hands instead of pistols and revolvers. Now, nobody dares to fire bullets at people in Srinagar, he said. "Support the BJP to form the next government in J-K so that we can facilitate massive development in the region. There will be so much development that the people in PoJK on seeing this should say that we do not want to live with Pakistan and instead will go to India," the defence minister said.

Over to EC for polls as last batch files nomination papers in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

More than three months after the declaration of the 2024 Lok Sabha election results, a battle of words have broken out in Kerala over the reasons for the BJP opening its account for the first time in the history of the State. Suresh Gopi, the candidate fielded by the saffron party had won the Thrissur Lok Sabha seat with a comfortable margin of 75,000 votes defeating his nearest rival V S Sunil Kumar (CPI) and K Muralaadhara (Congress), the latter getting relegated to the third position. Suresh Gopi was appointed as minister of state for tourism and oil and natural gas in the central government. Late last week, the CPI, a strongly ally of the CPI(M) launched a fusillade against victory registered by the BJP candidate describing it as the fall out of the Thrissur Pooram fiasco. The Pooram, the biggest cultural extravaganza of Central Kerala, could not be held in



its traditional splendor in 2024 because of the stringent regulations enforced by the police. "There was a secret deal between the CPI(M) and the BJP to subvert the Thrissur Pooram festival. Any disruption in Pooram (festival) is sure to polarize the Hindu votes and this has resulted in Suresh Gopi winning the poll," said V D Satheshan, Leader of the Opposition. Sunil Kumar, the CPI candi-

date, attributed the disruption in Pooram to Gopi's win. "A thorough probe should be ordered into the reasons behind the failure of law enforcement agencies to hold the Pooram without any obstacles," said Sunil Kumar. The CPI Kerala secretary Binoy Viswam echoed the version of Sunil Kumar and said there was a conspiracy behind the whole episode. K Muralaadhara, son of former chief minister K Karunakaran

too alleged that there was a CPI(M)-BJP deal at Thrissur. But it was known from the beginning that Suresh Gopi would win from Thrissur because of the rapport he had established with the people of the constituency. He had contested the 2019 Lok Sabha poll from the same constituency and had bagged 2,94,000 votes despite starting as a late comer. By 2024, his campaign picked up and he had established a clear lead even before the poll campaign gained steam. Moreover, the Christians in the constituency voted in large numbers for Suresh Gopi. "Though he had polled 2, 94,000 votes in 2019, his vote share crossed the 4,12,000 votes in 2024. The CPI's claim that there was a deal between BJP and the CPI(M) is total nonsense as the party candidate had polled 3,37,652 votes this time. This is 36,000 votes more than what the party candidate had polled in the 2019 election," said Sudheer

Lower back pain expected to impact 850 million people by 2050: Physiotherapists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Do you suffer from routine low back pain? You are not alone. The condition that affected over 600 million people globally in 2020 is expected to impact 850 million by 2050, mainly due to poor lifestyle, physiotherapists said here on World Physiotherapists Day. Low back pain which remains a leading cause of disability worldwide is the theme of this year. Despite the prevalence of this issue, affecting 90 per cent of people due to factors like prolonged sitting, poor posture, and furniture design, many remain unaware of the underlying cause. Persistent pain, which can occur at any age, is serious and may require attention if it lasts for more than three months. "Chronic pain can lead to disability. Global data indicates that 1 in 13 people suffer from this growing issue due to prolonged sitting, poor posture,

and furniture design. Since 1990, the incidence of back pain has risen by up to 60%," according to Dr. Pooja Sethi, Head of the Physiotherapy Department at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Delhi. She said that in 90 per cent of cases, no specific cause for back pain can be identified with the balance cases linked to issues with joints, muscles, ligaments, or discs. "X-rays or MRIs often do not reveal the cause of pain, but orthopedic doctors or physiotherapists may diagnose it through examination," she added. Dr. Khyatee, a senior physiotherapist from Ghaziabad and former senior research officer with AIIMS Delhi emphasised that physical therapy is often recommended as a first-line treatment for most types of lower back pain. "This approach includes guided therapeutic exercises designed to strengthen the lower back muscles and condition the spinal tissues and joints."

These exercises focus on providing flexibility and strength training to the entire kinetic chain—the interconnected groups of body segments, joints, and muscles that work together for movement, she added. "Given the rising number of individuals, particularly younger populations, experiencing low back pain, it's crucial to raise awareness about prevention and management. We have seen that around 90% of back pain cases are non-specific and can be managed effectively with the right approach. "Our back pain assessment activity helps participants evaluate their risk and receive tailored exercise guidance. Prevention is always better than cure, and through such initiatives, we aim to help people avoid more serious conditions and lead pain-free lives," said Dr. Seema Grover, Head of the Department of Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals.

Kangana's Emergency receives UA certificate from CBFC with conditions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Actor-politician Kangana Ranaut's 'Emergency' has received a UA certificate from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) with the condition that the filmmakers make three specific cuts and provide factual sources for the controversial historical claims depicted in the movie. The CBFC has asked filmmakers to give disclaimers on historical events depicted in the film. The CBFC's recommendations include removing or modifying certain visuals in a scene showing Pakistani soldiers attacking Bangladeshi refugees. This includes a sequence where a soldier is shown smashing an infant's head and another where three women are beheaded. The release date of the film has not been finalised yet. A UA certificate implies that the movie can be viewed by audiences of different age groups, but with parental guidance.



Additionally, the committee had asked the filmmakers to replace a curse shouted by someone from the crowd in response to the death of a leader in the film. They have also asked for a change to the surname of a family mentioned in a line. The filmmakers were also asked to provide correct information for a line said by an actor playing the character Nixon, that made disparaging references to Indian women. According to reports, Emergency was submitted for a review on July 8 to the cen-

HQ Defence Staff organising CORE Programme for senior officers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a first, the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) is organising a five-day Combined Operational Review and Evaluation (CORE) Programme for senior officers of Tri-Services here starting Monday, the defence ministry said on Sunday. Giving details, officials said the five-day development cum orientation programme, has been designed for Major General and equivalent officers from the three services, along with officers from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs, and Ministry of Home Affairs. The Combined Operational Review and Orientation (CORE) programme has been conceptualized to prepare senior officers of the Indian Armed Forces for future leadership roles, by developing skills in strategic planning, duly anticipating, and preparing for future threats, challenges and conflicts. The effective conduct of future



wars will hinge on three vital elements: military leaders, combatants (man-machine interface) and support staff. The Indian Armed Forces are taking dynamic steps towards modernisation, both in concepts and inventory. It is, therefore, imperative for future senior military leaders to stay abreast with changing geopolitical dynamics and futuristic combat scenarios augmented by disruptive technologies and advancements to take comprehensive decisions. The CORE programme aims to foster jointness and integration and enhance cooperation and coordination among different services to create a detailed

understanding of the operational environment. The programme will comprise panel discussions and lectures by 30 eminent speakers and subject matter experts from varied fields, curated around a unique different theme on each day. The changing Nature of Warfare, Globalisation and Interconnectedness, Lessons from Recent ongoing Conflicts in the world, Impact of non-kinetic warfare, Cyber and Information Warfare, and Adoption of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Systems in the military are some of the topics that will be discussed.

Traffic woes to end...

From Page 1 "Emphasising that efficiency and equality are two most important factors to achieve optimum utilisation of facilities, LG suggested equal parking rates for Government as well as private buses and also reducing parking time equally to achieve higher turnaround. He also asked for only buses with Fastag stickers to be allowed to enter ISBT, so as to ensure complete tracking without human interface," he said. Once notified, the new norms will not only ensure efficiency in the functioning and operation of ISBTs but also enable the facilities to function to their optimum capacity of 3,000 per day against 1,700 now, he added. The under-utilisation is because of rate differences between Government and private buses, poor management of parking bays, staff using terminals as resting places, and systemic issues such as staggered circulation due to extended turnaround times leading to traffic snarls outside, the official said. A system of differential parking or utilisation charges based on time is also set to be notified to reduce turnaround time. Buses will be provided with a parking time slot of 25 minutes at a fixed rate. After that, charges will be applied for every five-minute extra. Enforcement and implementation will be ensured through Fastags, he said.

Monkey Pox arrives in...

From Page 1 Mpx, a viral disease, is caused by the monkeypox virus. "Samples from the patient are being tested to confirm the presence of Mpx. The case is being managed in line with established protocols, and contact tracing is ongoing to identify potential sources and assess the impact within the country," said the Ministry. Following reports of Mpx-positive cases globally, particularly in neighboring countries Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), the Centre has issued an alert while designating three hospitals in Delhi as nodal centers for Mpx. Surveillance at borders and airports has been enhanced. At the Lady Hardinge Medical College, RML Hospital, and Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi isolation wards have been established to treat and monitor Mpx patients. Any patient testing positive for Mpx, can be admitted to these hospitals. In addition, at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi, five beds have been reserved for suspected monkeypox cases. If any patient shows symptoms of Mpx or is suspected of having it, they will be shifted to these beds for treatment. The World Health Organisation in August declared Mpx a public health emergency of international concern, which is twice in two years. There are vaccines available for Mpx, and vaccination should be considered along with other public health interventions. Common symptoms of Mpx include a skin rash or mucosal lesions that can last 2-4 weeks, accompanied by fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, and swollen lymph nodes. Mpx can be transmitted through close contact with someone who has the virus, contaminated materials, or infected animals. During pregnancy, the virus may be transmitted to the foetus or to the newborn during or after birth. The first announcement of the global outbreak was made in 2022 when cases began to be reported worldwide. With 122 countries reporting more than 99,518 confirmed cases and 208 deaths, Mpx is emerging as a major global health threat. Pakistan is also witnessing the spread of this virus, with 11 confirmed cases and one death reported since the initial detection

NEP is a gamechanger, States that have not adopted it yet should rethink, revisit their stand: Dhankhar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar on Sunday said the new National Education Policy (NEP) is a gamechanger and States that have not adopted the policy yet should rethink and revisit their stand. Addressing the International Literacy Day celebrations, Dhankar cautioned against people who taint, tarnish and demean India's institutions and urged people to show light to those "misguided souls" not able to acknowledge the impressive growth of the country. The Vice President said it was time "for us to be in mission mode" with commitment and passion to ensure 100 per cent literacy at the earliest. "Education is something that

no thief can take away from you. No government can snatch it from you. Neither relatives nor friends can take it away from you. There can be no reduction in it. It will grow and continue to grow as long as you keep sharing it. If literacy is pursued passionately, India can reclaim its ancient status as a centre of learning, like Nalanda and Takshashila," Dhankar said. Appealing to the States yet to adopt the new NEP to rethink and revisit their stance, he emphasised that the policy was a gamechanger for the nation. "This National Education Policy empowers our youth to fully exploit their talent and energy, giving due importance to all languages," he said. Cautioning against the people who taint, tarnish and demean India's institutions, Dhankhar

urged to "show path to those misguided souls who are not able to acknowledge the impressive growth of Bharat and are not recognising the ground reality". Highlighting the special significance of the mother tongue, Dhankhar stated that it was the language in which people dreamed. He also emphasised India's unparalleled linguistic diversity. "There is no country in the world like India. We are a unique nation when it comes to the richness of language, with several languages. Reflecting on his experience as Rajya Sabha chairman, he said, "I afford members the opportunity to speak in 22 languages. When I hear them speak in their language, I listen to the translation but their body language itself tells me

what they are saying." Dhankhar also called upon everyone to resolve to make at least one person literate. "When we make someone literate, we liberate him or her, we help that person discover himself or herself, we make him or her feel dignity, we cut down dependence, we generate independence and interdependence. It enables a person to help himself or herself. It is a supreme facet of hand-holding," he said. In his address, Dhankhar called upon everyone to promote literacy. "Time for us to be in mission mode with commitment and passion to ensure 100 per cent literacy at the earliest but I am sure this is achievable sooner than we think. Let each one make one literate, this will be a spinal contribution for Viksit Bharat," he said.

Paralympics: Warriors...

From Page 1 Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated all the athletes for their achievements and even exchanged telephonic conversations with athletes who were disappointed in winning medal in the Paralympic event.

It was a proud moment for the whole of India, the achievements we accomplished this year and the history which got created in the Paris Paralympic event. As India celebrates its victories, it also looks forward to building a more inclusive sporting landscape, one where Para-Athletes are recognised and celebrated for their extraordinary achievements.

With the 2024 Paralympics marking a new era in Indian sports, the nation now stands tall on the global stage, inspired by the athletes' indomitable spirit, resilience, and relentless pursuit of excellence.

India steps into the Theatre of...

From Page 1 On his recent visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Modi embraced President Zelensky and the Ukrainian leader said he and Prime Minister Modi had "honoured the memory of children whose lives were taken by Russian aggression". "Children of every country deserve to be safe. We must make it possible," he said. Prime Minister Modi's nearly nine-hour visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since its independence in 1991, came six weeks after he held summit talks with President Putin that triggered anguish in some Western countries.

Opp presidential candidate González flees Venezuela for asylum in Spain

AP ■ CARACAS

Former Venezuelan opposition presidential candidate Edmundo González has fled into exile after being granted asylum in Spain, delivering a major blow to millions who placed their hopes in his upstart campaign to end two decades of single-party rule.

The surprise departure of the man considered by Venezuela's opposition and several foreign governments to be the legitimate winner of July's presidential race was announced late Saturday night by Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez. She said the government decided to grant González safe passage out of the country, just days after ordering his arrest, to help

restore "the country's political peace and tranquillity." Neither González nor opposition leader María Corina Machado has commented. Meanwhile, Spain's centre-left government said the decision to abandon Venezuela was González's alone and he departed on a plane sent by the country's air force.

Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares told Spanish national broadcaster RTVE that his government will grant González political asylum as he has requested. Albares spoke while en route to China with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez on a state visit.

"I have been able to speak to (González) and once he was aboard the airplane he

expressed his gratitude toward the Spanish government and Spain," Albares said. "Of course I told him we were pleased that he is well and on his way to Spain, and I reiterated the commitment of our government to the political rights of all Venezuelans."

Sánchez said in a speech Friday, before González's departure was announced, that the opposition leader was "a hero whom Spain is not going to abandon."

Albares said that González had spent an unspecified number of days at the Spanish Embassy in Caracas before his departure. A Spanish official with knowledge of details on González's departure said that his government did not discuss González's exit with Maduro's administration.



The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with ministry protocols. González, a 75-year-old former diplomat, was a last minute stand in when Machado was banned from running. Previously unknown to most Venezuelans, his campaign nonetheless rapidly ignited the hopes of millions of Venezuelans desperate for change after a decade-long economic freefall.

While President Nicolás Maduro was declared the winner of the July vote, most Western governments have yet to recognise his victory and are instead demanding that authorities publish a breakdown of votes. Meanwhile, tally sheets collected by opposition volunteers from over two-thirds of the electronic voting machines indicate that González won by a more than 2-to-1 margin.

The tally sheets have long been considered the ultimate proof of election results in Venezuela. In previous presidential elections,

the National Electoral Council published online the results of each of the more than 30,000 voting machines but the Maduro-controlled panel did not release any data this time, blaming an alleged cyberattack mounted by its opponents from North Macedonia.

Attorney General Tarek William Saab, a staunch Maduro ally, sought González's arrest after he failed to appear three times in connection with a criminal investigation into what it considers an act of electoral sabotage.

Saab told reporters the voting records the opposition shared online were forged and an attempt to undermine the National Electoral Council. Experts from the United

Nations and the Carter Centre, which at the invitation of Maduro's government observed the election, determined the results announced by electoral authorities lacked credibility. In a statement critical of the election, the UN experts stopped short of validating the opposition's claim to victory, but they said the voting records it published online appear to exhibit all of the original security features.

Spain has been a major point of exodus for Venezuelans, particularly of those leading opposition to Maduro's regime. They include Leopoldo López, who fled to Spain to reunite with his family in 2020, and Antonio Ledezma, who left for the European country in 2017.

Bangladesh-India relations should be based on equity and fairness: Yunus

PTI ■ DHAKA

Interim government's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus Sunday said that Bangladesh wants to maintain good relations with India while asserting that it should be based on equity and fairness.

Yunus, 84, made the remarks while responding to a question at a meeting with students who had participated in the student-people revolution that ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina last month, state-run BSS news agency reported.

"We need to maintain good relations with India. But it should be based on equity and fairness," the chief adviser's special assistant Mahfuj Alam quoted him as saying.

Mahfuj, who briefed the media after the meeting, added that the chief adviser said Bangladesh always gives importance to mutual respect and equity in maintaining relations with neighbours. He stressed reviving the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to enhance regional cooperation. The interim government headed by Yunus was appointed days after Hasina resigned and fled to India on August 5 following unprecedented anti-government student-led protests over a controversial quota system in government jobs.

Last week, Yunus expressed a desire for good ties with India but insisted that New Delhi must abandon the narrative



that only Hasina's leadership ensures the country's stability. Meanwhile, Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain Sunday expressed surprise over Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's remarks, emphasising that he does not foresee any immediate threat of conflict between the two neighbours.

"I am more surprised than concerned. I don't understand why he (Singh) made such remarks... I don't find any reason behind that," he told reporters at the foreign ministry here when asked for his comments on Singh's remarks.

Addressing a joint commanders conference in Lucknow on Thursday, Singh called upon the top military brass to analyse the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza as well as the current situation in Bangladesh to "predict" any future problems and stay prepared to deal with the "unexpected."

Interim govt warns against unrest during Durga puja

Dhaka (PTI): Amid concerns of possible unrest during Durga puja, Bangladesh's interim government on Sunday warned potential troublemakers, pledging tough action against those disrupting communal harmony or targeting places of worship during the Hindu festival.

Durga puja will be celebrated from October 9 to 13.

"If anyone disrupts or harasses people at worship halls, we will not spare them. We will bring them under the law and ensure peace," Religious Affairs Adviser Dr AFM Khalid Hossain said during a visit to the Prematli Gaurang Bari Kalimandir in Godagari at Rajshahi district.

He urged members of the Hindu community to celebrate their festivals with enthusiasm and religious fervour and assured them that no one would be allowed to harm their temples. The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

"If you fear attacks on your temples, be assured that no criminals will succeed. We have engaged local people, including madrasa students, to take turns guarding the temples. No one will stop us from celebrating our religious

festivals," Hossain said, asserting that the interim government wants to transform Bangladesh into a state free of discrimination and sectarianism.

The minority Hindu population faced vandalism of their businesses and properties, and destruction of temples, during the student-led violence that erupted following the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. After unprecedented anti-government protests that peaked on August 5, Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled to India.

On Saturday at Rajshahi Circuit House, Hossain met with government officials and warned that miscreants might attempt to disrupt communal harmony ahead of Durga puja.

"We must collectively resist such efforts," he said, suggesting that madrasa students could be engaged as volunteers to help safeguard temples during the festival. The adviser also instructed law enforcement and the administration to take measures to secure puja mandaps.

Last month, thousands of Hindus staged protest rallies in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka and the northeastern port city of Chattogram, demanding protec-

Gunman kills 3 Israeli soldiers on West Bank-Jordan border

AP ■ ALLENBY CROSSING (WEST BANK)

Three Israelis were shot and killed Sunday at the border crossing between the West Bank and Jordan, Israeli officials said, in what appeared to be an attack linked to the 11-month-old war in Gaza.

The military said the gunman approached the Allenby Bridge Crossing from the Jordanian side in a truck and opened fire at Israeli security forces, who killed the assailant in a shootout. It said the three people killed were Israeli civilians. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said they were all men in their 50s.

Jordan is investigating the shooting, its state-run Petra News Agency reported. The Western-allied Arab country made peace with Israel in 1994, but is deeply critical of its policies toward the Palestinians. Jordan has a large Palestinian population and has seen mass protests against Israel over the war in Gaza.

The Allenby crossing over the Jordan River, also known as the King Hussein Bridge, is mainly used by Palestinians and international tourists, as well as for cargo shipments. The crossing has seen very few security

incidents over the years, but in 2014 Israeli security guards shot and killed a Jordanian judge who they said had attacked them.

Authorities in Israel and Jordan said the crossing was closed until further notice, and Israel later announced the closure of both of its land crossings with Jordan, near Beit Shean in the north and Eilat in the south. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned the attack and linked it to Israel's larger conflict with Iran and allied militant groups, including Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The Israeli-occupied West Bank has seen a surge of violence since Hamas' Oct 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the war there. Israel has launched nearly daily military arrested raids into dense Palestinian residential areas, and there has also been a rise in settler violence and Palestinian attacks on Israelis. In Gaza, meanwhile, an Israeli airstrike early Sunday killed five people, including two women, two children and a senior official in the Civil Defence — first responders who operate under the Hamas-run government. The Civil Defence said the

strike targeted the home of its deputy director for north Gaza, Mohammed Morsi, in the urban Jabalya refugee camp. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military. The army says it tries to avoid harming civilians and only targets militants.

Gaza's Health Ministry says over 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since the war began. It does not differentiate between fighters and civilians in its count. The war has caused vast destruction and displaced around 90% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, often multiple times. Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in their Oct 7 attack into southern Israel. They abducted another 250, and are still holding around 100 of them after releasing most of the rest in exchange for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel during a weeklong ceasefire last November. Around a third of the remaining hostages inside Gaza are believed to be dead.

The United States, Qatar and Egypt have spent months trying to broker a cease-fire and the return of the hostages, but the negotiations have repeatedly bogged down.

Trump threatens to jail adversaries

AP ■ MOSCOW

With just days to go before his first — and likely only — debate against Vice President Kamala Harris, former President Donald Trump posted a warning on his social media site threatening to jail those "involved in unscrupulous behaviour" this election, which he said would be under intense scrutiny.

"WHEN I WIN, those people that CHEATED will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the Law, which will include long term prison sentences so that this Depravity of Justice does not happen again," Trump wrote, again sowing doubt about the integrity of the election, even though cheating is incredibly rare.

"Please beware," he went on, "that this legal exposure extends to Lawyers, Political Operatives, Donors, Illegal Voters, & Corrupt Election Officials. Those involved in unscrupulous behaviour will be sought out, caught, and prosecuted at levels, unfortunately, never seen before in our Country." Trump's message represents

his latest threat to use the office of the presidency to exact retribution if he wins a second term. There is no evidence of the kind of fraud he continues to insist marred the 2020 election; in fact, dozens of courts, Republican state officials and his own administration have said he lost fairly. Just days ago, Trump himself acknowledged in a podcast interview that he had indeed "lost by a whisker."

While Trump's campaign aides and allies have urged him to keep his focus on Harris and make the election a referendum on issues like inflation and border security, Trump in recent days has veered far off course. On Friday, he delivered a stunning statement to news cameras in which he brought up a string of past allegations of sexual misconduct, describing several in graphic detail, even as he denied his accusers' allegations.

Earlier, he had voluntarily appeared in court for a hearing on the appeal of a decision that found him liable for sexual abuse, turning focus to his legal woes in the campaign's final stretch.



Pope Francis is hugged by a blind pupil of the Holy Trinity Humanistic School in Baro, near Vanimo, Papua New Guinea, on Sunday. Pope Francis celebrated the Catholic Church of the peripheries on Sunday as he travelled to the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea, bringing with him a ton of medicine and toys and a message of love overcoming violence for the people who live there. AP/PTI

Pope arrives in remote jungles of Papua New Guinea with a ton of humanitarian aid, toys

AP ■ VANIMO (PAPUA NEW GUINEA)

Pope Francis travelled to the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea on Sunday to celebrate the Catholic Church on the peripheries, bringing with him a ton of medicine, musical instruments and a message of love for the people who live there.

Francis flew aboard a Royal Australian Air Force C-130 transport plane from Port Moresby to Vanimo, on the northwest coast of the South Pacific nation. There, Francis met with the local Catholic community and the missionaries from his native Argentina who have been ministering to them.

For an Argentine pope who marvelled in 2013 at having been chosen from the "end of the Earth" to lead the church, it was a voyage to another end of the Earth on the longest, farthest trip of Francis' pontificate.

Francis has previously travelled to the edge of the Arctic (to apologize to the Inuit people for church abuses), and into the Peruvian Amazon (to draw attention to its plight), and to the plains of Ur, Iraq (to boost

Christian-Muslim ties). But even by his standards, Sunday's trip to remote Vanimo was extraordinary.

A crowd of an estimated 20,000 people gathered on the field in front of the Vanimo cathedral singing and dancing when Francis arrived, and he promptly put on a feathered headdress that had been presented to him. In remarks from a raised stage, Francis praised the church workers who go out to try to spread the faith. But he urged the residents of Vanimo to work at home at being good to one another. He urged them to be like an orchestra, so that all members of the community come together harmoniously to overcome rivalries.

Doing so, he said, would help to "drive out fear, superstition and magic from people's hearts, to put an end to destructive behaviours such as violence, infidelity, exploitation, alcohol and drug abuse, evils which imprison and take away the happiness of so many of our brothers and sisters." It was a reference to the tribal violence over land and other disputes that have long characterised the country's culture but have grown more lethal in recent

years. Francis arrived in Papua New Guinea to urge an end to the violence, including gender-based violence, and for a sense of civic responsibility to prevail. Francis had started the day with a Mass before an estimated 35,000 people at the stadium in the capital, Port Moresby. In his homily, Francis told the crowd that they may well feel themselves distant from both their faith and the institutional church, but that God was near to them.

"You who live on this large island in the Pacific Ocean may sometimes have thought of yourselves as a far away and distant land, situated at the edge of the world," Francis said. "Yet ... today the Lord wants to draw near to you, to break down distances, to let you know that you are at the centre of his heart and that each one of you is important to him."

Francis was elected pope largely on the strength of a speech he gave to his fellow cardinals in 2013 about the need for the church to go out to the "peripheries" where people need God most. In keeping with that philosophy, Francis has largely shunned foreign trips to European capitals, preferring

instead far-flung communities where Catholics are often a minority.

Vanimo, population 11,000, certainly fits the bill of being remote. It is located near Papua New Guinea's border with Indonesia, where the jungle meets the sea, and is for the most part only reachable by plane or boat.

Francis, history's first Latin American pope, has also had a special affinity for the work of Catholic missionaries. As a young Argentine Jesuit, he had hoped to serve as a missionary in Japan but was prevented from going because of his poor health. Now, as pope, he has often held up missionaries as models for the church.

The Rev. Martin Prado, an Argentine missionary of the Institute of the Incarnate Word religious order, was responsible for getting the pope to Vanimo.

As he waited for Francis to arrive Sunday, he recounted for reporters the "crazy" story of how he accompanied a group of Vanimo parishioners to Rome in 2019, and ended up scoring an audience with the pope after his parishioners insisted that they wanted to give him some gifts.

Imran's party stages rally, demand his release

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Jailed former premier Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Sunday held a public show, demanding his "immediate release" while slamming the government for its crackdown on the party as police fired tear gas to disperse the crowd.

The rally — postponed twice in the last two months — was held near Sangjani Cattle Market in the suburbs of Islamabad after the capital administration issued a no-objection certificate (NOC).

Thousands of Khan's supporters attended the rally, proving that the party's power base was intact despite several hurdles it faced, including the incarceration

of its 71-year-old founder. Khan was arrested on August 5 last year after his conviction in the Toshakhana corruption case filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan. Since then, he has been in jail in different cases. On Sunday, Khan completed 400 days in prison. The rally was scheduled to end at 7 pm (local time) as per the NOC. As soon as the deadline ended, the district administration directed the police to take action against the rally-goers for not complying with the NOC. The authorities stated that the organisers violated the rules and regulations by not concluding the gathering before the deadline. In response to the crackdown,

PTI workers began pelting stones at police, injuring many security personnel, including Senior Superintendent of Police Shoaib Khan.

"Strong turnout for PTI rally despite the state's tactics to limit numbers through roadblocks and containers, and despite the risk of violent crackdowns and arrests. Its size and popularity ensure its mobilization capabilities remain intact despite relentless attempts to curb it," Micheal Kugleman, a South Asian expert, said in a post on X.

Several PTI leaders addressed the gathering, demanding Khan's immediate release. The PTI leader in the National Assembly, Omar Ayub Khan, said that the party would not sit until Khan

was released.

"We are soldiers of Imran Khan and will not sit until he is set free," he said, adding that soon Khan would be with his supporters. He condemned physical hurdles put on roads to restrict the movement of participants and also announced that the PTI would now hold rallies across the country.

It was the first major rally by the PTI in Islamabad since the February 8 elections. The party wants to exert pressure on the government to release Khan, who languishes in jail despite the courts either acquitting him or giving him bail in all cases he was convicted.

Khan has repeatedly shown a willingness to hold talks with the

establishment while refusing to sit with the government. So far, all his tactics have failed to get any relief. Mass protest is an option, but his party has been facing pressure to avoid it.

Today's rally was a test for both the government and the PTI as it will help them gauge the ground power swell for Khan and fine-tune their policies and tactics in the coming days. Sources told PTI that the Islamabad administration put security on high alert this morning and blocked off multiple arteries leading to the capital city. Hospitals were put on alert by the administration. The Metro bus services were stopped in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune elected to serve second term

AP ■ ALGIERS (ALGERIA)

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the winner of Algeria's presidential election, granting him another term leading the gas-rich North African nation five years after pro-democracy protests led to the ouster of his predecessor.

In a result that surprised few observers internationally or in Algeria, the country's independent election authority on Sunday announced that Tebboune had won 94 per cent of the vote, far outpacing his challengers Islamiste Abdelali Hassani Cherif, who won 3 per



cent and socialist Youcef Aouchiche, who won 2.1 per cent.

Election officials reported less than six million of the country's 24 million voters had turned out to vote on Saturday, perpetuating the low voter turnout rates that marred Tebboune's first term and raised questions about his popular support.

Algeria is Africa's largest country by area and, with almost 45 million people, it's the continent's second most populous after South Africa to hold presidential elections in 2024 — a year in which more than 50 elections are being held worldwide, encompassing more than half the world's population. Throughout the campaign, activists and international organizations, including Amnesty International, rallied against the campaign season's repressive atmosphere and the harassment and prosecutions of those involved in opposition parties, media organisations and civil society groups.

Reliance, TCS lead market value slump

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms got eroded by Rs 2,01,699.77 crore last week, with Reliance Industries and Tata Consultancy Services emerging as the biggest laggards, in line with weak trends in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark dropped 1,181.84 points, or 1.43 per cent. The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled Rs 60,824.68 crore to Rs 19,82,282.42 crore. The valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) slumped Rs 34,136.66 crore to Rs 16,12,762.51 crore. State Bank of India's valuation dropped Rs 29,495.84 crore to Rs 6,98,440.13 crore and that of Bharti Airtel diminished Rs 28,379.54 crore to Rs 8,76,207.58 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Infosys tanked Rs 17,061.44 crore to Rs 7,89,819.06 crore and that of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)



eroded by Rs 16,381.74 crore to Rs 6,57,009.14 crore. ICICI Bank's mcap declined Rs 15,169.76 crore to Rs 8,51,204.65 crore and that of ITC was down Rs 250.11 crore to Rs 6,27,337.65 crore.

However, Hindustan Unilever added Rs 14,179.78 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 6,66,919.73 crore. The mcap of HDFC Bank climbed Rs 3,735.35 crore to Rs 12,47,941.78 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most-valued domestic firm followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, LIC, and ITC.

IPO market booms with 13 upcoming offerings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The IPO market will be bustling next week, with four companies, including Bajaj Housing Finance, set to launch their initial share-sale to raise a total of Rs 8,390 crore. Besides these four main-board IPOs, nine SMEs are preparing to debut with their maiden public issues next week, targeting to collect Rs 254 crore. Together, these 13 firms are looking to raise Rs 8,644 crore through IPO. Munish Aggarwal, Managing Director Head - Equity Capital Markets, Equirus, expects the next two weeks to be hectic in terms of issuance activity in IPO markets. "While this seems to indicate that the markets are overheating, we believe that this is more symptomatic of the attempt by most issuers who have valid Sebi observations and decent traction with investors to try and utilize their financials for Fiscal 2024 to launch IPOs," he said. According to Sebi, financial data in the Red Herring



Prospectus (RHP) must be less than six months old at the time of the IPO. Therefore, September is the last month when companies can use their FY24 financials to launch IPOs, he added. The four main-board IPOs include that of Bajaj Housing Finance, which is expected to mobilise around Rs 6,560 crore, P N Gadgil Jewellers (Rs 1,100 crore), Kross Ltd (Rs 500 crore), and Tolins Tyres (Rs 230 crore). Of these, the initial share-sales of Bajaj Housing Finance, Kross Ltd, and Tolins Tyres will open for subscription on September 9 and conclude on September 11, while that of P N Gadgil Jewellers will open on September 10 and close on

September 12. Additionally, Arkade Developers is expected to float IPO on September 16 and Western Carriers India may also soon come out with its public issue. So far this year, more than 50 main-board IPOs have been launched, along with one Follow-on Public Offering (FPO) by Vodafone Idea. The public issue of Shree Tirupati Balajee Agro Trading Company is underway and IPOs of Baazar Style Retail and Gala Precision Engineering closed earlier this month. Before that, IPOs of 10 firms, including Ola Electric Mobility and Brainbees Solutions Ltd, the parent firm of online e-commerce

platform FirstCry, were concluded in August. Apart from the main-board, SMEs launching their IPOs next week are -- Aditya Ultra Steel, Shubhshree Biofuels Energy, Share Samadhan, Gajanand International, SPP Polymers, Trafiksol IT'S Technologies, Excellent Wires and Packaging, Innomet Advanced Materials, and Envirotech Systems. These companies are aspiring to mobilise between Rs 12-45 crore each through public issue. The IPOs for Aditya Ultra Steel, Shubhshree Biofuels Energy, Share Samadhan, and Gajanand International will begin on September 9; SPP Polymers and Trafiksol IT'S Technologies on September 10; Excellent Wires and Packaging and Innomet Advanced Materials on September 11; and Envirotech Systems on September 13. Recently, IPOs have garnered significant subscription levels. In August, main-board IPOs were subscribed on an average over 75 times, while the year-to-date average for 2024 is 66 times.

GST Council to deliberate on insurance premium, online gaming taxation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The GST Council on Monday is expected to deliberate on a host of issues, including taxation of insurance premium, GoM's suggestions on rate rationalisation, and a status report on online gaming, sources said. Sources said the fitment committee, comprising Centre and state tax officials, will present a report on GST levied on life, health and reinsurance premiums and the revenue implications. The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state ministers, will decide on whether to reduce the tax burden on health insurance from the current 18 per cent or exempt certain categories of individuals, like senior citizens. The deliberations will also happen with regard to the goods and services tax (GST) cut on life insurance

premium. In 2023-24, the Centre and states collected Rs 8,262.94 crore through GST on health insurance premium, while Rs 1,484.36 crore was collected on account of GST on health reinsurance premium. The issue of taxation on insurance premium figured in Parliament discussions with opposition members demanding that health and life insurance premiums be exempt from GST. Even Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari wrote to Sitharaman on the issue. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her reply to discussion on the Finance Bill had said 75 per cent of the GST collected goes to states and opposition members should ask their state finance ministers to bring the proposal at the GST Council. West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya had raised the issue in the meeting of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation

last month and the matter was referred to the fitment committee for further data analysis. The GoM had opined against any tinkering of four-tier GST slab of 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent for the time being. The panel, however, had asked the fitment committee to look into any scope for rationalisation of rates of goods and services. With regard to online gaming, Centre and state tax officers will present a "status report" before the GST Council. The report would include GST revenue collection from the online gaming sector before and after October 1, 2023. From October 1, 2023, entry-level bets placed on online gaming platforms and casinos were subject to 28 per cent GST. Prior to that, many online gaming companies were not paying 28 per cent GST, arguing that there were differential tax rates for games of skill and games of chance. The GST Council in its



meeting in August 2023 had clarified that online gaming platforms were required to pay 28 per cent tax and subsequently Central GST law was amended to make the taxation provision clear. Offshore gaming platforms were also mandated to

register with GST authorities and pay taxes, failing which the government would block those sites. The council had then decided that the taxation on online gaming sector would be reviewed after six months of its implementation.

Sources said the Council would deliberate on the status of taxation on the sector and any change in tax rates is unlikely. Besides, the Council is likely to be apprised about the ongoing drive against fake registration, the success of the

drive and action taken against such entities. The total amount of suspected GST evasion would also be presented before the Council. The drive, from August 16, 2024, to October 15, 2024, is aimed at detecting suspicious/fake GSTINs and to conduct requisite verification and further remedial action to weed out these fake drivers. In the first drive between May 16, 2023 to July 15, 2023, against fake registration, 21,791 entities (11,392 pertaining to state tax jurisdiction and 10,399 pertaining to CBIC jurisdiction) having GST registration were discovered to be non-existent. An amount of Rs 24,010 crore (state - Rs 8,805 crore + Centre - Rs 15,205 crore) of suspected tax evasion was detected during the special drive. Also, the Council would approve notifications, including that of the amnesty

scheme, announced in the last council meeting. The various amendments to GST law decided by the council in its previous meeting on June 22 were passed by Parliament last month via Finance Act, 2024. The council in June meeting took a host of taxpayer-friendly measures, including waiver of interest and penalty for demand notices issued in the first three years of GST -- 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 -- if the full tax demanded is paid by March 31, 2025. To reduce litigation, a monetary limit for tax officers, to file appeals before the GST Appellate Tribunal, the High Court and the Supreme Court was fixed at Rs 20 lakh, Rs 1 crore and Rs 2 crore, respectively, by the Council. It also recommended a reduction of the quantum of pre-deposit required to be paid by taxpayers for filing of appeals under goods and services tax (GST).

Glenmark forecasts strong growth for domestic formulations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The drug formulations market in India is expected to grow at a CAGR of 9-10 per cent over the next decade with Jan Aushadhi outlets anticipated to emerge as a much stronger player in the country, according to Glenmark Pharmaceuticals. The domestic formulations market is estimated to be at Rs 2 lakh crore, with a growth rate of 11 per cent over the past two decades. "It is projected that the domestic formulations market will maintain a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9-10 per cent over the next decade," the Mumbai-based drug maker said in its Annual Report for 2023-24. As the Trade Generics and Jan Aushadhi channels expand, it is anticipated that these channels could collectively contribute 30 per cent to the market volume in ten years, it

stated. The Jan Aushadhi initiative aims to enhance access to cost-effective, unbranded generics by scaling up to 25,000 franchise pharmacies by 2026, it said. "It is estimated that Jan Aushadhi procurement could account for 3-5 per cent of the market share by volume and around Rs 40-50 billion (Rs 4,000-5,000 crore) in value over the next decade," it added. Glenmark stated that despite the increasing influence of Trade Generics and Jan Aushadhi, branded generics are expected to remain dominant, comprising 65-70 per cent of the market by value and anticipated to grow at a CAGR of over 8 per cent during this period. There are more than 10,000 functional Jan Aushadhi Kendras across the country. The government has set a target to open 25,000 such outlets across the country by



March 2026. The product basket of PMBJP (Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana) comprises 1,963 medicines and 293 surgical devices covering all major therapeutic groups. The company noted that facing challenges in competing with the robust sales and marketing strategies

of domestic firms, coupled with lower price realisations compared to their home markets, most multinational corporations have gradually scaled back their operations in the Indian market. Informing its shareholders, the company said it has 52 product applications pending for approval in North

America. As on March 31, 2024, it has 193 generic products authorised for distribution in the US market. "Our company currently has 52 applications pending in various stages of the approval process with the US FDA, of which 21 are Paragraph IV applications," it stated. In Europe, the company is awaiting approval of four respiratory products which were filed in Q4 FY 2023. "We will continue to leverage key growth drivers such as sustained growth in base business, continued market share gains in the key branded respiratory products, new launches in the respiratory segment and venturing into untapped markets," it said. With a view to driving further market expansion, the company has already established presence in the Italian market and will be further widening reach across the region in the upcoming quarters, it added.

Gujarat targets 48 MW solar rooftops on govt buildings

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Solar rooftop systems of 48 MW will be installed on various government buildings in Gujarat in the current financial year for which Rs 177 crore have been allocated, the state government said on Sunday. To tap into Gujarat's solar energy potential, the state Climate Change Department is actively installing such systems on government buildings, it said. "By March 2024, a total of 3,023 solar rooftop systems, generating a combined capacity of 56.8 MW, have been set up across various government departments in the state," the government said in a release. "To advance this initiative, a 48 MW solar rooftop system will be installed on government buildings throughout the state



this year. The state government has allocated Rs 177.4 crore to support the project," it said. In 2023-24, Gujarat generated a total of 24,765.3 million units (MU) of renewable energy, including 9,637 MU from solar, 14,201 MU from wind, 885.325 MU from hydro, 69 MU from small hydro, and 42 MU from biomass and bagasse, it said. The state's vast solar potential has been

effectively utilised through the establishment of solar parks and the deployment of rooftop solar installations for households. Projects such as Charanka Solar Park have positioned Gujarat as a leader in solar energy generation in India," the government said. Coastal wind farms have also played a crucial role in enhancing the state's renewable energy capacity, it said.

DICGC introduces Daava Sookhak for depositors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) has launched an online tool Daava Sookhak for depositors to track their claim status. The DICGC's mandate since its inception has been the reimbursement of insured amounts to depositors of failed banks. Daava Sookhak, a user-friendly online tool, is part of DICGC's ongoing commitment to improving the services provided for depositors. "Depositors can now track the status of their claims by entering their claims by entering their mobile number (registered with their bank) on the DICGC website," said DICGC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).



To begin with, depositors can view the status of their claims for banks placed under All Inclusive Directions (AID) post-April 01, 2024. The corporation ensures that all categories of deposits with banks except institutional deposits. The deposit insurance coverage limit has been enhanced six times since

1962, from Rs 1,500 per depositor held in the same right and same capacity at all the branches of the insured bank to Rs 5,00,000 on February 04, 2020. At present, 97.8 per cent of the total deposit accounts are fully protected. Of the remaining 2.2 per cent of accounts, deposits are insured up to the

limit of Rs 5 lakh. In terms of value, 43.1 per cent of the deposits were insured as of March 2024. In the case of liquidated banks and banks under the Reserve Bank's All-Inclusive Directions (AIDs), the DICGC settled claims amounting to Rs 1,432 crore during 2023-24. During the year, it received repayments of Rs 900.73 crore, of which Rs 760.83 crore was from liquidated/transferee banks and Rs 139.90 crore from banks under AID. All banks operating in India are registered with the corporation for deposit insurance. The number of banks registered with DICGC was 1,997 as of March 31, 2024, of which 140 were commercial banks and 1,857 were cooperative banks.

App-centric Gen Z reshaping consumer landscape

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The digitally-native, app-first Gen Z cohort is assuming the centre stage in India's consumer markets by scripting "big shifts" in consumption trends, including the rise of quick commerce delivery and direct-to-consumer brands, according to a report by Bernstein. Brands are seeking a deeper connection with this digitally-native, app-first generation that swipes up for practically everything from social media to ride-hailing and food delivery. Indian Gen Zs are the world's largest, the report said about the cohort born into a digital age, that shops, works and eats online. Gen Z is the generation born between 1996 and 2010.

Indian Gen Zs make up 20 per cent of the world and about 27 per cent of India's population, it noted. Gen Zs have become the "Swipe Up" generation considering the amount of time they spend on social media. They swipe up for practically everything - social media, ride-hailing, and food delivery, according to Bernstein's report on 'India Internet'. Gen Zs are showing a preference for digital-first, new-age brands, it observed. "We see big shifts in consumption trends dominated by Gen Zs...Scale up of short-form content (Instagram, Youtube shorts)...Preference for quick commerce delivery, 15-20 minutes (Blinkit, Zepto)... The emergence of D2C brands...Discovering new

food choices through food delivery apps (Zomato, Swiggy)," the report said, adding this has led to brands building deeper connections with Gen Zs. Gen Zs have significant headroom in consumption, contributing to about 17 per cent of India's total consumption. "GenZ has been not only a 'mobile-first' generation but also an app-first 'Swipe Up' generation. Time on smartphones has gone up 60 per cent," according to Bernstein. Gen Z behaviour has helped scale up internet use cases driving monthly or daily active users (MAU/DAU) growth across app ecosystems. "D2C brands are scaling faster versus traditional FMCG (3-4 years vs 10 years) led by the

buying power of Gen Z customers. They have been able to target Gen Z customers through social media," the report said. India is the world's largest footprint for Meta across their app universe (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, FB messenger), it said, adding that quick commerce platforms like Blinkit and Zepto are enabling digital-first brands to reach Gen Z customers, rapidly driving growth. These broad trends are seen benefiting certain companies, which are digital-first and focus on large consumption areas. The report highlighted that consumption behaviour, preferences and adoption differ between the three primary consumer cohorts (Gen Zs, Millennials and Gen X).

WE DESERVE SAME RESPECT, SAYS NAVDEEP AFTER TURNING TAUNTS INTO TRIUMPH



PTI ■ PARIS

Navdeep Singh, who suffered from dwarfism, endured not just the usual rigours of training but cruel taunts from onlookers while growing up in his village in Haryana's Panipat district. On Saturday, having turned those taunts into his biggest triumph on sport's grandest stage, the four feet four inches tall para athlete expressed his concerns with the indignities visited upon people whose bodies don't fit the usual moulds, and demanded "same respect" for them. The 23-year-old Indian javelin thrower won an unparalleled gold in the F41 classification at the Paris

Paralympic Games. "Humein bhi utna darja milna chahiye, maine bhi desh ka naam roshan kiya hai (We deserve the same respect, I too have brought glory to the country," Navdeep said, flashing his gold medal in a video shared by the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI). "My aim is to educate society that we also exist in this world and nobody should make fun of us, which is often the case. We also can make our country proud. "There were a lot of hurdles initially but I kept at it and strengthened myself, which led to good results. This is the biggest moment of my life, I feel proud to sign off with a gold medal," he added.

As the track and field competitions concluded at the Paris Games, Navdeep's golden throw in the final ensured the hallowed Stade de France echoed with the Indian national anthem. His personal best effort of 47.32m initially placed him in second position but it was upgraded to gold after the top finisher, Iran's Sadegh Beit Sayah, was disqualified for repeatedly displaying an objectionable flag. It was a defining moment for Navdeep who silenced all his doubters. Born prematurely in 2000, Navdeep's struggles began from the start. It wasn't until he was two years old that his parents realised their son had

dwarfism, setting the stage for a life filled with both struggles and triumphs. His father, Dalbir Singh, a national-level wrestler, kept motivating him and saw his son as an extension of his own aspirations. Navdeep started his athletic journey at the age of 10, dabbling in wrestling and sprinting before finding his true calling in javelin throw after being inspired by national icon Neeraj Chopra. "The first thing that comes to my mind is my dad (Dalbir Singh). I really miss my family now. Initially, it felt like a burden. I wondered why I couldn't enjoy life like others -- go to school and have fun. "But he (dad) kept me

motivated and on track. In this journey, I can't credit just one person. Champions are made with support, so my coach, my family, the government -- all contributed to our success, taking our medal tally beyond the expectation of 25, reaching 29 already."

EARLY SUCCESS
Navdeep made his international debut at the Asian Youth Para Games, clinching his first gold medal and setting the stage for a remarkable career. He continued to train tirelessly at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) centres in Gandhinagar and Bangalore, honing his skills and refining his technique.

At the Fazza International Championship in Dubai in 2021, he secured another gold medal. Amid high expectations, Navdeep also faced setbacks, finishing fourth at the Tokyo Paralympics three years ago and Asian Para Games last year. He finished with a bronze at the World Para Athletics Championship in 2024, and faced criticism. "I suffered a lot, so I wanted to achieve something for my country. My event was on the last day, but I came on the August 31, so I kept preserving myself. "I heard things like, 'He can't do this, he only performs well in India, but fails in competition'. I heard these from several quarters, but I just had to ignore all this. I just needed guidance and the right path. "I carried all my past baggage, the training, the hard work, the criticisms. I knew I had to unleash all of this on the September 7, and I did that and won." He also spent years away from home, training relentlessly with limited resources, often making do with basic meals and cooking alongside his roommate and friend Sumit Antil, who smashed his own record to win javelin gold in F64 category. "It has been a struggle for six years (2017-2024). I stayed away from my home, eating whatever was available. Sumit and I used to stay together; we are good friends and roommates. "Initially, we would eat outside but ended up with upset stomachs, so we started cooking for ourselves," Navdeep recalled. "I started with (a throw of) 11 metres initially and now reached 47; I never thought of it. The performance was better than what I expected. I will work harder from now on and will try to win more gold medals for India," he signed off.



France wins gold in blind football at Paralympics under Eiffel Tower lights

PARIS, (AP)

France defeated Argentina 3-2 on penalties under the lights of the Eiffel Tower for the gold medal in blind football on the penultimate day of the Paralympic Games. Frederic Villeroux scored the decisive spot kick to get the partisan home fans' party underway after the teams drew 1-1 in normal time on Saturday. "It felt like the script of a film," said Villeroux, who also made the breakthrough in the 12th minute when he rifled a shot inside the left post. Argentine star forward Maximiliano Espinillo replied from close range straight away after the French defenders failed to clear the ball. "You have to take the good and accept the bad, but we are still very proud," Espinillo said. France is the first team other than Brazil to win blind football at a Paralympics. Brazil won all five previous golds since it was first played at the 2004 Athens Games. The five-time defending champion, which had never lost a match before Thursday's penalty loss to Argentina in the semifinals, was consoling by the bronze medal after a 1-0 win over Colombia thanks to a fierce strike from Jefinho in the 24th minute.

Mexican wave during a break in play. It continued silently when play resumed - so the players would not be disturbed.

More golds for the US
On another solid day for United States athletes, Jake Williams scored 26 points as the men won the wheelchair basketball gold by beating Britain 73-69. That made it three from three for the U.S. In Games basketball after the men and women won thrilling finals against France at the Olympics last month, also at Bercy Arena. Fans at Bercy are used to hearing "The Star-Spangled Banner" and they will listen to it again if the women's team wins its final against the Netherlands on Sunday. Earlier, Germany's men won the bronze-medal match against Canada 75-62. Meanwhile, the U.S. Sitting volleyball team made it three golds straight by defeating China 3-1 in the women's final. The Americans have won every title since 2016 in Rio de Janeiro. The U.S. Equestrian team won three more medals in Paralympics dressage, and Fiona Howard and Rebecca Hart clinched their third gold medals of the Paris Games. The Paralympic debutant Howard won the Grade II individual freestyle and the veteran Hart won in Grade III. Earlier, teammate Kate Shoemaker claimed bronze in Grade IV. Riders compete in five grades, with Grade I for the most severely impaired riders. Howard and Hart previously won individual golds this week and helped the U.S. win the team event on Friday.

Long may it continue
American swimmer Jessica Long extended her mammoth Paralympics medal collection to 31 with gold in the S8 100-meter butterfly. She won in 1 minute, 10.59 seconds at La Défense Arena, finishing one second clear of Viktoriia Ishchiulova. Britain's Alice Tai was third. The 32-year-old Long also won the women's 400 freestyle on Wednesday. Her Paralympic career started when she was 12 and won three golds at the 2004 Athens Games. S8 is for swimmers with the absence of limbs. Long is a double amputee.

Jessica Pegula not quite ready to assess her run at the US Open after losing to Aryna Sabalenka

PTI ■ NEW YORK

At some point, Jessica Pegula will take stock of what she accomplished over the past month, including the run at the U.S. Open that led to her first Grand Slam final. And, in all likelihood, she will be pleased. Proud, even. That sort of perspective was difficult, though, in the immediate aftermath of a 7-5, 7-5 loss to Aryna Sabalenka at Flushing Meadows on Saturday night with the championship on the line. "Everyone is like, Congrats! Amazing tournament! I'm like, 'Eh, whatever,'" said Pegula, a 30-year-old American who had never before been past the

quarterfinals at a major. "I think maybe once I decompress a little bit, I'm sure I will be a little bit more appreciative and see all of that." She will rise from No. 6 to No. 3 in the WTA rankings on Monday, equaling her career high, after this post-Olympics stretch on North American hard courts that included a title in Toronto and runner-up finishes at both the Cincinnati Open and U.S. Open. In all, boosted by improvements to her serve and her movement, Pegula went 15-2 in that time - with both defeats coming against No. 2 Sabalenka. "For sure, I will take a lot of confidence from this - in maybe like a hour or two --



because ... I'm kind of annoyed. Not even annoyed losing the tournament; it's more just I was looking at it, like, I just wanted to win

the match," explained Pegula, whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres. "Now there's things that are

just in my head that I feel I should have done better and stuff like that. But I think that will pass in a little bit." She had been 0-6 in major

quarterfinals before beating No. 1 Iga Swiatek at that stage this time around. That was followed by a semifinal victory in which Pegula came back from what she called an "embarrassing" first set to beat 2023 French Open runner-up Karolina Muchova in three. Then Pegula showed more mettle by pushing back in each set against Sabalenka, getting to 5-all in each after trailing 5-2 in the first and 3-0 in the second. But in the end, she couldn't quite do enough to keep up with Sabalenka's power. "You're showing some amazing tennis," Sabalenka told Pegula during the trophy ceremony, "and I'm more than sure that, one day, you're going to get one.

India face Syria, aim for successive Intercontinental Cup titles

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Hosts India and Syria will go head to head in the winner-takes-it-all third and final game of the Intercontinental Cup trophy here on Monday. India, who began the competition with a goalless draw against Mauritius on Tuesday, are eyeing their second consecutive Intercontinental Cup triumph, and third overall. Syria beat Mauritius 2-0 on Friday, which means they hold a slight advantage heading into the final game as the Eagles of Qasoum require only a draw to claim the trophy. Syria have a long history of playing tournaments in India, but the title has always evaded them. The West Asians lost back-to-back Nehru Cup finals to India in 2007 and 2009 before finishing fourth in 2012. In their last trip to India in the 2019 Intercontinental Cup, Syria ended in third place. But for the Blue Tigers to deny them a first silverware on

the teams. "When you have time to work, the possibilities for success are more," Márquez explained in the pre-match press conference. Defender Jay Gupta concurred with his coach's words. "Obviously, it's a game where we have to fight for the cup, but we're just focused on how we adapt to what the coach wants as soon as possible." Having completed a week's training in Hyderabad, the 22-year-old shared that the mood in the dressing room is positive after the arrival of Márquez at the helm. "I think a lot of players have already been under coach Manolo for a longer time (in the clubs), so they would know how to adapt to him. But I just wanted to say the atmosphere in the dressing room is really, really positive," said Gupta. Márquez shared that fitness-wise, there's still work to do for the players since the season is only getting started, but overall, he and his coaching staff are happy with the boys'

attitude in the training ground. "When you are in the pre-season, you are not in your best moment physically. In fact, some players finished the first game very tired. And this is normal. One good thing is that all 25 players are available for tomorrow. "We are satisfied with how they are working. We are very happy with the attitude they have in every training session," said Márquez. Like India, Syria are also in



their new era under new head coach José Lana. The Spaniard was satisfied with their opening-game display against Mauritius as goals from Mustafa Abdullatif and Mahmoud Al-Mawas sealed a 2-0 win. He hopes to keep progressing and do even better against India. "I think India are a great team. I like the way they play with this coach. They try to move the ball fast. I think it will be a difficult match for us. And our

only objective for tomorrow is to be better than our previous match," said Lana. Sharing more thoughts on the Indian team, the Syrian coach said, "I think they have good organisation. They know how to play when they don't have the ball. They try to press high. And when they have the ball, they try to play faster and move the ball from side to side." New England era off to winning start as Rice and Grealish come back to haunt Ireland Dublin, Sep 8 (AP) After the pain of the European Championship, England kicked off a new era by beating Ireland 2-0 here. Some 55 days since the defeat to Spain in the Euros final, England began the UEFA Nations League under a new regime following the departure of Gareth Southgate. Interim coach Lee Carseley made an impressive start at Aviva Stadium after first half goals from Declan Rice and Jack Grealish.

The identity of those scorers would have been especially painful for the Irish fans who jeered Rice and Grealish for their decision to switch to England after representing Ireland. Carseley, who has stepped up from coaching England's European champion under-21s, also represented Ireland as a player. "We've shown that we've got real talent. We can be really pleased with the clean sheet as well," he said. Rice, who made three appearances for Ireland, fired England ahead in the 11th minute. Grealish represented Ireland at youth level up to the U21s and doubled the lead at the end of a slick passing move. Grealish was a surprise omission from Southgate's Euro 2024 squad. "There's no better feeling than playing for England, especially in games like this," the winger said. "Honestly, it was probably one of the worst summers of my life because you can't not see

everything that's happening in front of you." New Ireland coach Heimir Hallgrímsson hoped to cause another upset against England after he was co-manager for Iceland's victory over the Three Lions at Euro 2016. But even though England failed to build on its first half superiority after the break, it was a routine win for Carseley's first game in charge. England is behind leader Greece on goal difference in Group B2. Greece beat Finland 3-0 with two goals from Fotis Ioannidis. After some positive performances at the Euros - following it group stage elimination from the 2022 World Cup - the Germans kept that feelgood feeling going by routing Hungary 5-0 in Dusseldorf. Niclas Füllkrug struck in the first half before Germany went on a scoring spree after the break with goals from Jamal Musiala, Florian Wirtz, Aleksandar Pavlovic and Kai Havertz.

NEW ZEALAND SEEKS TO EXPLOIT AFGHANISTAN'S RED-BALL INEXPERIENCE IN TEST

PTI ■ GREATER NOIDA

New Zealand will aim to exploit Afghanistan's relative inexperience in red-ball cricket, in the one-off Test starting here from Monday, and gather momentum ahead of their upcoming World Test Championship challenges in the subcontinent. New Zealand's first-ever Test against Afghanistan will kick off a challenging couple of months for the Black Caps who play six long-format matches on the bounce in the subcontinent, something they haven't done in 40 years. With their underwhelming subcontinent record in mind (40 losses in 90 matches), New Zealand would want to hit the straps straightaway. Senior batter Kane Williamson has emphasised on the need to adapt to conditions and with three games under their belt, they would be well prepared for the marquee series against India next month. Spin is expected to dominate proceedings and New Zealand have come well prepared with five slow bowling options.

Left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel, who returns to India for the first time since his 10-wicket haul in Mumbai in 2021, is expected to make the playing XI. Rachin Ravindra, who has been sweating it out in CSK High Performance Centre in Chennai, is expected to be handy with bat and ball while all-rounders Glenn Phillips, Mitchell Santner and Michael Bracewell are vying to fill the remaining spinners' spots. Matt Henry is New Zealand's best seamer at the moment but captain Tim Southee's dip in Test form will be a concern. Will O'Rourke, or express pacer Ben Sears may be given a go. New Zealand will need to shake off the rust as they haven't played Test cricket since early March and the tenacious Afghanistan side is poised to pose a strong challenge. For Afghanistan, who obtained Test status in 2017, this will be only their 10th ever outing in the traditional format. They head to the clash having



lost their last three Tests against Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Ireland. But in their brief Test journey they have managed to beat Ireland, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe. Afghanistan have made significant strides in white-ball cricket, but some players will now need to swiftly make the transition from T20 to Test format. The disparity in Test experience between Afghanistan and New Zealand is substantial, but Hashmatullah Shahidi and his team will look to gain from familiarity with the Shahid Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida, where they have previously played five ODIs and six T20Is. Talismanic all-rounder Rashid Khan is not there to bowl his menacing leg-breaks, which is a huge blow for them, while T20 regulars Rahamnullah Gurbaz, Mohammad Nabi, Fazallaq Farooqi, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad and Naveen-ul-Haq are also not available. Ibrahim Zadran, Rahmat Shah and skipper Shahidi, who aver-

ages 44.09 in Tests, will burden the batting responsibilities. Seam-bowling all-rounder Azmatullah Omarzai is likely to make his Test debut, while Zia-ur-Rehman, Zahir Khan, Khalil Ahmed, Qais Ahmad, Shahidullah Kamal and Bahir Shah are the spin options. With rain and thunderstorms forecast throughout the week, the match is likely to be affected. Teams (from): Afghanistan: Hashmatullah Shahidi (c), Ibrahim Zadran, Rahmat Shah, Abdul Malik, Riaz Hassan, Afsar Zazai (wk), Ikram Alikhil (wk), Bahir Shah, Shahidullah Kamal, Azmatullah Omarzai, Shams Ur Rahman, Zia-ur-Rehman, Zahir Khan, Qais Ahmad, Khalil Ahmad and Nijat Masood. New Zealand: Tim Southee (c), Tom Blundell (wk), Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Will O'Rourke, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Kane Williamson, Will Young.

Shahidi calls for more Test cricket, dedicated home venue for Afghanistan



"It's in the hands of the ACB and ICC. When it comes to Test cricket, some players are different from those who play in the leagues." Shahidi, who has a Test double century, feels a longer run of red ball fixtures will help the Afghans hone their skills in format. "If we get three-four match series at a stretch, it will be helpful for us as a side. If you look at our past, we would prepare only 10 days ahead of a Test match. "It's not easy to come to red-ball cricket, by just playing in the nets. Only if you play matches, will you get better at judging the ball." The game against New Zealand is historic as it will be the first time these two side clash in the longest format. "It's a good opportunity for us to play against New Zealand, given their rankings. Hopefully, the ACB will try harder to give us opportunities against bigger teams in the future." Their inexperience cost them a historic win against Sri Lanka earlier this year and Shahidi feels it could hurt them against a vastly experienced side like New Zealand. "It will be a lack of experience, but when it comes to taking challenges, we are a nation that does not take a step backward." We have talented players and we can do well in every department - some of our players have hundreds in this format. It's tough, but if we play to our strength, we can beat any team," he said.

PTI ■ GREATER NOIDA

Greater Noida, (PTI) Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi on Sunday called for more Test matches for his side and a dedicated home venue in India to improve training and gain a competitive edge over their opponents. Afghanistan cannot play in their home country due to ongoing security issues, instead they have hosted matches at three venues in India -- Greater Noida, Lucknow, Dehradun and the UAE. "India is our home, and when we host teams, other nations have played more cricket here," Shahidi said on the eve of the one-off Test against New Zealand. "Hopefully, we will get a good venue here in India and if we

restrict ourselves to one venue, it will be effective for us. Hopefully, the ACB and the BCCI will get us a good venue." "If you see our records in first-class, it's good because we play at our home ground. We know those conditions. Hopefully, in the future, there will be a time when the teams will travel to Afghanistan and our average will be higher," he added. Afghanistan have become a force to reckon with in the white-ball formats but since receiving the Test status in 2017, they have played just nine matches, most of them one-off fixtures. "In six years, nine games is not more. We are new in this format. We need more experience. If we get more chances on a regular basis, we will improve a lot.

Moeen Ali retires from international cricket



AP ■ LONDON

England all-rounder Moeen Ali has announced his retirement from international cricket after being overlooked for the upcoming white-ball series against Australia. The 37-year-old Ali said in an interview with British newspaper The Daily Mail that it was "time for the next generation." "It felt the time was right. I've done my part," Ali said. Ali played 68 Tests, 138 One-Day Internationals and 92 Twenty20 Internationals for England, winning the World Cup in both the shorter forms. He said he still feels like he can compete at the highest level, but was "trying to be realistic

about his international future. "I could hold on and try to play for England again, but I know in reality I won't," Ali told the Mail. Matthew Mott was fired as head coach of England's limited-overs teams last month after disappointing title defences in the ODI and T20 World Cups and the appetite for change continued with the removal from the squad of Ali and Jonny Bairstow - two senior players sharing over 400 caps. Moeen had been an influential vice-captain to Jos Buttler in recent years. England host Australia in an eight-game white-ball tour beginning on Wednesday with a T20 in Southampton.

Indian cricket powerful, talent comes from everywhere says Rahul Dravid

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The legendary Rahul Dravid on Sunday said that Indian cricket has evolved into an "extremely powerful" force, thanks to the growing talent pool that now extends to even the remotest corners of the country. Dravid, who masterminded India's triumph in the T20 World Cup, said a strong club cricket culture has a lot to do with bucking the old trend of city cricketers dominating the passage to the national team. "If you look at Indian cricket today, Indian cricket is extremely strong, it's extremely powerful. One of the big reasons for that is that talent comes from everywhere, from all over the country," said Dravid during the 50th year celebration of Mount Joy Cricket Club. "I think if you go back to the time of say GR Vishwanath or even when I was starting out my career, most of the talent came from the big cities or from few other states. "Even if they were talented boys in smaller places, they had to come to the big cities to play cricket. But today I think you see in Indian cricket that boys are coming from everywhere," he added. Dravid said it's getting reflected in the standards of domestic cricket in India. "You just look at the standard of the Ranji Trophy.



In the old days when you played in the South Zone, other than playing Hyderabad or Tamil Nadu, I think it is fair to say, without being disrespectful, that a lot of other teams you could take it not for granted but you could certainly take it a little bit more lightly. "I don't think there is any team in the South Zone today that you can walk in and say that you will comfortably beat," he added. "Hailing the club cricket structure in the country, particularly in Karnataka, Dravid said the system has allowed the sport to remain accessible to all. "We need clubs to be strong. We need cricket not to be concentrated in the hands of a few people. We need cricket to be egalitarian, we need it to be all over the place. "You cannot have talent or you cannot have facilities con-

centrated only in one or two places. To get the best out of talent, we need to ensure that young boys and girls are getting access to good infrastructure in every part," he noted. "The 51-year-old former Indian captain then briefly revisited his club career when he was young to underscore the need for that system to thrive. "After the practice, HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) would give us two eggs and one small glass of milk. I would always stay back for that glass of milk and those eggs. Not because I wanted the milk and eggs. "But because I wanted to sit and listen to the likes of BK Kumar or Nandan talking about cricket. And it used to be great fun to listen to them and learn so much from them," said Dravid.

Pacers shine as India B beat India A by 76 runs

PTI ■ BENGALURU

KL Rahul's gumption, which helped him pile a patient fifty, found no resonance among his colleagues as India B pacers led by Yash Dayal pushed India A to a 76-run defeat on the fourth and final day of their Duleep Trophy match here on Sunday. Chasing 275, India A were bundled out for 198 in their second innings as left-arm seamer Dayal (3/50), with able support from his colleagues Mukesh Kumar (2/50) and Navdeep Saini (2/41), led the India B attack. Rahul top-scored for 'A' with a 51. In the first session of the day, India B made 184 all out in their second essay to muster a handy overall lead of 274. The India A chase began on a shaky note as Mayank Agarwal departed in the second over itself, wafting Dayal away from his body to Nitish Kumar Reddy, who made a wonderful diving catch at second slip. That brought Riyan Parag to the middle and the right-hander followed the path set on Saturday by Rishabh Pant and Sarfaraz Khan. Parag took on the bowlers and pacer Mukesh bore the brunt of



his aggression, getting smoked for two sixes and the second maximum touched the roof of the Chinnaswamy Stadium over the mid-wicket region. Parag added 48 runs for the sec-

ond with a rather subdued Shubman Gill, who was dropped by Nitish Reddy at slips off Mukesh on 16, and 31 came off the former's bat in just 18 balls. But the approach was tough to

sustain considering the kind of assistance the bowlers were getting here, and soon his massive hoick off Dayal took an edge off Parag's bat en route to stumper Rishabh Pant.

Gill (21) departed soon, falling to Saini for the second time in the match and on this occasion, he edged the pacer to Pant. Dhruv Jurel poked Dayal well outside off-stump to Yashasvi

Jaiswal at gully, as India batters perished to a combination of bowlers' persistence on that channel and their own carelessness. They took the lunch at a queasy

76 for four that soon transpired into 99 for six after the dismissal of Shivam Dube and Tanush Kotian, an hour into the lunch. However, Rahul batted out 180 minutes 121 balls and milked 42 runs for the seventh wicket with Kuldeep Yadav to delay the inevitable. The standout shot in an otherwise dour innings was a whistling on drive off Mukesh that fetched him a boundary. But Mukesh had his revenge soon when Rahul feathered a cut off him to Pant, who completed five catches in this innings, soon after reaching his fifty with a single off Saini. It effectively signalled the end of the road for India A, though Akash Deep (43, 42b, 3x4, 4x6) gave a few moments of fun with a cavalier innings. But beyond the entertainment value, it always was a case of when more than if. Earlier, resuming from their overnight score of 150 for six India B could only 34 runs more to the total before getting bundled out. Pacer Akash, whom Sarfaraz Khan carted around for five fours in a row the previous day, found his mojo to add the scalps of Washington Sundar and Saini to complete a five-wicket haul (5/56).

India to bid for 2030 Youth Olympics: Minister Mandaviya

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday said India is set to bid for the 2030 Youth Olympics, a precursor to the country's ambition to host the 2036 Olympics. The 2030 Youth Olympics will be the fifth edition of the international event. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi we are going to bid for the 2030 Youth Olympics but our focus remain on hosting the 2036 Olympics," Mandaviya said on the sidelines of the Olympic Council of Asia's (OCA) 44th General Assembly here. "Under Modiji's leadership we have been able to host multiple international sporting events, including cricket World Cups, football U-17 World Cup," BJP president JP Nadda, who was the chief guest for the event, added. "India will fight against Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Thailand, Mongolia, Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina to get the hosting rights for the 2030 Youth Olympics.

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