



OPINION 6 DEBUNKING CONSPIRACY THEORIES WITH AI

WORLD 9 TALIBAN SUSPENDS AF POLIO VAX DRIVES

MONEY 10 PIYUSH GOYAL LAUNCHES BHASKAR

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

Late City Vol.160 Issue 251 \*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

Established 1864



# the pioneer



HARMANPREET'S TWIN STRIKE IN 4-1 VICTORY OVER KOREA 12 SPORTS

www.dailypioneer.com

## MODI'S 100 DAYS PROJECTS PUSH HISTORIC



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Projects worth over ₹15 lakh crores have been launched in the first 100 days of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government for a historic third term. The projects focussed on infrastructure, farmers, middle class, women, and minorities, among others, according to a Government statement. Incidentally, the will Government will complete first 100 days on Tuesday coinciding with Prime Minister Modi's birthday.

The central Government has approved projects worth ₹3 lakh crore in 100 days with primary focus on roads, railways, ports and airways, the statement said. This includes approval of eight national high-speed road corridor projects spanning over 900 kilometres. It also includes approval of the Wadhawan Mega Port in Maharashtra at a cost of ₹76,200 crore, which will be among the top 10 ports in the world. The Government has also laid the foundation stone of Shinkun-La Tunnel, to connect Ladakh with Himachal Pradesh.

12 crore 33 lakh farmers," the statement added. Furthermore, the Minimum Support Price for Kharif crops for 2024-25 has been increased, which benefitted 12 crore farmers by approximately ₹2 lakh crore. In a relief to middle class, the NDA government announced no tax on income up to ₹7 lakh, helping salaried individuals save up to ₹17,500 in taxes, the Government statement said. "The standard deduction increased to ₹75,000 and the exemption limit for family pension was raised to ₹25,000. A comprehensive review of income tax rules is to be conducted within six months to make them concise, clear, and easy to understand," the statement added.

Continued on Page 8



File Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

## Kejriwal to meet LG today, likely to tender resignation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Arvind Kejriwal sent shockwaves across political circles saying that he would step down as the Chief Minister of Delhi, the AAP chief will meet Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena at 4.30 pm on Tuesday, during which he is likely to tender his resignation. Saxena has given him an appointment for a meeting at 4:30 pm on Tuesday. AAP had earlier said Kejriwal sought time for a meeting with the Lieutenant Governor. Regarding the final decision over the New Delhi CM, the AAP legislative party meeting will be held on Tuesday at CM's house. Meanwhile, the AAP's Political Affairs Committee (PAC) deliberated on the selection of the next chief ministerial candidate and the composition of the Delhi cabinet at Chief Minister's

residence. The committee also reviewed strategies for the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections, as the party aims to broaden its political presence in the neighbouring state. Kejriwal held one-on-one talks with leaders of the Public Affairs Committee of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for their feedback on who should be the next Chief Minister of the national capital. "During the meeting, he (Kejriwal) sought one on one feedback from each leader on his replacement. Tomorrow, the legislative party meeting is there and this discussion will go into the second round," Bharadwaj said after the meeting. Among those who attended the PAC meeting were Kejriwal, former deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Rajya Sabha MPs Sanjay Singh and Raghav Chaddha and five city cabinet Ministers.

Continued on Page 8

## Capital to combat vector borne diseases

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake of two deaths by dengue reportedly in the national Capital including a 54-year-old patient who died at Lok Nayak Hospital and another at Safdarjung Hospital, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has intensified efforts to combat the spread of vector borne diseases including spraying and fogging of more than 4.20 lakh houses with insecticides. The two deaths due to dengue include a 54-year-old patient who died at Lok Nayak Hospital and another at Safdarjung Hospital. According to data by the MCD, a total of 675 cases of dengue have been reported this year till September 10. A total of 967 cases of vector borne diseases including 260 cases of malaria and 32 cases of chikungunya have been reported in the same period. The maximum numbers of dengue cases were witnessed in the Najafgarh zone with 103 cases, followed by Shahdara North zone with 84 cases, South zone with 71 cases, Central zone with 67 cases, Karol Bagh zone with 60 cases, Rohini zone with 56 cases, Shahdara South zone with 50 cases, West zone with 45 cases, Narela zone with 42 cases, Civil Lines zone with 40 cases, and City SP zone with 33 cases. The lowest was reported from Keshav Puram zone with 24 cases. Amid a surge in cases of the vector-borne disease at several city hospitals in Delhi, the civic body is taking a multi-pronged approach with the officials visiting over 2.59 crore households, with 1,56,932 found to be breeding mosquito sites. "Breeding sites are destroyed on the spot, and homeowners are educated on health and hygiene practices," a senior MCD official said. He added that drains, water bodies, and surface water collections are sprayed weekly using manual and motorised sprayers and larvivoracious fishes have been introduced at 213 locations in clean water collections. "23 special drives have been conducted to cover vulnerable areas such as police stations, construction sites, parks, hospitals, schools,



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

Government offices, and DTC depots," he added. Additionally, MCD has also conducted special fogging operations in Kavad camps, Krishna Janmashtmi pandals, temples, and Lal Quila. The civic body also mentioned that low lying areas along railway tracks are being sprayed by power spray tankers mounted on railway wagons. Chaired by the MCD's Mayor Shelly Oberoi and Commissioner Ashwani Kumar, the civic body has conducted 28 Inter-Sectoral Coordination Committee meetings under the chairmanship of the Mayor and Commissioner at headquarters and zonal levels, involving major stakeholders such as Delhi Development Authority (DDA), Delhi Jal Board (DJB), Delhi Police, Public Works Department (PWD), Central Public Works Department (CPWD), Horticulture, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Education, and Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) departments to ensure effective coordination and implementation of control measures. "Nodal Teachers of all schools have been trained for prevention of mosquito breeding in schools. Fogging and focal spray operations will be conducted at public gatherings and religious festivals to control adult mosquito populations," he said, adding that outdoor fogging operations will be intensified in September-October, depending on mosquito density and disease situation and legal notices, challans, and administrative charges will be levied on repeated offenders.

Continued on Page 8



## Didi, doctors meet positive

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With the crucial two-and-a-half-hour meeting between Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the agitating junior doctors ending on a "positive note" the State Government is likely to announce "some very important decisions" pertaining to the doctors' demands on Tuesday, sources said.

The agitating doctors had been demanding justice for the lady doctor of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital who was raped and murdered in the morning of August 8. Though the doctors had not come out of the meeting venue as minutes were still being written, sources privy to the proceedings said that the doctors had "vividly communicated to the Chief Minister" their demand including administrative actions against the erring officials of the Health Department including the Health Secretary and two directors of Health apart from Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal.

The Government side told the doctors that as certain decisions including those on administrative actions against the senior officials could be taken only after certain procedures, such issues could be addressed subsequently. On whether the doctors who had been on "cease work" would join duty right away was



A delegation of junior doctors moves to board a bus from their dharna site near Swasthya Bhawan for a meeting with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at her Kallighat residence, in Kolkata, West Bengal, Monday PTI

not made clear as the sources from the doctors' side said that the delegation would speak to the media after a general body meeting that would take place around midnight at the sit-in site near Swasthya Bhavan Government. They however, said the "meeting has taken place in a very cordial atmosphere and both the sides were eager to cooperate." Earlier, the junior doctors on Monday evening reached Chief Minister's residence. This was hours after the Mamata Banerjee Government tried for "one last time" to break the 36-day impasse and offered a "constructive dialogue." The medics had been asking for punishment for those responsible for the August 9 felony and "destruction" of evidence; departmental action against arrested former RG Kar

principal Sandip Ghosh; resignation of Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal and Health Secretary NS Nigam; improved security for healthcare workers; and eradication of the 'threat culture' in Government hospitals allegedly perpetrated by a political lobby that indulges in mass cheating, extraction, victimisation, smuggling of bodies, corruption etc. In the meeting which was a prolonged one "security related issues in the State's medical colleges were being discussed in the initial phase," sources said. "It is still early days and will take a good time to end as the discussions have just started... there are many points and counterpoints that were raised and heard," said an official.

Continued on Page 8

## INDI alliance divided on Article 370, says HM

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Launching a frontal attack on the pre-poll alliance partners, Congress and the National Conference on the last day of campaigning in Kishtwar, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday appealed to the voters in the region to punish these parties by voting in favour of the BJP as they (Congress-National Conference) have always "nurtured and nourished" terrorism. Shah vowed to "bury terrorism deep into the earth so that it would not be able to rear its head again." Addressing three back-to-back election rallies in the region Shah said there is a clear fight between the Congress-National Conference alliance and the BJP — one wanting to bring back Article 370, and the other committed to stopping it. Shah reiterated the Constitution's Article 370, which gave special status to J and K, is history and will never come back. The Home Minister also paid tributes to all those who have been killed in terror-related incidents, and specially referred to the deaths of BJP leaders Anil Parihar, Aji Parihar and RSS leader



Union Home Minister Amit Shah speaks during a public meeting ahead of J&K Assembly elections, in Kishtwar district, Jammu & Kashmir, Monday PTI

Chanderkant Sharma. BJP has fielded former Minister Sunil Sharma from Padder-Nagseni and Shagun Parihar, daughter of Aji Parihar, from Kishtwar assembly constituency. Reminding the voters about the promises made by the alliance partners in their election speeches and party manifestos, the Union Home Minister emphasised, "NC and Congress say that if they come to power, they will bring back Article 370. Modi revoked Article 370 and it has become history. It has no place in the Indian Constitution," he added. Shah said they will also not allow the NC-Congress to snatch reservations of Gujjars and Paharis.

constitution, one Prime Minister and one flag that is our beloved tricolour." Campaigning for the BJP candidates, Shah said attempts were being made to bring back the 1990s-like situation and spread terrorism. "NC and Congress have made promises that their Government will release terrorists. But this is Narendra Modi's Government and none has the guts to spread terrorism." Shah also targeted NC chief Farooq Abdullah and asked him where he was when Kishtwar was bleeding from terror attacks. "He should be asked if he comes here. But I know where he was. He was enjoying summer vacation in London, Shah said.

He said the BJP Government has resolved to wipe out terrorism and initiated some measures. "We have strengthened village defence guards and special police officers. We have replaced their obsolete rifles and they are being equipped with self-loading rifles...we are raising a security grid. Terrorists may come but they will be wiped out." He claimed that NC and Congress had said if they came to power, they would reconsider reservation to Paharis and Gujjars. "Firstly, the reservation would not have been possible, had Article 370 stayed here. Secondly, I am watching the Kashmir situation. Let me tell you that neither Farooq Abdullah nor Rahul Gandhi is going to form the Government," he said. Shah referred to Maharaja Hari Singh, Jammu and Kashmir's last king, and said he was banished from his State. "These parties (NC and Congress) not only insulted Maharaja Hari but also did not allow him to return home. His ashes came back. These parties, who insulted Maharaja Hari Singh, are responsible for the exodus of Pandits, denied rights to women and reservation to marginalised sections...will you bring them back?" he asked.

## MLA to reward ₹11 lakh to cut tongue of Rahul Gandhi

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a shocking development that has unleashed a massive controversy in Maharashtra, an MLA belonging to the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena on Monday announced a bounty of Rs 11 lakh to anyone who chops the tongue of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over the latter's purported comments on reservations. In a video clip that has gone viral landing the BJP-led MahaYuti Government in an embarrassing situation, Shiv Sena (Shinde) MLA Sanjay Gaikwad said: "While on foreign soil, Rahul Gandhi said that he wants to end reservations in India. This has exposed the Congress' true face. Gandhi's statement reveals his party's mindset that is inherently opposed to reservations. I will reward anyone who cuts off Rahul Gandhi's tongue with Rs 11 lakh."

"In the Lok Sabha polls, they (the Congress) secured votes by spreading lies that the Constitution is in danger...BJP will change the Constitution and today in the United States he said that his party will put an end to reservations given by late Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar," Gaikwad, an MLA from Buldhana said. As was expected, the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) turned up the heat on Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnis of the BJP and Aji Pawar of the NCP. Having found themselves on the defensive, Shinde, Fadnis and Aji Pawar had distanced themselves from Gaikwad's statement.

Continued on Page 8

## EID-E-MILAD-UN-NABI



Muslims take part in an Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi procession in Prayagraj on Monday. PTI

## Will never surrender: Trump after assassination attempt

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Hours after another failed attempt on his life, former US President Donald Trump on Monday said he will never surrender and never stop fighting for Americans. The Republican presidential candidate also thanked the US Secret Service and other law enforcement officials for their "outstanding" job after what the FBI said was an apparent assassination attempt while playing golf on one of his golf courses in Florida's West Palm Beach. The former President remained unharmed in the latest assassination bid about two months after another attempt on his life at a Pennsylvania rally. "I am Donald J. Trump. FEAR NOT! I am safe and well, and no one was hurt. Thank God!", the Republican presidential candidate said on his campaign website. "There are people in this world who will do whatever it takes to stop us. I will not stop fighting for you. I will Never Surrender! I will always love you for supporting me. Through our UNITY we will Make America Great Again! I will Never Surrender!" Trump said. "THE JOB DONE WAS ABSOLUTELY



OUTSTANDING," the former President said in a post on Truth Social. "I would like to thank everyone for your concern and well wishes — It was certainly an interesting day! Most importantly, I want to thank the US Secret Service, Sheriff Ric Bradshaw and his Office of brave and dedicated patriots, and all of the law enforcement, for the incredible job done today at Trump International in keeping me, as the 45th President of the United States, and the Republican nominee in the upcoming presidential election, SAFE," Trump said.

Local authorities said the US Secret Service agents protecting Trump fired at a man pointing an AK-style rifle with a scope while the former President was golfing with donor Steve Witkoff when shots were fired. CNN quoted a source familiar with the development as saying. President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris were briefed and updated on the investigation. Harris, the Democratic presidential candidate and Trump's rival in the upcoming election, in a statement, said "violence has no place in America." "I have been briefed on reports of gunshots fired near former President Trump and his property in Florida, and I am glad he is safe. Violence has no place in America," Harris said on X. Biden echoed that thought in his statement, adding that he had directed his team to ensure the Secret Service "has every resource, capability and protective measure necessary to ensure the former President's continued safety." "As I have said many times, there is no place for political violence or any violence ever in our country," Biden said on X, adding that he was "relieved the former President is unharmed."

67TH CONVOCATION OF UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW

# Contribute to Viksit Bharat: Govt to students

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Governor Anandiben Patel on Monday urged students to contribute to the development of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) and tackle the nation's pressing challenges. Speaking at the 67th convocation of Lucknow University, she emphasised the importance of applying their academic knowledge to real-world problems. Patel congratulated the graduating students, highlighting this pivotal moment as a transition from theoretical learning to practical application. "It is your moral responsibility to give back to society positively and contribute to the development of Viksit Bharat by addressing issues such as water conservation, disaster management, sustainable development, and air pollution," she said. She also recalled the words of Mahatma Gandhi, encouraging students to maintain a humane perspective and consider whether their actions benefit the poorest members of society. "Gandhi once said to remember the face of the poorest person you have seen and then ask yourself if your work is helpful to them," Patel noted. The governor expressed delight at seeing many female students receive medals, reflecting on how their achievements suggest a bright future for India as a global leader. She also remarked on the success of students who are children of teachers, attributing their success to a solid educational foundation. Patel praised Lucknow University for its progress over the past five years, highlighting improvements that have earned it a NAAC A++ grade and a place within the top 100 institutes in the NIRF ranking. "The transformation of the university demonstrates that commitment and collaboration can drive significant change," she said. She encouraged the university



Governor Anandiben Patel and others posing with the graduating students at LU convocation on Monday

to continue promoting sports and integrating Indian heritage into the curriculum, emphasising the importance of both modern advancements and traditional values. Patel also noted India's growing prowess in technology and electronics, stating, "India is now among the leading nations in these fields." The chief guest on the occasion was Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar, creator of the supercomputers, who addressed the graduates, emphasising the crucial role of women in shaping the future. "Girls are the future of mankind, and we must educate them well," Bhatkar asserted. He expressed optimism about India's potential to lead globally and stressed the importance of imagination and creativity in driving progress. Bhatkar also advocated for the inclusion of quantum studies in educational curricula and emphasised that research and innovation should be the focus for Uttar Pradesh's advancement. He called for collaboration among universities rather than competition to enhance the research ecosystem. Director of the Space Application Centre ISRO Nilesh Desai, who was awarded an Honoris Causa degree of

DLitt, highlighted the significance of ISRO's work beyond high-profile missions. He encouraged students to pursue their passions and make meaningful contributions to society. Minister of Higher Education Yogendra Upadhyay told the graduates that the nation's progress relies on their contributions and that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has high expectations from them. He commended Governor Anandiben Patel for her efforts in improving university rankings and encouraged students to reflect on how they can give back to society. Minister of State for Higher Education Rajani Tiwari emphasised that achievements are tools for change and urged students to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth. She reminded them to value the support of their families and mentors. LU Vice-Chancellor Prof Akh Kumar Rai discussed the role of education in providing both knowledge and discipline. He highlighted the ongoing implementation of the New Education Policy of 2020 and urged graduates to remember their responsibilities to their alma mater.

## Medal winners bask in glory

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The 67th Convocation of Lucknow University was marked by excitement as top-performers received their medals on Monday. The toppers not only celebrated their academic success but also shared their future goals and the inspirations that drive them. Shailja Chaurasia, who earned 13 medals, including 10 gold medals in Mathematics, expressed excitement about being recognised for her outstanding academic performance. "I'm thrilled to have received the highest number of medals for achieving top marks across all faculties," she said. Shailja, who had previously won a gold medal in BSc at Lucknow University, attributed her success to hard work. "I don't follow a set study schedule. Instead, I devote as many hours as needed to my studies, often exceeding my usual routine. My focus was always on understanding concepts rather than just scoring marks," she explained. She also praised her teachers

for their support and her family for their encouragement without pressure. Looking ahead, Shailja is preparing for the SSC and RBI examinations and plans to pursue the UPSC exams once she gains stability in her career. "As the eldest in my family, I want to start earning first, which will give me the confidence and stability to tackle the UPSC exams. I'm not yet ready to sit for them," she noted. Shailja admires her mother, a primary school teacher, as her role model. "My mother has been my pillar of support through every challenge," she added. Vaishnavi Mishra, who won nine gold medals in Law, was elated about her achievements. She shared that her success came from dedication rather than a specific strategy. "I devoted more hours to studying during exams, focusing on hard work and meticulous time management. Regular study was crucial for me," she said.

Vaishnavi plans to join the judiciary and is preparing for the PCS J examinations while also considering a Masters in Law. "My dream is to be part of the judiciary and deliver justice," she said. Vaishnavi admitted to being somewhat inactive on social media, following a "detox" approach to manage her online presence. Reema Chaudhary, who received eight gold medals in Masters in Archaeology and Ancient Indian History, was exhilarated by her accomplishments. "I'm overjoyed and didn't expect to win so many medals. My success was due to having clear concepts, which helped me in exams and interviews," she said. Reema plans to take the Civil Services examination and is preparing for a PhD entrance exam. "I aim to work in the Culture department to help preserve our heritage and monuments. It's crucial to protect our traditions that have been passed down through the ages," she added.

# Girl from Agra raped in car

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A girl from Agra was allegedly raped inside a car in Lucknow, police said on Monday. The accused had called the girl to Lucknow on the pretext of providing her a degree and certificates for education from High School to post-graduation, they added. The girl also alleged that her obscene videos were made by the accused and the accused threatened to make the same viral if she did not keep mum. The Para police have registered a case based on the girl's complaint and the investigation is ongoing. In her complaint, the girl said that she saw an advertisement on Facebook for getting educational certificates and she dialled the number provided. Rakesh Kumar, the person on the other end, told her that he would get the certificates made for Rs 30,000 each without her having to take any exam. He further told the girl that the entire work was done by the accused's partner Srinivas. After this, the deal was fixed at Rs 15,000 per certificate and the girl transferred Rs 15,000 to the accused's UPI account. The girl alleged that after taking money, the accused WhatsApped her a certificate

made in her name. The accused also asked her to visit Lucknow on May 10 to collect all the certificates. They also gave her a car's registration number so that she did not have to face any problem in finding him on the Agra Expressway. The girl, who was found near the Agra Expressway in Para, stated in her complaint that after talking to both of them, she reached Lucknow from Agra. She met them met on the Agra Expressway in Para where they made her sit in the car. Rakesh and Srinivas, who were sitting in the car, said the certificates were in the office. They stopped the car in a deserted area and Rakesh got exited the vehicle. As soon as he got off, Srinivas started making obscene remarks. When she protested, he raped her. Both filmed the act on their mobile phones and threatened to defame her by making the video viral. They later abandoned her near the expressway. The girl alleged that she reached Agra and filed a complaint, but the police did not register the case and said they would first visit the spot. The girl then reached Lucknow and filed a complaint with the Para police.

## Man throws boiling milk on wife over dowry demands

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman has accused her husband of severe harassment, including throwing boiling milk on her, in the PGI police station area of Lucknow, police said on Monday. The victim, identified as Shaista Rizwan, filed a complaint against her husband Mahfooz Alam, a resident of Utraitha on Rae Bareilly Road in Lucknow. According to Shaista's complaint, she married Mahfooz in 2022. Her family reportedly spent over Rs 30 lakh on the wedding and related expenses. However, within a month, Alam and his family allegedly started demanding additional dowry, including a motorcycle, an air-conditioner, and Rs 5 lakh in cash. Shaista alleged that her in-laws forcibly took the jewellery given by her parents and subjected her to physical and emotional abuse. She alleged that Alam threw boiling milk on her twice and even threatened to throw acid on her if she failed to meet their demands. Despite her family's efforts to meet the demands, such as purchasing an air-conditioner as requested, Shaista alleged that the harassment continued. She also alleged that her brother-in-law exhibited inappropriate behaviour towards her, which

she interpreted as having ulterior motives. Shaista alleged that at around 2 pm on August 11, her in-laws physically assaulted her, demanding the promised Rs 5 lakh in dowry. They reportedly threatened to set her ablaze if she did not comply. Fearing for her life, Shaista's parents intervened and took her back to their home. ROAD MISHAP A youth was killed and another injured in a road accident on Faizabad Road in Lucknow on the intervening night of Sunday and Monday. The incident occurred near BBD University. The deceased was identified as Rehan Ali, who was a resident of Dhakuli in Barabanki. Rehan Ali and his friend were travelling on a motorcycle when they were struck by a speeding car at around 3 am. Rehan and his friend Faizal had come to Lucknow for some work and were on their way back home when the accident happened. The car involved in the incident sped off the scene, and the driver remains unidentified. Both were rushed to RML Hospital, where Rehan was pronounced dead upon arrival. Faizal is said to be in a stable condition and receiving medical care. The police have initiated an investigation into the incident.

## Gang defrauding people through fake real estate scheme busted; 4 held

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the arrest of four accused, the Gomti Nagar police on Monday claimed to have busted a gang defrauding people through a fake real estate scheme. The gang, which promised plots at low prices, was led by Shivam

Saxena, Akshit Saxena, Shrikant Gupta (who masqueraded as Mata Prasad), and Yashish Kumar, the managing director of the fraudulent company. According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), East, Shashank Singh, the accused operated with a high degree of organisation. They targeted individuals seeking land or plots but lacking strong connections, exploiting their vulnerability. The gang's tactics included using intimidation and physical threats to extract additional money if victims became suspicious. The police recovered a licensed revolver with five live cartridges and a car (Honda Amaze) which was used in the fraudulent activities. The accused were apprehended based on a tip-off by an informer, near a shopping mall in the area. The DCP said that Anju Gupta, an employee at a hospital, had filed a complaint after being defrauded of Rs 4.5 lakh by the gang. The gang had promised her a 950 square feet plot in Hind Nagar, Sarojininar

Chillawan for Rs. 7 lakh. After receiving Rs 4.5 lakh, they provided a forged sale deed registration documents and demanded the remaining amount. When Gupta refused, the gang threatened her over the phone and coerced her into meeting at a tea stall where they further intimidated her. The complaint named Shivam Saxena, Akshit Saxena, Shrikant Gupta (posing as Mata Prasad), and Rohit Pandey alias Pintu (posing as Amit Kumar), along with four to five accomplices. The investigation also implicated Yashish Kumar, the company's MD, who played a crucial role in the scam. "The accused were involved in organised criminal activities, defrauding people through deceit and impersonation," the DCP said. "They created fake firms, conducted fraudulent sale deed registration documents, and exploited people by offering cheap land," he added. The police are making efforts to apprehend more accused involved in the scheme.

## Businessman duped of ₹64.65 lakh by conman posing as spiritual advisor

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A businessman was duped of Rs 64.65 lakh by a scammer posing as a spiritual advisor, police said on Monday. The fraudster identified as Hemant Kumar Rai, who claimed to be able to solve problems caused by black magic, deceived Rai through elaborate digital scams, exploiting his desperation to save his failing business. According to the Hazratganj police, Rai's ordeal began when he sought divine intervention after experiencing significant losses in his business over the past year. On the advice of well-wishers, he started looking for an astrologer online and came across Priya Bamba Astrology, run by the scammer. Initially, the fraudster convinced Rai that his business problems were the result of black magic and demanded Rs 11,000 for a remedy. Rai complied, transferring the money to the scammer's Bank of Baroda account in Raigarh Churu, Rajasthan. However, this was only the beginning of

the deception. The scammer continued to demand additional funds, claiming that ongoing rituals and pujas were necessary. Over time, the demands escalated. On August 11, 2023, Rai sent Rs 11,000, followed by another Rs 39,000 on August 18, 2023. The fraudster then claimed that the situation was more severe than initially thought and that additional money was needed for continuous pujas. The scam reached its peak when the fraudster demanded Rs 20 lakh for a ritual at a crematorium. Rai, believing the scammer's threats and manipulation, transferred the amount, only to realise later that he had been defrauded. Upon discovering the scam, Rai attempted to recover his funds by freezing the fraudster's bank account. Despite these efforts, he was unable to retrieve any of the money. Frustrated and seeking justice, Rai filed a complaint with the cyber police. The Hazratganj police have since registered an FIR and are actively investigating the case.

## Pathak highlights major health sector upgrades

Lucknow (PNS): Health Minister Brajesh Pathak highlighted significant advancements in the state's health sector on Monday, emphasising the extensive medical facilities across the state. "Efforts are being made on a war footing to bolster the health infrastructure," Pathak, who is also the Deputy CM, stated. "We are installing modern machines in newly constructed health centres and upgrading existing hospitals to provide better healthcare services," he said. A total of Rs 2.77 crore has been allocated for installing advanced equipment, including digital X-ray machines, in the four newly constructed community health centres located in Mardah (Ghazipur), Jamtali (Pratapgarh), Chitwargaon (Ballia), and Maita (Kanpur Dehat). Additionally, Rs 18.25 lakh has been approved for a C-arm machine to be installed in the 100-bed hospital in Sirauli, Gauspur (Barabanki), while Rs 15 lakh has been allocated for purchasing and installing an ultrasound machine at Dr Shyama Prasad (Civil) Hospital in Lucknow.

### NOTICE

I Mohd Javed S/o Abdul Hameed R/o Post Khanpur Dist. Auraiya. 206122, I have changed my name to Mohd Javed Hameed for all future purpose

### सूचना

सूचित हो कि मेरे प्लॉट नंबर 2/13, सेक्टर जे, जानकीपुरम, लखनऊ की मूल रजिस्ट्री वास्तव में खो गई है, यदि किसी को द्वारा इसका दुरुयोग किया जाता है तो अबैध माना जाएगा। संजीव कोठारी पुत्र श्री धीरजलाल महादेव कोठारी नि. बी -49, सेक्टर जे, अलीगंज, लखनऊ मो. 9415001759

### NOTICE

1. Pornima Mishra, Aged about 24 years, D/o Late Sri Rajesh Kumar Mishra, presently r/o Gyan Outlet, Vikas Khand, 3, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, hereby states that in my Educational Certificates my name is mentioned as "Mishra Pornima Rajesh Kumar inclusive of my father's name whereas my actual name is "Pornima Mishra" as correctly mentioned in the Aadhar Card No. 9648 7035 7561. "Pornima Mishra" and "Mishra Pornima Rajesh Kumar" are one and the same person for all purposes.

### Information

It is informed to the general public that in the records, my wife's name is Shanti and son's name is Mayank, which is wrong and incorrect. The correct and correct name of my wife and son is Shanti Tiwari and Mayank Tiwari and my wife's date of birth is recorded as 1 July 1974, which is wrong and incorrect. The actual and correct recorded date of birth is 15 January 1971. This should be considered correct and correct. (Manoj Kumar Tiwari son of Ram Khelavan Tiwari Resident - II/149, NTPC Colony, Unchahar, District- Raebareilly, Uttar Pradesh.

## Several injured in violence over biryani distribution

Lucknow (PNS): A violent altercation broke out in the Gosainganj area of Lucknow early Monday morning, stemming from a dispute over the distribution of sweet biryani prepared for Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi celebrations. The incident resulted in multiple injuries and the arrest of three individuals. According to police reports, the conflict began in Ghuskar village when Nasir Khan was preparing sweet biryani to distribute among followers for the festival. The situation escalated when Farid, a local resident, and Hasseen Khan from Amethi, opposed the biryani preparation and began hurling abuses. Nasir Khan's brother Shakir intervened, leading to a violent confrontation. Hasseen Khan and Farid reportedly attacked Shakir with a cooking ladle, causing him to fall unconscious. Additional violence ensued when Alam Rais,

Surayya, and Afroz joined the fray, using a burning wooden stick to assault Shakir and his father Sabir. The altercation drew the attention of local residents, who attempted to intervene. However, the attackers fled the scene, threatening further violence. The victims were initially taken to the Community Health Centre in Gosainganj. Due to Shakir's critical condition, he was referred to KGMU Trauma Centre for a head surgery and remains in serious condition. Following the incident, the police arrested three suspects - Hasseen Khan (28), a driver; Afroz Khan (28); and Surayya, both homemakers. They were apprehended at their residence in Amethi. SHO, Gosainganj, Brajesh Kumar Tripathi, confirmed that a case of attempted murder has been filed against six individuals, including four men and two women.

## Illegal nursing home sealed in Hapur after newborn's death

Hapur (PTI): Authorities here have sealed a nursing home operating illegally, following the death of a newborn and subsequent protests by the family, officials said on Monday. 'Meerut Nursing Home' on Modi Nagar Road was found to be operating without a proper registration. Hapur's Chief Medical Officer Dr Sunil Tyagi said, said city resident Raju's wife was admitted to the nursing home late Sunday, however, the newborn died during delivery. The family alleged negligence on the part of the medical staff and staged a protest demanding action, he added. Tyagi said upon receiving the information, he arrived at the nursing home with his team and found that the facility was operating without registration. "The nursing home has been sealed. Action will also be taken against the accused doctor," Tyagi said.

## RLD president Jayant to visit Ranchi today

Lucknow (PNS): National president of Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) Chaudhary Jayant Singh, is set to visit Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, on Tuesday. Anupam Mishra, the party's Jharkhand in-charge and national secretary, said there is significant enthusiasm among party workers and officials in anticipation of Jayant's visit. Mishra noted that party leaders, including himself, have been stationed in Ranchi for the past two days to oversee preparations and provide guidance to local workers and officials. This will be Jayant's visit to Ranchi in his capacity as both the national president of RLD and Union minister of state. Jayant will first meet party officials and workers at the Ranchi Circuit House before proceeding to the Birsu Munda Airport. He is scheduled to attend a programme at the Arya Bhatt

Auditorium of Ranchi University and later interact with trainees at the Jan Shikshan Sansthan in Ranchi. Prior to Singh's arrival, Anupam Mishra and state president Dwarika Prasad Lala conducted a review meeting with officials and workers to finalise the welcome arrangements and issue necessary instructions. Mishra also mentioned that the first list of RLD state officials for Jharkhand might be announced on Tuesday. Meanwhile, RLD state president Ramashish Rai said that the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be celebrated as Service and Resolution Day. "RLD workers will distribute fruits to patients in hospitals across the state from September 17 to October 2 and will ensure their contribution to the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan by taking a pledge, he added.

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.  
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66

Notice Inviting Tender [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop)

e-tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Chandigarh Dairy Hiring of services for outsourcing activities / contractor for packaging UHT milk & milk products / beverages.	Annual
2.	For Verka Mohali Dairy a) Outsourcing the activities related to city- i. Supply demand, dispatch & milk supply helpers. ii. Supply security personnels, BCC and accounts personnels. b) Flex & glow sign boards, banners, stickers and other advertisement material etc.	Annual
3.	For Verka Gurdaspur Dairy a) Supply of rice husk. b) Pest control services. c) Refrigerated vehicle for supply of milk & milk products for jammu and katra (09 MT).	1000 MT - 02 Years
4.	For Verka Patiala Dairy a) Fire wood b) Annual Maintenance Contract for Bulk Milk cooler, Capacity:01kl, 02kl, 03kl & 05 kl. c) Job contract for :- i. Loading / unloading of different materials. ii. Production, Packing of SFM bottles and operation, repair and maintenance of all machines related to SFM. iii. Operation, repair and maintenance of pouch filling machine, tray washer & coding of pouches.	Half Yearly/1500 MT 114 - As per requirement 30,000 to 50,000 (bottles per day as per demand) 55,000 to 60,000 ltrs (day or as per demand)
5.	For Verka Jalandhar Dairy Supply of pet jar with sleeves capacity-200ml, 500ml & 1 Ltr.	Annual
6.	For Verka Cattle Feed Plant, Ghana-ke-Banger Disposal of the unserviceable materials.	-

NOTE:  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop & e Tenders portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.  
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

NA/12/2547/2023/37674 Dated CHD - 9/16/2024

# Pak a festering wound, needs surgical intervention: Yogi

CM inaugurates Siddheshwari temple in Tripura

PNS ■ WEST TRIPURA/  
LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday described Pakistan as a “cancer to humanity, a festering wound for the world that can only be treated through a surgical intervention”.

Yogi was addressing a gathering after inaugurating the Siddheshwari temple, with Tripura counterpart Dr Manik Saha also in attendance. CM Yogi remarked that if the Congress leadership at the time of independence, along with Jogendra Nath Mandal, had thwarted the conspiracy of the Muslim League, “this wound would never have formed.” He further said that Pakistan’s resolution requires action, and the process has already begun. “Now, the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir wish to join India, and Balochistan is also seeking independence from Pakistan,” he said.

On a different note, CM Yogi said, “Saints act as divine representatives on Earth. When such a significant number of saints unite for any cause, success is inevitable.” He urged that the campaign for religious awakening must be carried forward under their guidance.

Yogi stressed the importance of working collectively to ensure that destructive forces are not given a foothold, emphasising the need to eliminate such powers to prevent a situation like Bangladesh from occurring again. He added that both nation and religion must be safeguarded.

“The strength and unity of the rulers in Tripura kept the state independent and secure. The king protected Tripura from heretics and foreign invaders by uniting the people,” Yogi said. He stated that a nation or leader who demonstrates power and makes their enemies aware of it will remain safe.

However, those who lose their strength and fail to distinguish between friends and foes will face consequences, as seen in Bangladesh today, he added. “It is vital to reflect on the current situation in Bangladesh and those responsible for it. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) foresaw the dangers posed by the Congress, recognising that if the country continued to fall victim to Congress’s misdeeds, it would lead to the partition of India,



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the inauguration of Siddheshwari temple in Barakathal, West Tripura on Monday PTI

the massacre of Hindus, and the division of society along caste lines. The Congress would erode India’s traditions and culture for its selfish interests. The warnings of the RSS proved true, as the Congress ultimately partitioned the country,” Yogi said. He emphasised that the resistance during the 1905 Bengal Partition was pivotal, and everyone knows what could have happened to the country without that opposition. CM Yogi also highlighted that the RSS and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) engage in selfless service without resorting to propaganda. He further stated that today, the RSS operates thousands of educational institutions and service initiatives worldwide through Vidya Bharati. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad runs Ekal Vidyalayas in over one lakh villages in tribal areas across India.

In 1984, the VHP also established a tribal hostel in Gorakhpur through the Shri Ram Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, providing education for children from the North East. According to CM Yogi, India’s time has come, and under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation is on its way to becoming a global power. CM Yogi noted that the five-century-long wait ended with the construction of the grand temple of Lord Shri Ram in Ayodhya. “While some may oppose the temple’s construc-

tion, there is little that can be done about those who feel discontented. The government is respecting the faith of the majority of Indians. Ayodhya, Mathura, and Kashi are the three major pillars of Sanatan Dharma, and these sacred places will continue to flourish as revered centres of faith,” he said. “Sanatan Dharma advocates for the well-being of all (Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah), but this can only be achieved when the nation remains secure,” he added. Yogi stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the entire nation is united in the mission of ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’. “Today, Tripura enjoys a safe and harmonious environment—something that was unimaginable seven or eight years ago,” he pointed out. He noted that while the double-engine government is accelerating the comprehensive development of Tripura, the state is also experiencing significant progress in the realm of religion. “In the past, riots were common during festivals in both Tripura and Uttar Pradesh. However, today in Uttar Pradesh, the government has given bulldozers as a reply to the rioters and the temple of Lord Shri Ram to the devotees,” he added. He emphasised the importance of protecting one’s faith, quoting, ‘Dharma Eva Hato Hanti Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah’ (if we safeguard our religion, it will, in turn, protect us). “Conversely, if we forsake

our religion for selfish gain, it will abandon us as well. Yato Dharmastato Jayah (where there is righteousness, there is victory) is a fundamental principle of Sanatan Dharma,” he noted. CM Yogi described the ‘Pran Pratishtha’ ceremony of Maa Siddheshwari and the temple inauguration as a significant moment for all. He recalled that Pujya Sant Shantikali Maharaj initiated the ashram’s legacy in 1994. “Chitranjan Maharaj has been carrying forward his vision with unwavering dedication, which is why the Government of India has honoured him,” Yogi said. The Uttar Pradesh CM also invoked the image of Lord Krishna, who holds both a flute and the ‘Sudarshan Chakra’. He explained that while the flute symbolises peace, the ‘Sudarshan Chakra’ represents the need for strength and security. Following the inauguration, he planted saplings on the temple premises and participated in the Maha Yagya, offering sacrifices and praying for the welfare of the people. This newly built temple in Barkathal is part of the network of 24 temples managed by the Shanti Kali Ashram in the northeastern region. Maharaja Chitta Ranjan Deb Barma, head of the Shanti Kali Ashram, has been dedicated to preserving Hindu culture, traditions, and religion. He was honoured with the Padma Shri award last year for his contributions.

# Govt negligent towards problems of people of flood-affected villages: AKY

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday accused the UP government of being negligent towards the problems of common man in hundreds of flood-hit villages and said while the people are in distress, the government is busy with other works. Hundreds of villages in dozens of districts of the state are affected by floods and heavy rains and life is devastated. Farmers’ crops, houses and other properties were destroyed due to the floods, he said in a statement. Yadav alleged that many people lost their lives but the gov-



ernment remains completely careless. While the people are in distress, the government and the officials are busy with other work, he said adding that the government is not concerned with the problems of the

people. Rivers are in spate in Sitapur, Ayodhya, Bahraich, Gonda and Barabanki districts of the state, he said. “Hundreds of villages are in the grip of floods. Water has entered the villages and houses but the government remains inactive. On one hand, the common people are in trouble due to flood water and on the other hand, they are in terror due to wild animals,” he said. Yadav said wolves and other wild animals are killing common people in the Terai region. In Bahraich, Lakhimpur Khari, Sitapur and Pilibhit, wild animals have attacked and killed dozens of villagers and children, he noted.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has been raising this issue for more than a year but the government has not taken any action. People’s lives have become difficult in these areas, he said. Alleging that the entire army of ministers of the Yogi Adityanath government and the administration system are engaged in misusing power instead of solving the problems of the people, Yadav said the affected people are not getting any help. “Many people died due to heavy rains in various districts of the state recently, but the government neither reached out to the victims nor did it help them,” he claimed.

# SP: Business group grabbing land of Manjhi community in Ayodhya

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party has alleged that a business group was grabbing land of the most backward ‘Manjhi’ caste in Ayodhya and that its goons indulged in hooliganism with farmers, a charge the business conglomerate has denied. After Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and his party posted videos of a clash between two groups and claimed that it was related to land grabbing, the local police said they were taking legal action in the matter. They added that the allegations were not true. Samajwadi Party Media Cell

on X posted two clips, and a news report about an alleged scuffle between employees of the business group and farmers in Ayodhya. In the post accompanying the clips, it alleged, “In Ayodhya, under the instructions/partnership/protection/direction of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, big industrialists are forcibly occupying lands of Dalit/backward class farmers.” “After the Ram Mandir verdict, Ayodhya has become a hotspot for property and all the BJP/Chief Minister Adityanath/big industrialists want to wash their hands/take

a bath/occupy land in the Saryu,” the post said in Hindi. The handle also shared an X post by party chief Akhilesh Yadav in which he shared a clip of the scuffle. He said in the post accompanying the clip, “Detention of farmers in Ayodhya and relief to billionaires... Is the government still in power in UP or has it retired?” The Samajwadi Party Media Cell further alleged in its post, “Abhinandan Lodha Group is occupying lands of the people of the Manjhi community and its goons are forcibly beating, coercing and involved in hooliganism with the farmers in Ayodhya. The

police administration is sold out at the behest/direction of Chief Minister Adityanath and is unethically supporting the Lodha Group and has sent the farmers to jail.” A spokesperson for Lodha Ventures later said the plot of land was sold to it by a farmer. “When we went to take possession of that plot, a group of goons, armed with lathis, attacked our people and injured them,” he said. “Our people suffered severe head injuries and have been hospitalised where they are in a serious condition. We have filed a complaint and arrests have been made by the police,” he added.

# Minor clashes mar Eid-e-Milad celebrations

One electrocuted in Shahjahanpur

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Amidst tensions between religious groups over the Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi processions, particularly in Bareilly, Kanpur, and Sambhal, the festival celebrating the birth of Prophet Mohammed was observed with a mix of both peaceful and contentious incidents across Uttar Pradesh. In Lucknow, the festival was marked by around 200 processions, which were accompanied by langars (community meals) arranged at various points along the routes.

Police were stationed at multiple locations to ensure the safety and security of participants and spectators. Similarly, in Varanasi, the atmosphere was vibrant with 60 religious groups presenting ‘Naatiya kalaam’, a poetic genre in praise of the Prophet. Despite these peaceful celebrations, several violent incidents marred the festivities. In Shahjahanpur, a tragic accident occurred when a DJ setup on a tractor-trolley came into contact with an electric wire. This incident resulted in three individuals suffering severe burns, with one of them succumbing to injuries. In Bahraich, a different kind of tragedy unfolded. Two youths on a motorcycle, transporting



Muslims take part in an Eid-e-Milad-Un-Nabi procession in Lucknow on Monday PTI

firecrackers for the procession, hit a dog. The accident caused the firecrackers to explode, leading to severe burns for one of the riders, who later died. In Kanpur, the Gadanpur Churna locality in Bilhaur witnessed a significant confrontation. Local villagers halted the procession due to objections over the slogans being chanted and the Islamic flags being flown. They asserted that such a procession had never used this route before. The situation escalated until the police intervened, diffusing the tension by halting the procession’s progress and dispersing those trying to create trouble.

In Sambhal, another contentious situation arose when the police stopped a procession due to the presence of a DJ. The decision led to a confrontation with Suhail, the son of Samajwadi Party MLA Iqbal Mohammed. Suhail objected to the police’s actions, leading to a standoff. Eventually, the police clarified that the DJ could not be part of the procession, and the event proceeded peacefully after the DJ was removed. Bareilly experienced its share of disputes as well. On the evening of the festival, a group of Hindus blocked the Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi procession, claiming that Muslims had

previously obstructed their Kanwar Yatra. The tension was further exacerbated by the refusal of local Hindus to allow the procession to pass through the Joganwada area. The authorities intervened, negotiating with the heads of the anjuman to plan an alternative route. After considerable negotiation, the procession was rerouted through Maurya Gali in Joganwada. However, this new route also faced opposition from local Hindus, who were displeased by the rerouting decision. The situation was eventually resolved late into the night, with the procession allowed to proceed on the newly designated route.

# UP govt bid to make state leader in energy sector

**Lucknow (PNS):** The Uttar Pradesh government is making concerted efforts across various fronts to establish the state as a leader in the energy sector. With industrial activities surging and record energy consumption levels in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has placed special emphasis on clean energy. The government is not only promoting solar energy, but also advancing hydro-based pump storage projects. Yogi envisions Uttar Pradesh as a hub for pump storage plants, with Mirzapur,

Chandauli, and Sonbhadra poised to play key roles in this transformation. Notably, Mirzapur is set to become the largest hub for these plants, with four facilities of varying capacities to be developed. The plant in Sonbhadra, meanwhile, will have the highest energy output, while Chandauli will also host a pump storage plant. The government is progressing to generate 4,730 MW of energy in Uttar Pradesh through six pump storage plants. Notably, all of these projects received

clearance in mid-August, and the process of establishing these plants is set to begin soon. Additionally, companies like Acme, Avaada, and East India Petroleum have received ‘in principle’ approval for more pump storage plants in Sonbhadra, Chandauli, and Mirzapur, with directives from the Yogi government to accelerate the pace of these projects. As part of the government’s plan, the first approval under this initiative was granted on May 30 this year for a 1,250 MW hydro pump storage plant

in Garhwa, Sonbhadra, to be developed by Aquagreen Engineering Management Private Limited. This off-stream loop pump project will enhance storage capacity by pumping water from the Son river into two reservoirs, with a pump intake well located 4.6 km away from the reservoir. The project will be completed with an investment of ₹6,100.62 crore. Similarly, a 600 MW hydro pump storage plant in Mubarakpur, Chandauli, was approved on August 8, 2024.

# UP govt agencies to procure ‘Shree Anna’ from October 1

**Lucknow (PNS):** Uttar Pradesh government agencies will commence the procurement of ‘Shree Anna’ (coarse grains) from October 1. The government has urged the farmers to register on the UP Kisan Mitra App for availing the facility. Official agencies will purchase the grains from the farmers till December 31. The government has already announced the minimum support price (MSP) of maize at ₹2,225 per quintal, millet at ₹2,625, sorghum (hybrid) at ₹3,371 and sorghum (maldandi) at ₹3,421 per quintal. The payment to farmers will be made through DBT in their Aadhaar-linked bank accounts after biometric verification. The digital payment has ended the role of the middleman. The government is not only encouraging the general public to recognise the benefits of millets, but is also connecting farmers with the advantages of cultivating it. For the year 2024-25, the pro-

urement of coarse grains will begin on October 1 and continue until December 31. Registration and renewal for farmers is currently ongoing for the procurement of coarse grains, including maize, millet, and sorghum. According to the Food and Civil Supplies department, farmers are required to register or renew on fcs.up.gov.in or through the UP Kisan Mitra app. Procurement will be done only from registered farmers. Farmers can seek assistance for any issues they may have by contacting the previously issued toll-free number (18001800150). Additionally, they can reach out to the respective district food and marketing officers, regional marketing officers, or marketing inspectors. It is mandatory for the bank account in which farmers receive payment to be linked to their Aadhaar. Payments will be made directly to the farmers’ bank accounts. To prevent middlemen and maintain transparency, the

purchase of coarse grains at the procurement centres will be done through biometric verification of farmers through e-pop (electronic point of purchase) devices as before. Maize will be procured in Budaun, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Etah, Kasganj, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Hardoi, Unnao, Kanpur Nagar-Rural, Kannauj, Etawah, Bahraich, Ballia, Farrukhabad, Mirzapur, Sonbhadra, and Lalitpur. Millets will be procured in Budaun, Bulandshahr, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Rampur, Sambhal, Amroha, Aligarh, Kasganj, Etah, Hathras, Agra, Mathura, Mainpuri, Firozabad, Hardoi, Unnao, Kanpur Nagar-Rural, Etawah, Auraiya, Kannauj, Farrukhabad, Gajapur, Ballia, Mirzapur, Jalaun, Chitrakoot, Prayagraj, Kaushambi, Jaunpur, and Fatehpur. Sorghum will be procured in Banda, Chitrakoot, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Kanpur Nagar-Rural, Fatehpur, Unnao, Hardoi, Mirzapur, and Jalaun.

# Five of family mowed down by pickup truck

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a tragic incident, five members of a family sitting on a road in Sambhal were killed and four injured when a speeding pickup truck ran over them early Monday, police said. The injured were sent to Aligarh for treatment, while the driver of the vehicle was detained, they said. The driver of the pickup truck also sustained injuries. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took cognizance of the accident and asked officials concerned to immediately shift the injured to hospital and ensure their proper treatment. The chief minister also directed the officials of the district administration to reach the spot and expedite the relief work. Meanwhile, Superintendent of Police (SP) Krishan Kumar said that around 6 am, some people from Bhopatpur village were sitting on the side of

the road when a vehicle coming from Gawa hit them. Lilladhar (60), Dharamal (40), Ompal (32), and Puran Singh (45) died on the spot, the SP said. The police said the injured were immediately taken to the community health centre in Rajpura, from where they were sent to Aligarh. Jamuna Prasad (60) died during treatment. The superintendent of police said all nine persons involved in the accident were from the same family. The driver of the pickup truck was also injured in the incident, he said. The bodies have been sent for autopsy, the superintendent of police said. District Magistrate of Sambhal Rajendra Singh Pensia, who visited the accident site, said the condition of two persons is serious. He added that the driver might have dozed off, which caused the accident.

# Cong delegation meets kin of Ayodhya rape victim

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A delegation of the Uttar Pradesh Congress, led by state president Ajay Rai, on Monday met the family of the 20-year-old girl, who was allegedly gangraped inside the Ram Temple premises in Ayodhya. The victim works as a sweeper in the Ram temple of Ayodhya and is also a BA (final year) student. She was allegedly taken to three different places in the temple premises by the perpetrators and gangraped. The Congress delegation, led by Ajay Rai, reached the Gopinathpur village under Rangunhi police station of Ayodhya district on Monday, met the family members of the victim and inquired about the details related to the incident. The party gave a cheque of ₹25,000 as financial assistance. Talking to mediapersons after meeting the victim’s family, Rai said that the law

and order situation has collapsed not only in Uttar Pradesh but also in all BJP-ruled states. “Criminal incidents against women and girls are happening every day in the state, exposing the BJP government’s women safety policy,” he said. “The Yogi government has failed to stop crimes against women. The criminals are going about their business without any restraint and it is a result of the administration’s failure. The unsafe environment developing in the state is restricting the freedom and aspirations of our sisters and daughters,” Rai alleged. He said that those in the government administration should be ashamed and seriously consider who is responsible for the safety of half the population of the country. “The Congress will also stage a demonstration in all the 18 divisional headquarters of Uttar Pradesh to protest against the deteriorating law and order condition on Wednesday,” he added.

# 12-yr-old boy injured in animal attack

**Lucknow (PNS):** A 12-year-old boy was injured in an animal attack at Mahsi tehsil in Bahraich on Sunday night. The incident, which took place in Piprimohan village, has raised concerns about the potential involvement of a wolf, though the Forest department has not confirmed this. The boy was reportedly attacked on the neck while sleeping on the terrace with his family. Villagers initially suspected a wolf was responsible for the attack. However, the Forest department has stated that there were no signs of wolf activity at the scene. District Forest Officer (DFO) of Bahraich Ajit Singh explained that although an inspection was conducted for pug marks, no evidence of a wolf was found. He noted that the lone wolf, which had previously been spotted only once, has been difficult to track due to the ongoing monsoon season, which has flooded the search areas.

# CM may launch many schemes in Varanasi on PM's birthday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath who arrived here on Monday evening from Tripura on a two-day visit may launch many schemes on the 74th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the latter's parliamentary constituency on September 17. On the occasion, Yogi may inaugurate planting of 148 saplings near Kancharpur and Sarang areas under Upvan Yojana. Yogi will participate in the special puja and Rudrabhishek at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple on Tuesday as part of PM Narendra Modi's birthday celebrations.

The state government is increasing the greenery that has decreased in the cities due to urbanisation and development. The Yogi government, which planted more than 36.51 crore saplings in a single day on July 20, is now going to start Upvan Yojana to make the Nagar Nigam areas green. Varanasi Nagar Nigam will launch the Upvan Yojana by planting 148 saplings near Kancharpur and Sarang ponds. Long-lived plants will be planted at both these places. At these places, plantation will be done using Miyawaki technique on one acre of land and open gym, walking track, exercise place etc will be constructed at the remaining places.

Municipal Commissioner Akshat Verma said under the 'Upvan Yojana' of the Nagar Nigam, the inauguration will be done by planting 74 saplings in Kancharpur Park and 74 big saplings near Sarang pond. At both the places, long-lived plants of neem, banyan, pakki, peepal etc will be planted along with tree-guards for the protection of the plants. Besides, gardeners will be deployed for their care, he added. Besides, on the new initiative taken in this parliamentary constituency of the PM under the guidance of CM, multipurpose QR code is being installed in the houses of Kashi so that homeowners will be able to pay house and water



UP Minister Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' in Varanasi praying for long life of PM on eve of Modi's birthday on Monday.

taxes from their homes as well as monitor the daily garbage collection from homes. QR codes will also be installed in shops to deposit the rent of shops allotted by the Nagar Nigam. The state government will also gift sludge dewatering vehicle machine worth ₹6.40 crore to the city. Yogi can launch these schemes on the PM's birthday. Verma said multipurpose QR codes are being installed in the houses of the Nagar Nigam areas, through which the building owners can deposit house, water, sewer and other taxes related to the Nagar Nigam sitting at home. With this QR code, Nagar Nigam can monitor the garbage collected daily from the houses of the building owners. Municipal commissioner said the work of installing QR codes in 2.25 lakh buildings is going on at a fast pace and so far, QR codes have been installed in more than 58,000 buildings. He also informed that the tenants of 1,500 shops allotted by the Nagar Nigam will not have to visit the Municipal Corporation offices to deposit the rent. The Nagar Nigam is going to launch the process of installing QR code for depositing the monthly rent of the allotted shops. Through this, all shopkeepers will get the facility of depositing the monthly rent online while sitting at their shops.

Besides, the CM may join various programmes of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), including launching of cleanliness drive, at Dadhashwamedh Ghat and flagging off 'Swachhata Daur' (race) apart from joining the party's programme at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham and inaugurating blood donation programme of BJYM at Shri Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Hospital, Kabirchaura. Meanwhile, according to the city chief of BJP Vidyasagar Rai, on PM's birthday the party will organise various programmes in Varanasi. He said various service programmes will be organised by the city and district units of the BJP under the Seva Pakhwada (fortnight) from September 17 to October 2, under which cleanliness programmes will be held at the statues of great personalities, monuments and places of worship from 6 to 8 am on September 17, in which public representatives, BJP office-bearers and workers will participate. City general secretary of BJP Rahul Singh has been made the coordinator of this programme. On the same day at 10 am in Kashi Vishwanath Temple, there will be a programme of worship and Rudrabhishek with the wish for the good health and long life of the PM Modi. For this, City South MLA Dr Neelkanth Tiwari and city vice-president Alok Srivastava have been made

programme coordinators. On the same day at 11 am, a blood donation camp will be organised by the district and city units of youth wing (BJYM) at SSPG Hospital, for which city general secretary Jagdish Tripathi has been made the programme coordinator. At 1 pm, food and fruits will be distributed in major hospitals and service colonies, for which city vice president Madhukar Chitransh has been made the programme coordinator. On the same day at 5 pm, worship and sweets will be distributed in major temples. City general secretary Ashok Patel has been made the coordinator for this. At 7 pm, a programme of Ganga Aarti and sweets distribution will be organised at Dashashwamedh Ghat. Mayor Ashok Tiwari and city general secretary Naveen Kapoor have been made the programme coordinators for this. Regional media in-charge Navratan Rathi said that on the eve of PM Modi's birthday, a programme of Deepotsav was organised at PM Modi's public relations office in Jawahar Nagar, Bhelupur on Monday. Besides, under the leadership of the UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH Dr Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu', a ritualistic worship was performed at the Ram Mandir in Jagatganj and the participants prayed to the Almighty for PM Modi's long and healthy life. After the worship, Dr Dayalu distributed 74 types of medicinal and potent plants in Rampuri Garden located in Jagatganj. These included trees like neem, guava, peepal, parijat, lemon, Ashoka, banyan etc. After this, the minister planted saplings in the park along with people present. He said environmental protection is the duty of all of us and along with planting trees, it is also necessary to take care of them.

He informed that crores of saplings have been planted across the country on the call of the PM and this campaign is progressing rapidly. He said that the entire life of PM Modi is dedicated to nation building and public service.

# Farmer killed in accident

Kanpur (PNS): A farmer was killed while his sharecropper was seriously injured when a speeding truck in a bid to overtake them hit their bike near Bilrahi trisection on Kanpur-Sagar national highway in Mahoba on Monday morning. After hitting the bike, the truck dragged the bike riders up to 20 metres which led to the killing of the farmer and serious injury to his sharecropper who had been admitted to the district hospital. After the incident, a massive jam prevailed on both sides of the highway for about half-an-hour. Ram Kripal Bajpai (55) of Urwara under Srinagar police station, along with sharecropper Shekhar Sen (22) was coming to Srinagar to sell grain on bike around 10 am on Monday. The speeding truck coming from Chhatrapur in a bid to overtake them hit their bike from behind near Bilrahi trisection on the highway due to which the pillion rider farmer Ram Kripal came under the wheel and the bike entangled in it. In a bid to escape from the spot, truck driver dragged the farmer up to 20 metres which led to his killing on the spot. Sharecropper Shekhar Sen sustained serious injury in the incident. Truck driver and cleaner disappeared by leaving their vehicle on the spot. Police sent the injured to the district hospital and got the traffic restored on the highway. Station House Officer (SHO) Srinagar Shivpal Singh said a probe was on in the matter and efforts were also on to ascertain the location of the absconding truck driver and cleaner.

# Body recovered

PRAYAGRAJ (PNS): The body of a 14-year-old boy who had drowned in a pond on Sunday evening was recovered by the PAC flood relief team on Monday. The boy had drowned in deep water on Sunday evening. When the body was not found even after a lot of effort, the help of PAC was taken. The body was found after two hours of effort and has been taken into possession by the police. The incident belonged to Karchana area.

# Flood situation in Kashi turns grim



The Namoo Ghat on Monday submerged in the continuously rising Ganga in Varanasi.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Flood situation in this holy city has turned grim as water of Ganga river not only entered several localities in Nagwa and Samneghat areas in the southern part but also caused reverse flow of Varuna river, submerging several localities in the northern part here on Monday. The water level of Ganga continued to rise and is now flowing above the warning level of 70.262 metres. It was recorded at 70.7 metres at 8 am as per the report of Middle Ganga Division-III of Central Water Commission (CWC) and it is expected to reach 70.75 metres by 8 am on Tuesday. However, the only relief is that the water level will become steady after a day as it was recorded constant at upstream Mirzapur and will start receding at Phaphamau apart from checking the rising trend at Varanasi and downstream Ghazipur. Due to reverse flow, the water level of Varuna has increased alarmingly, entering the houses of residents living in Rasoolgarh, Baghwanala, Nai Basti, Puranapul, Konia, Saraiya, Nakhighat and other localities, forcing many from Rasoolgarh area to shift to relief camp established in the Salpur primary school. In Shivpur rural areas, Varuna river water entered villages



MLA Neelkanth Tiwari inspecting the flood-affected Konia area in Varanasi on Monday.

like Daniyalpur and Pisaur. The personnel of Water Police and NDRF are constantly monitoring the flood at Bhainsasur Ghat and adjoining areas. In the southern part of the city, due to leakage in the automatic channel gate built near Jnana Pravah drain, the water of Ganga has started entering the colonies. Dozens of houses have come under the grip of flood water. In view of rising water level, people have started preparing to vacate their houses and go back to their villages and houses of relatives apart from keeping the belongings on the second floor of their houses. Besides, Ganga water entered more than 100 houses in Nagwa through reverse flow of drain there, forcing many to shift at safe places. Flood water also started entering the houses in Gangotri Bihar, Sangampuri, Dumraon Bagh Colony, Saket Nagar, Rohit Nagar etc. More than two dozen acres of crops submerged in water in nearby Ramna village. Apart from this, in the northern outskirts huge crops have been damaged in several villages like Mokulpur, Kudhwa, Retapur, Nakhwa, Gobardhanpur, Rampur areas in Chiraigaon block. Besides, the residents of several villages of Daab areas surrounded by Ganga and Gomti rivers have been affected as the water level of Gomti recorded rising at upstream Jaunpur. Though there was no much rain in this belt of Purvanchal (Eastern UP), Ganga's rising trend was seen due to heavy rain in western UP, Bundelkhand regions apart from many North India states, causing rising trend in many tributaries of Ganga and Yamuna rivers. Though the intensity of the rising trend of Ganga has slowed down it continued to rise with a speed of 10 mm per hour. Just a day ago it was rising at a speed of 40 mm per hour. During the last 24 hours, the water level increased by 57 centimetres, rising from 70.13 metres to 70.7 metres. At Assi Ghat in the city, there was about 5-6 feet high water submerging Subah-e-Banaras venue, forcing the organisers to shift the site to an upper location as the famous Ganga aarti is being conducted at Dashashwamedh Ghat. Besides the stairs of newly-developed Namoo Ghat near Rajghat were also submerged in the flooded Ganga. The river water has already entered the famous Sheela Mata Mandir at Old Dashashwamedh Ghat forcing the devotees to reach the temple through the water. The flood situation in downstream Ballia turned further grim again as the water level was already above the danger mark again. The Ganga was flowing in Ballia at 58.88 metres against the danger mark of 57.615 metres in the morning and it is expected to reach 59.55 metres by Tuesday morning rising with a speed of 40 mm per hour. In downstream Ghazipur the river was recorded at 63.4 metres against the red mark of 63.105 metres and expected to reach 63.55 metres. At upstream Mirzapur it was at 76.48 metres against the warning level of 76.724 metres.

# CM-adopted CHC, four others selected for Kayakalp Award

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Five community health centres (CHCs), including CHC Hathibazar, adopted by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have been selected for the Kayakalp Award. The result of the state level Kayakalp Award 2023-24 has come to strengthen the medical and health services and to emphasise on the Swachhta Mission. CHC Misirpur has received the Kayakalp Award for the first time. On the other hand, Cholarpur CHC has received the award for the eighth time in a row while CHC Hathibazar, Araziline CHC and Chaukaghat Urban CHC have received the Kayakalp Awards for the second time in succession. This has brought a wave of happiness in the health department. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that it is a matter of great happiness for the Health department that CHC Misirpur has received the Kayakalp Award for the first time. Araziline and Urban CHC Chaukaghat have received the Kayakalp Award for the second time in a row. Cholarpur CHC has achieved a

proud milestone for the district by receiving the Kayakalp Award for the eighth time in a row, the CMO said, adding that all five CHCs will be given an amount of one lakh rupees each as a prize. The chief medical officer congratulated the superintendents of all five CHCs namely Dr RB Yadav (Cholarpur CHC), Dr Naveen Singh (Araziline CHC), Dr Falguni Gupta (Urban CHC Chowkghat), Dr Karan Gautam (CHC Hathibazar) and Dr RB Singh (CHC Misirpur). Kayakalp Karyakram Nodal Officer Dr YB Pathak, District Programme Manager (DPM) Santosh Kumar Singh, Quality Assurance Divisional Advisor Dr Tanveer Siddiqui, along with all the doctors, health education officers, BPPMs, BCPPMs and the staff. He also motivated them to provide better medical and health services to the community. Dr Chaudhary said that health services are being strengthened at all urban and rural community health centres of the district so that everyone can get the Kayakalp Award. At all health units, special attention is being paid to arrangements for pathology tests, services

related to delivery and pre-natal checkups, operation theatres, regular vaccination of pregnant women and children and other health services along with cleanliness, hygiene, green environment etc. Also, patients and their attendants do not face any kind of problem. According to him, CHC Cholarpur has received the Kayakalp Award for the eighth consecutive time by securing 90.57 per cent marks in the final assessment. Last year it received 88.14 per cent marks. CHC Araziline received 80.86 per cent marks, while last year it had received 71.14 marks; Urban CHC Chowkghat has received 73.71 per cent marks, while last year it had received about 71 per cent marks; CHC Hathibazar has received 73 per cent marks, last time it had received 70.14 per cent marks; and CHC Misirpur received the Kayakalp Award for the first time by securing 77.71 per cent marks in the final assessment. As per the government's instructions, the community health centre is given the Kayakalp Award after obtaining 70 or more than 70 per cent marks in the final stage.

# Global reach of Hindi highlighted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Department of Teacher Education, SHUATS organised an online talk here on Monday on the occasion of Hindi Diwas fortnight. The event was convened by Dr Prashobh PD Souza, with three distinguished speakers sharing their insights on the importance of Hindi. Dr Niharika Denis, Organising Secretary, provided a brief history of Hindi Diwas. Anujjet Iqbal, an internationally renowned writer from Lucknow, spoke about her journey of learning Hindi despite being from Punjab. She emphasised that anyone can learn Hindi and contribute to its promotion, as she has done by writing for national and international publications. Harshini Vikas Jadhav, a lecturer, Aurobindo Institute of Technology, Indore, shared her story of learning Marathi when she first started teaching in Maharashtra. Simultaneously, she taught Hindi to local students to help spread the language. Sanghmitra Gupta, a head teacher from Basti, highlighted the global reach of Hindi, noting that the language is not only spoken across India but also recognised internationally.

# Prof Narendra Mohan conferred prestigious award

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the sugar industry, Prof Narendra Mohan, former Director, National Sugar Institute (NSI), was conferred the prestigious 'Sugar Industry Excellence Award - Promotion of Diversification in Industry' at the 8th IAPISIT International Sugar Conference being held from September 16 to 19 at QuyNhon, BinhDinh, Vietnam. The award was given by the



Director, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of Vietnam and Dr Yang-Rui Li, Chairman of the conference. Dr Yang-Rui Li, while conferring award to Prof Mohan lauded his untiring efforts to provide innovative solutions to the sugar industry across the globe in attaining much needed economic and environmental sustainability benefiting all the stakeholders, including sugarcane farmers. His concept of 'Beyond Sugar' and 'Bio-refinery model for sugar factories' stressing need for producing value-added products from by-products and waste has resulted in transformation of the sugar industry, he said. On the occasion Prof Narendra Mohan also addressed the delegates on the topic 'Business strategies for attaining sustainability by the sugar factories in South East Asia', wherein he discussed various models of production of bio-fuels from by-products and waste of the sugarcane-based sugar industry.

# Hindi Week: Handwriting competition organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Under Hindi Week, a handwriting competition was held for the employees at the training centre of IFCCO Phulpur here on Monday. Apart from this, Hindi handwriting and Antakshari competition was organised for the women of Ghiyanagar in the community centre. Antakshari was based on Hindi verses, couplets, poems, quatrains and shlokas. Women participated enthusiastically in both the competitions. Antakshari competition full of literary knowledge was the center of attraction. First Lady of IFCCO Phulpur Unit Vineeta Kudesia praised the Antakshari competition. The programme was coordinated by Hindi Working Committee coordinator Anil Kumar Gupta and members Swayam Prakash, Hemlata Sijoria, Arvind Chauhan, Vinod Kumar Yadav, Neetu Singh, Abhay Kumar and Rajneesh Mishra. WOMAN KILLED: A 30-year-old youth allegedly killed his girlfriend after calling her to a hotel in Soron on Sunday night. Five hours after her death he surrendered himself to the police. The police team took him to the hotel and found the woman's body lying on the bed. The police called the forensic team.

# Dr Kapoor re-elected KCA chairman



New office-bearers of KCA elected at the AGM on Sunday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Dr Sanjay Kapoor has been re-elected the Chairman of Kanpur Cricket Association (KCA) in its 74th Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on Sunday. All other office-bearers were also elected unopposed. SN Singh and Kaushal Kumar Singh were retained on the post of president and secretary respectively for the two-year term. In a bid to promote juniors' and women's cricket, a budget of ₹2.30 crore was also placed in the meeting. For the first time, plans were on the anvil to organise Kanpur Premier League on the pattern of IPL in the city. Election of the new office-bearers was held under the supervision of Sanjay Singh Jatav and Joginder Bahl in the Dadanagar Industrial Cooperative Estate auditorium. Addressing mediapersons, Chairman Dr Sanjay Kapoor said KCA will prepare budding players from U-14 to

U-19 group for the state team. For this, the KCA will organise a KPL on the pattern of IPL in the city in November in which cricketers with expertise in all fields will be eligible to participate. He said KCA will soon arrange a playground of its own in the city. The other new office-bearers included Sanjay Tewari, Arvind Singh, Ashish Sachan (vice presidents), PS Negi, Saurabh Gupta (joint secretaries), Vinay Anand (treasurer), Bhanu Pratap Singh, Anoop Jain, AP Singh, Vishal Khandelwal and Ayush Agarwal (members). Ashwani Kohli was elected the KPL Commissioner. WOMAN DUPED: A woman was duped allegedly of ₹22.18 lakh by a lawyer familiar to her on the pretext of providing her a job as an assistant professor in the CSJM University, Kanpur. The latter also sent a fake PhD degree and an appointment letter at her address. The matter came to light when the woman reached University to join her duty. The victim woman has now lodged FIR against four persons, including the lawyer, at the Swaroop Nagar police station. She alleged that when the lawyer refused to refund the amount and threatened with dire consequences, she met the city police commissioner Akhil Kumar and lodged a complaint. Thereafter the Swaroop Nagar police lodged an FIR against four persons and started a probe in the matter. VICTIM DIES: A minor gangrape survivor, who was undergoing treatment at the hospital for the past 16 days, succumbed to her illness on Monday morning. After four youths had forcibly dragged her from the house and sexually assaulted her she had allegedly consumed poisonous substance and was undergoing treatment in a private hospital. Her father is a farmer who said that on August 30 when his daughter (14) was studying in the verandah, four local youths had dragged her from the house and sexually assaulted her. DCP (East) Shravan Kumar Singh said police had lodged an FIR against all the four accused of gangrape and other serious crime and had been sent to jail. Now, after the death of the girl, relevant sections will be added to the FIR. Police will soon file the chargesheet to initiate strict penal action against the accused, he said.

# Various programmes to be held during 'Swachhata Ki Bhagidari' fortnight

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Various programmes on the theme of 'Swabhava Swachhata-Sanskar Swachhata, Swachhata Ki Bhagidari' fortnight will be held in Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) from September 17 to October 2. During this cleanliness campaign, focus will be on a total sanitation and Swachhata Mitra Suraksha camps will be organised. On the first day on September 17, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vineet Kumar Srivastava will administer the oath of cleanliness to the offi-

cers and employees working at the divisional office at the main entrance of the DRM Office at Lahartara. Along with this, a workshop will be organised at the major stations of the division to create public awareness among the railway passengers towards cleanliness. In the sequence of Swachhata Pakhwada (cleanliness fortnight), on September 18, Safai Mitra Suraksha and health camps will be organised in all the major stations of the division and railway units of railway colonies and PPE kits, safety gears and equipment etc will be provided for the safety of cleaning staff and health work-

ers. On the third day officers will travel a fixed distance by walking fast at the officers' club and all major stations (walkathon) to create awareness about cleanliness. Next day, in-door games will be organised by the Personnel department and Divisional Sports Association under SBM Sports. On September 21, the Engineering and EnHM department will register participation in making the environment green by planting saplings in the name of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' at all the big and small stations of Varanasi division by the Railway employees and officers. In the

sequence on September 22, the Mechanical and EnHM department will reduce, reuse and recycle the unusable and abandoned materials at all the big and small stations of Varanasi division. Along with this, artwork and decorative items will be made from abandoned waste. The next day, the Commercial department will sell artwork and modern decorative items made from abandoned waste at all the big and small stations of the division. Along with this, public awareness will be spread to ban the use of plastic in stations and railway colonies.

# Naval commanders conference to address China, Israel-Hamas conflict



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

China's growing assertiveness in the Ind-Pacific region and South China Sea and ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict will figure prominently in the Naval commanders' conference here from September 17 to 20. Giving details, officials said here on Monday, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will address the second edition of Naval Commanders' Conference.

It is the apex level biannual event facilitating deliberations on significant strategic,

operational and administrative issues between the Naval Commanders. Held against the backdrop of evolving geo-political and geo-strategic dynamics, regional challenges and complexity in maritime security situation in West Asia, the Conference plays a crucial role in shaping future course of Indian Navy. During the Conference, Rajnath will address the Naval Commanders on matters pertaining to national security and national expectations. The Chief of Defence Staff along with the Chiefs of Indian Army

and Indian Air Force will engage with Naval Commanders to foster collaborations amongst the three Services across spectrum of conflict and convergence towards theaterisation. The Conference will commence with the inaugural address by the Chief of the Naval Staff and he will review major Operational, Materiel, Logistic, HR Development, Training and Administrative activities pursued by the Indian Navy over last six months and deliberate upon key milestones to be crossed to safeguard maritime interests.

The Indian Navy has responded with strength and resolve against emerging threats of drones and missiles affecting safety of trade, demonstrating its capability as 'Preferred Security Responder' in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The Commanders will also review the ongoing Naval projects to enhance indigenisation through 'Make in India' in consonance with the vision of complete 'Aatmanirbharta' by 2047.

Towards Navy's commitment to protect India's maritime interests in the region, the Conference would witness comprehensive review of the Operational preparedness, inter alia discussions on the Navy's capability enhancement plan, promoting national vision of indigenisation, self-reliance and realising combat effectiveness of Naval forces. The Commanders' Conference as pivotal platform upholds Navy's commitment to safeguard India's maritime interests and Navy's status as a 'combat ready, credible, cohesive and future ready force.'

# Air Force Association celebrates 44th Annual Day



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Air Force Association (AFA) celebrated its 44th Annual Day on Monday. As part of the celebrations, the President of Air Force Association, Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhaduria (Retired) laid a wreath at the National War Memorial here on behalf of all IAF Veterans in the morning to honour those Armed Forces personnel who have made the supreme sacrifice for the nation. This was followed by the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at Air Force Auditorium, Subroto Park, New

Delhi on the same day, IAF said. Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari was the Chief Guest for the AGM. The meeting also had several retired Chiefs of the Air Staff, and serving officers in attendance. Air Force Association is a welfare organization in the non-governmental sector, actively involved in the welfare of air veterans and their families. The Association is also deeply committed in alleviating the sufferings of widows and destitute children. The Association was established in 1980 under the patronage of Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh. It has 20 branches spread all over the country. In addition, it has two branches in UK and Australia. It has nearly 98,494 Air Veteran members and 7,470 Spouse members. Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari was the Chief Guest for the AGM. The meeting also had several retired Chiefs of the Air Staff, and serving officers in attendance.



# SC to hear muslim plea on Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah dispute

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday a plea of the Muslim side against the Allahabad High Court order rejecting their petition challenging the maintainability of 18 cases related to the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah dispute in Mathura. A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar will hear the plea filed by the Committee of Management Trust, Shahi Masjid Idgah against the August 1 order of the high court. The mosque management committee's plea has been filed through advocate RHA Sikander. On August 1, the high court rejected the plea challenging the maintainability of 18 cases related to the temple-mosque dispute in Mathura, and ruled that the 'religious character' of Shahi Idgah needs to be determined.

Justice Mayank Kumar Jain of the high court had concluded that the cases "do not appear to be barred by any provisions of the Wakf Act, 1995; the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991; the Specific Relief Act, 1963; the Limitation Act, 1963 and Order XIII Rule 3A of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908." On August 9, the top court had extended its stay till November on the operation of the Allahabad High Court order that allowed a court-monitored survey of the Shahi Idgah mosque complex. A bench headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna had ordered continuation of the stay till the apex court had imposed on January 16 on the operation of the December 14, 2023 order of the high court. The high court in its December 14, 2023 order had allowed a court-monitored survey of the Shahi Idgah mosque complex and agreed to the appointment of a court commissioner to oversee it. The Hindu side claims the premises hold signs suggesting that a temple once existed at the site. A bunch of petitions has been filed by the mosque management committee in the apex court including the one challenging the May 26, 2023 order of the high court transferring to itself all matters related to the dispute pending before a Mathura court. In Mathura, a suit was filed in the court of Civil Judge Senior Division (III) for shifting the Shahi Idgah mosque, claiming that it was constructed on a part of the 13.37 acre land of the Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust.



# Cambridge researchers unveil blueprint behind floral patterns in Hibiscus

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Do you know flowers not only captivate with their colors but also guide pollinators like bees with their intricate patterns, much like a road map to their nectar? A team of researchers from the University of Cambridge's Sainsbury Laboratory has unveiled a hidden blueprint behind these floral designs, particularly in hibiscus flowers (Gudhal in Hindi). They found that bees prefer larger bullseyes over smaller ones and fly 25% faster between artificial flower discs with larger bullseyes – potentially boosting efficiency for both bees and blossoms. This blueprint, laid down early in petal formation, determines the size and shape of the eye-catching bullseye patterns that can significantly influence a flower's appeal to pollinators, said the study published in Science Advances.

"Remarkably, bees are drawn to larger bullseyes, which could boost their foraging efficiency by 25%. This discovery not only deepens our understanding of how plants attract pollinators but also reveals the sophisticated strategies flowers use to evolve and thrive in their ecological niches," explained Dr Edwige Moyroud, main author of the study understanding the mechanisms underlying pattern formation in petals. The researchers discovered that

a pre-pattern forms on the petal surface very early in the flower's development, long before the petal displays any discernible color. "The petal acts like a 'paint-by-numbers' canvas, where different regions are predetermined to develop specific colours and textures long before they start looking different from one another. The research also revealed that plants can precisely regulate and alter the shape and size of these patterns through various mechanisms, which could influence plant evolution. By refining these designs, plants might enhance their ability to attract pollinators or potentially draw different insect species. "If a trait can be produced by different methods, it gives evolution more options to modify it and create diversity, similar to an artist with a large palette or a builder with an extensive set of tools. By studying how bullseye patterns change, what we are really trying to understand is how nature generates biodiversity." Lead author Dr. Lucie Riglet said in the study that she explored the mechanism behind hibiscus petal patterns by studying the development of petals in three hibiscus flowers that had identical overall sizes but varied bullseye patterns. She observed that the pre-pattern starts as a tiny, crescent-shaped area long before the bullseye becomes visible on petals smaller than 0.2mm.

# President Murmu to inaugurate 8th India Water Week 2024

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate the four-day 8th India Water Week 2024 to be kicked off from Tuesday, bringing international and domestic water experts under a platform to deliberate on issues beyond conventional solutions and exploring innovative approaches to address the complexities of water management in the 21st century. Addressing the media during the Curtain Raiser Press Conference here on Monday, Secretary (Jal Shakti) Debashree Mukherjee said that the theme of the mega event is 'Partnerships and Cooperation for Inclusive Water Development and Management. "Our theme underscores a



fundamental truth: achieving sustainable water management requires collaboration across all sectors and levels," she added. Mukherjee further informed that the event, the eighth in the series, will be inaugurated in the presence of Union Minister of Jal Shakti CR Paatil and Minister of State Raj Bhushan Choudhary. It is being organized by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The event will feature distin-

guished delegates, including experts in the field of water resources from various countries, as well as ministers and senior officers from Central and State Governments, faculty from various academic institutions, representatives from non-governmental organizations, and civil society. The aim is to initiate regular and systematic discussions and talks with eminent stakeholders through seminars, exhibi-

tions, and other parallel sessions to build public awareness and gain support for implementing key strategies for the conservation, preservation, and optimal use of available water, said a statement here. At the event, while representatives from the government sector will share their vision and perspectives on the water sector, global experts will present their insightful and thought-provoking ideas. The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, participating as a partner ministry, will showcase its efforts to advance sustainable water practices in rural India. It is promoting Water-Sufficient Villages as part of its initiative on the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals through targeted panchayat development plans by converging resources.

# Congress to chair external affairs, agriculture, rural development committees in LS

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Congress will chair the parliamentary standing committees on external affairs, agriculture, and rural development in the Lok Sabha and education in the Rajya Sabha, party sources said on Monday, with talks between the government and the opposition over the panels' chairmanship concluding. In all, the Congress is set to have the chairmanship of four department-related standing committees – three in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha. The Congress will chair the Department Related Standing Committee on External Affairs; Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Food Processing; Rural



Development and Panchayati Raj in the Lok Sabha; and Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports in the Rajya Sabha, a source told. Significantly, the Congress will chair the crucial committee on external affairs after a gap of five years. Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor headed

the panel on external affairs between September 2014 and May 2019. The Congress last held the chairmanship of two department-related standing committees in the Rajya Sabha and one in the Lok Sabha. While Jairam Ramesh headed the committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Abhishek Singhvi chaired the panel on Commerce. Tharoor headed the Committee on Chemicals and Fertilisers in the Lok Sabha. Talks have been going on for quite some time over chairmanship of the department-related standing committees, with the government and opposition bargaining hard over control of key committees such as external affairs, defence, finance and home.

# Congress claims Modi in his 100 days proved weak PM

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

With Modi 3.0 completing 100 days, the Congress on Monday claimed that Narendra Modi in his third term had proven to be a "weak" prime minister who was dependent on crutches and setting new records for U-turns. Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said the past 100 days had weighed heavily on the nation's farmers, youth, women, infrastructure, Railways, and overall peace. These hundred days have proven that Modi has neither a solution nor a vision for the country's problems, she said at a press conference at the AICC headquarters. Modi's "habit" of turning a blind eye to issues and running away from challenges continues to persist, she

claimed. "Each moment of the government in these 100 days has been marked by instability, indecision and immaturity. There have been multiple attempts to inflate a punctured balloon but the thorn pricked by the public in the Lok Sabha elections has not given Narendra Modi any chance to rise again," she said. "Do you remember the tall claims made during the election campaign that Narendra Modi was planning for the first 100 days? Where is that plan now? Because from day one, Modi has proven to be a weak prime minister, dependent on crutches, setting new records for U-turns," Shrinete said and cited alleged U-turns on issues of lateral entry in civil services, broadcast bill, Waqf bill, indexation and NPS. Posing questions to the prime minister, Shrinete asked if he had any plan or vision for the next five years. "Do you have a plan to improve relations with our neighbouring countries? Do you have a plan to address the economy, income inequality, unemployment, inflation, or women's safety?" Shrinete asked. "Besides blowing the whistle on corruption, what have you done? In fact, all those you called corrupt are now in the BJP. Are you planning to legitimise corruption now?"

# SC to hear pleas on demolition of properties of person accused of crime

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday pleas which have raised grievances that properties of persons, who are accused of some crime, were being demolished in several States. While hearing these petitions on September 2, the apex court had questioned how can anybody's house be demolished just because he was an accused. The apex court had said it proposes to lay down certain guidelines on the issue that would be enforceable across the country. "How can anybody's house be demolished only because he is an accused? Even if he is a convict, still it can't be done without following the procedure as

prescribed by law," observed the bench comprising Justices B R Gawai and K V Viswanathan. However, the court said it will not protect any unauthorised construction or encroachment on public roads. "We propose to lay down certain guidelines on 'pan-India basis' so that the concerns with regard to the issues raised are taken care of," the bench had said on September 2. It had asked the counsel appearing for the parties to give suggestions so that the court can frame appropriate guidelines. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Uttar Pradesh, had referred to an earlier affidavit filed by the state in the matter. He had said the affidavit states

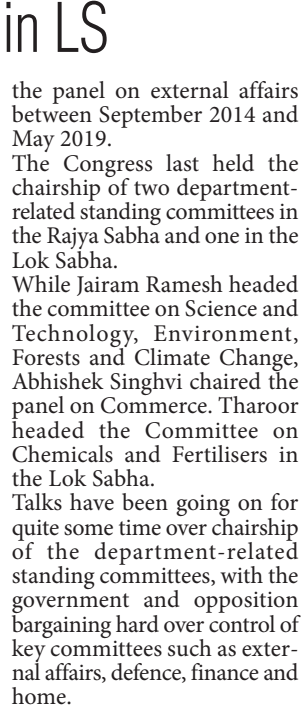
that merely because a person was alleged to have been a part of some offence can never be a ground for demolition of his immovable property. According to Mehta, the state has said demolition of an immovable property can take place "only for violation of and in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the respective applicable municipal law or law governing development authorities of the area." The top law officer had said no immovable property can be demolished solely on the ground that the owner or occupant of such property was involved in a criminal offence. The counsel appearing for one of the petitioners had said almost every state was now indulging in this and demolishing properties.

# Varicose veins linked to serious health risks, new treatments enhance safety, effectiveness

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Often dismissed as merely a cosmetic nuisance, Varicose veins, the enlarged and twisted veins typically found in the legs, can pose significant health risks and should not be underestimated, health experts have warned. For individuals with varicose veins face up to a five-fold increased risk of developing deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a potentially life-threatening condition. Varicose veins are also linked to peripheral arterial disease and other vascular disorders, caution health experts. In a study published online in Cureous, Chukwuyem Ekhatior, Neuro-Oncology from New York Institute of Technology, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Old Westbury, USA said while some individuals remain asymptomatic, others experience discomfort such as

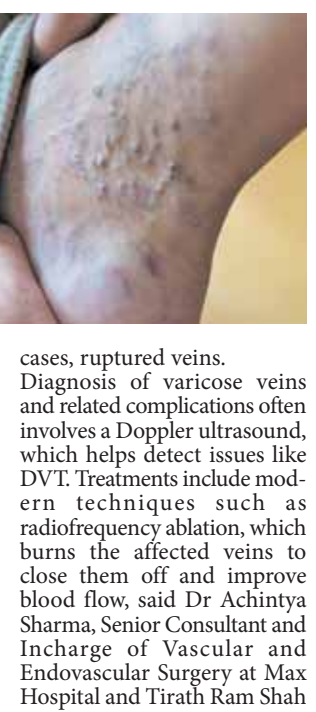
pain, itching, and throbbing. If left untreated, chronic venous insufficiency can progress to more severe stages, leading to complications like edema, skin changes, ulcers, and bleeding. Recent advancements in treatment have enhanced safety, effectiveness, and long-term success, said co-author Sophia B Bellegarde, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, American University of Antigua, Cooldidge, ATG. Dr. Vimal Bhandari, former head of the National Organ Transplant and Tissue Organisation (NOTTO) and Professor of Surgery at ESI Hospital and Medical College, explained, "The condition arises when the valves within veins fail to function properly, leading to blood pooling and causing the veins to become twisted and enlarged. This malfunction is not only a cosmetic issue but a



precursor to serious complications if left untreated." He advised seeking medical attention if varicose veins cause discomfort, swelling, or affect daily activities. Symptoms such as persistent pain, swelling, skin ulcers, sudden vein enlargement, or changes in skin color or texture should prompt a consultation with a healthcare provider. Early intervention can prevent complications such as venous ulcers, redness, eczema, and, in severe

cases, ruptured veins. Diagnosis of varicose veins and related complications often involves a Doppler ultrasound, which helps detect issues like DVT. Treatments include modern techniques such as radiofrequency ablation, which burns the affected veins to close them off and improve blood flow, said Dr Achintya Sharma, Senior Consultant and Incharge of Vascular and Endovascular Surgery at Max Hospital and Tirath Ram Shah

Hospital. He highlighted the prevalence of varicose veins, noting they affect approximately 40-60% of women, often due to factors like pregnancy and weight gain, and 15-30% of men. "Modern methods focus on minimally invasive procedures rather than traditional invasive surgeries. Options include compression therapy, sclerotherapy, and laser therapy. Sclerotherapy involves injecting a solution into the vein to cause it to collapse and fade over time," Dr Aakash Patel from Shalby Hospitals, Ahmedabad talked about the Glue therapy, a minimally invasive and highly effective solution for treating varicose veins. He said that the therapy allows patients to return to their daily activities with minimal downtime. It has been effectively used in the United States and Europe for the last 5 years.





www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Damage control

Kejriwal's resignation announcement sparks speculation about the move and the future of AAP

In a move that has surprised many, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is set to resign on September 17. As speculations swirl about the reasons behind his decision, political observers are divided—some see it as a strategic manoeuvre, while others suggest it might be a forced move driven by internal and external pressures. The resignation raises serious questions about the future of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and crucially, who might succeed him as the next Delhi chief minister. Kejriwal, known for his populist style of politics, has in the past made many bold announcements that appeared to be strategic gambles, often aimed at galvanising his voter base. His decision to step down as Delhi's Chief Minister in 2014 over the Jan Lokpal Bill is a notable example. The Congress party maintains that this upcoming resignation could be another political gimmick, designed to keep Kejriwal in the spotlight or shift the narrative around AAP's recent challenges, especially when the Delhi elections are just months away.



Interestingly, Kejriwal did not resign while he was in jail and ran the Delhi government from behind the bars. He maintains that it is the BJP's design to embroil non-BJP chief ministers into false cases of corruption and send them to jail, make them resign and split their party. He is vocal about it and implores other CMs not to resign come what may. However, there are also compelling arguments that this resignation may be more than just a stunt, an attempt to revive the party. His resignation is perhaps a necessary response to salvage his image as an honest and selfless leader and boost his party's standing in the

upcoming elections. He would have an advantage when he goes to voters and tells them about his resignation and plays a victim card. Regardless of whether Kejriwal's resignation is a tactic or a forced measure, it undeniably leaves AAP at a critical juncture. Kejriwal has been the face of the party since its inception, and his exit from the Delhi Chief Minister's office could destabilise the party's core support base. More so as second-in-command, Manish Sisodia will also not be named as the new CM. AAP has worked hard to position itself as an alternative to the national parties, with a focus on governance, education, healthcare, and anti-corruption measures. However, the party's fortunes have largely depended on Kejriwal's leadership. His potential resignation could either pave the way for the party to mature into a broader, more stable entity or expose its dependency on a single individual. The pressing question now is: Who could be the next CM? Many AAP leader could take his place—Sanjay Singh, Atishi Marlena, Raghav Chadha or even his wife Sunita but it would be Kejriwal's choice for sure. As AAP looks ahead, the question remains: can the party make a comeback in the next elections despite its top brass embroiled in serious charges of corruption and wrongdoing. Well, Delhiites would know better.

### PICTALK



Folk artists take part in a human chain organised as part of 'International Democracy Day' celebrations, in Bengaluru PTI

## A cup of garam chai: The essence of India

In India, tea is a symbol of unity, ritual, and tradition. This humble drink connects regions, cultures and generations, creating cherished memories, one sip at a time

In India, tea transcends mere consumption; it embodies a lifestyle. Whether in the bustling streets of Mumbai or the serene backwaters of Kerala, the clinking of tea cups resonates, marking the essence of every region in the country. Whether it is scorching summers or bone-chilling winters, tea is a remedy that brings Indians together to start the day, refuel, or simply enjoy a moment of solace.



This particular beverage serves as a connection across various regions and cultures, firmly establishing itself as a fundamental element in the majority of Indian households. The humble beverage, often referred to as "chai," unites people in a truly unparalleled way. In moments of family togetherness, during brief pauses between meetings, or while enjoying time with friends, tea remains a steadfast presence. The allure of tea is found in its ability to offer a blend that caters to each person's unique preferences and methods of preparation and enjoyment. For some, it is the timeless combination of milk and water; others enjoy it as a brew crafted entirely from milk. Next come the imaginative elements: cardamom for an aromatic boost, ginger to add a warm, spicy flair, or masala for its rich, intricate taste. The possibilities are limitless, reflecting the boundless diversity that India embodies. But what unites us all is the essence of tea. It's not just about the flavours, but the moments it creates. Picture a rainy monsoon day, the air fresh and invigorating, with a warm cup of tea cradled in your hand. You take a sip, relishing the warmth, as you nibble on fresh theplas or crispy pakoras. Perhaps it's one of those crisp early winter mornings when you are cocooned in your blanket, your chai infused with ginger to stir your senses as you savour that buttery paratha. These experiences are not just about satisfying a craving but about creating memories and connections, one cup at a time. Tea doesn't just complement Indian food—it enhances it. Whether it's dunking biscuits into a hot cup of chai, enjoying a slice of cake alongside tea, or savouring it with savoury snacks like samosas, this beverage possesses an enchanting quality that enhances any meal. Tea is often the centrepiece of these culinary experiences. There's an unspoken rule in many households: the tea must always be hot, plentiful, and perfectly brewed. Once the kettle is on, everything else fades into the background. The allure of tea

# Debunking conspiracy theories with AI

Amid the digital chaos, the truth is the first casualty. It must be revealed before it is too late. AI comes handy in the fight for clarity and clearing doubts



SANTOSH MATHEW

As the digital age unfolds, one thing is clear: conspiracy theories have never been easier to spread, nor harder to debunk. In 2024, as humanity embraces cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, it's a strange paradox that ancient prophecies and far-fetched theories still hold a powerful grip on the collective imagination. From claims that the Moon landing was faked to the spread of false narratives about the COVID-19 pandemic, conspiracy theories shape our perception of world events, offering an alluring—if misleading—explanation for the chaotic times we live in.

Our fascination with the unknown has deep historical roots. Figures like the 16th-century mystic Nostradamus and the blind Bulgarian prophet Baba Vanga have captivated millions with their supposed ability to foresee global disasters, political upheavals, and even pandemics. For centuries, people have tried to align Nostradamus' cryptic quatrains with real-world events, from the rise of Hitler to the assassination of JFK. Similarly, Baba Vanga's alleged predictions of 9/11, Brexit, and natural disasters have only fueled modern fears of impending doom. Yet, despite the scepticism that surrounds their claims, these figures remain symbols of the human desire to make sense of a world that often seems beyond our control. In today's world, conspiracy theories have evolved. No longer confined to whispered conversations in dimly lit rooms, they now dominate social media platforms and news outlets.

The Flat Earth Society, which defies centuries of scientific evidence to insist that the Earth is flat, finds new believers daily. The widely debunked theory that NASA staged the 1969 Moon landing still draws attention, as do theories that connect Nostradamus' prophecies to modern political figures like Donald Trump. While such theories may seem harmless or even entertaining to some, the consequences are often real and dangerous. The COVID-19 pandemic, for exam-



ple, was a breeding ground for conspiracy theories. False claims that the virus was engineered as a bioweapon, or that 5G technology spread the disease, circulated rapidly. These beliefs not only stoked fear but also fueled vaccine resistance, leading to a slower public health response. As artificial intelligence continues to revolutionize our world, it's also becoming a powerful tool for both the spread of and the fight against conspiracy theories. AI itself has become a subject of suspicion, with some fearing it as a means of mass surveillance or control.



**AI IS ALSO BEING DEPLOYED TO COMBAT MISINFORMATION. RESEARCHERS HAVE RECENTLY BEGUN EXPERIMENTING WITH AI CHATBOTS, LIKE GPT-4, TO ENGAGE WITH CONSPIRACY THEORISTS DIRECTLY**

But AI is also being deployed to combat misinformation. Researchers have recently begun experimenting with AI chatbots, like GPT-4, to engage with conspiracy theorists directly. In a controlled study, participants were invited to express their beliefs in specific conspiracy theories. The AI then engaged them in a three-round dialogue, offering counterarguments and evidence to debunk their claims. Remarkably, these conversations led to a 20% reduction in participants' belief in their chosen conspiracy theory, and the effect lasted for at least two months.

While these results are promising, they only scratch the surface of a much larger issue. Conspiracy theories persist because they provide simple, emotionally charged explana-

tions for complex global events. In times of uncertainty, people naturally seek out answers that make sense of their fears. Whether it's the belief that the U.S. government orchestrated the 9/11 attacks or that NASA faked the Moon landing to win the space race, these theories offer a false sense of order in a disorderly world. Social media algorithms amplify these ideas, often pushing the most extreme narratives into the spotlight, further fueling distrust and division.

Even AI, with its potential to debunk misinformation, cannot overcome the deep-seated fear and scepticism that drive people to embrace conspiracy theories in the first place. The rise of AI has sparked its own set of conspiracies, with some claiming that it's part of a grand plot for world domination or that it's being used to control the masses. As much as AI can engage and educate, its ability to change hearts and minds is limited when faced with the sheer emotional power of fear and distrust. And it's not just AI or social media that keeps conspiracy theories alive. Historical events like the 9/11 attacks, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the AIDS epidemic have all been used to fuel false narratives. One long-standing theory claims that HIV was a man-made biological weapon designed to target specific

populations, particularly African Americans and Latinos. Despite decades of scientific research disproving such claims, these ideas continue to find an audience among those who mistrust government and scientific authorities. At the heart of every conspiracy theory lies a fundamental distrust of authority. As Roman historian Tacitus once observed, when governments or those in power lose the trust of the people, manipulation and suspicion take root.

And in today's hyper-connected world, these suspicions spread with unprecedented speed. Yet, there is hope. While AI alone cannot solve the problem of misinformation, it can be a valuable tool in the broader effort to rebuild trust and foster dialogue. The challenge is not just to debunk falsehoods but to address the deeper emotional and psychological needs that drive people to believe in them in the first place. It requires a concerted effort from governments, media, educators, and individuals to promote transparency, critical thinking, and open communication. As the world becomes more connected, the stakes grow higher. Misinformation, once confined to fringe groups, now has the power to shape global events.

*(The writer is an associate professor, views are personal)*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### KEJRIWAL TO RESIGN

Madam — Kejriwal's move to resign and call for fresh elections to Delhi Assembly is a ploy to assert his position in the party and capitalize incarceration sympathy in popularity. The SC's bail condition in any case bars him from entering the secretariat and permits signing only such orders which are to be sent to LG for his assent which effectively debars him as a functional CM. This condition will require an alternative CM until the term ends in February 25 which is too long a period in politics by which time the alternative leader chosen, can marginalize Kejriwal, to assert his leadership position. AAP now has a chance to negotiate a deal with Congress by bartering seats in Haryana for a possible coalition in Delhi elections and can fight to regain its hold on Delhi. The victory thus scored in Delhi assembly election apart from giving a morale booster for Kejriwal and his supporters in AAP will also help him assert his leadership position in the party. He will also move the court subsequently, as popularly elected leader of the assembly, for relaxation in the bail conditions which court may also consider with some conditions which bears relation to the charges framed.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

### NEED FOR MORE EXPRESS TRAINS

Madam — It is with reference to the news: P M Modi flags of Vande Metro ,inaugurates four Vande Bharat trains in Bihar" - September 16. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated four Vande Bharat trains in Bihar and Vande Metro in Gujarat. As Railway Minister said these trains not only reflect the success of the "Make in India" initiative but also set new global standards of speed, safety and service. In the fast moving world Vande Bharat trains, Tejas Express, Shatabdi Express and Duronto trains are must for Indian Railways. But these premium trains to attract niche clientele in spe-

### A politician and a gentleman



Heaping praises on any big figures from any walk of life after their demise is a common trend but the septuagenarian veteran Marxist leader and general secretary of the CPI(M) Sitaram Yechury was one of the select few national political personalities who was always held in the highest esteem by all

his peers across the political divide, irrespective of divergence of views. Verily, the departed Communist leader's out-of-the-blue passing away has left the party orphaned and, hence, it will take time to find his befitting replacement notwithstanding, the void his demise has caused in the national political space can never be filled adequately. Sitaram Yechury has left a deep void in the national political arena. Revered by peers across political divides, his untimely demise has orphaned his party, leaving a leadership gap that will take time to fill. Despite political differences, Yechury's ability to command respect from all corners remains unparalleled. His absence will be profoundly felt, and the space he occupied will be difficult to replace. A true stalwart, his legacy will endure. Rest in peace, Sitaram Yechury.

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

### PRISONER NO 626710

Madam — Umar Khalid has completed four years in jail without trial. He was arrested under the UAPA on September 14, 2020, in connection with the Delhi riots. Recently, the Supreme Court has ruled that courts cannot decline bail, even under the special anti-terror law UAPA, and other offences, once the accused satisfies his prima facie innocence. But he and 11 others have still been awaiting trial in jail. Khalid is accused of making two speeches that instigated protestors to block roads. A documentary, "Prisoner No. 626710 is Present", on him has shown his controversial speech in Maharashtra in 2020 in its entirety. It is reported that he urged the people in that speech to use Gandhian means to oppose the new citizenship laws, which sparked fears of disenfranchisement. If it is true, then it means that Mahatma Gandhi could have faced the UAPA had he still been alive.

Sujit De | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

**FIRST COLUMN**

**KARMIC CYCLES AND VEDIC WISDOM**

Shradh rituals help ancestral souls go beyond cycle of birth and death



ASHWINI GURUJI

The soul incarnates into a physical body which is made up of the five elements in various permutations and combinations, reincarnating birth after birth depending on the kind of karmas that one does in a lifetime. Certain souls do not reincarnate, either because they are finished with their karmic cycle of the lok (the Prithvi lok) or because they are stuck in a different dimension of existence and are unable to manifest in the human body, as their karmic balance is not sufficient to entitle them for human birth. These souls either remain suspended as energies and are called ghosts and spirits or they go to a different dimension of existence called the pitr lok or the lok of the ancestors. Whatever dimension or level of existence they are in unless they have been freed from the cycle of birth and death, they need energy from their offspring to offset their karmic balance to enable them to reincarnate again. Shradhs are an important part of the Hindu/ Vedic culture and cater to these ancestors' needs. On these days the constellations are such that the gateways to the other dimensions open and they are allowed to visit the earth to meet their near and dear ones. These ancestors depend on their children and grandchildren to do good deeds in their name and to chant specific mantras, both these acts free the souls from bondages of these not-desired yonis or levels of existence. It is the basic duty of the family members to perform certain rites and do charity and guardian in the names of their close ones. At present and age, the youth of the country has no idea about the power and efficacy of the Vedic sciences and the phenomenal knowledge of the Vedic



mantras and rituals, the present education system is to be blamed for this as it is completely based on what the colonial masters chose for us, they were fearful of the power of the Vedas and hence destroyed the gurukul system and ensured that we were taught redundant sciences and tweaked history to their advantage the purpose was so that the coming generations lose faith in their culture and follow the colonial masters blindly. The result that they wanted is visible today. For the younger generations who might be thinking by now that this article reeks of Hinduva and is a fairy tale based on fiction, I would like to point out certain facts of history. In the ancient world, the main cultures flourishing around 4000 years back were the Egyptians, the Mesopotamians, the Romans, the Mayans etc. and of course our very own culture. None of the present day religions or schools of thought were present, except the Hindu religion and the Vedic thought. All the cultures are prevalent believed in the other world and travelling of the soul to other dimensions. The pyramids are aligned in the north-south direction and the shafts in them are pointing towards the three main stars of the Orion belt which the scientists of today say could be the birthplace of stars and human origin. The technology to move such heavy stones to build pyramids is still not available to mankind. As a matter of fact, scientists are to date baffled by them, they were further baffled when they found high doses of radioactivity in the bones indicating an atomic explosion of the human remains at Mohenjo Daro. 4000 years back when these civilisations were flourishing, at that time the third guy or the diaper yug was in process, if we just try to go back further to the treta yug and read about the various weapons used in the Ramayana war, we would realise that our ancestors knew the way the creation functions and the secrets of the lokas and the world of energy. The hindu culture is the only culture that predates all the other cultures and is still the largest practised religion, its mantras and practices are not mumbo jumbo but they are a gift of a highly advanced civilisation to the present day humans. That's why it has survived till date.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

**Social business promises inclusive development**



UTTAM CHAKROBARTY

Social businesses have the potential to blend financial sustainability with solutions to social issues like poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation

The deliberations of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across the globe are getting louder. However, SDGs have much to do with inclusive development in India. Nevertheless, as India marches towards becoming a global economic powerhouse, the challenge of inclusive development remains a daunting task. Despite robust economic growth, disparities in wealth, education, healthcare, and opportunities persist, leaving large segments of the population marginalized. In this context, the concept of social business has garnered increasing attention as a solution that addresses both social and economic challenges simultaneously.

Of late, this alternative paradigm for development is getting a boost in the country. Social business is a powerful model designed to tackle pressing social problems - poverty, inequality, healthcare and education - while operating in a financially sustainable way. Unlike traditional businesses, which prioritize profit maximization for shareholders, social businesses are driven by a mission to solve societal issues, and any profits generated are reinvested into the business to scale its impact. This innovative approach to entrepreneurship is particularly relevant in India, where the scope for addressing societal gaps through market-driven solutions is immense. The Genesis of Social Business Over the past decade, India has witnessed a surge in interest in social entrepreneurship. Fueled by rising awareness of social issues, a growing youth population, and the rise of impact investment funds, the country is now home to a plethora of social businesses across sectors.

Organizations like SELCO, which provides affordable solar lighting to low-income households, and Araku Coffee, which empowers tribal farmers through sustainable agriculture practices, exemplify how businesses can be a force for good. India's unique landscape of socio-economic diversity also presents a fertile ground for social innovation. Entrepreneurs are finding creative ways to solve challenges related to agriculture, healthcare, sanitation, education, and financial inclusion. For example, Amul, India's dairy cooperative giant, operates on principles that align closely with social business, ensuring fair wages for farmers while providing quality products to consumers. Similarly, Goonj, a non-profit working in rural India, converts urban waste into useful products, addressing both poverty and waste management. An Alternative Path India, with a population of over 1.4 billion, faces an array of socio-economic challenges.

Although the country has made significant progress in areas like technology and infrastructure, millions continue to struggle with basic needs like clean water, healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. Traditional government interventions and charity-driven models, while vital, often fail to create sustainable and scalable solutions. This is where the social business model comes in—bridging the gap between business and social responsibility. Facets of Social Business India's healthcare sector, while rapidly growing, remains highly unequal. Millions of people, particularly in rural areas, lack access to quality medical services. Social businesses like Narayana Health, founded by Dr. Devi Shetty, are addressing this issue by providing low-cost, high-quality



WITH THE RISE OF A NEW GENERATION OF SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS ENTREPRENEURS, SUPPORTED BY IMPACT INVESTORS AND TECHNOLOGY, THE POTENTIAL FOR SOCIAL BUSINESS TO DRIVE CHANGE IS GREATER THAN EVER

healthcare to the masses. The education sector in India faces challenges of accessibility, quality, and affordability, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. Social enterprises like Teach For India are working to bridge the gap by bringing talented individuals to teach in under-resourced schools. Agriculture remains the backbone of India's economy, employing over 50% of the population. However, smallholder farmers often struggle with access to markets, credit, and sustainable practices. Social businesses like DeHaan, which offers end-to-end agricultural services including input distribution, crop advisory, and market linkage, are empowering farmers and improving their incomes. India's push towards renewable energy, in line with its commitments to combat climate change, has opened up a new frontier for social businesses.

The rise of eco-friendly and sustainable products, driven by social businesses, has also led to a growing market for sustainable fashion and organic products in urban areas. **Growing Graph of Social Business** A critical enabler of social business in India has been the rise of impact investing. Impact investors, unlike traditional venture capitalists, seek to generate not just financial returns but also measurable social and environmental impact. The growth of funds like Aavishkaar, Acumen, and Omidyar Network has provided crucial capital to early-stage social businesses, allowing them to scale and deepen their impact. The Indian government has also recognized the potential of social businesses to drive inclusive growth. Programs like Startup India, which provides financial support, mentorship, and tax incentives, have been extended to social enterprises, encouraging more entrepreneurs to tackle pressing social issues. Not All Roses Many social businesses, especially those operating in rural areas, struggle to secure the necessary funding to scale their operations. Traditional financial institu-

tions often view social enterprises as high-risk, given their focus on impact rather than profit maximization. Although impact investing is on the rise, the availability of patient capital—long-term, low-return investments necessary for social businesses to thrive—is still limited. One of the biggest challenges for social businesses is scaling their impact while maintaining financial sustainability. Often, social enterprises are deeply rooted in local contexts, which can make it difficult to replicate their models across different geographies. Additionally, scaling can sometimes dilute the focus on the social mission, as businesses seek profitability to sustain growth. The regulatory environment for social businesses in India is still evolving. Navigating complex bureaucratic processes, securing the necessary permits, and dealing with multiple government agencies can be time-consuming and expensive. There is also a lack of clear legal recognition for social businesses, which often operate in a grey area between non-profit organizations and traditional for-profit companies.

**Measuring Social Impact:** Unlike traditional businesses, where success is measured purely in terms of financial performance, social businesses must demonstrate their social impact. However, measuring impact can be complex, and there is no standardized framework for doing so. Many social businesses struggle to strike a balance between maximizing their impact and ensuring that they remain financially viable. India's booming tech industry has become a key driver of social innovation. The proliferation of smartphones and internet connectivity has enabled social businesses to reach remote and underserved populations more effectively. From fintech solutions that provide micro-loans to rural entrepreneurs, to edtech platforms offering quality education at scale, technology is unlocking new opportunities for social businesses to deepen their impact. One notable example is the Jan Dhan-

Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, a government initiative that has expanded financial inclusion by linking bank accounts to mobile numbers and Aadhaar (India's biometric identification system). This digital infrastructure has empowered social businesses to deliver services like digital payments, insurance, and healthcare more efficiently.

**The Way Forward** As India continues its journey toward becoming an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society, social businesses will play an increasingly important role. With the rise of a new generation of socially conscious entrepreneurs, supported by impact investors and technology, the potential for social business to drive change is greater than ever.

The COVID-19 accelerated the momentum for social entrepreneurship in India, with many seeing social businesses as a key pillar in the country's post-pandemic recovery. However, for the social business movement to truly take off, greater support from the government, investors, and civil society is essential.

Policy makers must create an enabling environment through targeted incentives and streamlined regulations. Meanwhile, impact investors need to provide more patient capital to allow social enterprises to grow sustainably. Precisely, social business represents a powerful tool for driving inclusive development in India. By addressing social problems through innovative, financially viable solutions, social businesses can empower individuals, uplift communities, and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous society.

As India continues to evolve, the role of social business will only grow in importance, offering hope for a future where economic growth and social progress go hand in hand.

(The writer is an Associate professor at the School of management, Presidency University, Bengaluru; views expressed are personal)

**Empowering teachers, empowering India: Paving the path to becoming Vishwa Guru**

With the National Education Policy 2020 and NCTE programs paving the way, India is poised to reclaim its status as a global beacon of knowledge

PM quotes 'Education is not just a way to gain knowledge but a means to transform the world'. It is our teachers who will lead this transformation, making India not only a land of knowledge but a beacon of hope and wisdom for the entire world. Teacher's Day, celebrated few days back, serves as a poignant reminder of the selfless contributions made by teachers throughout their careers.



PANKAJ ARORA

It allows students to express their gratitude, love, and respect for the people who have guided and inspired them to become true citizens. The celebration is a vehicle for recognising the immeasurable value teachers bring to society and emphasising the importance of education

as a pillar of the nation. India now moves closer to realizing its dream of becoming a Vishwa Guru, the teaching profession continues to be a vital force in this journey, as India is well on its way to reclaiming its ancient mantle. India's rich educational heritage is deeply rooted in its culture, recapitulating the legacy of Indian education, where teachers are equated

with creators 'Brahma, the creator of the universe' in Hindu philosophy. This essence of the guru-shishya (teacher-student) relationship, where knowledge was imparted by sages in gurukuls, gave a strong emphasis on the holistic development of children. The teachers or 'Gurus' were revered, holding a status that was even higher than that of emperors. India's ancient universities like Nalanda and Takshashila were some of the earliest global learning centres of learning for the world. India's ancient texts, such as the Vedas and Upanishads, have long been sources of wisdom for the world. As India strives to reclaim its position as a global leader in knowledge, the role of teacher-

becomes even more crucial who are at the centre of this transformation. The time is ripe for the youth of India to embrace the teaching profession; by investing in the teaching profession and addressing its challenges, India can build a strong foundation for a future where it leads not just in power, but in wisdom and knowledge as well. The role of teachers in this endeavour is indispensable, making them the true architects of India's bright future, by inspiring curiosity, encouraging critical thinking, and instilling values, they are shaping the future leaders of the world. Prime Minister Modi's vision for India as a global leader is not just about economic growth or technological advancement; it is



about creating a society where knowledge, wisdom, and values are cherished. As India marches towards its goal of becoming a Vishwa Guru, the teaching profession will be playing a pivotal role in shaping this vision. Teachers are the torchbearers

of knowledge, and their empowerment is crucial when India embarks on its mission of becoming a Vishwa Guru. India's aspiration to become a Vishwa Guru is deeply intertwined with its education system, where National Education

Policy (NEP) 2020 has emerged as a significant step in this direction, focusing on improving teacher education, and professional development, and creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes a more flexible, multidisciplinary approach to education, places a strong focus on the professional development of teachers.

For India to truly become a Vishwa Guru, it must invest in its teachers, who serve as architects of the nation's future through their unwavering dedication. This is where NCTE is playing a pivotal role in providing them with the resources, training, and support they

need to excel in their profession. The flagship programs of NCTE are instrumental in elevating the status of teachers in society, by giving them the right support & training. India's teachers will undoubtedly lead the way in shaping the future of the world. It recognizes that to nurture future leaders, teachers themselves must be continuously learning and adapting to new pedagogies to ensure that they are equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

(The writer is the Chairperson, National Council for Teacher Education, Ministry of Education, New Delhi and Professor of Education in the Department of Education, University of Delhi; views are personal)

# PM Modi to visit poll-bound Maharashtra for third time this month

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI



In his third foray into Assembly poll-bound Maharashtra in less than a month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Wardha in Vidarbha region on September 20, coinciding with the first anniversary of the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana, an occasion where he would extend benefits to artisans and craftspeople. Modi, who is in the Assembly poll campaign-mode even before the announcement of the schedule by the Election Commission of India (ECI) had earlier addressed a "Lakhpati Didi Sammelan" at Jalgaon in north Maharashtra on August 25 and laid a foundation stone for Rs 76,000 crore Vadhan Port at Palghar in coastal Konkan region August 30.

At the "Lakhpati Didi Sammelan", Modi had distributed certificates to 11 lakh "Lakhpati Didis" who recently became e Lakhpaties, released a "Revolving Fund" of Rs 2,500 crore, benefiting about 48 lakh members of 4.3 lakh Self-Help Groups (SHG) and disbursed

bank loans of Rs 5,000 crore which will benefit 25.8 lakh members of 2.35 lakh SHGs. The August 30 2024 function was politically significant, considering that Modi had in a damage-control effort in a tendered apology to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's imposing statue at Rajkot fort in Sindhudurg district over the collapse of the revered Maratha king's 35-foot tall statue at Rajkot fort in Sindhudurg district ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly polls.

At the first anniversary function of the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana, Prime Minister Modi will dole benefits to artisans and craftspeople under this scheme. It may be recalled that Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana — known popularly as PM

Vishwakarma was launched on September 17, 2023 in New Delhi.

The scheme — which is coordinated by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) — is aimed at providing end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople who work with their hands and tools.

The scheme covers artisans and craftspeople engaged in 18 trades — carpenter (suthar/badhai), boat maker, armourer, blacksmith (lohar), hammer and tool kit maker, locksmith, goldsmith (sonar), potter (kumhaar), sculptor (murtikar, stone carver), stone breaker, cobbler (charkmar)/shoemaker/footwear artisan, mason (rajmistri), basket/mat/broom maker/coir weaver, doll and toy maker, barber (naai), garland maker (malakaar), washerman (dhoobi), tailor (darzi) and fishing net maker.

At the function, Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnis and Ajit Pawar will be present. A few union ministers will also attend the event.

# Hindu outfit roots for BCCI to cancel India-Bangladesh cricket tour

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI



The right-wing Hindu Janajagruti Samiti (HJS) on Monday rooted for the cancellation of all India-Bangladesh cricket matches as well as cultural programs featuring Bangladeshi artists, until the attacks on Hindus stop in the neighbouring country.

In a representation submitted to the Special Executive Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the HJS called for cancellation of the forthcoming tour of Bangladesh cricket team to India from September 19 to October 12.

Advocate Anish Paralkar of HJS, Vinayak Shinde of the Manav Seva Pratishthan, Advocate Rahul Patkar, Ravindra Dasari, and Sandeep Tulsakar were present on the occasion.

"India is set to host two Test matches and three T20s against Bangladesh from September 19 to October 12, 2024, in Chennai, Kanpur, Gwalior, Delhi, and Hyderabad... While fanatical Jihadis in Bangladesh openly kill Hindus, burn their homes, vandalize temples, seize land, and rape Hindu women, how

can we play cricket matches with them? We will never tolerate this," the HJS said in its representation to the BCCI.

"The Hindu community in Bangladesh continues to face relentless attacks, with 230 reported deaths and incidents of anti-Hindu violence across 52 of the 64 districts," HJS national spokesperson Ramesh Shinde said.

The representation — copies of which are being sent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar.

"Following the resignation of Sheikh Hasina, these attacks

have intensified, especially in rural areas where Hindus live in constant fear. Recently, a young Hindu, Utsav Mandal, was brutally assaulted by a Jihadi mob inside a police station over alleged blasphemy charges, further illustrating the ongoing violence and persecution of Hindus in Bangladesh," Shinde said.

Shinde said that as much as "Muslim countries unite and strongly oppose any attacks on the Muslim community, India should adopt a similar stance against the violence targeting Hindus in Bangladesh".

# 15 nominations for upcoming Assembly elections withdrawn in Haryana

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM



A total of 47 candidates are in the fray for four Assembly seats in the upcoming Assembly elections as 15 nominations were withdrawn on Monday.

Monday was the last day of the withdrawal of nomination papers for the assembly polls. Prominent among those in the fray for Gurgaon seat are BJP Mukesh Sharma from Gurgaon seat, Congress Mohit Grover from Gurgaon and Independent Naveen Goyal.

Likewise, former minister and BJP candidate Rao Narbir Singh from Badshahpur seat, Congress Vardhan Yadav and Independent Kumudni Jhangu.

Similarly, BJP Bimla Chaudhary from Pataudi (SC) constituency, Congress Par Chaudhary, from Sohna assembly constituency and BJP Tejpal Tawar from Sohna seat, Congress Rohtas Khatana and others.

According to a statement issued by the District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner Gurugram Nishant Kumar Yadav, 15 can-

didates withdrew their candidature in the office of respective returning officers in the district, leaving 47 candidates in the poll fray.

Yadav said that election symbols have been allotted to the candidates who have filed nominations in all four Assembly constituencies of the district namely Pataudi, Badshahpur, Gurgaon and Sohna on Monday.

He informed that on Monday, 7 candidates from the Pataudi Assembly, 13 from the Badshahpur Assembly, 17 from the Gurgaon Assembly and 10 from the Sohna Assembly are now in the poll battle.

He informed that voting for the Assembly elections will be held on October 5 and counting will be held on October 8, the result will be declared along with the counting.

# Rahul Gandhi conspiring to end reservation in India, claims Meghwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Monday slammed the Congress alleging that Rahul Gandhi, sitting in America, was conspiring to end reservation in India.

Addressing a meeting of party officials at the BJP office in Gurukulam, Meghwal claimed that during the Lok Sabha elections, Congress cheated and threatened the people of SC, ST and OBC categories that if the BJP came to power, it would abolish the Constitution and end the reservation, but in the true sense, ending reservation is the real agenda of Rahul Gandhi and Congress.

"The BJP government for the third time is necessary for the development and progress of Haryana. Elections are to be held on October 5 and there is very little time left now. In such a situation, efforts will have to be made day and night at many levels," he said.

He added that at the time of elections, Congress runs a narrative of confusion, lies and rumours to cheat people. It is the responsibility of the work-

ers to expose the lies of Congress and to spread the achievements of the Modi and Nayab governments to the people.

"Rahul Gandhi, sitting in America, was conspiring to end reservation in India," he alleged.

"The BJP government has changed the picture and destiny of the country and the state in 10 years. People are also feeling the changes that have taken place in the last 10 years," Meghwal claimed.

BJP District President Kamal Yadav while giving assurance to Arjunram Meghwal said that this time lotus will bloom in all the four assemblies of Gurugram district. He said that all the workers are working hard.

# Crime Branch arrests 17-year-old youth for killing two brothers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



The Delhi Police's Crime Branch arrested a 17 year old for killing two brothers due to harassment in east Delhi's Geeta Colony.

According to the police on Monday, on Saturday at 06:41 pm, information was received at Geeta Colony police station about a 20 year old Sahid having gunshot injuries on his head. He was declared brought dead by the doctor.

"The deceased was brought to hospital by his elder sister. On enquiry, sister of the deceased stated that some children informed that her brother Sahid was lying in the street and blood was oozing. She took her brother to LNJ where he was declared dead. She didn't know more about the incident," DCP Crime Branch Rakesh Paweriya said.

Further, the deceased's elder brother 30 year old Irshad, alias Bobby, was also found missing and the house of the deceased was found locked from the outside, which is hardly 30 to 40 meters far away from the spot.

The local police noticed some

fresh blood flowing out in the small drain of the house and then the lock of the house was broken and found that Irshad was lying unconscious inside the house and was having gunshot injury in his head.

"He was sent to the hospital where he was declared dead. He was married," he said.

"The shooter was identified as one juvenile, who was on the run since the incident. In the enquiry, he stated that they took the ground and first floor of the house of Rani Garden on rent from father of the deceased about four to five years back and given Rs 4 lakh in lieu of the security. In a written document, it had been agreed that they can stay there as long as the money is not returned," he said.

However, Asfak got married

with his second wife and went to some unknown place from there.

"After that, the deceased person started pressuring them to vacate their rented house. Both were aggressive and they used to harass the juvenile as well as his family. He was so fed up due to day to day harassment being done by the deceased persons," the DCP added.

On 14.09.2024, at about 3 to 4 pm, the juvenile was in his house and the deceased Irshad started abusing him without any reason and he shot him.

"After that, he saw Sahid at his shop and he also shot Sahid on his head with point blank. Then he left the spot and kept the pistol (weapon of offence) in the house of his cousin in Rani Garden," he said.

# Man arrested for stalking woman, her two daughters

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



A 24 year old man has been arrested for allegedly stalking a woman and her daughters in the southwest Delhi's Cantonment area.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (southwest) Rohit Meena on Monday said, "The complainant alleged that at 8.30 pm on August 23, she was walking towards Gopinath market with her mother and two daughters. Her daughters were 100-150 metres ahead of her, when a car started following them continuously for almost 15 minutes."

The complainant alerted her daughters and also posted about the matter on social media. "She also filed a complaint at Delhi Cantonment police station the next day," he said, adding that an FIR was registered under 78(1) BNS and 12 POCSO Act and further investigation were taken up.

He added that a team was formed to nab the offender. "The team analysed CCTV

track of the alleged car for more than 115 kilometres covering from Delhi Cantonment to Pari chowk in Noida and then back to Delhi. However, complete footage trail could not be checked as no CCTV were present in UP beyond Pari Chowk," the police said.

"Number of the vehicle was obtained which was found in the name of Tinku, the son of a criminal who is wanted in an attempt to murder case in Uttar Pradesh and has been absconding since last six months," the DCP said.

The team came to know that the registered car often comes to Delhi from Chilla check post of UP-Delhi border and returns after sometime.

"The team was posted there for 10 days at the check-post and the accused, identified as Rajat, a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Jewar, was nabbed. He was produced before the court and sent to Judicial custody," DCP Meena added.

# Didi, doctors meet...

**From Page 1**

The modalities of the talks hinged on a proposal of mutual exchange of minutes of the meeting as against the live streaming — or alternatively videography — of the proceedings as earlier demanded by the doctors, sources said.

"There is a hearing on the issue in the Supreme Court tomorrow and I want a solution before that ... we have offered talks for one last time so that the doctors can go back to work as health services are getting hampered ... more so

because we have a flood-like situation emerging and the doctors' services will be required ... no side can sit and watch the people suffer like this ... so I asked the Chief Secretary to invite the doctors so that we can come to a solution," the Chief Minister said.

When asked as to whether she was expecting a solution immediately she said, "I expect a solution ... the two sides should seat with an open mind and iron out the issues." Talks had twice fizzled out after the doctors demanded live-streaming or

at least videography of the proceedings to which the Government denied permission. Subsequently the doctors demanded exchange of signed copies of minutes of the talks on Saturday to which the Government agreed but by the time two sides agreed upon issues it was too late and the doctors had to return to their sit-in site. On Monday morning, a letter from the Chief Secretary Manoj Pant came to invite the doctors for talks to which they agreed but with a condition that they would have to be allowed in

with two professional stenographers to record the minutes.

Meanwhile in a related development the RG Kar issue tended to affect the Kolkata Police force too after the CBI arrested Abhijit Mondal, the SHO of the Tala Police Station for his alleged complicity in destroying evidence at the place of occurrence.

Junior officers approached the senior IPS officials demanding immunity from the complex situations arising in their places of work in the recent days.

# Kejriwal to meet LG...

**From Page 1**

"Today is a holiday and tomorrow is the first working day of the week. He will tender his resignation tomorrow to Lt Governor and after the resignation is accepted, a meeting of party MLAs will be held to decide on the new name," he said at a press conference in the afternoon.

"Saying anything right now will be assessment," said Bharadwaj.

AAP leader also said the AAP has said it has put the ball in BJP's court by demanding early elections in Delhi in November, and now it is up to the Opposition party to decide whether it was prepared to face Kejriwal.

Earlier in the day, Kejriwal held a series of meetings with his close confidantes at his residence including Manish Sisodia and Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha for over an hour where they discussed the probabilities for the Delhi Chief Minister's post and its impact on the upcoming Haryana polls.

Sisodia did not speak to the media while leaving.

Since Kejriwal's surprise resignation decision on Sunday, Delhi Ministers Atishi, Gopal Rai, Saurabh Bharadwaj, Kailash Gahlot, some MLAs from the reserved category, including Deputy Speaker of Delhi Assembly Rakhi Birla, as well as the AAP supremo's wife Sunita Kejriwal, were making the rounds as probabilities for the post. Ruling out the possibility of Sisodia taking

over, Kejriwal said someone from the AAP will take his place until polls are held.

This effectively means that the top leaders of AAP are not in the race for the Chief Minister's post. Even though this Chief Ministerial stint will only be for a few months, the AAP leadership would be looking to choose a prominent leader who can articulate the party's position on key issues and has wide acceptability among the party ranks.

Assembly polls in Delhi are due in February next year, even though Kejriwal also demanded that the election be held in November along with the Maharashtra polls. The main opposition BJP has scoffed at Kejriwal's announcement.

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva has said Kejriwal is saying the people should decide if he should be Chief Minister. "The people have announced their verdict three months back (during Lok Sabha polls). You had roamed Delhi streets and asked for votes. The people gave their answer and put you in your place," he said.

The Congress, which contested the general election in Delhi in alliance with AAP, termed the AAP leader's move a political stunt. "It would have been better if he had resigned when Delhi was facing floods and drinking water shortage. I hope Delhi soon gets a new Chief Minister who can go to his office and sign files," said Delhi Congress chief Devendra Yadav.

# MODI'S 100 DAYS...

**From Page 1**

The Modi Government also implemented a unified pension scheme, under which Government employees with 25 years of service will receive 50 per cent of their average basic salary as pension.

"Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana three crore houses (were) approved. One crore houses under the urban scheme, two crore houses (were) approved for construction in rural areas," the statement said. It also said that so far, over four crore houses have been approved in both urban and rural regions in India.

On women empowerment, in the first 100 days, the Prime Minister Modi Government has awarded certificates to 11 lakh new 'Lakhpati Didis'. According to Government figures, over one crore 'Lakhpati Didis' now earn more than ₹1 lakh every year. Besides, the MUDRA loan has been increased from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh.

As regards empowerment of minorities and tribals, under the Prime Minister's Developed Tribal Village Campaign, as many as 63,000 tribal villages were approved to be developed, helping in improving the socio-economic status of five crore tribals.

Furthermore, the Namaste scheme has been extended to include waste pickers along with sanitation workers, promoting their social and economic empowerment.

The first 100 days focused on improving the ease of

doing business, which included abolishing the angel tax and reducing corporate tax. The Government is also setting up ₹1000-crore venture capital fund for space sector startups.

An approval has also been given for the Gen-Next Support for Innovation Startups (GENESIS) programme to support startups in Tier-II and Tier-III cities, the statement said.

On youth empowerment and skill development, the Prime Minister Modi-led NDA Government has announced a ₹2 lakh crore-package to promote empowerment and skill development among the youth. The goal is to benefit 41 million youth over the next five years.

The Government has also announced more than 15,000 new appointments, and first-time employees covered under EPFO, an incentive of up to ₹15,000 will be provided in three instalments.

In the health sector, the Ayushman Bharat Scheme has been expanded to include all citizens aged 70 and above under free insurance of up to ₹5 lakh. Besides, 75,000 new medical seats have been added, which will help the "healthcare system more effective and reduce dependence on foreign medical education," the statement said.

Furthermore, the National Medical Commission is preparing a National Medical Register to create a centralised repository of doctors in the country.

# Capital to combat vector borne...

**From Page 1**

₹7,397 legal notices, 32,384 challans, and 7,929 administrative charges have been levied under the provision of Malaria and other Vector Borne Diseases Bye-Laws under DMC Act. Police complaints will also be lodged against defaulters allowing repeated mosquito breeding," he said.

# MLA to reward ₹11 lakh to cut...

**From Page 1**

State BJP President Chandrashekhar Bawankule said that he did not endorse or support Gaikwad's statement.

However, Bawankule said that he said that India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had opposed the reservations on the ground that they would affect the country's progress. On his part, State Congress President Nana Patole demanded that an offence must be registered against Gaikwad. The people are witnessing the goondashahi,

hukumshahi and Talibanshahi of this Government," he said.

Condemning Gaikwad's statement, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly, Vijay Wadetiwar of the Congress and his counterpart from the Upper House, Ambadas Danve of Shiv Sena (UBT) slammed Gaikwad for his "outlandish" statement.

"The Shinde-led Shiv Sena is not even worthy of taking Rahul Gandhi's name... Gaikwad is nothing more than a traitor MLA from a stolen party (Shiv Sena led

by Uddhav Thackeray," Wadetiwar said.

Congress Legislative Party Leader Balasaheb Thorat said: "Gaikwad's statement against Gandhi mirrors the attitude of the assassins of Mahatma Gandhi.... The conspiracy to discredit Rahul Gandhi by putting words in his mouth will never succeed. Nobody dares to even touch Rahul Gandhi's hair as crores of Congress workers are his protective shield."

"If there is even an iota of law left in the State, the Shinde Government should

immediately take action against Gaikwad for his poisonous remarks," Thorat said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi wrote on the micro-blogging site X, "Prime sample of a gaddar, the blatant abuse of the elected post they hold to incite acts of violence against Rahul Gandhi. The disgraceful home Minister of Maharashtra will ignore any action and expecting anything from the traitor CM and his panaas khoke fauj is a joke!"



# Taliban suspends Af polio vax drives

AP ■ DUBAI

The Taliban have suspended polio vaccination campaigns in Afghanistan, the UN said on Monday. It's a devastating setback for polio eradication, since the virus is one of the world's most infectious and any unvaccinated groups of children where the virus is spreading could undo years of progress. Afghanistan is one of two countries in which the spread of the potentially fatal, paralyzing disease has never been stopped. The other is Pakistan. It's likely that the Taliban's decision will have major repercussions for other countries in the region and beyond.

News of the suspension was relayed to UN agencies right before the September immunisation campaign was due to start. No reason was given for the suspension, and no one from the Taliban-controlled government was immediately available for comment.

A top official from the World Health Organisation said it was aware of discussions to move away from house-to-house vaccinations and instead have immunisations in places like mosques.



The WHO has confirmed 18 polio cases in Afghanistan this year, all but two in the south of the country. That's up from six cases in 2023.

"The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is aware of the recent policy discussions on shifting from house-to-house polio vaccination campaigns to site-to-site vaccination in parts of Afghanistan," said Dr. Hamid Jafari from the WHO.

"Partners are in the process of discussing and understanding the scope and impact of any change in current policy." Polio campaigns in neighbour-

hoods in Afghanistan used a house-to-house vaccination strategy for the first time in five years, a tactic that helped to reach the majority of children targeted, the WHO said.

But southern Kandahar province, the base of Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, used site-to-site or mosque-to-mosque vaccination campaigns, which are less effective than going to people's homes.

Kandahar continues to have a large pool of susceptible children because it is not carrying out house-to-house vaccinations, the WHO said.

"The overall women's inclusion in vaccination campaigns remains around 20 per cent in Afghanistan, leading to inadequate access to all children in some areas," it said. Any setback in Afghanistan poses a risk to the program in Pakistan due to high population movement, the WHO warned last month.

Pakistani health official Anwarul Haq said the polio virus would eventually spread and continue affecting children in both countries if vaccination campaigns aren't run regularly and in a synchronized manner.

"Afghanistan is the only neighbour from where Afghan people in large numbers come to Pakistan and then go back," said Haq, the coordinator at the National Emergency Operation Centre for Polio Eradication. "People from other neighbouring countries, like India and Iran, don't come to Pakistan in large numbers."

There needs to be a united effort to eliminate the disease, he told The Associated Press. The campaign suspension is the latest obstacle in what has become a problematic global effort to stop polio. The initiative, which costs about USD 1 billion every year, has missed multiple deadlines to wipe out the disease and technical mistakes in the vaccination strategy set by WHO and partners have been costly.

The oral vaccine has also inadvertently seeded outbreaks in dozens of countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East and now accounts for the majority of polio cases worldwide. This was seen most recently in Gaza, where a baby was partially paralysed by a mutated strain of polio first seen in the oral vaccine, marking the territory's first case in more than 25 years.

# Ex-BBC news anchor gets suspended sentence

AP ■ LONDON

Former BBC news anchor Huw Edwards, once one of the most prominent media figures in Britain, was given a suspended prison sentence Monday for images of child sexual abuse on his phone. Edwards, 63, pleaded guilty in Westminster Magistrates' Court in July to three counts of making indecent images of children, a charge related to photos sent to him on the WhatsApp messaging service by a man convicted of distributing images of child sex abuse. Chief Magistrate Paul Goldspring sentenced Edwards to a six-month prison term suspended for two years. He will be listed on a sex offenders register for seven years. "It is not an exaggeration to say your long-earned reputation is in tatters," Goldspring said. Edwards' fall from grace over the past year has caused turmoil for the BBC after it was revealed the publicly funded broadcaster paid him about 200,000 pounds (USD 263,000) for five months of his salary after he had been arrested

in November while on leave. The BBC has asked him to pay it back. "We are appalled by his crimes," the BBC said in a statement after the sentencing. "He has betrayed not just the BBC, but audiences who put their trust in him."

Edwards had been one of the BBC's top earners when he was suspended in July 2023 over separate claims made last year involving a teenager he allegedly paid for sexually explicit photos. Police investigated and decided not to bring charges.

Although Edwards was not publicly named at the time those allegations surfaced, his wife later revealed he was the news presenter investigated and said he was hospitalised for serious mental health issues. He never returned to the air but the BBC kept him on the payroll until he resigned in April for health reasons.

Edwards began his BBC career in Wales four decades ago. He went on to become lead anchor on the nighttime news for two decades and led the coverage of the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022 as well as

election coverage. The BBC said at the time of his guilty plea that it was shocked to hear the details of the charges against him.

More than 375 sexual images were sent to him on WhatsApp between December 2020 and August 2021. More than 40 were indecent images of children, including seven classified as "category A" — the most indecent — with children estimated to be between 13 and 15. One child was aged between 7 and 9. In chats with Alex Williams, who was later convicted of distributing child sex abuse images, Edwards was asked if he wanted sexual images of a person whose "age could be discerned as being between 14 and 16," and Edwards replied, "yes xxx," prosecutor Ian Hope said.

"From that chat in December 2020, Alex Williams said that he had a file of vids and pics for you of someone special," Hope said. Edwards asked who the subject and was then sent three images that appeared to be the same person who appeared to be aged 14 to 16, Hope said.

# 3 journos allegedly attempting to flee Bangladesh arrested

PTI ■ DHAKA

Three journalists and another person were taken into custody while allegedly attempting to flee Bangladesh through the northern Mymensingh border with India, the police said on Monday. Prominent journalists Mozammel Babu, the chief editor of the private Ekatoor TV, and Bhorer Kagoj editor Shyamol Dutta, who were among the four detained while attempting to flee in a car early on Monday, were considered close to ousted premier Sheikh Hasina's regime and face "several cases" in Dhaka.

Others taken into custody included Ekatoor TV reporter Mahbabur Rahman and driver Selim, the police said. They were initially detained by the neighbourhood police near the zero line of the Dhobaura border of Mymensingh district at 6 am, the police said. The vil-



lagers later handed them over to Mymensingh police, it said. Private Samoy TV channel reported that Babu and Dutta, both prominent faces, were assaulted by locals who snatched away the money they were carrying before calling the police.

"They are now in our custody and their safety has been ensured during their stay in the police station. We have enhanced the security vigil," a police officer said. The official

said the Mymensingh police were awaiting concerned officials to take them to Dhaka for required legal procedures. The police in Dhaka on August 21 arrested another journalist couple Farzana Rupa and Shakil Ahmed while they were preparing to board a France-bound aircraft. The couple has been charged with murder during the anti-reservation students movement that eventually turned out to be a mass upheaval leading to the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government on August 5. Identical murder charges have been lodged against several other journalists, drawing concern from international journalist rights groups and watchdogs. The interim government of Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus indicated they were unlikely to be arrested until thorough investigations into the allegations against them.

# Israeli airstrikes kill 16 in Gaza

AP ■ DUBAI

Jerusalem (AP): Palestinian officials say Israeli airstrikes have killed 16 people in the Gaza Strip, including five women and four children. A strike early Monday flattened a home in the built-up Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, killing at least 10 people, including four women and two children. The Awda Hospital, which received the bodies, confirmed the toll and said another 13 people were wounded.

Hospital records show that the dead included a mother, her child and her five siblings.

Another strike on a home in Gaza City killed six people, including a woman and two children, according to the Civil Defence, first responders who operate under the Hamas-run government. Israel says it only targets militants and accuses Hamas and other armed groups of endangering civilians by operating in residential areas. The military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children.

# Houthi down another US-made drone

AP ■ DUBAI

Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed Monday that they shot down another American-made MQ-9 Reaper drone, with video circulating online showing what appeared to be a surface-to-air missile strike and flaming wreckage strewn across the ground. The U.S. military did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the Houthi's claimed



downing of a drone over the country's southwestern Dhamar province. The Houthis have exaggerated claims in the past in their ongoing campaign targeting shipping in the Red Sea over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. However, the online video bolstered the claim, particularly after two recent claims by the Houthis included no evidence. Other videos showed armed rebels gathered around the flaming wreckage, a propeller similar to those used by the armed drone visible in the

flames. One attempted to pick up a piece of the metal before dropping it due to the heat. Brig. Gen. Yahya Saree, a Houthi military spokesperson, identified the drone as an MQ-9, without elaborating on how he came to the determination. He said it was the third downed by the group in a week, though the other two claims did not include similar video or other evidence. The U.S. military similarly has not acknowledged losing any aircraft.

Saree said the Houthis used a locally produced missile. However, Iran has armed the rebels with a surface-to-air missile known as the 358 for years. Iran denies arming the rebels, though Tehran-manufactured weaponry has been found on the battlefield and in seaborne shipments heading to Yemen despite a United Nations arms embargo. Reapers, which cost around \$30 million apiece, can fly at altitudes up to 50,000 feet (15,240 meters) and have an endurance of up to 24 hours before needing to land. The aircraft have been flown by both the U.S. military and the

CIA over Yemen for years. The Houthis have targeted more than 80 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the war in Gaza started in October. They seized one vessel and sank two in the campaign that has also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by a U.S.-led coalition in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have included Western military vessels as well.

The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the U.S. or the U.K. to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran.

Those attacks include a barrage that struck the Greek-flagged oil tanker Souinion in the Red Sea. Salvagers have begun towing away the burning oil tanker, hoping to avoid a catastrophic leak of its 1 million barrels of oil on board.

# French EU commissioner resigns after attacking leadership of top official

AP ■ BRUSSELS

An influential French member of the European Union's powerful executive branch resigned on Monday, calling into question the leadership of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen just as she tries to assemble a new team for the next five years. Thierry Breton, a French business executive and commissioner for the EU's vast internal market who recently clashed with tech billionaire Elon Musk, suggested that von der Leyen had gone behind his back to get another French official named in his place to the next commission.

In a post on social media platform X containing his resignation letter to the EU's top official, Breton said that von der Leyen's move was "further testimony to questionable governance -- I have to conclude that I can no longer exercise my

duties in the college". The commission proposes legislation for the 27 EU member countries and ensures that the rules governing the world's biggest trading bloc are respected. It's made up of a College of commissioners with a range of portfolios similar to those of government ministers, including agriculture, economic, competition, security or migration policy.

With an eye to keeping a gender balance within the commission for her second term at the helm, von der Leyen had asked each member country to supply the name of a male and female candidate for policy commissioner. Most only proposed one candidate, often a man.

The commission chief, a former German defence minister, has been pressuring smaller countries to change their minds. In recent weeks, a man who was the preferred candi-

date of the government in Slovenia withdrew and a woman was proposed in his place. Von der Leyen decides which country gets which portfolio, and some of them, like those involving trade or finance or EU enlargement, are coveted by certain countries. Plum jobs like the post of "vice president" -- the commission has seven of these -- are also much sought after. Breton suggested that he was a victim of these political machinations. Few days ago, in the very final stretch of negotiations on the composition of the future College, you asked France to withdraw my name -- for personal reasons that in no instance you have discussed directly with me -- and offered, as a political trade-off, an allegedly more influential portfolio for France in the future College," he wrote in his resignation letter.

"You will now be proposed a

different candidate," he said. It was not immediately clear who French President Emmanuel Macron might name in his place. Macron's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In any case, nothing is set in stone. The commission nominees must still pass a grilling in the European Parliament to take office.

Breton has irritated some in the commission with his go-it-alone approach. Acting last month without von der Leyen's approval, he took to X to warn Musk of possible "amplification of harmful content" by broadcasting an interview with former US President Donald Trump. Musk, who owns the social media platform, posted a derogatory reply. Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung urged the EU to "mind their own business instead of trying to meddle in the US presidential election."

# Starmer, Meloni discuss curbing migrant boats to UK and Italy

Rome (AP): UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer is meeting Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni in Rome on Monday, as the two very different politicians, from left and right, seek common cause to curb migrants reaching their shores by boat. The visit comes after at least eight seaborne migrants died off the French coast over the weekend.

Support for Ukraine is also on the agenda for the trip, part of Starmer's effort to reset relations with European neighbours after Britain's acrimonious 2020 departure from the European Union.

The centre-left Labour Party prime minister isn't a natural ally of Meloni, who heads the far-right Brothers of Italy party. But migration has climbed the UK political agenda, and Starmer hopes Italy's tough approach can help him stop people fleeing war and poverty trying to cross the English Channel in flimsy, overcrowded boats.

More than 22,000 migrants have made the perilous crossing from France so far this year, a slight increase from the same period in 2023.

Several dozen people have perished in their attempts, including the eight killed when a boat carrying some 60 people ran

aground on rocks late Saturday. The same day, 14 boats carrying 801 migrants reached Britain.

Starmer promised "a new era of international enforcement to dismantle these networks, protect our shores and bring order to the asylum system."

"No more gimmicks," he said before his trip to Rome -- a reference to the previous Conservative government's scuttled plan to send some asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda.

Meloni pledged a crackdown on migration after taking office in 2022, aiming to deter would-be refugees from paying smugglers to make the dangerous Mediterranean crossing to Italy. Her nationalist conservative government has signed deals with individual African countries to block departures, imposed limits on the work of humanitarian rescue ships, cracked down on traffickers and taken measures to deter people from setting off.

Italy also has signed a deal with Albania under which some adult male migrants rescued at sea while trying to reach Italy would be taken instead to Albania while their asylum claims are processed.

The number of migrants arriving in Italy

by boat in the first half of this year was down 60 per cent from 2023, according to the country's Interior Ministry.

Starmer wants to learn from Italy's mix of tough enforcement and international cooperation, though Italy's approach has been criticised by refugee groups and others alarmed by Europe's increasingly strict asylum rules, growing xenophobia and hostile treatment of migrants.

The leader of Italy's right-wing League, Matteo Salvini, who is deputy prime minister in Meloni's government, has been accused by prosecutors of alleged kidnapping for his decision to prevent a rescue ship carrying more than 100 migrants from landing in Italy when he was interior minister in 2019. British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper defended the government's decision to seek advice from Italy's right-wing administration, saying "we've always had a history of working with governments that have different political parties that are not aligned". She said the UK was interested in Italy's experience in fighting organised crime, as well as its deals with countries such as Tunisia to stop migrants' journeys before they reach the sea, and its deal with Albania.

# Columnists resign from Jewish Chronicle over Gaza articles fabrication claims

London (AP): Three prominent columnists have resigned from the newspaper Jewish Chronicle over allegations it published fabricated articles about the Israel-Hamas war.

The resignations on Sunday came after the London-based newspaper removed multiple articles by a freelance journalist and apologized to readers, saying it conducted an investigation into the writer and was not satisfied with some of his claims. The newspaper did not specify which articles by the journalist, Elon Perry, were problematic. Among other claims, Perry -- who described himself as a commando in the Israel Defense Forces -- alleged that Hamas leader Yahya

Sinwar planned to smuggle himself and Israeli hostages out of Gaza through the border area with Egypt known as the Philadelphia corridor. The claims were questioned by Israeli media outlets.

Long-time Jewish Chronicle columnist Jonathan Freedland resigned in protest on Sunday, saying "the latest scandal brings great disgrace on the paper" and that it has "departed from the traditions that built its reputation as the world's oldest Jewish newspaper." "Too often, the journalist, Elon Perry, reads like a partisan, ideological instrument, its judgements political rather than journalistic," Freedland wrote on the social media platform X.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, people brace for rain on a street as Typhoon Bebinca made landfall in Shanghai, China, Monday. AP/PTI

# Typhoon Bebinca makes landfall in Shanghai

PTI ■ BEIJING

Bebinca, the strongest typhoon to have hit China's Shanghai city in 75 years packing wind speed of 42 meters, made landfall on Monday bringing the megacity of 25 million to a grinding halt.

The typhoon, with the maximum wind force near its center reaching 42 meters per second, churned ashore at the Lingang area of Shanghai's Pudong District, the Shanghai central meteorological observatory said. The city has already mobilised thousands of relief and rescue workers to attend to emergencies. Bebinca is believed to be the strongest typhoon to land in Shanghai in 75 years. It is the 13th typhoon to hit China this year.

**Bebinca is believed to be strongest typhoon to land in Shanghai in 75 years**

The State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters on Sunday activated a Level IV emergency response for east China's Anhui Province and raised the response in Shanghai and Zhejiang to Level III, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Bebinca has already led to flight cancellations over Shanghai and the suspension of passenger ferry operations in the city. Shanghai Railway Station has announced plans to suspend passenger trains on

several routes passing through the city from Sunday to Monday.

More than 414,000 people in the megacity of 25 million have been relocated by the end of Sunday, and all highways in the city were closed in anticipation of the typhoon, Hong Kong based South China Morning Post reported.

All flights from Pudong and Hongqiao airports were cancelled from 8 pm on Sunday. Ferries have stopped running, while bus services have been suspended in the waterfront district of Fengxian. The operator of Shanghai's airports stated that temporary rest areas have been prepared for passengers, and in-house catering vendors and convenience stores have been instructed to offer continuous service.

# Piyush Goyal launches BHASKAR Sensex hits new high

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday launched the Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR) initiative, which will serve as a central hub where startups, investors, service providers, and government bodies can collaborate and exchange ideas.

"Let's make this a one-stop shop for all data dissemination for engagement and interaction, one-stop shop for the entire ecosystem through simple and easy-to-use links, and easy to navigate," he said.

It will be a single point of contact for startups looking for various requirements like mentors and finance, he added.

Through this platform, all the key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors, mentors, service providers, and government bodies can interact with each other to promote the sector's growth.

The primary goal of BHASKAR is to build the world's largest digital registry for stakeholders within the



startup ecosystem. To achieve this, the platform will offer features like networking and collaboration, providing centralised access to resources, creating personalised identification, enhancing discoverability and supporting India's global brand. BHASKAR will bridge the gap between startups, investors, mentors, and other stakeholders, allowing seamless interaction across sectors.

Through this initiative, every stakeholder will be assigned a unique BHASKAR ID, ensuring personalised interactions and tailored experiences across the platform. Using powerful search features, users can easily locate relevant resources, collaborators and opportunities to ensure faster decision-making and action. The government would invite all stakeholders to become part of this transformative initiative as it

addresses the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and investors. By serving as a centralised registry, BHASKAR will enable seamless access to a wide array of resources, tools, and knowledge to help fuel the entrepreneurial journey from ideation to execution.

Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Amardeep Singh Bhatia said the aim is to take the startups to 50 lakh in the coming years.

"This platform will bring everyone together (including investors and mentors), Bhatia said, urging startups to come forward and help build this.

DPIIT Joint Secretary Sanjiv said the initiative will further strengthen the country's startup ecosystem. By January 16 next year, all the districts of India will have at least one startup, he added.

Sanjiv also said the department has urged over 100 corporates and unicorns to set up incubation centres for manufacturing sector startups. The department has shared a handbook with the companies on corporate incubation and acceleration.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark index Sensex rebounded nearly 100 points to hit a lifetime closing high on Monday, while the broader Nifty ended just shy of its record peak, propelled by bargain hunting in energy, utility and banking stocks amid sustained foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 97.84 points or 0.12 per cent to settle at a new record peak of 82,988.78. During the day, it jumped 293.4 points or 0.35 per cent to hit a fresh lifetime intraday high of 83,184.34.

The NSE Nifty rose 27.25 points or 0.11 per cent to settle at 25,383.75, over 5 points lower than its previous record. During the day, the benchmark gained 89.2 points or 0.35 per cent to hit a new intra-day high of 25,445.70.

"The domestic market traded in a narrow range with a positive bias as the participants are keenly awaiting the Fed's decision this week. The weakness in the US job market and benign inflation are pointing at a slow rate cuts on the table."

"The inflow of foreign money and an expectation of



stability in domestic growth may keep sentiment optimistic," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. NTPC was the biggest gainer on the Sensex chart, rising 2.44 per cent, followed by JSW Steel, Larsen & Toubro, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Nestle, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Steel.

Bajaj Finance declined over 3 per cent. Hindustan Unilever, Bajaj Finserv, Adani Port and Asian Paints were the other laggards.

"The Indian markets continued their bullish trend, with Nifty reaching a new record high, driven primarily by foreign institutional investor (FII) buying and a strong market breadth. Investors remain cautiously optimistic ahead of the US Federal Reserve's meeting later this week, which could influence short-term trends. Investors are advised to stay aligned with the current trend, but watch for potential market reactions to the US

policy announcements," Vikram Kasat, Head - Advisory, PL Capital - Prabhudas Lilladher, said.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.28 per cent while the midcap index ended marginally up by 0.01 per cent.

Among the indices, utilities jumped 1.97 per cent, power (1.93 per cent), metal (0.65 per cent), capital goods (0.56 per cent), consumer durables (0.49 per cent) and industrials (0.33 per cent). IT, telecommunication, tech, services and FMCG were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Hong Kong ended with gains. Markets in Japan, mainland China and South Korea were closed for holidays.

European markets were trading mostly higher. The US markets ended in positive territory on Friday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 2,364.82 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought equities worth Rs 2,532.18 crore.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.35 per cent to USD 71.90 a barrel.

## SEBI withdraws its press release on unprofessional work culture

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Monday withdrew its press release issued in September 4, which addressed claims of unprofessional work culture, stating that these concerns are "misplaced" and reaffirmed that employee-related issues will be managed internally.

The withdrawal came days after a protest by a large number of Sebi employees outside the regulator's headquarters on September 5, a day after the press release. They had demanded the withdrawal of the statement and the resignation of Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch.

In a statement on Monday, Sebi acknowledged the critical role its employees have played over the past thirty-six years in shaping the Indian securities market into one of the most dynamic and well-regulated markets globally.

Sebi said it addresses employee-related matters through appropriate internal mechanisms.

"Following constructive discussions with representatives of all grades of officers, Sebi and its employees have reaffirmed that such issues are strictly internal and will be managed in accordance with the organization's high standards of governance and within a



time-bound framework," the regulator said.

Accordingly, the press release issued on September 4 has been withdrawn.

The decision to retract the press release came after employees strongly condemned the unauthorized dissemination of internal communications.

Sebi employees have reiterated their commitment to resolving concerns amicably through established internal channels, ensuring that such matters remain internal and managed within a time-bound framework.

"Employees have strongly condemned the unauthorized release of internal communication and have confirmed that all concerns shall be addressed amicably through established internal channels," the statement noted.

For Puri, protests and internal issues have come at a time when she is probably facing the most challenging times in her stint. The career

banker-turned-regulator is battling speculations on whether a conflict of interest made her go slow on the probe against Adani Group and a raft of other allegations around it. In what is unprecedented for any financial regulator, around 500 employees wrote to the Finance Ministry on August 6, against the top management, for what they called a "toxic" work environment, which includes instances of public humiliation and shouting down.

After the publishing of a media report about the letter, Sebi responded with a press release, which stated such claims are "misplaced", which seemed to have irked the employees. The regulator stated that some "external elements" had instigated its employees into believing that they shouldn't be held to high standards of performance and accountability, though, it did not provide specific details.

## DGGI proposes global cooperation to curb GST evasion in OIDAR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

DGGI has suggested reciprocal arrangements with foreign governments for information sharing and enforcement measures as well as blocking of websites to prevent tax evasion in OIDAR services like e-gaming, online education and advertisement.

The move has been necessitated as it has come to DGGI's notice that there are entities, including online casinos that are based out of tax havens and also those which operate through offshore VPNs and cloud-based platforms. These entities are non-cooperative and appear to intentionally avoid tax compliance, and hence an information exchange with global law enforcement agencies would help crack down on any evasion.

Online Information and Database Access or Retrieval (OIDAR) services are those which are delivered over the internet or electronic network and whose supply is essentially impossible without Information Technology. It includes a wide array of services viz cloud services, digital content, online gaming, online advertising etc. When such services are provided by an offshore entity to a non-taxable recipient, the supplier becomes liable for obtaining registration and discharging GST on the same.



Currently, as many as 574 offshore entities providing OIDAR Services have registered themselves with the GST department, and annual revenue from this sector has increased from Rs 80 crore for the FY 2017-18 to Rs 2,675 crore for 2023-24 fiscal.

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) in its annual report noted that since the OIDAR service providers are located abroad it becomes a challenge in GST enforcement and hence the sector remains relatively untapped and holds tremendous revenue potential.

On dealing with such offshore suppliers, it has also dawned that several such suppliers are ignorant of the law, and upon conveying the legal position clearly, such suppliers agree to comply with the GST mandate, it said.

These include the likes of Udem Inc (USA), Canva Pty (Australia), OVH group (France), Blackboard (Netherlands) etc who registered themselves following efforts of DGGI and discharged significant tax

liability.

"However, there are other entities that are non-cooperative and appear to intentionally avoid tax compliance. These include various online casinos based out of tax-havens like Malta, Cypress, Curacao, BVI etc. There are also other entities that are difficult to reach out to on account of them operating through VPN or cloud-based platforms," the DGGI said.

The GST intelligence wing said that unique challenges in tax enforcement in this sector necessitate out-of-the-box interventions to plug revenue leakage. The DGGI suggested steps like registering with the KODEX platform to receive the data/information in respect of offshore suppliers, as well as coordination with the Reserve Bank of India to obtain relevant data pertaining to forex transactions for purpose code falling under Group 8 (i.e. Computer and Information Services) of RBI's Purpose Codes for Reporting Forex Transactions to deal with evasion in the sector.

## HCLTech top India company on TIME World's Best Companies list



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian IT firm HCLTech has been named the no.1 India-headquartered company in TIME magazine's World's Best Companies 2024 list.

The Noida-headquartered firm has also secured a place in the global top 10 list within the Professional Services category.

"This accolade underscores HCLTech's commitment to excellence and innovation. It reinforces our leadership in the industry and our status as a top employer.

"Aligned with our purpose of 'Supercharging Progress' and 'Find Your Spark' employee value proposition, we are dedicated to maximizing employee potential, advancing community and social responsibility initiatives and achieving sustainability goals," said Rahul Singh,

Chief Operating Officer of Corporate Functions, HCLTech.

The World's Best Companies 2024 ranking identifies top-performing companies across the globe on the parameters of employee satisfaction, revenue growth, and sustainability.

HCLTech posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 4,257 crore in the June quarter of FY25, up 20.45 per cent from the year-ago period.

Revenue for the June-ended quarter came in at Rs 28,057 crore, 6.6 per cent higher year-on-year.

It gave a revenue growth guidance of 3-5 per cent for FY25 on GenAI diversification and strong operational execution.

As of June 2024, HCLTech has a global headcount of 219,000, across 60 countries.

## Mercedes expands electric vehicle lineup in India, launches EQS 580 4MATIC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Luxury car maker Mercedes-Benz India on Monday expanded its Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) range in the country with the launch of the locally produced EQS 580 4MATIC.

India is the first country outside the US to start the local production of the seven-seater electric SUV.

EQS SUV 580 4MATIC is the second model, after the EQS sedan, to be locally produced at company's Pune-based manufacturing plant.

"This will be our sixth EV in India, and the second car to be locally produced in India. We are also proud that India becomes the first market out of the US to locally manufacture the EQS," Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director and CEO Santosh Iyer told PTI in an interaction.

The move to manufacture the product locally outlines the company's commitment to electrification and increasing product portfolio offering choices to customers, he added.

"EQS SUV's localisation underpins our deep commitment to grow the



Indian luxury electric car market and reinforce our commitment for a greener and sustainable future," Iyer said.

The move also supports the government's vision of Make-in-India, he said.

Iyer said local production has led to a significant advantage in terms of pricing the electric SUV.

The introductory price of EQS SUV 580 4MATIC starts at Rs 1.41 crore which should also make a lot of customers shift to EVs much faster in terms of transition, he said.

When asked about the demand for green vehicles, Iyer said the sales of EVs were

growing in the country with even high-end products finding acceptance.

"The EQA sedan which was introduced in India around 18 months back, we have sold more than 500 cars. It's a car costing more than Rs 1.6 crore. Our total penetration of EVs is 5 per cent today, it's growing. For sure, customer acceptance is there," he stated.

Iyer noted that the company remains committed to offer top-end luxury EV products offering higher range in the market.

He noted that there may be more opportunities in the entry EV segment but the focus of the company firmly

remains on bringing luxury products in the market.

"To bring products at lower price points, that is not our current strategy," Iyer said.

The company aims to offer products with higher driving range, a factor that leads to bigger battery and escalation in price, he added.

The EQS SUV 580 4MATIC is India's longest range electric SUV with ARAI certified range of 809 kms.

Iyer said the company remains committed to the Indian market and has announced an additional investment of Rs 200 crore earlier towards manufacturing operations, new product start-ups and digitisation of manufacturing processes.

The company till date has invested over Rs 3,000 crore in India, he added.

In the January-September period this year, Mercedes-Benz India has launched three new BEVs - EQA, EQS SUV 580 and Mercedes-Maybach EQS 680 SUV.

With the EQS SUV 580 4MATIC, the company now offers the EQA, EQB, EQE SUV, EQS SUV, EQS sedan and Maybach EQS SUV 680 in the market.

## Rupee rises four paise to close at 83.88 against US \$

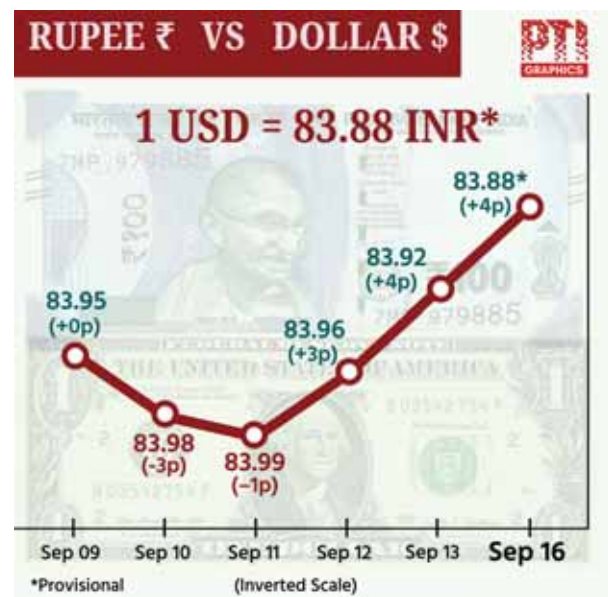
PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee witnessed range-bound trade and settled for the day higher by 4 paise at 83.88 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday supported by weak American currency and significant foreign fund inflows, while firm crude oil prices capped sharp gains.

Forex traders said market participants are eagerly awaiting cues from the US Fed policy on Wednesday, with a rate cut all but certain. However, the magnitude of the cut remains uncertain.

Moreover, the rupee continues to hold steady within a well-defined range on active intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), they added.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.89 and witnessed an intraday high of 83.87 and a low of 83.90 against the American currency. The domestic unit finally settled for the day at 83.88 (provisional), higher by 4 paise over its previous close, amid a positive trend in domestic equities. On Friday, the local unit settled higher by 4 paise at 83.92 against the US dollar.



"We expect Indian rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on continued weakness in the US dollar ahead of the FOMC meeting this week," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhani by BNP Paribas.

Choudhary further said that "there are broad expectations of a 25 bps rate cut by the Fed following a 25 bps rate cut by ECB last week. Fresh foreign inflows and a positive tone in

## Odisha to emerge as Tata Steel single-largest investment destination

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Tata Steel on Monday said Odisha would emerge as the company's single-largest investment destination after the phase-II expansion of its Kalinganagar plant from 3 million tonnes per annum to 8 mtpa. The steel major has invested Rs 27,000 in phase-II of the Kalinganagar plant expansion, and the company is on the verge of commissioning its expanded capacity at the unit, it said in a release.

The ongoing expansion in Kalinganagar will play an important role in Tata Steel's ambition to achieve its target of 40 mtpa capacity in India by 2030, the company said.

"The phase-II expansion of Tata Steel's Kalinganagar plant in Jajpur district of Odisha... Will also catapult the eastern state to an enviable position of becoming the single-largest investment destination for the country's oldest steel maker," the release said. Along with the Tata Steel Meramandali (formerly Bhushan Steel Ltd) plant in Dhenkanal district, the company's total investment in Odisha stands at over Rs 100,000 crore.

equity markets may further support the domestic currency. However, a recovery in crude oil prices may cap sharp upside."

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was down 0.39 per cent to 100.72 points.

Brent crude, the international benchmark, gained 0.56 per cent to USD 72.01 per barrel in futures trade.

# INDIAN MEN CRUSH AZERBAIJAN, WOMEN BEAT KAZAKHSTAN

PTI ■ BUDAPEST

Backed by the two in-form stars in World Championship challenger D Gukesh and Arjun Erigaisi, the Indian men scored a 3-1 victory over Azerbaijan in the fifth round of the 45th Chess Olympiad here.

It seems like Gukesh and Arjun can do nothing wrong in this Olympiad as they overpowered Aydin Sulemanli and Rauf Mamedov respectively with their white pieces in quick time.

Praggnanandhaa played another draw on board two to only ensure an Indian victory while Vidit Gujrathi played out a draw with Shakhriyar Mamedyarov in a marathon game to complete the triumph.

After scoring the fifth victory on the trot, the Indian men maintained a clean slate on ten points and they were joined by Vietnam who continued with their impressive show and downed Poland 2.5-1.5.

The other two teams that joined the leaders' pack were China and Hungary who scored identical 2.5-1.5 victories over Spain and Ukraine respectively.

With six rounds still to come in the biggest chess event, Magnus Carlsen's Norway and Iran are the only two teams sharing the fifth spot on 9 points apiece. Norway defeated a talented Turkey team by a 3-1 margin while Iran made most of the opportunities to down Canada 3.5-0.5.

In the women's section, Grandmaster D Harika suffered a shock defeat to give Kazakhstan an early lead. Better for most of the game, Harika misplayed after many pundits believed her position to be winning against Bibisara Assaubayeva.

On the fourth board Vantika Agarwal yet again played the anchor and won a clean game with white pieces against Alua Nurman while Xeniya Balabayeva split the point with Diviya Deshmukh.

With the scores tied at 2-2 it was Vaishali's turn to come up triumphs for the team and she outwitted Meruert Kamalidenova.

Team India joined Armenia and Mongolia in the lead on ten points. Armenia halted the Chinese party for now handing them a 2.5-1.5 defeat while Mongolia proved superior to United States with a similar score.

The three leaders have 10 points apiece and they are now followed by Georgia and Poland a half point behind.

Gukesh scored his fourth victory in a row at the expense of Sulemanli. The World championship challenger got a huge middle game advantage with scattered black pieces and a weak king and made no mistakes in converting that in to a full point.

Arjun is the only Indian who has played all five games thus far and the primary reason is his ability to complicate matters with either colour. Up against Mamedov, it was



CHES OLYMPIAD

Sicilian Dragon structure wherein Arjun converted to a complicated endgame and then his precise calculation helped him carve out his fifth win as many games.

For the records, Arjun is currently at 2888 ELO rating points in live ratings and just 12 short of attaining the magical 2800 mark - a summit captured by only Viswanathan Anand as an Indian.

The women section has seen some serious bouts wherein the tables were turned in quick time. In the next round now, the eves will take on Armenia.

**Results round 5 open:** India (10) beat Azerbaijan (8) 3-1 (D Gukesh beat Aydin Sulemanli; R Praggnanandhaa drew with Nijat Abasov; Arjun Erigaisi beat Rauf Mamedov; Shakhriyar Mamedyarov drew with Vidit Gujrathi); Ukraine (8) lost to Hungary (10) 1.5-2.5; Vietnam (10) beat Poland (8) 2.5-1.5; Spain (8) lost to China (10) 1.5-2.5; Turkey (7) lost to Norway (9) 1-3; Iran (9) beat Canada (7) 3.5-0.5.

**Women:** Kazakhstan (8) lost to India (10) 1.5-2.5 (Bibisara Asaubayeva beat D Harika; R Vaishali beat Meruert Kamalidenova; Xeniya Balabayeva drew with Diviya Deshmukh; Vantika Agarwal beat Alua Nurman); China (8) lost to Armenia (10) 1.5-2.5; Mongolia (10) beat USA (8) 2.5-1.5; Uzbekistan (7) lost to Georgia (9) 1.5-2.5; Poland (9) beat Turkey (7) 3-1.



## Yamal scores twice as Barcelona beats Girona 4-1

AP ■ MADRID

With two goals in less than 10 minutes, Lamine Yamal led Barcelona to its fifth straight victory at the start of the Spanish league season.

The teenager's double, plus second-half goals from Dani Olmo and Pedri, gave Barcelona a commanding 4-1 win at Catalan rival Girona on Sunday, keeping a four-point lead at the top.

Atletico Madrid kept pace by beating last-place Valencia 3-0 with goals from Antoine Griezmann and newly signed players Julian Alvarez and Conor Gallagher, while Real Madrid had won 2-0 at Real Sociedad on Saturday with goals from Kylian Mbappé and Vinicius Junior.

Along with Atletico and Madrid, Villarreal was the other team four points behind Barcelona after winning 2-1 at Mallorca on Saturday.

"To help the team it's important to score the goals and to do whatever is needed," Yamal said. "The first match after the international break is always complicated. Now we can start focusing on the match against Monaco (in the Champions League on Thursday)."

Yamal's goals on Sunday were his second and third of the

season. The 17-year-old Spain international opened the scoring after stealing the ball from a defender and sending a close-range shot into the net in the 30th minute. He scored again in the 37th after picking up a loose ball inside the area.

Olmo's third goal since joining Barcelona this season came from a tight angle in the 47th, and Pedri sealed the easy victory with a goal from inside the area in the 64th.

Olmo, who had to be replaced in the second half because of a right leg injury, became the first player to score in his first three league games for Barcelona since Cesc Fabregas in 2011. Only Zlatan Ibrahimovic, in 2009, achieved the same feat this century.

Cristhian Stuani scored Girona's lone goal in the 80th. The hosts were initially awarded a penalty kick for a handball inside the area just before halftime, with Barcelona leading 2-0, but the call was reversed by video review. Barcelona played with 10 men from the 87th after Ferran Torres was sent off for a hard foul on an opponent.

Poland striker Robert Lewandowski played his 100th match with Barcelona.

Girona, a surprise third-place finisher last season, won both league games against

Barcelona last season.

Atletico Madrid tops Valencia Newly signed Argentina forward Alvarez and England midfielder Gallagher scored their first goals for Atletico Madrid in the team's 3-0 win over last-place Valencia.

Alvarez sealed the home victory in stoppage time after Gallagher had opened the scoring in the 39th and Griezmann had doubled the lead in the 54th.

"I didn't feel like I was under pressure to score," Alvarez said. "I was ready for when the opportunity appeared."

It was the second consecutive win for Atletico, and third in five league matches. Diego Simeone's team drew its other two games.

Valencia has opened its season with four losses and a draw - 1-1 against Villarreal in the previous round.

Earlier Sunday, 10-man Athletic Bilbao won 3-2 at Las Palmas, which hasn't won in 19 straight league games going back to last season. It was the second win for Athletic this season.

Celta Vigo beat Valladolid 3-1 at home for its first win after two consecutive losses. It was the fourth straight game without a win for Valladolid after it opened with a victory at Espanyol.

## Britain fails to reach Davis Cup Finals

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Britain failed to qualify for the last eight of the Davis Cup Finals after losing to Canada 2-1 in its last group-stage tie, while Novak Djokovic helped Serbia secure a place in next year's qualifiers.

The British needed a 3-0 win against the Canadians in Manchester, but Dan Evans lost 6-0, 7-5 to Denis Shapovalov to end Britain's hopes in the opening match in front of a crowd of 15,700 at the AO Arena, the biggest for a Davis Cup tie on British soil, according to organizers.

Felix Auger-Aliassime then defeated Jack Draper 7-6 (8), 7-5 to seal Canada's victory and first place in Group D. England won the final doubles match.

Evans hinted this may have been his last Davis Cup

appearance.

"I've probably had my fair share now. It could be and probably will be (the end)," he said. "I need to have a think. If I don't feel capable of playing, I won't come back."

Canada and Argentina advanced from Group D. Finland was the other team eliminated.

Four groups have been playing in four cities to qualify for the eight-team Finals in Malaga, Spain, in November. The top two in each four-team group advance.

In Valencia, Spain defeated Australia 2-1 to win Group B with both having already qualified. France and the Czech Republic were eliminated.

In Bologna, the Netherlands won the closing doubles match to clinch its spot in the Finals



despite a 2-1 loss to Italy in Group A. The Dutch needed a single win to advance but had lost the first two matches.

The decisive win came with Wesley Koolhof and Botić van de Zandschulp defeating Simone Bolelli and Andrea

eliminated nations. The United States and Germany had advanced from the group.

**DJOKOVIC WINS AGAIN:** Djokovic led Serbia to a 3-1 win over Greece in a World Group 1 tie in Belgrade. The Olympic champion partnered Hamad Medjedovic to a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 win over Aristotelis Thanos and Petros Tsitsipas. Djokovic beat Ioannis Xilas 6-0, 6-1 in the singles on Saturday.

**BERDYCH TO CAPTAIN CZECHS:** Former world No. 4 and two-time Davis Cup champion Tomas Berdych will take over the captaincy from Jaroslav Navratil for the Czech Republic.

Navratil captained the Czechs for nearly two decades, including when it won the 2012 and 2013 titles with Berdych as a player.

## McLaren boss Zak Brown revels in best season

AP ■ LEBANON (TENNESSEE, USA)

After a thrilling Azerbaijan Grand Prix, it seems like nearly half the field is capable of winning races in Formula 1.

McLaren chief executive Zak Brown, whose driver Lando Norris is Max Verstappen's closest title challenger, says he's enjoying the best show he's seen in his eight years in F1.

There have been six different winners in the last eight races, representing four different teams. Verstappen, whose dominance in 2022 and 2023 broke records, still leads the standings but his last win was in June.

"I think this is the best season I can think of ever in Formula 1 since I've been here," Brown told The Associated Press from the IndyCar season finale at Nashville Superspeedway in Tennessee. Could it even be better than the 2021 fight between Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton, which was decided on the final lap of the year and helped fuel F1's Netflix boom? Brown thinks it might be.

"That was mega exciting, but it's just two guys, two good guys. Now you've got four good teams in today's race," he said.



"To have four teams that can win any weekend, and (Sergio) Perez was obviously back on form today, eight drivers going into Singapore and we're going I don't know which of these four teams might win. I don't know which of these eight drivers might win, I can't recall Formula 1 having that level of competitiveness."

There was non-stop action Sunday. McLaren's Oscar Piastri took the win in Baku, but only after a daring overtake on Ferrari's Charles Leclerc. Perez was in the mix for Red Bull until he and

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz Jr. Collided, handing third to Mercedes driver George Russell.

Further back, Norris surged through the field from 15th on the grid to finish fourth ahead of Verstappen and take another bite out of the champion's standings lead.

Teams' performances fluctuate week by week, depending on upgrades from the factories, track conditions and setup changes, like the one which Verstappen blamed for ruining his weekend in Azerbaijan.

Even a change of tires can turn an also-ran into a contender, Russell said Sunday.

"Just in this one race, we had a car that could have won if you took the pace from half of the race and a car that should have been outside the top 10 from the other half," he said, adding: "So I hope we've got the faster version" for next week's race in Singapore.

The Singapore street track hosted one of the most competitive races of an otherwise Red Bull-dominated 2023 season. On worn tires, Sainz held off Norris' McLaren and the two Mercedes of seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton and Russell, who crashed from third on the last lap.

Piastri is F1's on-form driver with the most points of anyone in the last seven races. He knows just how many moving parts are involved in success this year, and how quickly it can all change.

"We've been in with a chance everywhere, and I think today was definitely one of those days where we weren't necessarily the quickest, but we had a car that could put us in the fight," the Australian said.

"We had a pit stop that could put us in the fight. We had some teamwork that put us in the fight."

# Manchester City hearing is the chance to clear the club name

AP ■ MANCHESTER

The biggest challenge to Manchester City's Premier League dominance was due to start on Monday at a hearing into a slew of alleged financial breaches.

On the line is City's reputation and punishment could be as extreme as expulsion from the league.

City, which has won the last four league titles, denies the charges, which include providing misleading information about its finances. It will be down to a team of lawyers to clear the club's name and finally quash accusations that have cast a cloud over its unprecedented period of success.

Manager Pep Guardiola confirmed on Friday that the long-awaited hearing into more than 100 charges of

alleged financial wrongdoing was due to start.

"I'm happy it's starting on Monday. I know there will be more rumors," he said. "Everybody is innocent until guilt is proven."

The charges City was accused by the Premier League in February last year of providing misleading information about its finances over a nine-year period between 2009-18 after it was bought by Abu Dhabi's ruling family in 2008. City was trying to establish itself as one of the leading clubs in Europe, signed some of the world's best players like Yaya Toure, Sergio Agüero and Kevin de Bruyne and won three league titles - in 2012, 2014 and 2018.

The league's financial fair play rules are designed to ensure clubs essentially spend what they earn and commercial

deals are assessed for being at legitimate market value.

The charges came after a four-year investigation and following the publication of leaked emails and documents, likely hacked, that were published starting in 2018 by German magazine Der Spiegel. The documents allegedly showed attempts to cover up the source of City's income in a bid to comply with Financial Fair Play rules operated by European soccer's governing body UEFA and the Premier League.

City was also accused of breaches relating to its alleged failure to co-operate with the investigation.

The hearing into the charges will be held by an independent commission made up of three judges appointed by a lawyer who chairs the league's judicial



TAINT ITS DOMINANCE OF ENGLISH SOCCER

panel. The hearing will be held behind closed doors, and a verdict is not expected until next year.

The punishment Potential punishment for a "serious breach" of the league's rule book is wide-ranging.

City's response City said it was surprised by the charges when they were made last year.

"The Club welcomes the review of this matter by an independent Commission, to impartially consider the comprehensive body of irrefutable evidence that exists in support of its position," it said in a statement. "As such we look forward to this matter being put to rest once and for all."

Guardiola has repeatedly been critical of the treatment of City.

"My first thought is we are already being condemned," he said after the charges were made. "We are lucky we live in a marvellous country where everyone is innocent until proved guilty. We didn't have this opportunity. We are already sentenced."

The rules Known as Financial

Fair Play, the regulations are aimed at preventing clubs from spending more than they earn. FFP was established in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, which deepened worries in European soccer that clubs could go out of business if the cost of player transfers and wages kept rising.

Previous cases City was fined 60 million euros (then \$82 million) spread over three years by UEFA in 2014 and forced to limit its Champions League squad to 21 instead of 25 senior players after violating FFP rules.

Ultimately City only had to forfeit 20 million euros of prize money after complying with the governing body's measures.

In 2018 German magazine Der Spiegel published the

"Football Leaks" series of articles supposedly based on City's internal documents and communications.

They suggested City had broken FFP rules in financial relationships with "related-party" sponsors from Abu Dhabi.

In February 2020 City was banned from UEFA competition for two seasons for "serious breaches", including overstating sponsor revenue and failing to cooperate with investigators.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) overturned the ban in July 2020, ruling that some UEFA charges were not proven and other evidence was excluded as time-barred.

The court "strongly condemned" Man City for obstructing UEFA's investigation, though a €10 million (\$10.

# SKIPPER HARMANPREET TWIN STRIKE IN 4-1 VICTORY OVER KOREA

PTI ■ HULUNBUIR (CHINA)

Skinner Harmanpreet Singh's sublime form resulted in twin strikes as defending champions India entered the final of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy with a clinical 4-1 win against South Korea in the semi-final here on Monday. India scored through Uttam Singh (13th minute), skipper Harmanpreet Singh (19th, 45th) and Jarnmanpreet Singh (32nd), while Korea's lone goal came from through Yang Jihun (33rd)'s penalty corner conversion. India will take on hosts China in Tuesday's final. Earlier in the day, China defeated Pakistan 2-0 via shoot-out in the first semifinal after the two teams finished 1-1 at the end of regulation 60 minutes. In the previous league stage encounter between the two finalists, India prevailed 3-0. Pakistan and Korea will face off in the third place classification match which will also be played on Tuesday. Meanwhile in the fifth-sixth place classification match, Japan beat Malaysia 4-2 in shoot-out following a 4-4 stalemate in normal time. In the second semifinal as expected, the Indians started on the offensive and tested the Korean defence with

## INDIA IN ACT FINAL



persistent attacks from the word go. The Koreans, on the other hand, were content to sit back and defend and rely on sporadic counter attacks. Abhishek came tantalisingly close to handing India the lead in the fourth minute but his reverse hit was brilliantly saved by Korean goalkeeper Kim Jaehan. The Indian made promising build ups and penetrated the Korean circle on consistent basis in the first quarter. India's attacking intent finally paid off in the 13th minute when Uttam positioned himself at the right place at the right time to tap in Arajiet Singh Hundal's supply from the right. A minute from the first break, Korea secured back-to-back penalty corners but failed to utilise the chances. Four minutes into the second quarter, India secured their first penalty corner and Harmanpreet scored his sixth goal of the tournament to hand his side a 2-0 lead. At the stroke of half-time, custodian Suraj Karkera came out of his line to save an effort from the opposition player. India continued in the same vein after the change of ends and

extended their lead two minutes into the third quarter. A brilliant scoop from Sumit from the right finds Jarnmanpreet just outside the circle on the left flank and the latter neatly collected the ball and took a step or two to get inside the circle and slap the ball into the Korean goal to extend India's lead. But Korea pulled one back a minute later from a penalty corner through the tournament's top-scorer Yang Jihun. The goal hardly bothered the Indians as they continued their attacking game and dominated the share of exchanges. With a second left for the third quarter, India secured another penalty corner when Korean goalkeeper Jaehan was shown the yellow card for handling the ball outside the circle, and Harmanpreet made no mistake to extend the lead. Eight minutes from the final hooter, India's second goalkeeper Karkera made a fine double save to deny Park Cheoleon, but the Koreans secured a penalty corner which went in vain. Thereafter, it was controlled show from the Indians as they defended their lead with consummate ease to march into their fifth final appearance in the tournament.



# Rohit, team sweat it out in third training session in Chennai

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Rohit Sharma and Co had another extensive training session in the build up to the first Test against Bangladesh with all 16 squad members turning for practice at the Chepauk here on Monday. After a day off, the India squad members took part in their third training session since their arrival here last week. The first Test begins on Thursday. As it is often the case, Virat Kohli was among the first set of batters to hit the nets. In the adjacent net was southpaw Yashasvi Jaiswal as both him and Kohli faced Jasprit Bumrah and home hero R Ashwin. The next set of batters included skipper Rohit, Shubman Gill and Sarfaraz Khan, the last named player arriving here after taking part in the second round Duleep Trophy match in Anantapur. The captain focussed on playing spinners keeping Bangladesh's slow bowling attack in mind. Ravindra Jadeja, Rishabh Pant and pacer Mohammed Siraj too



faced local bowlers and significant amount of throwdowns. The practise pitch at the main square offered a decent amount of bounce. India will have two more practice sessions scheduled before the series opener against Bangladesh, who are riding on the confidence of their series sweep in Pakistan. Most players in the playing eleven select themselves. The Chennai surface usually favour the spinners and there is likelihood of India going into the game with three spinners and two pacers. The spinners expected to feature are Ashwin, Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav while Bumrah and Siraj will share workload in the pace department. Axar Patel, despite his impressive all-round returns across formats, may have to sit out. On the batting front, Pant is expected to make his Test return after a gap of almost two years. Dhruv Jurel, who impressed his debut series against England, will be benched in that case.

## Sharma finishes T-42nd as Højgaard pips McIlroy to Irish title

PTI ■ DUBLIN

Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma had a choppy back nine leading to a round of 1-over 72 as he finished a disappointing T-42nd at the Amgen Irish Open at Royal County Down. Sharma, who was in the top-15 after the first two days, ended with a total of 4-over 288. He parred through the front nine and two more holes before finding his first birdie on the 12th. He bogeyed 13th and the 15th but birdied 16th only to drop a shot on 17th and close with a par. Meanwhile, Rasmus Højgaard holed out twice and produced a stunning finish with four birdies in last five holes as he beat local favourite Rory McIlroy. McIlroy looked on course to claim his first professional win on home soil when he led by two shots with four holes to play at a venue just an hour from where he grew up. However, Højgaard's superb closing 65 saw him claim his fifth DP World Tour title and move to second in the Race to Dubai Rankings and to the top of the European Ryder Cup standings. McIlroy had taken a one-shot lead into the final round and made the ideal start with birdies on the first and second. With playing partner Matteo

Manassero then dropping shots on the third and fourth, McIlroy briefly enjoyed a four-shot lead before making a bogey on the seventh after failing to get up and down from left of the green. He then missed from inside ten feet for birdie on both the eighth and the ninth as Højgaard kickstarted his challenge with an outrageous chip-in for birdie on the tenth. A birdie on the 11th edged McIlroy two in front again, but that advantage was wiped out as Højgaard birdied the 16th and McIlroy bogeyed the 15th. Højgaard then dramatically holed out from a greenside bunker on the 17th and although McIlroy drew level with a birdie on the 16th, he charged his birdie putt on the 17th past the hole and missed the return. Højgaard's third birdie in a row on the 18th meant McIlroy needed to make an eagle on the same hole to force a play-off and a towering approach from 191 yards gave him a chance from 15 feet, only for the eagle putt to slide just wide. "I was nervous. I was shaking out there the last few holes. I obviously knew that Rory was going to be there because he's got the whole support on his back there. It was nerve-racking going down the last few holes knowing that he was right behind me," Højgaard said.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian players have been working on their mental strength for a "long time" which should help the team in overcoming hurdles, says skipper Harmanpreet Kaur ahead of the upcoming women's T20 World Cup next month. India, who finished as runner-up in the 2020 edition of the tournament, are placed in Group A along with six-time winners and defending champions Australia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and New Zealand. Kaur said on Monday that the Indian players have been working on the mental aspect to bring out their best in crucial moments. "We have been working on mental strength for a long time. The last 3-4 overs are the most crucial. T20 cricket is not a small format; at the end of the day, you are playing 40 overs," Kaur told Star Sports. "In the last 4-5 overs, the team that is mentally strong wins the match. We

## Indian players working on mental strength ahead of T20 World Cup: Harmanpreet

have been focusing on this for a while. If we can remain mentally stable in those final five overs, we can execute what's best for us." India's performances in summit clashes have featured in discussions given the team lost in the 2020 final by 85 runs to Australia, while England had pipped them by a mere nine runs in the 2017 ODI World Cup final. Even in the Commonwealth Games 2022, Australia eked out a nine-run win to clinch the gold medal despite a spirited show with the bat from India in the final, with Kaur's team settling for the silver. "We are working on those aspects, and hopefully, we will overcome this hurdle in the tournament," she added.



India's campaign begins on October 4 against New Zealand followed by the clash against arch-rivals Pakistan on October 6. India, who lost to Sri Lanka in the women's Asia Cup final earlier this year, will take on the team from the island nation on October 9 and each of their first three group stage matches will be played in Dubai. India's final group match against Australia will be played at Sharjah on October 13. Kaur said the team's combination of players from different states in the country gives an opportunity to learn further. "All the players in our team come from different states. It feels good when you see so many different characters in the team. People from various states share the dressing room, and you get to learn about their cultures. "I think you can only experience that in sports, not in any other career," Kaur added.

# Sakshi Malik, Aman Sehrawat and Geeta Phogat announce Wrestling Champions Super League

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Olympic medalists Sakshi Malik and Aman Sehrawat, along with former world championship bronze-winner Geeta Phogat, on Monday announced that they would soon launch a Wrestling Champions Super League (WCSL) for the country's budding grapplers but the national federation has refused to sanction the initiative. Sakshi, along with Bajrang Punia and Vinesh Phogat, had spearheaded the wrestlers' protest against ousted Wrestling Federation of India President Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who was accused of sexual harassment. She has, however, distanced herself from the latter two after they took the political plunge by joining Congress ahead of next months Haryana

assembly elections. She won the 58kg bronze in 2016 Rio Olympics, and announced the project with Phogat, a 55kg bronze winner in 2012 World Championships through their social media handles. The two, while announcing that they had Paris Games bronze-winner Aman on board, did not provide any details. Phogat told PTI that she is hopeful of support from the federation and the government. "Sakshi and I have been planning this League for long. Soon it will take a final shape. We have not yet spoken to the WFI but it would be great if WFI and government support us. It will be the first league that will be operated only by the players," Phogat said. "We are doing it for the players, for their benefit. That is the idea and vision, so no one



should have any problem with it. It's a proud moment for us. We won't stop anyone from getting involved in it, if WFI or government comes on board,

even better. We have not yet spoken to them. "There will be international wrestlers, and coaches involved, so it should help our

junior wrestlers. They will get good exposure." The WFI said it would not give its sanction to the league. "We won't approve it. We are

reviving our pro wrestling league and hopefully we will have it soon. The wrestlers are free to do their own league, they can promote the game, but we won't be linked with that," WFI President Sanjay Singh said. Asked if there will be prize money involved, and about the format and venue for the event, Phogat said, "You will have to wait a bit to know all this. We will share the details very soon."

Sakshi, who retired from wrestling after Sharan Singh's close aide Sanjay Singh became WFI head, said she hopes to give back to the sport through this initiative. "The only way to repay our trust is to dedicate our sporting talent, experience, grit & success to the service of the sport. The 2 of us have therefore come together to create the Wrestling Champions Super League (WCSL)," she posted on X. "The WCSL, a world class international league, will skill & strengthen our wrestlers to dominate the sport globally by taking on the world's best in a hyper competitive, expertly supervised environment with best-in-class support systems in place." She also said that Sehrawat, who won bronze in 57kg in Paris Olympics, also "shares our vision and is joining us on this journey."

"This league is a very commendable initiative which will help Indian wrestling greatly and therefore I want to be a part of it and support it fully," Aman was quoted as saying by Sakshi. Daughter of noted wrestling coach Mahavir, Geeta is a cousin of Vinesh, who will be contesting from Julana constituency during the Haryana elections. Sakshi said the aim of the league is to build a culture of sustained high performance in the sport in the country. "While WCSL is focused on wrestling, it is inspired also by our overwhelming urge to build a culture of sustained high performance in Indian sport & motivate every Indian to experience the joy of playing. "Although founded by the 2 of us, the WCSL is a national mission committed to respecting & working in close partnership with all stakeholders. Winning, after all, is a team sport. Our hearts beat only for India, for Indian wrestling & for Indian sport. Come, let's build the sporting India of our dreams mil ke, ek saath!"

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.