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अबुआ आंभार हेमन्त सरकार

नियुक्ति नियमावली में अड़चनों को दूर कर नियुक्तियों की कड़ियां जोड़ती हेमन्त सरकार

JSSC द्वारा आयोजित विभिन्न परीक्षाओं में
चयनित 327 अभ्यर्थियों एवं Re-counselling के उपरांत
चयनित 150 सहायक शिक्षकों को

मुख्यमंत्री श्री हेमन्त सोरेन एवं मंत्रीगण सौंपेंगे नियुक्ति पत्र

दिनांक: 27 सितम्बर, 2024 | समय: अपराह्न 12:00 बजे | स्थान: जैप-1 ऑडिटोरियम, डोरण्डा, रांची

युवाओं के सपने, हेमन्त सरकार के हैं अपने

- कृषि पदाधिकारी समेत कई पदों पर राज्य गठन के बाद पहली बार नियुक्ति
- विभिन्न विभागों में हजारों युवाओं की हुई नियुक्ति
- गरीब-गुरुबा परिवार के युवा बने अफसर

- JPSC अथवा JSSC द्वारा अनुशंसित विभिन्न पदों में 75% से 100% झारखण्ड के अभ्यर्थियों की नियुक्ति
- JPSC में रिकॉर्ड समय पर नियुक्ति
- निजी क्षेत्र में स्थानीय युवाओं को 75% आरक्षण के साथ 1 लाख से अधिक युवाओं को मिला ऑफर लेटर

सूचना एवं जनसंपर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड सरकार

Mainiyan Samman Yatra launched in East Singhbhum, BJP on target

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR



The much-anticipated Mainiyan Samman Yatra was launched at the Bahragora branch ground on Thursday, attracting a massive crowd despite challenging weather conditions. The event, which focuses on empowering women under the Mainiyan Samman Yojana, was graced by Baby Devi, Minister of Women, Child Development, and Social Security for the Government of Jharkhand, as the chief guest. Other notable attendees included Gandeya Assembly MLA Kalpana Soren and Bahragoda MLA Sameer Kumar Mahanti, both of whom were special guests at the event. The program commenced with a formal ceremony where the MLAs honored the chief guest and other dignitaries with bouquets. This was followed by a procession of hundreds of vehicles, which began from under the Kaliadinga

overbridge and made its way to the meeting venue, moving through the entire market area. Despite heavy rains, thousands of women gathered under umbrellas, keenly listening to the addresses of the chief guest and other speakers. Opposition Criticism and Response Addressing the enthusiastic crowd, JMM's star campaigner and MLA Kalpana Soren emphasized the significance of the Mainiyan Samman Yojana. The scheme, under the Jharkhand government's initiative, provides a monthly allowance of ₹1,000 to every woman aged between 18 and 50, amounting to ₹12,000 annually. Soren took a dig at the opposition parties, stating that they were finding it difficult to accept the success of the welfare program. She further remarked on the solid footing of the grand alliance in Jharkhand, asserting that no opposition could halt its progress in the upcoming assembly elections. Commitment to Women's

Welfare Minister Baby Devi, speaking to the audience, reaffirmed the government's commitment to the well-being of mothers and sisters across the state. She acknowledged that a few women had yet to receive payments under the scheme but assured that the issue would be resolved swiftly. Baby Devi praised the government's continued efforts in securing financial independence and social security for women in the state. Echoing similar sentiments, Bahragoda MLA Sameer Kumar Mahanti launched an attack on the BJP, claiming that the welfare schemes initiated by the Jharkhand government have ensured the safety and prosperity of the state's women, its soil, and its resources. Mahanti noted that the massive turnout at the Mainiyan Samman Yatra despite adverse weather was a testament to the people's support for the current government's initiatives.



SAIL's 52nd AGM: Chairman emphasizes stakeholder engagement and proactive growth

PNS : BOKARO

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) conducted its 52nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) today at the company's headquarters in Lodi Road, New Delhi. The meeting, held virtually, was presided over by Amarendu Prakash, Chairman of SAIL, who addressed the shareholders. During his address, Prakash highlighted SAIL's unwavering commitment to

strengthening engagement with stakeholders and improving asset utilization. He emphasized that the company is taking proactive measures to remain ahead of industry challenges and opportunities. "SAIL will continue to engage with stakeholders, improve asset utilization, and proactively stay ahead of the curve," the Chairman remarked. The AGM also served as a platform for the company to review its operational

and financial performance over the past year. Amarendu Prakash further reassured shareholders of SAIL's focus on sustainability and innovation, which will drive the company's future growth. In closing, Chairman Prakash reaffirmed that SAIL will remain dedicated to adapting to market dynamics, ensuring operational excellence, and delivering value to all its stakeholders.

Rising from the Ashes



BY HITESH VARMA 'HITU'

again, stand tall." For my children, my family, my core, for the truth that I could't ignore. Though dungeons deep held me tight, But that flicker of faith refused to die. Slowly but surely, I found my way, With tiny steps forward, night to day. With gratitude in every stride, I now stand strong, no need to hide. From the ashes, I rise anew, With a heart resilient, although tired, yet true. Head held high, I face the sky, A warrior's spirit shall never die. Hitesh Varma is GM/HOD, Marketing and Sales BCCL.

The challenges loomed, dark and vast, They shattered me, broke me fast. Yet deep within, a voice so small, Whispered, "Rise

CMPDI observes Special Campaign 4.0

PNS : RANCHI



Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI), a Subsidiary of Coal India Limited is observing Special Campaign 4.0 at its HQ and all its Regional Institutes spread across 6 states. Special Campaign 4.0 aims to institutionalize Swachhata with focus on Enhancement of office spaces, Adoption of Environmental Friendly practices, Waste to Wealth creation, Scrap Disposal, Inclusivity etc. Special Campaign 4.0 will be implemented in two phases i.e preparatory phase (16th-30th September) and Implementation Phase (02nd-

30th October, 2024). CMPDI till date identified 33 sites for Cleanliness Campaign which will clear 52764 sq.ft of area; 214 physical files to be weeded out; Closing of 824 e-files etc. It is pertinent to mention here that CMPDI during

Special campaign 3.0 in 2023, cleaned 37 sites against a target of 32 sites; 1770 physical files were weeded out against a target of 100; and a record number of 12269 e-files were closed against a target of 700 thus exceeding all the targets by a huge margin.

Former BJP State General Secretary joined Congress



PNS : RANCHI

In Jharkhand Congress Bhawan Ranchi, member of Chaunpur royal family and former General Secretary of BJP Vivek Bhawani Singh joined Congress in the presence of Jharkhand Pradesh Congress Committee President Keshav Mahato Kamlesh, leader of legislative party Dr. Rameshwar Oraon and former state president Rajesh Thakur. Kamlesh expressed his desire to work in the organization unconditionally and his joining will further strengthen the organization as he said that there is a long queue of leaders coming from BJP to Congress, all of them are upset with the autocratic attitude of BJP and are ready to gradually come to the mainstream of

Congress. Impressed by the ideology of Congress party and Rahul Gandhi ji's Bharat Jodo Yatra, he joined the party today and we welcome him, he said. Leader of the Legislative Party, Dr. Rameshwar Oraon said that his joining the party will strengthen both the Congress and the alliance. I personally know his family. I welcome those who are joining the party inspired by the policies, principles and ideology of the Congress party. Vivek Bhawani Singh said that I have been in the BJP party for 20 years but I am very overwhelmed by the way they greeted me here and included me in the Congress family. "I have been in the BJP for 20 years. I did not suddenly decide to leave the party, especially

after 2014. I am not the only one, there are many people who are troubled by the dictatorial attitude of the BJP party and are affected by it. Everyone will join the Congress party one by one," he said. "Today the way Rahul Gandhi is constantly raising the basic problems of the common man like inflation, employment, GST, farmers, Rahul ji is the only leader in the whole of India who is constantly raising his voice and the leaders of BJP and all the constituent parties of India keep trying to corner him, but Rahul ji faces them equally strongly and works to raise the issues of the common man from the Parliament to the road, I was impressed by him and decided to join the Congress party," Singh said.

Emergency Angioplasty saves life of 67-Year-Old

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Brahmananda Narayana Hospital, Jamshedpur has successfully performed an emergency angioplasty on a 67-year-old man suffering from a heart attack and severe heart disease. Karu Nandan Pathak, a resident of Bandpara, Chaibaasa, West Singhbhum, was admitted with intense chest pain and difficulty breathing. Before coming to the hospital, he had visited several local doctors but found no relief. After hearing about the hospital's cardiology department from friends, he decided to seek help there. Upon admission, Dr. Ajay Kumar Agarwal and his team conducted tests, including an ECG, which indicated a serious heart condition. Given the urgency of the situation, they performed a coronary angiography, revealing critical blockages in two of his heart's three vessels. After explaining the situation to Mr. Pathak's family, the team quickly proceeded with angioplasty on the affected arteries. Dr. Agarwal emphasized, "Time is crucial when deal-

ing with heart attacks. If patients arrive at a cardiac facility during the critical early hours, their chances of survival increase significantly." Unfortunately, many people delay seeking help, which can worsen their conditions. Following the procedure, Mr. Pathak's condition stabilized, and he was discharged two days later, feeling much better. Dr. Agarwal noted, "When Mr. Pathak arrived, he was in a critical state. Our team acted swiftly to diagnose and treat him effectively." Cases like these highlight the importance of seeking timely medical attention for symptoms like chest pain and breathlessness. Early intervention can be lifesaving. Commenting on the hospital's commitment to patient care, the hospital's Facility Director stated, "At Brahmananda Narayana Hospital, we prioritize the well-being of our patients by offering comprehensive care across all specialties under one roof. This allows us to respond quickly and effectively in any medical emergency or for any health condition."

S K Durga Puja Maha Samiti to take out grand Shobha Yatra

PNS : DALTONGANJ



Sri Kendriya Durga Puja Maha Samiti holding press briefing in Daltonganj photo by PNS

The Sri Kendriya Durga Puja Maha Samiti Palamu is to take out a grand Shobha Yatra on October 2 ahead of the sacred Kalash Sthapana. Giving this information the president of the Sri Kendriya Durga Puja Maha Samiti Durga Johri said "This October 2 the beauty and elegance of the Shobha Yatra will be worth all time memory. It will be very grand." Johri is the president of the Sri Kendriya Durga Puja Maha Samiti for 10 consecutive years. On immersion Johri said "It has been unanimously decided to have immersion of the holy idols on October 12." There are mainly 4 locations in Daltonganj including the bank of the river Amanat where the immersion of the idols is done. Johri said "There is much water in both the rivers Koyel and Amanat. We urge

the administration to have a safety line and local swimmers ready in the event of any mishap." A 17 year old boy very recently lost his life in the river Koyel when he got swept away by the waters of the river. Johri added "There would be great many cautions on our side too. Immersion parties should have to be vigilant and alert." He said "We request the

faithful not to allow children to go into the river during the immersion. We can't afford any carelessness in the river water." Last year there were 581 Puja pandals during the Durga Puja in Palamu. A few more may be expected to add to this figure. Close to Palamu, Garhwa district had 575 Puja pandals last year. There were just 146 Puja pandals in Latehar district last year.

CMPDI inks MoA with RK Mission TB Sanatorium, Ranchi

PNS : RANCHI

CMPDI, RI-III, Ranchi signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Ramakrishna Mission TB Sanatorium, Tupudana, Ranchi for providing Financial assistance of Rs. Rs 55.86 Lakhs for the procurement of Medical equipment as part of CMPDI Corporate Social Responsibility. Shri Jayant Chakraborty, RD, RI-III, Ranchi and Shri Swami Satsanganand, Secretary, RK mission TB sanatorium signed the MoA. This initiative will augment diagnostic and treatment capabilities at the Ramakrishna Mission TB Sanatorium, which will benefit the Marginalized community located in and around Ranchi. It is pertinent to mention here that, CMPDI under CSR has donated an Ambulance and installed Ultrasound Machine- Colour Doppler system facility at Ramakrishna Mission TB Sanatorium, Tupudana, Ranchi in 2022. In another development CMPDI, RI-III, Ranchi signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Yathasambhav Prayas Sampurna Vikas (YPSV) to support the installation of 20 water coolers with Reverse Osmosis (R.O.) systems at 04 Panchayats of Ranchi district, Jharkhand. Jayant Chakraborty, RD, RI-III,



Ranchi and ndrajeet Kumar, Secretary, (YPSV) signed the MoA. This CSR initiative is aimed at enhancing access to safe drinking water. Water cooler will be installed at Makka Panchayat; Murupuri Panchayat; Chakme Panchayat (Burm Block); Boreya Panchayat (Kanke Block) panchayats of Ranchi District, Jharkhand. Through this Initiative, CMPDI is committed to improving the quality of life in these communities as part of its ongoing efforts under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

CMC launches cleanliness drive at religious sites, community toilets

PNS : BOKARO



Under the leadership of AMC Anant Kumar, a special cleanliness drive was organized as part of the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign within the Chas Municipal Corporation area. The drive primarily focused on maintaining cleanliness at religious sites, including the Shiv Mandir at Talgharia More, Chas Gurudwara, and Durga Mandir in Chira Chas. These important spiritual locations were meticulously cleaned with the active participation of officials, staff members, and sanitation workers from all zones of the corporation. Simultaneously, a cleanliness drive targeting community toilets in the area was also undertaken. The initiative witnessed the joint efforts of municipal officials, staff from Sulabh International, and local sanitation workers. The campaign aimed to reinforce the importance of public hygiene and ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for the community. AMC Anant Kumar praised the collective effort and emphasized the need for regular maintenance of public spaces, particularly during the festive season, to promote a culture of cleanliness and public health. The 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign continues to be a pivotal part of Chas Municipal Corporation's commitment to making the city cleaner and more livable.

NML celebrates 83rd CSIR Foundation Day with focus on future of mobility

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - National Metallurgical Laboratory (NML) marked its 83rd Foundation Day with a grand celebration at the NML Auditorium. The event was graced by distinguished guests, including Chief Guest Dr. Shankar Venugopal, Vice President of Mahindra Research Valley, Chennai; Dr. Sandip Ghosh Chowdhury, Director of CSIR-NML; and Aditya Mainak, Administrative Officer of CSIR-NML. The ceremony commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, followed by a welcome address from Dr. Chowdhury, who greeted the dignitaries, NML retirees, scientists, and other invitees.

The highlight of the event was the CSIR Foundation Day lecture delivered by Dr. Shankar Venugopal, who spoke on "The New Materials that are Shaping the Future of Mobility." In his insightful talk, Dr. Venugopal emphasized the importance of introducing cutting-edge technologies that are accessible to Indian farmers, aligning with Mahindra's mission to make technology affordable and impactful. He also discussed the exciting potential of Deep Sea Mining, which contains critical materials like manganese (Mn), cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni), and neodymium (Nd), essential for the electric vehicle (EV) industry. Dr. Venugopal touched upon the significance of India's lithium reserves,



estimated at 5.9 million tons, and highlighted the 90% price drop in lithium-ion batteries over the past decade, underscoring the rapid transformation in battery technology. He also

noted the challenges India faces in securing critical metals, such as lithium and cobalt, which are vital for producing EV batteries. As a solution, he urged a focus on technology development for recycling these critical materials from end-of-life EV batteries to ensure sustainability in the long run. In keeping with the tradition of celebrating excellence, the event also featured awards for various competitions and achievements. Dr. Venugopal presented awards for the essay and quiz competitions, held in honor of the Foundation Day, along with meritorious student awards for the wards of CSIR-NML employees. In recognition of academic excellence, a one-time cash award of Rs. 3,000 was given to students who secured 90% or more in at least three science subjects in the Senior Secondary Examination (12th class) of 2024. This year's recipients were:

Employees who had completed 25 years of service with CSIR were honored for their dedication, while those who retired between September 30, 2023, and August 31, 2024, were also recognized for their contributions to the organization. The celebration concluded with a vote of thanks by Aditya Mainak, Administrative Officer of CSIR-NML, who expressed gratitude to the dignitaries, participants, and attendees for making the event a success. The 83rd Foundation Day of CSIR-NML highlighted the continued commitment of the laboratory to scientific and industrial innovation, along with its contributions to the development of future technologies, especially in the mobility and materials sectors.



OPINION 6 EXPLORING THE DEPTHS OF THE HUMAN MIND

WORLD 8 TRUMP THREATENS TO END BIDEN IMMIGRATION PROGRAMMES

MONEY 10 JIO-BP INAUGURATES 500TH EV CHARGING STATION

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INDIA LIKELY TO MAINTAIN SUPREMACY OVER BANGLADESH 12 SPORTS



Police altered documents in RG Kar case, claims CBI



Activists of various left wing parties clash with police personnel during a protest march against the alleged sexual assault and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, in Kolkata, Thursday

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Central Bureau of Investigation has reasons to believe that a section of Kolkata Police officials had tried to create fake documents in the Kolkata lady doctor rape and murder case.

to "create" and "alter" certain documents that could change the direction of the case. Hearing a writ petition the Calcutta High Court had transferred the case to the CBI following allegations that the Kolkata Police was trying to suppress facts.

"During custodial interrogation of both the accused persons, new/ additional facts have emerged to the effect that some false records pertaining to the instant case were created/ altered in the police station," the CBI letter said.

given three versions of "sudden illness, suicide and then death over telephone before we rushed to the hospital ... then in the hospital we were made to sit for three hours while her mother literally held their feet to let her see her daughter's face once," said the father of the victim. The ordeal did not end there as the old parents were made to sit in the Tala Police Station for more than an hour and were repeatedly monitored while they wrote the FIR.

Domestic Violence Act applicable to all women: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, is a civil code that is applicable to every woman in India irrespective of her religious affiliation or social background.



which allowed it and remanded the matter to the magistrate with a direction to consider his application by giving an opportunity to both parties to adduce their evidence. The judges noted that aggrieved by the order, the woman approached the High Court which dismissed her plea in April last year and directed the magistrate to consider the application filed by the man under section 25 of the Act.

Hindu Temple vandalised in US

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Unknown miscreants have vandalised the BAPS Hindu temple in California's Sacramento, desecrating it with expletive-laden graffiti saying "Hindus go back!", the BAPS Public Affairs said.

SC to hear Godhra incident appeals on 15 January

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said it will hear on January 15 the appeals filed by the Gujarat Government and several other convicts in the 2002 Godhra train burning case.



Gujarat Government's counsel Swati Ghildiyal requested the bench to post the matter for hearing on some other day as she was to argue before another Supreme Court bench in a death penalty-related matter.



People gather at a government hospital after their family members drowned while taking holy dips in rivers and ponds during the 'Jivitputrika' festival on Wednesday, in Aurangabad district of Bihar, Thursday, Sept. 26, 2024.

Several drown during Bihar festival

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA/NEW DELHI

At least 43 people, including 37 were missing while taking holy dips in rivers and ponds in separate incidents during the 'Jivitputrika' festival in Bihar, the State Government said on Thursday.

Patna, Vaishali, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Gopalganj and Arwal districts. The DMD has pressed several teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) for search and rescue operations.

FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT TO MEET TROOPS AT SIACHEN



President Droupadi Murmu pays tribute at the Siachen War Memorial during a visit to Siachen Base Camp, on Thursday

HP govt face flak by party for adopting Yogi model

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ SHIMLA/NEW DELHI

Himachal Pradesh Minister Himakant Singh was summoned to Delhi and reprimanded by the Congress brass over a controversial order issued by his department mandating food outlets across the State to display the name and address of their owners, which has however been withdrawn.

the move as it had criticised a similar move by the Uttar Pradesh Government during the Kanwar Yatra a few weeks back. Sources said Vikramaditya has been asked not to give controversial remarks on this matter.

SC rejects Gujarat Government plea in Bilkis case



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed a plea filed by the Gujarat Government seeking a review of the court's verdict which contained certain observations against the State while quashing the remission granted to 11 men convicted of raping Bilkis Bano and murdering seven of her family members during the 2002 riots.

Little hopes of ceasefire between Israel, Hezbollah

AP ■ TEL AVIV

The Israeli Prime Minister appeared to downplay hopes of an imminent truce with Hezbollah on Thursday after the United States and its allies called for an "immediate" 21-day ceasefire to "provide space for diplomacy."

had been any directive to ease up on fighting on the northern border with Lebanon. The comments raised questions about a new international initiative to halt increasingly heavy exchanges of fire that have killed hundreds of people in Lebanon and threatened to trigger an all-out war between Israel and Hezbollah.



country would continue fighting "with all our might until victory and the safe return of the residents of the north to their homes." Hezbollah has also not yet

responded to the proposal for a pause in fighting, although Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati has welcomed it. The Lebanese militant group has insisted it would only halt its strikes if there is a ceasefire in Gaza, where Israel has been battling Hamas for nearly a year.

to meet with other world leaders on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Israel launched a massive operation in Gaza after a Hamas-led attack into southern Israel on October 7 in which about 1,200 people (mostly civilians) were killed, and 250 taken hostage.

Solid steps being taken to make farmers of State self-dependent: CM

CM transfers Rs 400.66 Cr through DBP for loan waiver of 1,76,977 farmers

PNS : RANCHI

The door to development opens through villages. In such a situation, the state will become strong only with the prosperity of the farmers. Our government is constantly taking concrete decisions towards making the farmers self-reliant," said Chief Minister Hemant Soren, while addressing the Jharkhand Agriculture Loan Waiver Scheme program organized by the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperation here on Thursday. The CM said that this is not a loan waiver scheme program, but it is a Mahajutan program in honour of the farmers.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister gave a big gift to 1,76,977 lakh farmers of the state by waiving their loans up to two lakh rupees.

The loan of about Rs 400.66 crore of all these farmers was repaid by the state government. The Chief Minister also unveiled the Birsa Kisan Integrated Portal of the Agriculture Department in this program.

The CM said that today farmers are facing various challenges. Agricultural work is getting affected due to the poverty of farmers and lack of capital. In such a situation, with the aim of giving relief to the farmers, our government has decided to waive their agricultural loans up to two lakh rupees, so that by strengthening their economic condition, they can get a chance to make a new beginning in the field of agriculture.

The CM said that 80 per cent of the population of Jharkhand lives in rural areas. The farmers and labourers here depend on agriculture for their liveli-



Chief Minister Hemant Soren waves to people during Jharkhand Agriculture Loan Waiver Scheme programme in Ranchi on Thursday. PNS

hood. In such a situation, their farm is their bank and the barn is their ATM. But, today the condition of the farmers is not hidden. They are doing agricultural work amidst adverse conditions. Many times due to the weather, the crops are dam-

aged a lot, the brunt of which they have to bear for a long time. Our government is continuously working to help the farmers come out of these adverse circumstances. In this episode, our government took a historic decision to waive the loan of



Chief Minister Hemant Soren distributes assets among beneficiaries during Jharkhand Agriculture Loan Waiver Scheme programme in Ranchi on Thursday. PNS

up to two lakh rupees taken by the farmers for agricultural work, so that the farmers can be provided with economic security cover.

The CM said that our government is working for the development and wel-

fare of every class and section. We have given pension to the elderly and are giving Samman Rashii to women. The process of giving employment to the youth is going on on a large scale. Savitribai Phule Kishori

Yojana is being run to encourage girls towards education. To ensure that the dreams of the bright students of this place to become engineers, doctors and officers do not remain unfulfilled due to lack of money, the government is giving them an education loan up to Rs 15 lakh on its guarantee under Guruji Credit Card Yojana. Our government has waived off loans of up to Rs 2 lakh of farmers. Along with waiving off the outstanding electricity bills, 200 units of electricity are being given free of cost. In our government, everyone including tribals, natives, Dalits, women, youth, elderly, backward and minorities are getting opportunities to move forward.

In the presence of the Chief Minister, an MoU was signed for 5 years between Secretary of Agriculture Department Abu Bakar

Siddique and Executive Director of NDDB, Anand, Gujarat, S Raghupati for promoting the dairy industry. Under this, about 68 thousand milk producers will be linked. Apart from this, milk producers will also be given an incentive of Rs 5 per liter in addition to the fair price of milk production.

Ministers Rameshwar Oraon, Satyanand Bhokta, Deepika Pandey Singh, Rajya Sabha MP Mahua Maji, MLA Rajesh Kachhap, Keshav Mahato Kamlesh, Rajesh Thakur, Development Commissioner Avinash Kumar, Agriculture Secretary Abu Bakar Siddique, Director Agriculture Tarachand, Director Horticulture Faiz Ak Ahmed, Director Animal Husbandry Kiran Pasi and Executive Director of NDDB, Anand, Gujarat Raghupati were present in this programme.

DW&SD Minister reviews work progress of Jal Jeevan Mission



DW & SD Minister Mithilesh Kumar Thakur reviews works of Jal Jeevan Mission in Garhwa on Thursday. PNS

PNS : RANCHI

Drinking Water and Sanitation Minister Mithilesh Thakur directed the officials to complete the work of drinking water supply schemes within the time limit for continuous quality water supply to all the rural families of the state through functional domestic tap water. All engineers should continuously monitor the progress of the work and visit the area to ensure work as per the quality standards and ensure to inform the department about the progress report.

He reprimanded them and said that the contractors who

have not been able to complete the work given on time should complete the work on time. He gave the last chance to those contractors to complete the work and warned them that if the work is not completed in the said period, they will be debarred. All the contractors should ensure to complete the works of the schemes on time with accountability. He was reviewing the progress of drinking water supply schemes being implemented under Jal Jeevan Mission during the state level marathon review meeting by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation at the Collectorate of Garhwa district

on Thursday. Thakur said that all the Executive Engineers should constantly take the support of their Deputy Commissioner to obtain NOC and solve other problems at the rural level. Ensure regular quality based drinking water supply to those rural families who have been covered with functional domestic tap water (FHTC).

The Minister directed all the engineers and contractors to work in mission mode. The progress of all drinking water supply schemes under Medininagar zone and multi-rural drinking water supply schemes worth more than Rs 50 crore under other 8 zones

was reviewed. In which there are a total of 108 multi-rural water supply schemes.

During the review, it was found that on 15 August 2019, tap water connection was available in only 3.45 lakh (5.64 percent) rural households across the state. After the launch of Jal Jeevan Mission, despite challenges like the Covid pandemic and inaccessible areas, till now a total of 33.96 lakh (54.34 percent) households across the state have been covered with functional domestic tap water. During the review of the progress of district-wise coverage percentage, it was found that the coverage of Simdega district is 93 percent, which is above the national average of 78 percent coverage. The department is making every possible effort to make Simdega district the first "Har Ghar Jal" district of the state.

The review meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Mast Ram Meena, Rajiv Ranjan Kumar, Special Secretary, Vijay Kumar Gupta, Additional Secretary and Brijnandan Kumar, Chief Engineer, all Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers and all concerned contractors.

BLOOD DONATION CAMP ORGANIZED IN CCL

Under the guidance of CCL Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) Pankaj Kumar, Central Hospital Ramgarh organized a blood donation camp on Thursday in collaboration with Military Engineering Services, Ramgarh under the aegis of CSR Department as part of the ongoing vigilance awareness campaign in CCL. It is known that the theme of this year's campaign is "Culture of honesty, for the prosperity of the nation" and this campaign has started from 16 August. The programme was inaugurated by IDSE, EE, Garrison Engineer, MES, Ramgarh Rohit Sathi and CMO in-charge Dr. Bhaskar Chakraborty. CCL employees, workers union members and a large number of people participated in the program, in which 30 blood donors were examined and 18 units of blood were collected which will be used for the treatment of needy patients.

Case against State IAS officer in Chhattisgarh liquor scam

PNS : RANCHI

The Economic Offence Wing of Raipur has registered a case in the alleged Rs 2050 crore liquor scam in Chhattisgarh. Apart from the officials of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand IAS and the then Excise Secretary Vinay Chaubey has also been accused in this case.

The Inspector of EOW Raipur first investigated the matter on the statement of Vikas Singh, a resident of Argora police station area of Ranchi and then registered a case. Vikas Singh has accused Chhattisgarh officials including Chhattisgarh retired IAS official Anil Tuteja, Raipur Mayor's brother Anwar Dhebar, Arunpatri Tripathi and their syndicate of causing a loss of revenue worth billions of rupees to the Chhattisgarh government by committing the liquor scam.

It has also been said in the allegations that this syndicate, in connivance with the officials of Jharkhand, changed the excise policy of Jharkhand and damaged the revenue of the government. It has also been said in the allegations that the officials of both the states together have also committed a scam in manpower supply.

According to the allegations, several meetings have taken place between the officials of both the states from December 2021 to January 2022. It is noteworthy that earlier in April 2023, IAS Vinay Chaubey and Karna

Satyarthi had recorded their statements in the Raipur office of ED regarding the liquor scam. ED is also investigating the Chhattisgarh liquor scam case. ED has lodged an FIR in ACB. The investigating agency found in its investigation that the scam was carried out during the tenure of the then Bhpuresh government through an illegal syndicate of IAS officer Anil Tuteja, MD of Excise Department Arunpatri Tripathi and businessman Anwar Dhebar. From the year 2019 to 2022, illegal liquor was sold from government liquor shops by affixing duplicate holograms, causing a loss of revenue worth crores to the government. It may be noted that in May this year, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) investigating the money laundering in the alleged Rs 2,161-crore liquor scam case in Chhattisgarh has attached Rs 15-crore worth properties of retired IAS officer Anil Tuteja, who was arrested on April 21.

In all, the Central agency has attached movable and immovable properties worth Rs 205.49 crore, which also include 115 properties worth Rs 116.16 crore of another accused Anwar Dhebar, who is the brother of Raipur Mayor Aijaz Dhebar.

The attached properties of Anwar Dhebar include Hotel Vennington Court in Raipur being run under the aegis of his firm A Dhebar Buildcon and a commercial building in the name of 'Accord Business Tower'.

CEO, State Police Nodal Officer hold review meeting with DEOs, SPs

PNS : RANCHI

Chief Electoral Officer K. Ravi Kumar today said that the officers should ensure to give concrete shape to the preparations for the assembly elections in the state. He said that the complaints received through various means in the last Lok Sabha elections, ensure preparations for the upcoming assembly elections. Ensure strong management of security in the upcoming assembly elections.

The CEO was holding a review meeting with District Election Officers and Superintendents of Police of all districts through online medium from Election House today on various subjects related to Lok Sabha election related matters and preparations for the upcoming assembly elections.

The CEO said that a certificate must be taken from all BLOs and BLO supervisors that not a single wrong deletion has been made in the voter list in their area. He said that preparations should be made to strengthen all security standards with zero risk in the election. Ensure webcasting at all check posts. He said that all enforcement agencies will strongly ensure that there is no illegal transaction or movement in the state and strictly prohibit it.

On this occasion, the CEO reviewed the ASD list, wrong deletion in voter list, security management, movement of illegal materials etc. point-wise and gave necessary guidelines.

On this occasion, State Police Nodal Officer AV Homkar, DIG Dhananjay Kumar Singh, DIG Indrajit Mahatha, DIG Ashwini Kumar Sinha, OSD Geeta



CEO K Ravi Kumar along with State Police Nodal Officer AV Homkar holds a meeting with senior officials at his office in Ranchi on Thursday. PNS

Chaubey, Assistant Chief Electoral Officer Dev Das Dutta and other election related officials were present.

Meanwhile addressing a training session of Nodal Officer of Training Cell, SLMT, DLMT, Deputy Election Officer and ALMT the CEO said that it is the duty of all the officials associated with the election to ensure error-free election process in the upcoming assembly elections. He said that there are clear guidelines of the Commission on every point for the election process. The goal of clean, fair, peaceful and error-free election can be achieved by following the clear guidelines of the Commission.

The CEO's office has organized a two-day training session in different batches of election-related officials for the upcoming assembly elections. This training session is scheduled from 26 to 29 September.

During the training, Kumar drew the attention of the officials to the minor errors in various election related activities like sitting arrangement of polling stations, checking of EVM-VVPAT, packing of election

material, ASD list, adding new voters and gave point-wise training on how to avoid it.

In the training session the officials were trained by the national level trainers on various topics like duties and responsibilities of polling parties, EVM/VVPAT for polling parties, voter polling time management, web-casting on polling day, poll eve and poll day duties of BLOs, duties of volunteers, role and responsibilities of micro observers, responsibilities of sector officer on poll eve, responsibilities of sector officer on poll day, mistakes, errors and IT applications by sector officer, postal ballots, duties and responsibilities of FST, duties and responsibilities of VST, VVT and AT, duties of EVM cum Material Receipt Centre Officer and staff, control room and poll day monitoring system app, form filling, sealing and packing.

In the training session, the officials were trained by Additional Chief Electoral Officer Dr. Neha Arora, Joint Chief Electoral Officer Subodh Kumar, national level trainers Geeta Chaubey,

Governor inaugurates 7-day JCI Expo Utsav 2024

PNS : RANCHI

Jharkhand's largest consumer fair Expo Utsav 2024 was inaugurated with great pomp by the Jharkhand Governor Santosh Gangwar at Morhabadi Ground on Thursday.

After the inauguration, the Governor visited various stalls and inquired about the goods and services displayed there. Gangwar praised JCI Ranchi for organizing this grand event and called it an important step for the business development of the state. "This event provides a big platform to the youth and entrepreneurs, from which they can showcase their innovation and skills," said Gangwar. Describing the event as an important contribution to the development and business of the State and the Governor also said that through Expo Utsav small and new entrepreneurs are also getting an opportunity to reach out to customers on a large scale. JCI Ranchi President JC Vikram Chaudhary thanked all the stall holders, participants and media present and said, "Expo Utsav is being organized with more grandeur every year and all the associates and members have contributed a lot to its success. This year we are trying to take the Expo to new heights where special arrangements have been made for people of all age groups." Chief Coordinator JC Shyam Anurag informed that more than 350 stalls from different countries and states have been set up in the Expo from where every type of goods from needle to car will be available. "This consumer fair is not only a place for shopping, but also a big platform for entrepreneurs to display their products and services. Here special care has been taken to provide entertainment, shopping and excellent food for every section," said Anurag. Former Rajya Sabha MP Mahesh Poddar was also present in the program. Poddar said, "I have been associated with Expo and JCI for years and it is a matter of pride to see this event being organised with such grandeur. The event is setting new dimensions every year due to the hard work of young entrepreneurs and organisers." Expo Utsav 2024 will have many special attractions including Fungola Amusement Park, Pink Hangar, Food Zone, and Furniture Zone. Apart from this, various competitions like dance, painting, yoga, fashion show, tambola, healthy baby and mom show and Voice of Expo will be organised in the next 6 days, which will bring special entertainment for people of all ages.



Governor Santosh Gangwar being felicitated during the inauguration of JCI Expo 2024 in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

Parivartan Yatra in Dhanbad Rajnath counts welfare schemes of Modi Govt, says Country is developing

PNS : RANCHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressing the Parivartan Sabha in Dhanbad, said that the wind of change is blowing in Jharkhand. No power can stop the uprooting of the JMM government from state. He said that in the Lok Sabha elections, the public elected BJP for the third time and made Narendra Modi the Prime Minister of the country. BJP formed the government in the country for the third time. The Defence Minister said that the prestige of the country has increased in the international world. Earlier, the country's voice was not heard, but today when India speaks, the world listens. In terms of wealth and economy, India has stood at the 5th position.

Singh said that by 2027, India will be included in the top 3. On the success of Indian scientists, he said that today Indian scientists have achieved success in the South Pole of the Moon. He said that in the world, there has been a continuous war going on between Russia and Ukraine for 2 years. In this crisis, the Centre worked to evacuate the Indian students trapped there. Taking aim at the JMM government and Jharkhand, he said that hunger, unemployment and poverty should be eradicated from Jharkhand.

Referring to the previous governments, the Defence Minister said that the JMM government could not do as much work as Babulal Marandi ji, Arjun Munda ji and Raghuvar Das ji did in Jharkhand.

On the Parivartan Yatra, he said that the Parivartan of the BJP is going to write a new history. On November 15, it will be 24 years since Jharkhand became a state. This is a golden opportunity. I have come to appeal to you people. Write a new his-



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addresses a gathering during Parivartan sabha at Dhanbad on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

tory of politics in the state.

He attacked JMM and said that a CM who earns money cannot develop the state. Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand are developing rapidly. What is the reason that Jharkhand is not developing? Appealing to the public, he said that I am not asking for one term, give me a government in Jharkhand for 10 years, if we do not make Jharkhand a developed state of the country, then do not vote for the Bharatiya Janata Party next time.

The public chose JMM in the last election. The public is feeling cheated today. The JMM government has set new records of corruption. The CM had to go to jail. The CM is the leader of the state and that leader has to go to jail, that too on charges of corruption. Politics does not work like this, politics works with public, shame and dignity. A family cannot run without public shame, a society cannot run without public shame, a state and government cannot run without public shame. But JMM has

set aside public shame and dignity.

He said that we have taken many effective steps to ensure that the hard earned money of the people is spent in the development of the country and the people. He said that every year some election or the other takes place in the country. This costs 7 lakh crore rupees. By implementing one country one election, the public will save 4 lakh crore rupees. Our government took many important decisions. 6000 rupees are being given to the farmers under PM Kisan Samman.

Referring to the previous Congress government, Rajnath Singh said that when Rajiv Gandhi was the PM, he had expressed his helplessness. He had said that what should I do, I send 100 rupees from Delhi's treasury but only 15 rupees reach people, 85 rupees are lost to corruption. Congress and other political parties did not find any way to stop this corruption. But PM Modi found a solution to this in his first cabinet.

Modi targets Congress: Infighting, lies drive Haryana to back BJP again

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

The Congress spends most of its time infighting, tells lies to grab power and remains distant from public issues, Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed on Thursday while asserting the people have decided to give another chance to the BJP to serve Haryana.

Interacting with Haryana BJP workers through the NaMo app as part of the party's "Mera Booth, Sabse Mazboot" programme, he discussed fieldwork at the booth level for the October five assembly polls and told them to make utmost effort to win each booth.

"A week remains for polling (in Haryana) and (you should) focus on every family in a polling booth," he told

party workers. There are 20,629 polling booths in Haryana.

Modi began his nearly hour-long interaction by mentioning his special connection with the people of Haryana, where he extensively worked for the party organisation in the 1990s, and expressed his gratitude to them.

Alleging the Congress has failed as an opposition in the past 10 years, the prime minister claimed its maximum time goes into infighting. Every child in Haryana is aware of the grand old party's internal strife, he said.

These days, the Congress' loudspeakers that were earlier making big claims have fallen weak, Modi said. "Some are saying the Congress is becoming weak each day.

During the past 10 years, the Congress has failed as opposition too."

"The party remained far from people's issues for 10 years... Such people can never win the trust of the people of Haryana," he said.

"But our strategy should not be to sit pretty on their internal strife. They are going to die their death, but we have to plant our flag deep by working harder than before," Modi said.

Attacking the Congress further, he said, "The entire basis of those who are fighting against us in the polls is lies. They repeatedly tell lies, their talks have no head and tail and they vitiate the atmosphere."

Modi claimed the Congress made tall promises to the people of Himachal Pradesh like they would "lay roof



made of gold for every house". But after coming to power in the state, development came to a standstill, the prime minister alleged, adding they talked of the old pension scheme but were now unable to pay salaries or carry out

recruitments. The Congress had promised to give Rs 1,500 to women who are waiting for it even after two years, he said. Himachal Pradesh is an example of how they told lies to win elections and the people of Haryana need to be

informed about it, the prime minister said at the interaction.

He alleged the Congress were experts in lying but wear the mask of "Raja Harishchandra". You will have to go door-to-door to expose them, Modi told the BJP workers.

One cannot imagine how many atrocities were committed against the Dalits during the Congress rule in Haryana, he said and asked the party workers to expose such incidents publicly.

"Haryana has for the first time got an OBC chief minister. They never made a chief minister from the backward classes. But the Congress will never say this," Modi said.

He alleged the Congress was not able to accept that Modi and Nayab Singh Saini, both

of who come from backward classes, became prime minister and Haryana's chief minister, respectively.

Recounting the BJP government's initiatives for farmers, the prime minister alleged that during the Congress rule in Haryana, the farmers got Rs 2 compensation cheques for crop damage.

It is the BJP government in Haryana which has been giving minimum support price on 24 crops, he said, adding the farmers should seek clarification from the Congress for their lies on the issue and tell them how much crops were being procured at MSP. Accusing the Congress of indulging in a scam with funds for Dalits' welfare in Karnataka, Modi alleged the party did not fulfil even a single promise in states where

it is in power, be it Karnataka or Telangana.

Now they are talking big in Haryana, he said, adding, "Spreading rumours and telling lies is in their blood". The Congress people live only for their family and that is their character, he said in response to a Haryana BJP worker's feedback during the interaction.

"I have full belief that the BJP is forming the government with a big mandate. One voice is heard from every home 'Bharosa Dil Se, Bajpa Phir Se' We have to put all our might to win the polling booth. You have to break all records of voting," he said.

Referring to the Haryana BJP's "Mahra Haryana-Non-Stop Mahara" campaign, Modi said it has been inspired by mothers and sisters from the state.



BJP gears up for crucial J and K Assembly polls

MOHIT KANDHARI ■
JAMMU

The Bharatiya Janta Party is fully geared up to defend its 'impregnable citadel' in the last and crucial phase of maiden assembly polls in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

In the third phase polling is scheduled to take place across 40 Assembly segments. Out of these 40, 24 seats fall in the Jammu region.

In the 2014 Assembly polls, BJP won 19 out of 21 Assembly segments from the four districts of Jammu, Kathua, Samba, and Udhampur.

This time three new seats have been added, one each in Kathua, Samba, and Udhampur during the Delimitation of Assembly constituencies.

BJP's performance in this phase is going to make or break the chances of government formation on its strength.

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday claimed that the Congress-NC alliance has been wiped out in the first two phases of the Jammu and Kashmir elections.

He also hit out at Omar Abdullah for contesting two Assembly seats out of fear. On Rahul Gandhi's claim to restore statehood in J&K if his party wins, Amit Shah responded that it can only be done when "BJP wants".

Leaving no stone unturned, the top brass of the party has already started carpet bombing across different Assembly constituencies of Jammu, Samba, Kathua, and Udhampur districts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to address a mega rally here in MAM sports stadium on September 28 ahead of winding up the month-long high-octane campaign.

On Thursday Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath addressed eight rallies covering all four districts of the Jammu region. Other star campaigners of the party including Smriti Irani,

Union Ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and Nitin Gadkari have addressed a series of meetings in Jammu. Both the leaders while targeting the opposition parties Congress, National Conference, and the Peoples Democratic Party appealed to the voters to give a decisive mandate to the BJP candidates to ensure the formation of a stable government that can carry forward the growth-oriented agenda of the Union government at the helm of affairs.

Addressing a rally in the border belt of Ramgarh Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath Thursday said, "After BJP's return (to power) here, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is also going to be a part of Jammu and Kashmir. And this is the commotion in Pakistan, they are struggling to save their democracy".

Comparing the situation in both countries the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister said, "On one side there is India and on the other side there is Pakistan, there is a shortage of food there, naturally, beggar Pakistan is not able to handle itself today. Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is raising its voice for separation from it.

It is saying that we also had the right to participate in the J&K elections... Balochistan is also saying that our chemistry does not match with Pakistan. Because Pakistan is the enemy of humanity, it is a cancer of humanity. The world must be freed from this cancer..."

He said that the ongoing Assembly polls in J&K are historic and the "results will be a slap on the faces of NC, PDP and Congress.

He said Pakistan's condition at present is horrific. "The country is falling apart. On the contrary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives 80 Crore people of India a free ration and 60 Crore are getting free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh which has been enhanced up to Rs 7 lakh.

"Pakistan is a sinking ship," he said. Yogi also addressed two other election meetings in RS Pura and Chhamb.

Kolkata Court gives death sentence to rape, murder accused

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
KOLKATA

A POCSO b(Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act) Court on Thursday awarded death sentence to a man for raping and murdering a 6-year-old girl about a year and a half ago terming it "not a rare but rarest of rare case."

The sentence comes against the backdrop of the ongoing controversy over the RG Kar College rape and murder case. Special POCSO Judge Sudipto Bhattacharya sentenced Ashok Kumar Shaw the accused to death terming he deserved no mercy for the crime he had committed against a child who had no chance of defending herself.

"Mercy to the guilty is cruelty to the innocent," the judge said while announcing the quantum of punishment. The victim was raped and



murdered in the Tiljala area of south-east Kolkata, on March 26, 2023. She was allegedly lured away by the convict.

The police subsequently discovered her body in a nearby flat. Wednesday's was the third such verdict in a matter of a few months in the State.

"The prosecution was able to establish the case successfully and the guilty was finally brought to book... and an exemplary punishment was awarded," said Madhavi Ghosh the Public Prosecutor.

PM Modi cancels Pune visit due to heavy rain, orange alert

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid continued heavy rains witnessed for the second consecutive day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi cancelled his scheduled visit to Pune on Thursday to inaugurate, dedicate and lay foundation stones for several development projects worth Rs. 22,600 crore and throw open the Solapur Airport to air traffic.

Confirming the development, Pune divisional commissioner Chandrakant Pulkundwar said: "The Prime Minister's visit to Pune has been cancelled. The scheduled programmes have been officially postponed," Pune divisional commissioner Chandrakant Pulkundwar said.

"Owing to an orange alert issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the Prime Minister's programme has been cancelled.

In the event of rains, people coming for the programme will have problems. Keeping the safety of people in mind, the PMO has cancelled the programme," Maha-Metro spokesperson Hemant Sonawane said.

Pune recorded 130 mm of rainfall on Wednesday and there was no let in heavy rains on Thursday as well.



During his visit to Pune, Modi was to flag off the Metro train scheduled to run from District court yMetro station to Swargate, Pune. The inauguration of Pune Metro section of District Court to Swargate meant completion of the Pune Metro Rail Project (Phase-I). The cost of the underground section between District Court to Swargate is around Rs 1,810 crore.

The Extension of Pune Metro Phase-I is developed at the cost of around Rs 2,950 crore The three stations -- Market Yard, Padmavati and Katraj -- coming under

the project have been constructed underground.

During his Pune visit, Modi was also to lay the foundation stone for the Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule's First Girls' School at Bhidewada.

Modi was also to dedicate to the nation Bidkin Industrial Area, a transformative project covering an expansive 7,855 acres under the National Industrial Corridor Development Program of Govt. of India, situated 20 kms south of Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar (known earlier as Aurangabad).

Delhi HC asks Centre to review Rahul Gandhi citizenship petition



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the Centre to obtain a copy of a petition pending before the Allahabad High Court on the issue of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's citizenship.

The court said a petition on a similar issue is also being heard by the Allahabad High Court and two courts can't deal with the same issue simultaneously.

On Wednesday, Allahabad High Court sought response from Union Home Ministry on its notice to Rahul on British Citizenship holding.

The court said before proceeding further in the matter, it will be in the interest of justice to know the position about the pending petition in the Allahabad High Court. "We read in the newspaper that Allahabad High Court is also seized of

the controversy. Two courts cannot deal with the same issue simultaneously.

"You (Centre) check up the status of the petition at Allahabad High Court and also obtain a copy of the petition. We just want to be doubly sure that we are not taking over someone else's jurisdiction," a bench of Chief Justice designate Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said. The bench was hearing a plea by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy for directions to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to decide his representation seeking cancellation of Rahul Gandhi's Indian citizenship.

Swamy, in his plea, also sought a direction to the Home Ministry to furnish a status report on the representation filed by him against Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. The plea, filed by advocate Satya Sabharwal,

said that on August 6, 2019, Swamy had written a letter to the ministry alleging that Gandhi had "voluntarily disclosed" to the British government that he was a citizen of British nationality, amounting to holding a British passport.

During the hearing, the Centre's counsel urged the court to grant some time to obtain a copy of the petition filed at the Allahabad High Court. The bench listed the matter for further hearing on October 9. On Wednesday, the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court asked the Centre whether it has taken any decision on a representation filed under Citizenship Act, 1955 asking it to inquire into allegations that Gandhi has a British citizenship.

It was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) moved by BJP worker from Karnataka, S Vignesh Shishir, claiming that he has done detailed enquiries into the issue of Gandhi being a British citizen and has got several new inputs. In his plea in the Delhi High Court, Swamy has said that the Congress leader, being an Indian citizen, has violated Article 9 of the Constitution, read with the Indian Citizenship Act, and would cease to be an Indian citizen.

Sanjay Raut found guilty in defamation case

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major political development in the run-up to the State Assembly polls, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut was on Thursday found guilty and sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment in a 2022 defamation case filed by Medha K. Somaiya - wife of BJP's former MP Kirit Somaiya.

A Metropolitan Magistrate's court awarded him a fine of Rs 25,000, in the same case.

Immediately afterwards, Raut moved an application before the court which suspended his jail sentence for 30 days to enable him file an appeal in an upper court. The court also granted him bail against a cash surety of Rs 15,000.

The 25th Metropolitan Magistrate, Mazgaon, came out with this politically significant Order in a libel suit filed in April 2022 by Medha Somaiya against Raut, who had alleged a Rs 100-crore toilet construction scam linked to Yuva Pratishthan, a non-government organisation run by the Somaiyas, at Mira Road in Thane district.



NCW urges companies to address workplace harassment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the tragic incident involving a young Chartered Accountant at Ernst and Young (EY) India in Pune, who reportedly died due to severe work pressure, Delina Khongdup, a member of the National Commission for Women, has called upon the companies to urgently address employee's concerns regarding workplace harassment including work pressure.

Addressing Assocham 5th Diversity and Inclusion Excellence Awards and Conclave 2024, she also underscored the importance of prioritising maternity benefits which is essential for fostering a supportive work environment.

Providing these benefits not only supports women during a critical life stage but also enhances overall employee well-being and job satisfaction, she said, stressing the need for diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

"This should be a constant practice in organisations for the entitlement of women and all genders. This is a human and social responsibility to achieve gender diversity for all walks of society. India has a vast diversity and there should be a feeling of inclusivity in all the places possible," she said.

"Corporate India should recognise this inclusivity and bridge the gender balance relationship in working spaces. Harassment in the workplace and non-payment of maternity benefits should be addressed immediately for betterment.

We should apply a holistic approach to achieve the goal of Viskit Bharat @2047," Khongdup added.

Ravi Bhatnagar, Co-Chairperson, ASSOCHAM National CSR highlighted the importance of recognising employee well-being at workplaces so that gender diversity can take center stage.

Dr Shweta Sharma, a clinical psychologist and Joint Secretary Indian Association of Clinical Psychologists (IACP) while talking to The Pioneer agreed as she said that by ensuring access to maternity leave and other related support, companies can promote a culture of inclusivity and care, which ultimately benefits everyone in the organisation.

She further said that from a psychological standpoint, the importance of work-life balance in a company's policy cannot be overstated, particularly in high-stress environments like EY India, where demanding workloads often contribute to mental health struggles. "A well-structured work-life balance policy promotes mental well-being, reducing burnout, stress, and anxiety among employees.

It allows individuals to maintain personal time for rest, relationships, and self-care, which are vital for psychological resilience. Companies that prioritize this balance can significantly improve employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention.

Encouraging staff to seek help when needed helps reduce the stigma around mental health challenges," said Dr Sharma.

Anvar claims CM Vijayan is held hostage by political aides, accuses police of gold smuggling

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Political Kerala had a jolt on Thursday evening as an independent MLA in the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front dared Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to reply to his allegations against P Sasi, the political secretary of the chief minister and M R Ajith Kumar, additional director general of police.

P V Anvar, the MLA, hitherto considered as a close confidante of Vijayan, declared in a press meet at Nilambur that the Kerala Chief Minister is being held hostage by a coterie led by his

new son-in-law Mohammed Riyaz (who is also the minister for PWD and tourism), political secretary Sasi and ADGP Ajith Kumar. "Pinarayi Vijayan will be the last Communist chief minister in the State. Even M V Govindan, the CPI(M) state secretary, does not have any role in the party or in the government today," charged Anvar.

The seriousness of Anvar's press meet could be understood from the fact that Governor Arif Mohammed Khan asked Raj Bhavan officials to translate a word by word account of what the



MLA said in the presser. The media meet was convened by Anvar in violation of the CPI(M) diktat to him not to speak to the

media. But Anvar's response to the directive has put the party and the chief minister in a quandary as he alleged that the police in the State had

robbed gold worth crores of rupees smuggled into the country by poor Muslim workers returning home after their trip to West Asian countries.

"Last three years saw 180 instances of police seizing gold from poor workers returning home via Calicut International Airport. Though the police is bound to hand over the gold to the Customs department, they have not followed the instructions," said Anvar who alleged that the gold was shared by the coterie consisting of Sasi and Ajith Kumar. He went to the extent

of calling Ajith Kumar, one of the senior IPS officers in the State a "criminal".

By the time the press meet was over, it was clear that Anvar had declared a war against Chief Minister and the CPI(M) leadership. But P C George, seven time MLA and a senior BJP leader in Kerala told

The Pioneer that Anvar himself has no credibility as he was facing serious criminal cases in connection with unauthorized construction of private check dams, quarrying and mining. "He is an Islamic terrorist and his allegations lack conviction," said George.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Trouble for Siddaramaiah

Karnataka CM faces fresh political and legal challenge as alleged land scam during his previous tenure gains traction

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is facing the heat as a special court has directed the Mysuru Lokayukta police to investigate his connection with an alleged MUDA scam. This follows the Karnataka High Court's dismissal of Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the Governor's approval for the investigation. Siddaramaiah finds himself embroiled in a controversy as a probe into an alleged land scam during his previous tenure (2013-2018) gains momentum. The allegations revolve around irregularities in the denotification of prime land in Bengaluru, where government-owned land was allegedly released for private development, bypassing legal procedures. This development has not only triggered a political storm but also raised questions about the stability of his government, which is already navigating internal challenges. The case, brought to light through opposition parties and activists, accuses Siddaramaiah of misusing his position to facilitate the denotification of land in favour of private individuals. It is claimed

that these actions led to substantial financial losses to the state exchequer. The denotification process is typically reserved for cases where the government no longer requires the land for public purposes. However, the opposition alleges that the decision-making was influenced by vested interests.

The probe, aims to examine Siddaramaiah's role and whether he acted within the framework of the law. While the investigation is in its preliminary stages, the political ramifications are already visible. With the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanding a thorough investigation and even his resignation, the pressure on Siddaramaiah is mounting. In response to the accusations, Siddaramaiah has strongly denied any wrongdoing, calling the probe a politically motivated attempt to tarnish his image and destabilise his government. Siddaramaiah's defence rests on his claim that the land denotification was carried out in compliance with legal procedures and was vetted by relevant authorities. He also pointed out that similar cases have been registered against several politicians across party lines, suggesting that this is a standard political practice to harass the CM's of the Opposition parties and not unique to his administration. If the investigation gathers pace and incriminating evidence surfaces, it could weaken his authority, both within his party and in the eyes of the public. The BJP, as the principal opposition in Karnataka, is likely to leverage the land scam to question Siddaramaiah's integrity and leadership. Their demand for accountability could lead to prolonged political uncertainty, especially if the case moves into the courts or if there are calls for judicial oversight. Further, any perception of corruption, especially in a state like Karnataka where electoral battles are fiercely fought, could erode Siddaramaiah's public image. His government, which came to power on promises of transparency and development, may find itself in a difficult position defending its track record if this case gains momentum and more evidence surfaces.



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PICTALK



An artist gives finishing touches to a clay idol of Goddess at artisans' village Kumartuli, in Kolkata

World tourism day: Uniting people, fostering peace

Whether visiting cultural landmarks, enjoying local cuisine, or simply interacting with people, tourism fosters global unity and peace

Every year on September 27, the world celebrates World Tourism Day, a reminder of the crucial role that tourism plays in fostering cultural exchange, boosting economies, and promoting peace. As borders open and people explore new destinations, tourism serves as a bridge, uniting diverse cultures and breaking down barriers between nations. In 2024, as we celebrate World Tourism Day, the theme focuses on the far-reaching benefits of travel beyond leisure, recognising how tourism helps us understand the world, its people, and its many cultures in deeper and more meaningful ways.



Tourism is not merely about sightseeing; it's about experiencing the essence of a place, its history, and its culture. As Bulat Nurmukhanov, Deputy Chairman of the Moscow City Tourism Committee, emphasises, "Tourism is primarily a way to immerse oneself in new cultures and experience history." Through tourism, individuals are given the chance to see the world through different lenses, fostering greater acceptance and understanding of other people and their ways of life. This broader understanding is why cities like Moscow have prioritised cultural tourism as a key driver for their economic and social growth. The Moscow tourism strategy emphasises the importance of museums, exhibitions, and cultural events, which help travelers connect with the history and artistic traditions of the region. This approach reflects a global shift in tourism, where travelers seek deeper, more authentic experiences that expand their worldviews. Tourism has always played a unique role in creating connections between people from different backgrounds. It allows us to learn from one another, building bridges of

understanding and respect. On World Tourism Day, this aspect of travel is especially highlighted, as we reflect on how it fosters harmony in an increasingly interconnected world. As Kush Kapoor CEO of Roseate Hotels & Resorts, points out, "Tourism is about the connections we forge and the cultural experiences we offer." Kapoor stresses the importance of offering travelers more than just a stay, but a chance to explore different cultures and traditions. In a world where differences can sometimes divide, tourism brings people together, promoting peace and mutual respect. For hotels and resorts, the focus is now on providing culturally aware experiences, from diverse culinary offerings to personalised services that reflect the traditions and customs of visitors. This kind of attention to cultural diversity enriches the overall travel experience, making it more inclusive and meaningful. Beyond cultural connections, tourism is a major economic driver for many countries. It generates millions of jobs, supports local businesses, and

contributes to the global economy. Sustainable tourism focuses on minimising the environmental footprint of travel while maximising the positive social and economic impact on host communities. From eco-friendly hotels to tours that support local artisans, tourism can be a powerful tool for inclusive development and environmental protection. Perhaps the most significant impact of tourism is its role in promoting global peace and understanding. By encouraging interactions between people of different cultures, tourism helps to break down prejudices and build mutual respect. As we celebrate World Tourism Day, it's important to remember that each journey is not just a trip to a new place but an opportunity to engage with the world in a way that promotes peace and harmony. When people experience the customs, values, and traditions of other cultures, they begin to appreciate the similarities and shared humanity that unite us all. (The author is a travel writer, views expressed are personal)



ANJALI PATHAK

Exploring the depths of the human mind



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

As AI draws comparisons to human cognition, the mystery of the mind grows more complex, raising crucial questions about its unused potential



The human mind is a unique organic entity whose lengths of reach and visions of the range are still to be fully mapped. Many believe that an average mind works at less than 30 per cent of its potential. Putting this in the context of artificial intelligence, the matter becomes even more complex. There is a theory doing the rounds in the field of artificial intelligence that suggests that entities of artificial intelligence have the potential of organic functioning, just like the human mind. The evidence for this is fairly mixed. Some conclusions may emerge over time. The crucial question concerning artificial intelligence however does include its possibilities and potential for organic evolution and growth. As observed, sooner or later, answers will emerge. Even otherwise, the human mind is a suo motu logic of its existence. Attempts to map it, are indeed one of the exciting aspects of human endeavour. Notwithstanding some breakthroughs in mapping the brain, there are areas of brain function that need a closer look both physically and operationally. Interestingly, notwithstanding all this, there is a common reference to the 'second childhood' of human beings, where people, upon reaching a certain

age, start behaving with child-like traits. It is difficult to explain this process, but it is fairly obvious to notice. Similarly, the jury is out on the age by which, the basic orientation of the brain fully takes place. One also needs to know when it matures enough to develop a relationship between the 'conscious' brain and the 'subconscious' brain. Notwithstanding the diverse interpretations of the above narrative, it is obvious that at some stage the basic foundations of the mind seemingly get concretised. One such example is the influence of early childhood experiences on a growing human being. There are stages of childhood emerging into early adulthood. All this becomes integral to the individual's ways of thinking and behaving. Popularly, this is known to affect the orientations of a growing individual on matters of finance, gender or for that matter even values. The list can be extended but more to the point one does not know, exhaustively, of all the influences which go into the making of an operationally adult human mind. Very often, there may be latent influences on a human mind



MANY AREAS OF THOUGHT, REFLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND RESEARCH MAY CONTAIN INDICATIONS OF UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF THE MIND. IT MAY BE A CHALLENGE, BUT A CHALLENGE THAT CANNOT BE EVADED

that may not manifest themselves until a much later point in adulthood. All in all, many ambiguities remain, and so do many contradictions that stay alive so far as the working of the mind is concerned. Above all, it is generally believed that hormonal changes affect the working of the mind. Both men and women reportedly pass through menopause in their later life. Many are of the view that menopausal effects are more identifiable amongst the women than the men. An issue, however, remains to be fully answered: what are the factors that influence the working of the mind? Yet another element that influences behaviour is the fall out of a mental shock. It can have many approximations of derailing the thought process of the individual, and indeed, impacting many values. Put simply, many areas of thought, reflection, analysis, and research may contain indications of understanding the dynamics of the mind. It may be a challenge, but a challenge that cannot be evaded. Further, there are also some transgenerational aspects to it. Say, how two parents deal with each other, or singly and collectively deal with a child

is an important factor for the child's growth. This can carry on across generations. Physiologically, the passing of some genes is known to happen across generations. This is not only in terms of physical characteristics but also certain diseases that may have affected one of the grandparents in a given generation and resurfaced again two generations later in the physical system of a descendant. The mapping of this process, as of today, needs much additional work to be done. This also contains a whole research agenda of human physiology, physical anthropology, medicines and more. Such a subject matter would deserve an integrated approach of not just, anthropology, psychology, genetic sciences and more, but a whole setup of support disciplines with appropriate interdisciplinary framework. This will give insights into the physiology of the human being and the composition of the brain and mind. It is a challenging task, but it is a task that cannot be avoided. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOVERNOR SPARKS CONTROVERSY

Madam — Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi, in an unprecedented move on the evening of June 29 last year, unilaterally removed Tamil Nadu Minister V Senthilbalaji from the Council of Ministers. But he hastily backtracked from his decision late at night because he too knew that his act was not only illegal but also unconstitutional. Some people say that Ravi has always been in the habit of being in controversies. But I believe that R N Ravi is a Governor later, first he is the order follower of the ruling Home Ministry. The ideology of the Home Ministry is clearly visible in every decision and every speech of him. For example, just two days ago, while giving a lecture, he said that 'secularism is a European concept, that is why it was not a part of the Indian Constitution earlier, later, an 'insecure Prime Minister' got it added to the Constitution during the Emergency'. For example, in one of his sentences, he first hinted at the concept of a Hindutva nation and secondly, he also criticised former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Some critics are demanding the immediate removal of R N Ravi from the post of Governor, whereas I believe that this is an ideological war which has been started by the central Government through the Governor, hence it would be better to answer this verbal war with thoughts only. Ravi should be asked, and then he will also say that the entire Constitution of India is external and is a copy of Europe, especially Britain, hence the entire Constitution should be abolished? Is our Constitution, on the basis of which we are proudly waving the flag of being the largest democracy today, also a European concept? Has the Governor forgotten that he has taken oath of this Constitution? Secularism is an integral part of our Constitution. It is our biggest duty to keep religion separate from politics. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

Ukraine appreciates India's efforts



The meeting of Ukrainian President Zelensky with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of his US visit for the Quad is taken with the overwhelming gesture from the Ukrainian counterparts. Ukraine has been visited by almost all the Quad leaders in person, and India particularly is playing a spe-

cial role in establishing peace within Ukraine with its humanitarian assistance, negotiating stability deals and peace settlement mediation between Ukraine and Russia. The Indian efforts for peace initiation is so far are still moving ahead in the back channel diplomatic level. For which Ukraine is thankful for the clear support of India towards Ukrainian integrity and sovereignty. India's efforts in this regards is particularly welcoming that, we take care of every nation near or far from us; stuck in the political or economic or geopolitical turmoil, India's assistance will be helpful to ensure peace and tranquillity in the war hit country. Also such moves will also help India to meet its commitment of becoming Vishwa Shanti Guru or World's Peace Leader in the time to come. This peace collaboration between India and Ukraine will take Indian diplomatic skills to the next level. Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

INDIA'S HOCKEY DOMINANCE CONTINUES

Madam—Indian hockey is on a high as exemplified by the way Manpreet Singh's men dominated the Men's Asian trophy at China's Hulunbuir. Notwithstanding the fact that India was the favourites to lift the title, the boys had to perform on the day, and they did. Although India fought hard to overcome an unexpected resistance from China in the final, the same team it had blanked in the league match, there was little doubt that it was the best team on display throughout the tourney. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics bronze medal, 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games gold medal, bronze at the recent Paris Olympics, and now Asian gold: India has had an excellent run on the astroturf for a couple of years, after a long, long period. The best part of the present Indian hockey team is the unity and spirit with which they come across the field come what may. Coach Craig Fulton's disinclination towards unnecessary and unwarranted chopping of players, in contrast to a few former coaches, has played its role. The talented players, of course, are indispensable

to Indian hockey. At the same time, it is felt that India should not rest on its laurels; 2026 World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands should be another platform to showcase their undoubted brilliance. Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

ENCOUNTERS RAISE CONCERNS

Madam —The recent reports of police encounters resulting in the deaths of alleged criminals raise a critical question about our justice system and accountability, such as how can we allow a system where police act as judge, jury, and executioner? Does law enforcement cross the line from justice to vigilantism? The tragic killings in Badlapur, Unnao, and Chennai reveal a disturbing trend. We need to consider how we can assure accountability that seems to reward extrajudicial actions. It is imperative for supreme courts to intervene and uphold the principles of justice in democracy. Anshu Bharti | Begusarai

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FIRST COLUMN

SHARPENING THE QUAD VISION

Quad summit focused on maintaining peace in the Indo-Pacific region as its top priority



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Prime Minister Modi's high-profile visit to the US this week reiterated the salience of US-India bilateral, underscored by several key decisions with a clear focus on the future of this 21st century partnership. This visit by the Indian PM, coming after his trips to Russia and Ukraine, points towards a multi-pronged approach, where India is willing to have diplomatic engagements at the highest level, keeping its national interests sacrosanct.

That PM Modi and President Biden have found a mutual friendship framework, despite the Indian PM having held a political roadshow of sorts with his predecessor in the Oval Office, is a signal to the large world, that the US-India bilateral has bipartisan support. The Quas leaders' summit, Modi's rockstar concert-style engagement with the Indian diaspora and his meeting with top CEOs from the technology sector in the US, all point towards an escape velocity having been achieved by the US and India, with no scope of a look back.

China was the invisible elephant in the room, at the Quad leaders' summit. The statement from the Quad summit without naming an aggressive, maritime international law violator, China, mentioned "As four leading maritime democracies in the Indo-Pacific, we unequivocally stand for the maintenance of peace and stability across this dynamic region, as an indispensable element of global security and prosperity.

We strongly oppose any destabilising or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force or coercion. We condemn recent illicit missile launches in the region that violate UN Security Council resolutions. We express serious concern over recent dangerous and aggres-



sive actions in the maritime domain. We seek a region where no country dominates and no country is dominated—one where all countries are free from coercion, and can exercise their agency to determine their futures. We are united in our commitment to upholding a stable and open international system, with its strong support for human rights, the principle of freedom, rule of law, democratic values, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and peaceful settlement of disputes and prohibition on the threat or use of force in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter. Respect for the leadership of regional institutions, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), is and will remain at the centre of the Quad's efforts." While Quad is not a defence partnership like NATO, the presence of a global superpower, China with its coercive maneuverers in the entire Indian Ocean region, bore heavily on the leaders during the summit in Delaware. Delhi, Delaware (President Biden's hometown), Sydney, and Tokyo are keenly watching the international waters, and violations by China have been reported. The leaders announced "Today we are announcing a new regional Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI), to enable our partners in the region to maximise tools provided through IPMDA and other Quad partner initiatives, to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws, and deter unlawful behavior. We look forward to India hosting the inaugural MAITRI workshop in 2025. In addition, Quad partners intend to layer new technology and data into IPMDA over the coming year, to continue to deliver cutting edge capability and information to the region." China would continue to be a key concern for Quad leaders, and would perhaps serve as the super glue closely packing these four countries, with major interest in the Indo-Pacific region in a tighter embrace. The next Quad leaders' summit is likely to be hosted by Delhi, where a new US president is likely to be the key guest of honour. Given that ex-President Trump had encouraged the Quad grouping and President Biden has elevated it to leaders summit, it is safe to assume that QUAD is here to stay.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

Dissanayake's rise amidst Sri Lanka's political uncertainty

As the nation transitions under Dissanayake's leadership, questions loom about his ability to navigate the complex web of rivalries that define Sri Lanka's volatile democracy



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

One of the senior editors in Colombo recounted an experience he had in Parliament after a crucial debate, where he observed two politicians discussing serious issues. After the discussion, the editor remarked to one of the leaders, "Look, you always attack him in Parliament, but behind the scenes, you are so close and listen to him carefully." This leader was none other than Anura Kumara Dissanayake, the newly elected ninth Executive President of Sri Lanka and leader of the Marxist-Leninist Party Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna. The person he was listening to was his predecessor, former President Ranil Wickremesinghe, a neoliberal democrat. In response to the editor's comment, Dissanayake stated, "Whatever we say in Parliament, listening to him for five minutes behind the scenes is where we can learn a lot about politics." Wickremesinghe embodies the craft of political manoeuvring, while Dissanayake represents an idealism that has sought to reshape politics through violent revolution, a pursuit that has, lamentably, cost over 60,000 young lives. But later, he engineered a shift among a few key party members to adopt a middle ground to attract liberal democrats through the NPP alliance. So far, it has been a successful story.

The friendship between these two leaders grew for a reason: Wickremesinghe was facing serious internal rifts within his party, the United National Party, where his junior, Sajith Premadasa, was rebelling against him. The history of this party is filled with tales of internal conflicts and bitter betrayals that continue to haunt its prosperity. Nevertheless, Wickremesinghe demonstrated resilience, showing that no matter who declared a power struggle against him, he could adeptly play the game of politics. This Machiavellian politician, well-versed in power dynamics, understands that he would never engage in a battle when it could be won through deception. The painful reality, however, is the consequences of these internal conflicts within political parties as the country enters a new era dominated by "political coalitions." In my opinion, this is not a healthy exercise for a robust democracy.

The erosion of political parties, the backbone of political ideologies, inevitably paves the way for unprecedented crises and precarious social outcomes. However, few realise that the friendship between Wickremesinghe, a man from Colombo's elite and a well-established political family, played [knowingly or unknowingly] a vital role in President Dissanayake's victory. The longstanding enmity between Wickremesinghe and Premadasa was undoubtedly a significant factor in Dissanayake's success, even though many predicted that no candidate would secure the over 50 per cent of votes required to win.

The results reflect the polarised political divisions in Sri Lanka, where minority-dominated areas remarkably rejected Dissanayake, presenting a significant challenge for the forthcoming general elections, as his political alliance will need to secure over 113 seats out of 225 to establish its power in Parliament.

Erik Solheim, former Norwegian minister and climate change advisor to Sri Lanka, who has been actively involved in Sri Lankan politics since the LTTE era as



THE RESULTS REFLECT THE POLARISED POLITICAL DIVISIONS IN SRI LANKA, WHERE MINORITY-DOMINATED AREAS REMARKABLY REJECTED DISSANAYAKE, PRESENTING A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE FOR FORTHCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS, AS HIS POLITICAL ALLIANCE WILL NEED TO SECURE OVER 113 SEATS OUT OF 225 TO ESTABLISH ITS POWER IN PARLIAMENT

a mediator in peace talks, commented on the significance of this election, stating, "The weakness of the election winner is that his coalition has very little experience running a complicated state like Sri Lanka. They may struggle to achieve a majority in Parliament and implement their many promises in a challenging economic environment."

Despite the worldwide congratulatory messages pouring in for the new leader, I find these insights particularly useful for forecasting the future trajectory of electoral outcomes and the challenges that the island nation is likely to face. The caretaker government, appointed for just two months until 14 November, faces low expectations and should refrain from making new appointments, wisely retaining some senior ministry secretaries from the previous administration.

If the President fails to secure a majority in the House, he will need to form a coalition, but if that proves impossible, the opposition may take control of Parliament, leading to chaotic infighting—an alarming scenario for an inexperienced President unprepared for Sri Lanka's complex political landscape. This situation accentuates significant uncertainties ahead. Historical trends suggest that a President's party or coalition often secures a majority in subsequent elections; however, the recent election results, where the winning candidate failed to garner over 50 per cent of the vote amidst three main contenders, complicate this.

The strong support for Sajith Premadasa and Ranil Wickremesinghe in Tamil-dominated provinces indicates a serious challenge for the newly elected President and his coalition as they approach the upcoming par-

liamentary elections. However, what is remarkable about this election is that it was exceptionally peaceful, with no violence reported, allowing for a refreshing power transition. The commendable role played by the Elections Commission in Sri Lanka cannot be overstated.

This calmness is particularly surprising in a country where people previously took to the streets, violently ousting the Prime Minister and President after experiencing a devastating economic crisis. Many find it hard to believe. Nonetheless, this should not be seen as the calm before the storm, as the country's economy remains precarious. No leader can fulfil all the promises made during the election campaign. The responsibility now lies with the leader and his team to convince the public, fostering understanding and collaboration to overcome the challenges ahead. This is where the reality of the much-discussed "new renaissance" will be tested against the ground realities. The nation-state and its historical trajectory will provide important lessons in understanding what the future may hold. What does it mean for a nation's history to be an intricate weave of choices and consequences rather than a mere succession of events? This perspective compels us to reflect on the profound implications of individual and collective decisions on the essence of a nation. The dismissal of "what ifs" simplifies a complex reality rich with potential paths, urging us to explore the interplay between certainty and possibility.

In the post-independence landscape, missed opportunities for reconciliation and economic transformation reveal a dissonance between political aspira-

tions and societal realities. The notion of a 'false renaissance' recurs throughout pivotal moments: the 1948 declaration of Independence, the 1956 Sinhala Only Act, the 1972 establishment of a republic, the 1977 shift to an open economy, the election of the first female executive president in 1994, the conclusion of the civil war in 2009, and the election of an apolitical leader (Gotabaya Rajapaksa) to overhaul the social structure in 2019—all serve as warnings against complacency born from superficial progress that obscures unresolved tensions and deep-rooted systemic issues.

Therefore, sensationalising the new leader's humble family background and expressing anger towards the "self-proclaimed elites" and their alleged corruption may not provide the sustainable answers that the nation desperately seeks. Instead, it is the collective will and the leader's capacity to engage with those who oppose him that will be essential for embarking on this new journey. While propaganda may orchestrate a false renaissance, the shimmering illusions of progress starkly contrast with the gritty ground reality, exposing a profound philosophical enigma: the allure of superficial advancement often obscures the underlying fractures of society. This compels us to confront the uncomfortable truths of our existence that we habitually choose to ignore in our quest for meaning and coherence. This challenge now lies before the new leadership. Behold an essential, paradoxical truth: within this tranquil interlude lies the profound anticipation of the storm to come.

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

Agri-tech 2.0 : Digital innovations paving the path to sustainable farming

By boosting productivity, promoting sustainability and reducing environmental impact, these technologies offer a pathway for sustainable future

As the global population heads toward an estimated 10 billion by 2050, the agricultural sector faces mounting pressure to significantly increase food production. For India, with its vast and diverse agricultural landscape, this presents a critical challenge. Traditional farming methods alone will not be enough to meet the needs of a growing population while also addressing the threats posed by climate change, dwindling natural resources and the imperative for sustainable practices. In this context, agri-tech, the convergence of technology and agriculture, offers a transformative pathway forward. By integrating cutting-edge digital technologies into farming, India has the potential to enhance productivity, sustain-



AUROBIND UPADHYAY

ability, and resilience. This article explores how these emerging technologies are reshaping the agricultural sector in India, positioning it to meet the demands of the future.

Agriculture at a Crossroads: For decades, agriculture has been the backbone of India's economy, employing over 50 per cent of the workforce and contributing significantly to GDP. However, the sector is

now facing unprecedented strain. The growing population, along with environmental challenges such as erratic weather patterns, water scarcity, and soil degradation, has placed the industry at a critical juncture. The traditional methods of farming are no longer sufficient to meet the increasing demand for food while preserving the environment. This is where agri-tech comes into play, providing innovative solutions that can transform Indian agriculture by improving efficiency and promoting sustainable practices.

Precision Agriculture: Data-Driven Farming: One of the most promising advancements in agri-tech is precision agriculture, which leverages technologies such as GPS, IoT sen-

sors, and drones to optimise farming operations. By gathering and analysing real-time data on factors like soil health, weather conditions, and crop growth, precision agriculture enables farmers to make informed decisions. This approach helps in the efficient use of water, fertilisers, and pesticides, minimising waste and environmental harm while maximising crop yields.

In India, the adoption of precision agriculture is accelerating. According to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), these techniques have the potential to increase yields by 15-25 per cent while reducing input costs by 10-15 per cent. The precision agriculture market in India is expected to grow significantly, from USD 57.6 mil-



lion in 2020 to USD 124.2 million by 2025. Government initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for water conservation and the Soil Health Card Scheme for better fertiliser management are further driving this growth.

AI and Machine Learning: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are also playing a crucial role in modernising Indian agricul-

ture. By analysing vast amounts of data from satellite imagery, weather forecasts, and historical crop performance, AI algorithms can predict potential problems like pest outbreaks and suggest the best times for planting. AI-powered platforms are already being used to predict pest infestations and optimise pesticide use, potentially reducing the need for harmful chemicals by up to 30 per cent.

Ensuring Transparency: Blockchain technology is emerging as a revolutionary tool in agricultural supply chains. By offering a decentralised ledger for recording transactions, blockchain ensures transparency, reduces fraud, and promotes fair trade practices. For farmers, suppliers, and consumers alike,

blockchain provides verifiable information about the origin and journey of food products, ensuring adherence to sustainability standards. The blockchain market in India's agriculture and food supply chain is expected to grow at a CAGR of 47.8 per cent, reaching USD 289 million by 2027.

IoT and Smart Farming: The Internet of Things (IoT) is revolutionising how farmers monitor and manage their crops. IoT devices, such as soil moisture sensors and weather stations, provide real-time data on environmental conditions, allowing for better decision-making in the field. For example, smart irrigation systems can adjust water usage based on real-time data, saving water and improving crop health. The IoT in agriculture market

in India is projected to reach USD 634.5 million by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 12.5 per cent.

Use of Drones: Equipped with high-resolution cameras and sensors, drones provide farmers with detailed aerial imagery of their fields. This helps in identifying issues such as nutrient deficiencies, pest infestations, and water stress. Farmers can then take targeted actions, reducing waste and environmental damage. The use of drones in Indian agriculture is expected to grow substantially, with the market anticipated to reach USD 108 million by 2025.

(The writer is chief growth officer with Arahax Technologies; views are personal)

US, allies call for immediate cease-fire between Israel, Hezbollah

AP ■ NEW YORK
The US, France and other allies jointly called on Wednesday for an immediate 21-day cease-fire to allow for negotiations in the escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah that has killed more than 600 people in Lebanon in recent days.

aware of the call for a cease-fire. Netanyahu's Office said that the ceasefire put forward from the United States and France was only a proposal and the Prime Minister, who is currently on a flight en route to the United States for the United Nations General Assembly, has not responded to the proposal.



believed the Lebanese government would coordinate its acceptance with the group. They said they expected Israel to "welcome" the proposal and perhaps formally accept it when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks at the General Assembly on

backed militant group, after nearly a year of war in Gaza. The US, France and other allies jointly called Wednesday for an immediate 21-day cease-fire to allow for negotiations in the escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah that has killed more than 600 people in Lebanon in recent days.

Trump threatens to end Biden immigration programmes

AP ■ WASHINGTON



Former President Donald Trump, who has made anti-immigration rhetoric a key part of his reelection campaign, has warned that he would kick out hundreds of thousands of immigrants who have entered the country under two key Biden administration programmes if he is reelected.

813,000 migrants have used that system since it was launched in January 2023. Separately, the administration launched a programme last year that allows 30,000 people a month from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela to come to the United States if they have a financial sponsor, pass background vetting and buy a plane ticket to fly into an American airport instead of going to the southern border.

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Trump: Ukraine is demolished

Washington (AP): Former President Donald Trump described Ukraine in bleak and mournful terms on Wednesday, referring to its people as "dead" and the country itself as "demolished", and further raising questions about how much the former president would be willing if elected again to concede in a negotiation over the country's future.

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Harrods issues apology to women claiming abuse by former owner

London (AP): The managing director of Harrods said Thursday that the London department store is "deeply sorry" for failing employees who say they were sexually assaulted by late owner Mohamed Al Fayed.

Zelensky visiting WH as partisan divide grows over Ukraine war



U.S. President Joe Biden, center, with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky, left, Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer, right, and other world leaders pose for a family picture of the launching of a Joint Declaration of Support for Ukrainian Recovery and Reconstruction, Wednesday in New York.

AP ■ WASHINGTON
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is visiting Washington on Thursday as U.S. support for his country's fight against Russia faces a partisan reckoning in this year's presidential election.

Labour Party members deal a blow to Starmer day after his appeal for unity

Liverpool (England) (AP): Members of Britain's governing Labour Party dealt Prime Minister Keir Starmer a blow on Wednesday, rejecting his decision to cut payments that offset winter heating costs for millions of retirees.

Pope arrives in Luxembourg

AP ■ LUXEMBURG
Pope Francis on Thursday began his trip to on-again, off-again strongholds of Christianity in the heart of Europe in an effort to reinvigorate a Catholic flock that is dwindling in the face of secular trends and abuse scandals that have largely emptied the continent's magnificent cathedrals and village churches.

IMF approves US\$ 7b bailout for Pak

AP ■ KIV
The IMF has approved a USD 7 billion new bailout package for Pakistan, authorising the immediate release of the first loan tranche of less than USD 1.1 billion to reinforce the cash-strapped country's efforts to address the ongoing economic crisis.

Catholic priests and nuns. The venue is the late-Gothic Cathedral of Notre Dame, which was built in the early 1600s by Francis' own Jesuit order and stands as a monument to Christianity's long and central place in European history.

Taliban: No one faces discrimination in Af

AP ■ KABUL
More than 20 countries expressed their support Thursday for the proposed legal action against the Taliban. "We condemn the gross and systematic human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan, particularly the gender-based discrimination against women and girls," the countries said.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that the client Mr. Yogendra Singh and Mrs. Anja Singh are purchasing Flat No. 105, Upper Ground Floor, having superior area measuring 350 Sq. Ft. (i.e. 32.51 Sq. Mtrs.), constructed on Plot No. A-1/5, area measuring 528.99 Sq. Mtrs., situated at DLF Ankur Vihar, Village-Sadulabad, Pargana-Loni, Paragula, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad (U.P.) from Mr. Gulshan Nagpal and Mr. Rajeev Nagpal who is the legal heirs and owner of the above-mentioned property after the demise of Mrs. Santosh Nagpal.

MECHANISED CLEANING OF KATHIAR RAILWAY STATION
GeM Bid Number: GEM/2024/8/5415608 Dated: 23-09-2024.
E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:
Name of work: Custom Bid for Services-Mechanised cleaning of Kathiwar Railway Station for the period of Three (03) years. Estimated Bid Value: ₹13,42,12,019/-.

INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK Punjabi Bagh Branch
1/52, North Ave, West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026
Notice is hereby given that the Original Sale Deed bearing Registration No. 518 dated 04.05.1999 for property situated at 518/52, North Ave, West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026, khatra no. 1129, khatra no. 1906, 5036/27224(1-18) Surat Nagar, Line Paer, Bahadurgarh, Jhajar, Haryana have been lost and are not traceable by the Bank.

STATE BANK OF INDIA
MUKESH KUMAR & ORS.
Before Debts Recovery Tribunal-II, Delhi
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
No.EMP/PED-27/2024
No.EMP/PED/TECH-11/2024/370
Date: 18.09.2024
Name of the work: Vehicle Speed Detection System at Paradip Port Authority.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Vishay Kumar S/O Tejvir Singh R/O-1553 Vivekanand Nagar, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh-201001, declare that name of my wife and my minor daughter has been wrongly mentioned in the School records, according to the school admissions records daughters name mentioned as Kanishka, her correct name is Kanishka Goswami aged 14 years and according to school records wife's name is Rashmi, the correct name of my wife is Rashmi Goswami.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to the public at large that the client Mr. Anand Khatanar is the owner of the Plot No. 17A, area measuring 100 sq. yds., out of Khatra No. 3, Khatra No. 8, Mustafil No. 16, Killa No. 12, 13, situated at Ghazipur, Tehsil Badkhal, Distt. Chhida Khan, Village Transfer Deed dated 21.01.2023 (vide Doc. No. 8149) executed by Mr. Chand Khan and same to be financed by SPMFG India Credit Co. Ltd., (Formerly Fullerton India Credit Co. Ltd.), Noida. That Original Sale deed dated 01.06.1999 executed by Mr. Ishwar Singh Sharma as attorney of Mr. Mohan Lal in favour of Mr. Hasanuddin has been misplaced. So, to comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person having any type of claim right/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, i.e. etc.

ICICI Bank
Registered Office: ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakri Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodra - 390007, Gujarat
Corporate Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra East, Mumbai - 400051, Maharashtra
Branch Relocation Notice
Dear Customers, We wish to inform you that with effect from October 30, 2024, we are relocating to a more convenient location. The address is as mentioned below:
New address: ICICI Bank Ltd., Highway Mart Reliance MET Ltd, SCO No. 22, 23 & 24, Sector 7 A, On SH 15, Dabri Toe, Jhajjar, Haryana - 124515.

CBDT reshuffles responsibilities

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the authority that supervises the income-tax department's work in the country, has carried out a fresh reshuffle of responsibilities amongst its members, with the investigation wing reporting to the chairman. An official order issued on September 24 said CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal, a 1988-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer, will be in charge of "coordination and overall supervision" of the board's work and that of the investigation, central and criminal investigation directorates. Earlier, there used to be an independent post of member (investigation) in the CBDT, but it was done away with last year as part of the work re-orientation of the board and



the chairman was authorised with the "supervision of the work of investigation", a senior officer told PTI. Some other members' responsibilities were also reorganised then, he said. According to the order, Harinder Bir Singh Gill, a

judicial), besides the additional charge of member (income tax). Prabodh Seth of the 1989 batch will be the member (administration) and his batchmate, Ramesh Narain Parbat, will be the member (legislation), according to the order that also listed out the zonal charges for these officers. The CBDT, under the Department of Revenue in the Union finance ministry, is headed by a chairman and can have six members in the rank of a special secretary. The board currently has a vacancy of two members. The latest reshuffle was affected as the tenure of two members ended in August, with Pragma Sahay Saxena taking voluntary retirement from service and the scheduled superannuation of Pravin Kumar, the officer said.

Jio-bp inaugurates 500th EV charging station

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nant Mukesh Ambani, Director, Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and Murray Auchincloss, CEO, bp, on Thursday inaugurated the 500th Jio-bp pulse EV-charging station of Jio-bp. Jio-bp is a fuels and mobility joint venture between RIL and global energy giant BP. "The commissioning of the EV-charging station enables access for guests at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre, Jio World Plaza and Jio World Convention Centre in Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC), Mumbai, marking the installation of the 500th Jio-bp pulse charging point in India," a company statement said. Jio-bp has expanded its network of EV-charging stations at a rapid pace, growing from 1,300 to 5,000 in just a year. With 95 per cent of its EV-charging network comprising fast charging stations -- the



highest in the industry -- the company is poised to deliver high speed electrons with unmatched industry-leading uptime of 96 per cent, establishing itself as the country's most reliable charging network, it said. Jio-bp is also the first in the industry to deploy the top-rated 480 KW chargers backed by unique CVPs, which enables it to provide an efficient and quick charging experience at locations such as malls, public parking, corporate parks, hotels, and wayside amenities. "By reducing range anxiety through its rapidly growing charging infrastructure, minimising charging time

with DC fast chargers, and delivering a seamless charging experience through its state-of-the-art Jio-bp pulse charging app, Jio-bp has occupied pole position in accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles in India," it said. Ambani said Jio-bp is playing a pioneering role in accelerating EV adoption in India. "With the largest network share of fast-charging stations, fastest growth in EV charging infra, and highest reliability, Jio-bp is offering a well-packaged, digitised charging solution to millions of Indians". With its foray into green electrons, powered by

Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd's solar power plants, Jio-bp is making rapid progress in its broader goal of promoting sustainable green mobility in India. "EV charging is one of bp's key transition businesses in our journey to becoming an integrated energy company. We are focusing on scale, speed, and strategic locations to provide a seamless customer experience. By combining bp and RIL's capabilities, we are delivering EV charging with convenience, creating a unique value proposition for customers," Murray Auchincloss said in a statement. With its sustained charging infrastructure growth, pioneering customer proposition, and focus on sustainability, Jio-bp is reinforcing its position as the fastest, mostly widely available, and most reliable EV charging partner in India.

ICRA sees room for petrol, diesel price cuts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A reduction in crude oil prices in recent weeks has improved margins on retail auto fuels, providing state-owned firms a headroom to cut petrol and diesel prices by Rs 2-3 per litre, rating agency Icrs said on Thursday. The price of a basket of crude oil India imports averaged USD 74 per barrel in September, down from about USD 83-84 a barrel in March when petrol and diesel prices were last cut by Rs 2 per litre. In a note, Icrs said the marketing margins on retail sales of auto fuels for the Indian Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have improved in recent weeks with the reduction in crude prices. The rating agency anticipates that there is headroom for the downward revision of retail fuel prices if crude prices remain stable at current levels. Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President and Group Head, Corporate Ratings, ICRA, said: "ICRA estimates that the OMCs' net realisation was higher by Rs 15 per litre for petrol and Rs 12 a litre for diesel vis-à-vis international product prices in September 2024 (till September 17). The retail selling price (RSPs) of these fuels have been unchanged since March 2024 (Rs 2/litre was reduced on petrol and diesel on March 15, 2024) and there appears to be headroom for their downward revision by Rs 2-3 per litre, if crude prices remain stable". Crude prices have witnessed a sharp decline in the last few months, primarily due to weak global economic growth and high US production and the OPEC+ has pushed the rollback of its production cuts by two months to combat the declining prices. A decline in the price of crude oil -- which is converted into fuels like petrol and diesel at



refineries -- had rekindled hopes for a reduction in petrol and diesel rates that have been on a freeze for over two years now barring a pre-election reduction in March. While petrol and diesel pricing is deregulated (meaning oil companies have the freedom to fix retail rates), the state-owned fuel retailers, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), have rarely used this freedom since late 2021 by not revising prices in line with cost. They stopped daily price revision in early November 2021 when rates across the country hit an all-time high, prompting the government to roll back a part of the excise duty hike it had effected during the pandemic to take advantage of low oil prices. The freeze continued into 2022 but the war-led spike in international oil prices prompted a Rs 10 a litre hike in petrol and diesel prices from mid-March 2022 before another round of excise duty cut rolled back all of the Rs 13 a litre and Rs 16 a litre increase in taxes on petrol and diesel done during the pandemic. That followed the current price freeze which began on April 6, 2022, and continued till March 15 reduction. Thereafter there has been a freeze in rates again. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 per litre in the national capital and diesel comes for Rs 87.62 a litre. Icrs said the Singapore Gross

India aims to integrate scalable food security interventions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India is seeking to integrate scalable food security interventions into existing government programmes while promoting local crop varieties, a top government official said on Thursday. Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi outlined these priorities during a review of the implementation of the United Nations World Food Programme's (WFP) country strategic plan (CSP) for India spanning 2023-2027. Chaturvedi, who chaired the first meeting of the Country Programme Advisory Committee (CPAC) under the new CSP, suggested the officers to "identify the scalable interventions and



initiatives and prepare mechanisms for including the same in ongoing programmes of ministries/departments." The secretary called for a dedicated workshop to discuss the agriculture sector initiatives in detail, highlighting the need for a focused approach, an official statement said. Chaturvedi emphasized

promoting nutritious local varieties of rice and millets alongside fortified cereals, signalling a shift towards indigenous crop promotion. He advised exploring the possibilities of bringing the Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO) into different initiatives. The secretary also emphasised that while accessing the

nutritional outcomes of the programmes "we should also look at the standards on nutrition applicable for the Indian population." The committee, comprising joint secretaries from various ministries and NITI Aayog representatives, is tasked with coordinating and reviewing progress on initiatives outlined in the strategic plan. The CSP, underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding between India's agriculture ministry and UN-WFP, focuses on four key outcomes: enhancing food-based social protection systems, promoting diverse and nutritious diets, empowering women financially, and building climate-resilient food systems.

WFP Country Director Elizabeth Faure briefed the committee on ongoing initiatives, including efforts to boost food security for smallholder farmers in Assam, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, and the nationwide push to bring millets in mainstream. The meeting saw participation from various ministries, including Food & Public Distribution, Women and Child Development, and Rural Development, as well as agencies like the National Disaster Management Authority and India Meteorological Department. India, the world's most populous country, faces significant challenges in ensuring food security for its 1.4 billion people.

India set to achieve GDP growth in FY25 says Finance Ministry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is set to achieve 6.5-7 per cent GDP growth in the current financial year as indicated by the movements in high-frequency indicators till August, a finance ministry report said on Thursday. The recent developments analysed indicate strong foundations of macroeconomic stability in India with steady growth, investment, employment and inflation trends, a strong and stable financial sector and a resilient external account, including a comfortable foreign exchange reserve position. "A challenge on the macroeconomic front is of navigating the continuing uncertainty in global economic prospects. We will likely encounter a cycle of policy rate cuts globally amid fears of a recession in advanced economies and continuing geopolitical conflicts," the Monthly Economic Review for August said. On balance, the report said, the GDP growth of 6.7 per cent in Q1 FY25 and the



movements in high-frequency indicators till August fit well with the real GDP growth projection of 6.5-7 per cent for FY25, provided by the Economic Survey 2023-24. For the remaining part of the financial year, it said, a reasonable expectation is that public expenditure will pick up, providing added growth and investment impetus. In the farm sector, higher kharif acreage is already visible. Adequately replenished reservoir levels will potentially give a fillip to the upcoming Rabi crops as well.

The skewed spatial distribution of rain may have an impact on farm output in a few regions. However, in the absence of any serious adverse climate shocks, rural incomes and demand should get stronger, and food inflation will be milder, it said. There are also incipient signs of strains in certain sectors. For instance, the automobile dealers' body FADA has pointed to moderating sales of passenger vehicles and a build-up of inventory, it added. Data from Nielsen IQ indicated that the growth of

fast-moving consumer goods sales in urban areas slowed in Q1 FY25. While these may turn out to be transient with the onset of the festival season, they warrant monitoring. Further, capital spending by Indian states has declined in the current financial year. Stock markets around the world are booming, it said. "Consequently, the risk of an eventual correction has risen. If the risk materialises, the spillover effect may be felt globally as well," it said.

Dr Reddy's faces penalty in Mexico for regulatory deviation



Dr Reddy's Laboratories said on Thursday the Mexican drug regulator has imposed a penalty of around Rs 28 lakh. The drug regulatory body of Mexico has imposed a penalty of MXN 6,51,420 (Rs 28 Lakh) on the company for deviation from prescribed guidelines for filing intimation of import of a reference standard for one of the active pharmaceutical ingredients, the Hyderabad-based drug major said in a regulatory filing. Shares of the drug maker were trading 0.39 per cent up at Rs 6,720 apiece on BSE.

Fixing SpiceJet's broken wings

Can the low-cost airline heal enough to effectively compete with IndiGo and Air India?

KUSHAN MITRA ■ NEW DELHI

Days after low-cost carrier SpiceJet raised Rs 3000 crore from institutional investors, the airline promptly cleared pending salary dues estimated to over Rs 80 crore. It is believed that the beleaguered low-cost airline will use much of the remaining funds to settle dues with a host of creditors from leasing companies to airports. However, even if much of the funds the airline has raised will go towards clearing dues, the fact is that SpiceJet did successfully manage to raise this large sum of money. This is despite the airline having to face a litany of problems and constantly being dragged to the courts by everyone from the previous owners, the Maran family of the Sun Group to various leasing firms. In fact, just last week the Supreme Court upheld a

Delhi High Court order mandating the return of three engines used by the airline on their Boeing 737 aircraft. With leasing companies asking the airline to pay up, and taking their aircraft away, the airline is down to just having 21 operational aircraft according to website airfleets.net. This is a precipitous decline from the halcyon days of the airline before Covid when the airline had almost five times as many aircraft in its fleet and was the first Indian operator of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. However, the one-two punch of the coronavirus shutdown and the grounding of the Boeing 737MAX fleet worldwide following two deadly disasters almost knocked the airline out. But this is not a time to dwell on the past, the fact is that despite difficult odds the airline has managed to raise a



large sum of money from Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) with institutions such as Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, BNP Paribas, Nomura and Tata Mutual Fund subscribing to the issue. The quality of investment is a very positive indicator of the future prospects of the airline. SpiceJet has a lot to do, first and foremost to regain the confidence of employees,

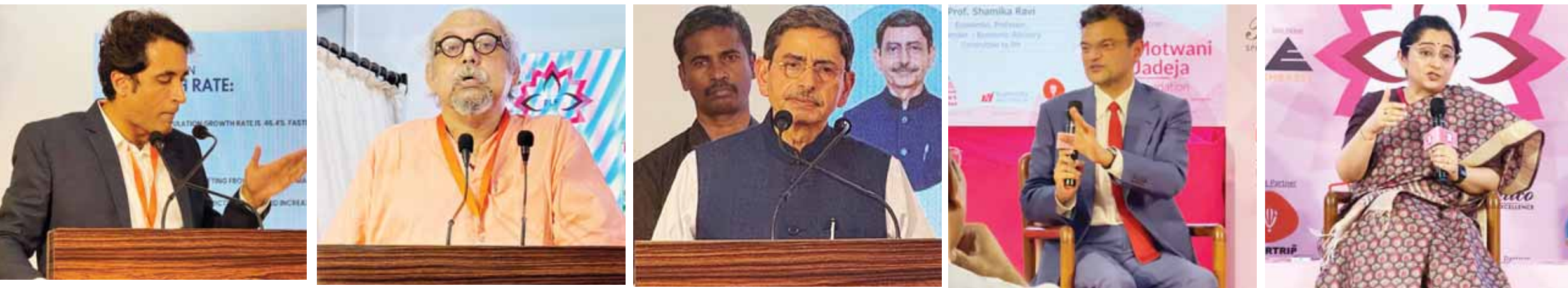
service providers and most importantly customers. They can do this by becoming more reliable and offering more services. Due to issues with leasing companies, the airline has been forced to wet-lease temporary aircraft from airlines in Cambodia and Turkey. They should now concentrate on operating their own fleet and by repaying dues owed to leasing firms, rebuild their

confidence in SpiceJet as a reliable airline. There is now talk of the airline growing to 100 aircraft by the end of 2026. If this fructifies, it is a welcome move as the Indian aviation sector needs the competition as the domination of IndiGo and Air India/Air India Express leave customers with little choice. This duopoly needs to be challenged, and SpiceJet

was a capable third player in the sector. Now however, they will have to deal with increased competition from the likes of Akasa. That said, the growth prospects for the Indian aviation sector are extremely high. Between January and June 2024, domestic air traffic numbered 79.35 million passengers, which was a growth at 4.28 percent from the same period last year. The growth could have been higher still had it not been for the collapse of Go First last year and persistent engine problems with Pratt&Whitney GTF engines plaguing IndiGo leading to almost a quarter of their fleet grounded. If SpiceJet can get their act together, and there is no reason to doubt that they can't after the fund-raise, the Indian aviation sector could easily grow to 250 million passengers per year by 2028.

INBRIEF

- NGEL INKS JV AGREEMENT WITH MAHAPREIT**
NEW DELHI: NTPC Green Energy Limited, entered into a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with Mahatma Phule Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Technology Ltd. (MAHAPREIT) on 25th September 2024.
- KATTANKULATHUR: SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre (SRM SKMCH&RC) has inaugurated a Tobacco Cessation Centre at its Kattankulathur location. The center, located at the Psychiatry OPD (C-1/37), First Floor, C Block, will operate from Monday to Saturday, 8 AM to 2 PM.**
- AMRITSAR: The Punjab government has approved the renaming of government schools to honor prominent freedom fighters and martyrs, aiming to commemorate their sacrifices for the country's independence.**
- AMRITSAR: An orientation workshop for college eco-club in-charges from seven districts was organized by the College Development Council, Guru Nanak Dev University under the Environment Education Programme.**



PONDICHERRY LITERARY FESTIVAL

SHAPING INDIA'S LITERARY FUTURE

As India's literary festivals increasingly become platforms for political agendas and sensational debates, the Pondicherry Literary Festival offers a breath of fresh air

BY KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Literary festivals are reasonably new phenomena that have sprouted across the globe. They are gatherings of authors who come from all corners of the world to discuss the evolution of literature and the modern trends that drive it. A festival syndrome has taken over India's literary world. The land of Kalidasa is bereft of any authors who are incapable of matching the stature of global-quality writers. Though there are writers who get patronage from some publishing firms or newspapers because of their obsession with anarchy and "out-of-the-box" stances like equating Maoists as "Gandhians with AK-47 rifles" and comparing their country to a "mobile-free republic", they are mere pygmies when compared to the ones in the global arena. The literary festivals that mushroomed across India gave a lot of hope to average Indians. The general expectation was that young authors would get a platform to tell the world what they felt about the emerging Indian literary world. But what we saw was that the festivals were getting hijacked by a coterie who set the agenda for wannabe writers. They want the new-generation authors to speak and write only against the concept of India. These literary festivals became an extension of the

Progressive Writers' Forum of the former Soviet Union, where the Communist Party was the last word on literature. The Party would decide what constitutes literature and ask the writers to "compose" ideology in the form of novels and poems. The two-day Pondicherry Literary Festival held on 21st and 22nd September brought in a refreshing change. The Pondicherry Literary Festival, officially launched in 2018, has emerged as one of the leading cultural events in south India - nay, in India itself. The event featured the crème de la crème of India's intelligentsia. It saw the active participation of authors like Aravindan Neelakantan, Anand Ranganathan, Kanchan Gupta, Vikram Sampath and many others. The event has systematically avoided noise from debates that are curated for the sake of polemics, thus giving an undesirable lease of life to debunked narratives. "We empower with knowledge on spiritual, religious and cultural subjects that showcase Bharat Shakti and critically evaluate what holds her back via lectures and conversations, book talks and presentations on science and technology, defence and security. This year we focus on Bharat in the New Age. 'Bharat Shakti' is a phrase we have chosen from the writings of Sri Aurobindo to serve as our guiding principle. Pondicherry is Sri Aurobindo's seat of *sadhana* and we take these



associations with reverence and respect," said Alo Sud, the festival director, who is the moving spirit behind this event. Pondicherry Lit Fest had a baptism by fire in 2018. "There were attacks and diatribes on us from the Left ecosystem, who had no qualms in designating this festival as a Sanghi, right-wing event. We do not categorise people based on rights, lefts or based on religions. This is an event where delegates can come, take part and return with their minds filled with ideas, knowledge and ground realities," said Alo Sud. In an era where commercial writers/authors advertise their new



works well in advance, authors like Aravindan Neelakantan and Anand Ranganathan are exceptions. They do not publicise their new works and it is by word of mouth that their contents get disseminated. The "secular media" blackout their groundbreaking works because of the unpalatable facts they highlight. It is Pondicherry Lit Fest that offers everyone (irrespective of caste, creed, ideology, and religion) a platform to air their views and grievances. The delegates were given a bird's-eye view of the happenings in spheres like science, technology, defence and security. The festival

stood out because there was no name-calling or Modi-bashing. The rest of the literary festivals staged across India seem to be dedicated to abusing Narendra Modi. Sometime in 2016, a Carnatic musician, feeling he was being relegated to the fourth round, came out with a startling disclosure that there was no freedom of expression under the Sangh Parivar regime. It hogged national limelight, as even the staunchest critic of Modi was hearing such an allegation for the first time. The result? The musician became an overnight star and was honoured with the

title *Sangeeta Kala Nidhi!* What Dr M Rajeev Kumar, a noted critic and author of many short stories and dramas, says about lit fests is noteworthy. "We do have many lit fests, but their agenda is fixed. There is no literature or culture in these events other than promoting certain politicians, their ideologies and some publishing houses. Lit festivals are for open discussions and not for name-calling and abusing rivals," said Dr Kumar, who has been writing for more than five decades and has yet to be invited to at least one lit fest in Kerala. Interestingly, there are lit festivals in West Asian countries too, where the targets are Modi and Indian nationalism. There are frontal organisations of extremist outfits as well as the CPI(M) (masquerading as cultural associations). This is what makes Pondicherry Lit Fest stand out from other events. Lucid speeches, lively discussions, and speakers who are keen to take the participants into confidence make it distinct from other such festivals. Delegates are treated to sumptuous meals of knowledge, wisdom and erudition. Who said avant-garde art and literature are meant only for intellectuals? Come to Pondicherry and you will be elevated to the level visualised by Sri Aurobindo, for whom the waterfront state was the second home.

NEW ARRIVALS

SEPTEMBER RELEASES



Time to Come Home: Sowing the Seeds of Self-Love for Lasting Happiness
by DAMINI GROVER (PRICE: ₹399, PAGES: 280) Hay House

In *Time to Come Home*, award-winning psychologist and life coach Damini Grover offers a transformative guide that dives deep into the vital themes of self-love and personal growth. The book emphasises that self-love is foundational for a fulfilling life, helping readers reconnect with their true selves while embracing their imperfections. Grover provides actionable steps and relatable stories to create a clear roadmap for understanding and practising self-love in everyday life, addressing common challenges of self-acceptance and personal development. This inspiring work invites readers to honour their worth and prioritise their happiness, ultimately leading to lasting fulfillment.

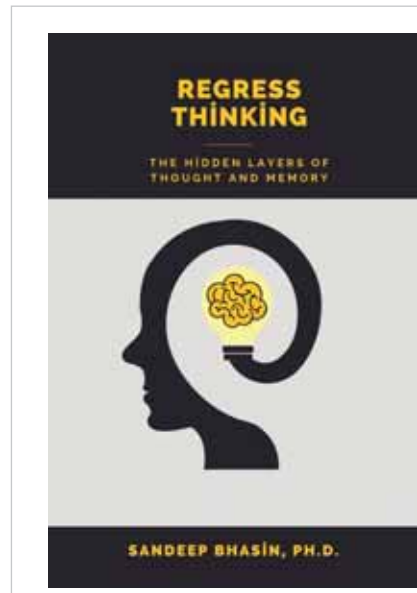
Turtle Moon
By HANNAH GOLD (Price: ₹499, Pages: 337) HarperCollins Children's Books

In *Turtle Moon*, Silver Trevelon's family grapples with unhappiness due to the absence of a long-awaited sibling. When her father receives an invitation to paint at a turtle rescue centre in Costa Rica, Silver hopes it will be the adventure that brings her family closer together. As she settles into life at the animal centre, she witnesses a rare leatherback turtle nesting on the beach. However, excitement turns to alarm when the turtle's eggs are stolen, propelling Silver and her new friends into a perilous quest to retrieve them. Their journey into the heart of the jungle uncovers long-buried secrets, testing their courage and resolve.

Exploring the interplay of thought and memory

In 'Regress Thinking: The Hidden Layers of Thought and Memory', author SANDEEP BHASIN explores the complexities of the mind and how understanding our thought processes can enhance creativity and memory, writes SAKSHI PRIYA

Regress Thinking: The Hidden Layers of Thought and Memory by Sandeep Bhasin invites readers on an enlightening journey through the complexities of the mind, combining historical insights with contemporary applications to offer a fresh perspective on creativity and cognitive processes. With over thirty years of experience across various fields, Bhasin draws on his extensive knowledge to explore these themes further. The book is structured around several central themes, each highlighting the vital role of creativity as a multi-dimensional process. Bhasin explores the psychology of creativity, illustrating how ideas emerge from the intricate interplay of different brain functions. He introduces the notion of *Regress Thinking*, a concept that encourages readers to retrace their cognitive steps to uncover hidden insights that might have been overlooked in the rush of everyday thought. This methodology is not just an academic pursuit, it has tangible applications in business, technology, and personal development. Bhasin's writing is both clear and engaging, making complex concepts accessible to a broad audience. He encourages readers to adopt a mindset of experimentation and to regard failure as an essential part of the creative process. By drawing connections between historical innovations and modern challenges, he highlights that lessons from the past can provide crucial strategies for tackling present-day problems. A standout aspect of the book is its use of case studies and real-life examples,



which illustrate the various manifestations of regression and its impact on individual's lives. These narratives offer practical insights and inspiration for overcoming challenges, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding and managing regression. Bhasin empowers readers to harness the potential of regression while mitigating its negative effects. One particularly compelling section of the book focuses on the four stages of the creative process: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. Bhasin explains how each stage contributes to idea



ABOUT THE BOOK
Book : Regress Thinking: The Hidden Layers of Thought and Memory
by SANDEEP BHASIN PH.D.
Publisher : Notion Press
₹990.00

generation, urging readers to embrace the non-linear nature of creativity. He also discusses the significance of environmental factors, mindset and collaboration in enhancing creative potential, reminding us that creativity

flourishes in supportive and stimulating settings. Moreover, Bhasin's examination of cognitive efficiency sheds light on the brain's remarkable ability to prioritise information and dismiss what it considers unimportant. This selective forgetting is framed as a beneficial feature, reinforcing the idea that understanding our mental processes can significantly enhance our learning experiences. *Regress Thinking* serves as a guide to individual creativity, it advocates for harnessing collective intelligence in our interconnected world. Bhasin promotes a culture of openness and collaboration, positioning these

elements as essential for addressing the pressing issues we face today. *Regress Thinking* is a fascinating read that intertwines history, psychology and practical application. It acts as both a manual and a companion for those looking to unlock their creative potential and navigate the intricacies of modern life. With its actionable insights and philosophical reflections, this book is a significant addition for anyone interested in enhancing their cognitive abilities and nurturing innovation. Bhasin's approach will resonate with those eager to explore the depths of their minds and utilise the past as a springboard for future success.

INDIA LIKELY TO MAINTAIN SUPREMACY OVER BANGLADESH

PTI ■ KANPUR
India would want their big guns Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma to fire when the mighty hosts aim for a clean sweep against a beleaguered Bangladesh in the second and final Test starting here on Friday.
The all-round show of Ravichandran Ashwin, Shubman Gill's sublime hundred, Ravindra Jadeja's quality batting and Rishabh Pant's roaring comeback allowed India to script a comfortable victory in Chennai despite being put under pressure by the Bangladesh pacers on day one.
It seems he has even added one more dimension to his game: curbing his aggressive instinct



if the situation demands, making him even more dangerous.
However, both Rohit and Virat's bats remained silent in the series-opener as Bangladesh pacers — Hasan Mahmud and Taskin Ahmed — bowled probing lines on a supportive track and were rewarded. With a long Test season ahead of them, the two premier batters must be itching to get back among the runs.
Playing his first Test at home since March 2023, Kohli did not look at his sharpest and one can trust him to not go for expansive cover drives at the start of his innings.
CHANGE IN COMBINATIONS: The Green Park wicket has traditionally been a low and slow track that assists spinners. While it is expected to offer some assistance to the fast bowlers initially, the basic nature of the pitch, prepared with black soil brought from Unnao, is not expected to change much.
The wicket will become slower as the game progresses. It means, India can field three spinners instead of three

their playing eleven. They struggled against a high-quality Indian pace attack in their first essay in Chennai and then could not handle Ashwin and Co while chasing an improbable target.
The team management has given contrasting statements on Shakib Al Hasan's availability. While a selector had said that he is doubtful due to a finger injury he suffered while batting in Chennai, chief coach Chandika Hathurusinghe said he is eligible for selection.
Bangladesh can bring left-arm spinner Taijul Islam in place of lanky pacer Nahid Rana. They also have an option in off-spinner Nayeem Hasan.
A SPLENDID DOUBLE AWAITS JADEJA: In 73 Tests, Ravindra Jadeja has taken 299 wickets and scored 3122 runs. He needs to add just one more scalp to his kitty to become the second-fastest pacer in Test history to complete the double of 300 wickets and 3000 runs.
England great Ian Botham had achieved the feat in 72 matches.
CONDITIONS CHALLENGING: The muggy weather will



Shakib retires from T20Is, says Kanpur Test will be his last if no farewell at home

PTI ■ KANPUR
Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan on Thursday announced his retirement from T20 Internationals with immediate effect and also said that the second Test against India will be his last if his country's board doesn't give him a farewell match against South Africa at home.
His final international game for Bangladesh will be in the Champions Trophy which is likely to be held in UAE and Pakistan.
The 37-year-old great, who featured in 129 T20Is for Bangladesh will, however, continue to play in franchise leagues.
"I have played my last T20 match in T20 World Cup. We have discussed this with the selectors. Looking at the 2026 World Cup, this is the right time for me to move out. Hopefully, BCB will find some great players and we will perform well," said Shakib on the eve of the second and final Test against India here.
Shakib, who has played 70 Tests, scoring 4600 runs and taking 242 wickets might just play his last Test in the North Indian industrial town in case the cricket board can't assure him of his security after being accused of murder although he wasn't even in the country at that time.
"I have expressed my desire to play my last Test in Mirpur to BCB. They agreed with me. They are trying to organise everything so that I can go to

India is capable to make a strong impression in women's T20 WC: Sthalekar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Former Australian captain Lisa Sthalekar said India have the all-round depth to grab an elusive ICC title during the upcoming women's T20 World Cup.
The global showpiece will be held in the UAE from October 3 and India's best effort in the event remains a final berth in 2020, where they lost to Australia.
"I can see Australia in the semifinals as they are aiming to win their fourth (title) in a row. England too had a strong pre-tournament build-up. India's chances are also very high and I expect them to be in the semifinals, if not in the finals," Sthalekar told a select group of journalists at the ABC — International Development's five-day cricket commentary



and mojo programme at the Australian High Commission. The former Australian skipper validated her argument citing good options through India's line-up.
"India has got power, depth, decent bowlers and if their 4-7 number batters can score at a good strike rate, they will be in a good position. They need a good start from the openers. Jemimah Rodriguez did well in the West Indies (in the CPL) recently. It will be fascinating to see how she performs in the WC," she said.
Delving further deep into the chances of the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side, Sthalekar said India have the wherewithal to beat Australia, their nemesis in global events over the years.
"For example, in the 2020 T20 WC, Poonam Yadav took four wickets in the first game and

described the effort she put in to reach the higher rungs of her job as a commentator.
"Not everyone has to be a Richie Benaud or a Danny Morrison. But we all have different skills and strengths that we bring to the commentary box. That's why you have diverse personalities (doing commentary)," she said.
Sthalekar picked commentating during the IPL as her biggest career moment.
"You have to have goals in your career and IPL (commentary) was my 10-year goal as a commentator. But I got a call to be in the IPL commentary team within six months.
"I remember my first IPL game as a commentator at the Eden Gardens in 2015. Some 70000 screaming fans were there and I had to do an interview with Gautam Gambhir," she said.

Man United stunned 1-1 by Dutch club Twente in revamped Europa League

AP ■ MANCHESTER
Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag questioned his players' killer instinct after they were held to a 1-1 draw by his old club FC Twente in the revamped Europa League.
Sam Lammers capitalised on a mistake by Christian Eriksen in the second half at Old Trafford and raced away to fire an equalizer for the Dutch underdog.
"You saw that was the game of their life. They fought for every yard and we didn't," Ten Hag said. "99% is not enough, You have to give 100%. You have

kill the game. You have to finish it off."
Eriksen had put United ahead with a stunning first-half strike but was caught in possession by Lammers, whose goal secured an unexpected point for the visitors.
Ten Hag had spoken before the game of his affection for the team he supported as a boy in the Netherlands and represented as a player. He said it was "not nice to have to hurt something you love."
Instead it was United fans left in pain, despite Eriksen seemingly putting the home team on course for victory.
United has won just three of

seven games in all competitions this season and Wednesday's draw came after a 0-0 draw at Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday.
Eriksen swept United ahead in the 35th with a first-time shot into the top corner. Connecting with a loose ball just inside the box, the playmaker didn't break stride as he whipped his effort past past Twente goalkeeper Lars Unerstall with power and precision.
With one fist clenched, he ran to the corner to celebrate in front of the home fans.
But it was Twente's supporters

domestically, Bundesliga's Hoffenheim took home a point from Denmark in a 1-1 draw with Danish Superliga's leader Midtjylland. Dario Osorio put the hosts ahead late in the first half before substitute Max Moerstedt leveled it in the final minute.
In Brussels, Anderlecht struck twice in the span of five minutes in the second half on the way to a 2-1 victory over Ferencváros. Yari Verschaeren scored on the hour and Kasper Dolberg added the second from the spot.
Slavia Prague scored in each half for a 2-0 win at Bulgaria's Ludogorets.



left cheering the loudest after Lammers' goal in the 68th when beating Andre Onana at his near post.
"There's a lot of football (still to play) when you (are) one up and the game takes more than 90 minutes," Ten Hag said.