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 SUPREME COURT VINDICATES  
 ABROGATION OF ARTICLE 370

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NEW DELHI, TUESDAY DECEMBER 12, 2023; PAGES 12-13



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# MODI'S HISTORIC COURSE CORRECTION IN J&K

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Article 370 of the Constitution, which bestowed special status on the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, was a "temporary provision" and any interpretation of the provision cannot postulate that integration of J-K with India was temporary, the Supreme Court ruled on Monday.

Upholding the abrogation of the controversial provision, the apex court said Article 370 read together with Article 1 of the Constitution leaves no manner of doubt that the integration of J-K as a part of the nation, which in itself was a Union of States, was complete.

"It can be garnered from the historical context for the inclusion of Article 370 and the placement of Article 370 in Part XXI of the Constitution that it is a temporary provision," Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, writing for himself and justices B R Gavai and Surya Kant, said in his 352-page verdict.

In its landmark verdict, the five-judge Constitution bench headed by CJI Chandrachud unanimously upheld the Centre's August 5, 2019 decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370, while directing restoration of statehood for J&K at the earliest and holding the Assembly elections by September 30, 2024.

The apex court dealt with the question — whether the provisions of Article 370 were temporary in nature or they acquired a permanent status in the Constitution at the end of the J&K Constituent Assembly's tenure in 1957.

In his verdict, Justice Chandrachud said Article 370 was introduced to serve two purposes.

"First, an interim arrangement until the Constituent Assembly of the State was formed and could take a decision on the legislative competence of the Union on matters other than the ones stipulated in the IoA (Instrument of Accession), and ratify the Constitution (the transitional purpose); And second, an interim arrangement because of the special circumstances in the State because of the war conditions of the State (the temporary purpose)," he noted.

The CJI said there are intrinsic reasons in Article 370 that support the view that the provision was not intended by the framers to be a permanent feature of the Constitution at the date of the adoption of the Constitution. "Part XXI of which Article 370 is a part specifies temporary and transitional provisions. In certain cases, the temporary provisions contained in Part XXI had a restriction with reference to the time over which they would operate," he said.

**Continued on Page 2**

## SC UPHOLDS ABROGATION OF ARTICLE 370 IN THE STATE



The five-judge bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai and Surya Kant during pronouncement of verdict on a batch of petitions challenging the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution, in New Delhi, on Monday

## PM and Amit Shah hail the Apex Court's verdict

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah Monday hailed the Supreme Court's verdict upholding the Government's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution as "historic" and said this gives a stamp of approval to the move as being "completely constitutional".

Taking to social media, the two top leaders instrumental in abrogating the provisions of Article 370 in 2019 said the top court's decision is not just a legal

judgment, but a "beacon of hope" and testament to the collective resolve to build a stronger and more united India, besides bringing peace and normalcy to Jammu and Kashmir.

Modi said the Supreme Court verdict on the abrogation of Article 370 is "historic" and constitutionally upholds the decision taken by Parliament on August 5, 2019. "It is a resounding declaration of hope, progress and unity for our sisters and brothers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The court, in its profound wisdom, has fortified the very

essence of unity that we, as Indians, hold dear and cherish above all else," he said. "I want to assure the resilient people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh that our commitment to fulfilling your dreams remains unwavering," the Prime Minister added.

"We are determined to ensure that the fruits of progress not only reach you but also extend their benefits to the most vulnerable and marginalised sections of our society who suffered due to Article 370," he asserted.

**Continued on Page 2**

## Kashmir's integration with India begins

Assembly polls in September 2024

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Government's decision to abrogate Article 370, which bestowed special status on the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, and said steps should be taken to conduct elections in the Assembly by September 30 next year.

The apex court also directed that statehood to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir be restored at the earliest.

The apex court also upheld the validity of the decision to carve out the Union Territory of Ladakh from Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. On that day, the Government abrogated Article 370 and bifurcated the State into two union territories — Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

The erstwhile State does not have internal sovereignty different from other States of the country, CJI DY Chandrachud said. "... All provisions of the Indian Constitution can be applied to J-K," the CJI said.

"We hold the exercise of presidential power to issue constitutional order abrogating Article 370 of Constitution as valid," the CJI said.

The bench comprising CJI D Y Chandrachud and Justices Gavai, Surya Kant, Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, assembled at 10.56 am to pronounce the three separate and concurring judgements. Justices Kaul and Khanna wrote their judgments separately. In his concurring judgment, Justice Khanna said the purpose of Article 370 was to slowly bring Jammu and Kashmir at par with other Indian states. He directed the setting up of a truth-and-reconciliation commission to probe human rights violations both by the state and non-state actors.

The CJI said Article 370 was couched amidst other temporary and transitional provisions with a marginal note which indicates that its provisions were temporary.

"On January 26, 1950, when the Constitution was adopted, the State of Jammu and Kashmir became an integral part of the territory of India. The mandate of Article 1 is that India that is Bharat shall be a Union of States," the CJI noted.

## ARTICLE 370: TIMELINE

**NEW DELHI:** Following is the timeline of events in a case in which the Supreme Court on Monday upheld the government's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution, which bestowed a special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, and said steps should be taken to conduct the election to the Assembly in the Union Territory by September 30 next year.

- **December 20, 2018:** President's Rule imposed while exercising powers under Article 356 of the Constitution in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Subsequently extended on July 3, 2019.
- **August 5, 2019:** Centre abrogates the provisions of Article 370, bestowing a special status upon the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **August 6, 2019:** First petition challenging the presidential order scrapping Article 370 filed by advocate M L Sharma, who was later joined by another lawyer from Jammu and Kashmir, Shakir Shabir.
- **August 10, 2019:** National Conference (NC), a prominent political party from Jammu and Kashmir, files a petition contending that the changes brought in the status of the state had taken away the rights of its citizens without their mandate.
- **August 24, 2019:** Press Council of India moves the Supreme Court supporting the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir administration's decision to impose restrictions on communications.
- **August 28, 2019:** Supreme Court issues notices to the Centre, Jammu and Kashmir administration on a plea moved by Kashmir Times editor for the removal of the restrictions imposed on journalists.
- **August 28, 2019:** A bench headed by then Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi refers matter to five-judge Constitution bench.
- **September 19, 2019:** Supreme Court sets up five-judge Constitution bench to hear pleas challenging abrogation of Article 370.
- **March 2, 2020:** Supreme Court declines to refer to larger seven-judge bench batch of petitions challenging constitutional validity of Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370.
- **April 25, 2022:** Supreme Court agrees to consider listing after summer vacation pleas challenging Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 after one of the petitioners seeks urgent hearing in view of delimitation exercise being carried out in Jammu and Kashmir.
- **July 11, 2023:** Supreme Court says it will commence day-to-day hearing from August 2 on petitions challenging abrogation of Article 370.
- **August 2, 2023:** Supreme Court commences hearing on petitions challenging abrogation of Article 370.
- **September 5, 2023:** Court reserves verdict on 23 petitions in the matter after hearing those for 16 days.
- **December 11, 2023:** Supreme Court upholds government's decision to abrogate Article 370, says steps should be taken to conduct election to Assembly in Union Territory by September 30 next year.

## People jubilant, Politicians bicker

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The common people on the streets of Jammu and Kashmir were 'upbeat and jubilant' after the apex court delivered its long-awaited verdict on Monday, upholding the abrogation of Article 370 and setting the stage for conducting the maiden Assembly polls by September 2024.

The common people refrained from discussing the politics surrounding the abrogation of Article 370; instead, they were keen on witnessing the 'dance of democracy'.

Senior Advocate Sheikh Shakeel called it a landmark judgement. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Sheikh Shakeel said, "The Apex Court has paved the way for restoring democracy in Jammu and Kashmir. The five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has also directed the Centre to restore the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir while setting the stage for long pending Assembly polls."

A senior representative of the deprived Valmiki society Garhu Bhatti and president of the West Pak refugees joint action committee Labha Ram Gandhi also welcomed the landmark judgement.

The Apex court has cleared all the hurdles allowing our children to



Members of Rashtriya Bajrang Dal after the Supreme Court's verdict upholding the Centre's decision to abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution, in Jammu, on Monday

realise their dreams and work hard. "The successive Governments in the State deprived us of our basic fundamental rights. We were caged and living in inhuman conditions for a long period of 70 years. After the Abrogation of Article 370, we were given the voting rights. We were granted citizenship of Jammu and Kashmir and our children were granted permission to sit for competitive examinations. Now they have been admitted toadmittedly professional colleges and preparing for Administrative

examinations. It is time to distribute sweets," he said.

The apex court has also directed the Centre to restore statehood status as soon as possible, Ashok Kumar, a local businessman running a provision store in the Nanak Nagar area of Jammu said.

However, the political parties reacted differently in both the Jammu and Kashmir regions. In Jammu, J&K Unit BJP chief Ravinder Raina hailed the Supreme Court's verdict upholding the abrogation of Article 370, saying "We honour and respect the judgment in letter

and spirit."

Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad termed the Supreme Court's verdict on pleas challenging the abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution "sad and unfortunate", but said "We have to accept it."

"It (the court verdict) is sad and unfortunate," Azad told reporters. The former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister said the people of the region are not happy with the verdict delivered by a five-judge bench of the apex court.

On the other hand, National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah said he is disappointed but not disheartened by the Supreme Court verdict.

In a broadcast on 'X', Omar apologised to the people of Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh for failing to convince the apex court to restore Article 370.

"Unfortunately, we could not convince the five judges, and for that... I apologise to the people of J&K, Ladakh, and those in the country who wanted us to succeed," he said. "Our efforts will not end here," the NC leader added. "I am in Srinagar at my home and addressing you because the gate has been locked and I am not being allowed to meet anyone..." Omar said.

**Continued on Page 2**

## MP gets a new BJP CM

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After Chhattisgarh, the BJP on Monday dropped a big surprise as it announced Mohan Yadav (58), a leader of Other Backward Classes (OBC) and a three-time party MLA, as the new Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

The suspense over the third winning State, Rajasthan, continued as its anticipated Chief Minister's name is expected to be announced by Tuesday afternoon, according to BJP sources.

Chhattisgarh's Chief Minister-designate and BJP leader Vishnu Deo Sai will take oath, along with his Cabinet colleagues, on Wednesday at a ceremony in Raipur in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries.

Yadav is an MLA from Ujjain Dakshin who won the 2023 Assembly polls by a margin of over 13,000 votes. He was the Higher Education Minister in the outgoing Shivraj Singh Chouhan Government. Chouhan has submitted his resignation to the Governor after Yadav was elected as the leader of the State legislative party paving the way for him



to take over as the next CM of Madhya Pradesh.

Yadav has staked the claim to form the Government and the oath ceremony will be decided by the party in a day.

Yadav met Governor Mangubhai Patel in the evening and handed over a letter of support claiming to form next Government.

Yadav was accompanied by outgoing Chief Minister Chouhan, State party chief VD Sharma, and the three Central observers to the Raj Bhavan.

According to BJP leaders, Yadav was elected as the BJP's legislature party leader in Madhya Pradesh at a meeting in Bhopal in presence of central observers.

**Continued on Page 2**

## The Lonely Courage of Prime Minister Modi

ADVAITA KALA

In the intricate web of global leadership, few threads are as uniquely spun as that of Narendra Modi, the fourteenth Prime Minister of India. Modi's journey from the dusty tea stalls of Gujarat to the grand corridors of power in New Delhi is not just a tale of political ascension, but a testament to a kind of courage that is often overshadowed and dismissed in the world of politics - the courage of treading a lonely path.

At the heart of Modi's leadership style is a distinctive blend of solitary decision-making and a deep connection with the masses. He is not a politician who views the people as the public, but as a community. And PM Modi is a community builder par excellence. He is a leader who,

despite being surrounded by advisors and supporters, often appears to walk a path of his own creation. His time in public life is not just about physical solitude; it's an ideological and emotional state, where one's convictions are so strong that they often stand in stark contrast to prevailing norms. And he often surprises us, not because what he does is unpopular, but because what he does has already been dismissed as unthinkable by those who came before him.

Modi's courage is evident in his bold policy decisions. The demonetisation initiative, while contentious at the time, highlighted his willingness to take drastic measures against corruption. Similarly, the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), although initially disruptive, has



been recognised for its long-term vision of a unified market. These decisions, taken amidst considerable uncertainty and opposition, exemplify a leader unafraid to walk alone if it means walking towards what he believes is right for his nation.

Another aspect of Modi's lonely courage is seen in his international diplomacy. Navigating a world stage where allegiances shift like sand, Modi has sought to position India as a global player, forging ties with both Western and Eastern

powers while maintaining a distinct stance on issues critical to India's interests. This delicate balancing act, pursued with a mix of diplomatic charm and assertiveness, underscores a leader willing to stand alone on the global stage to carve out a place for his country.

But perhaps the most poignant aspect of Modi's solitude is found in his personal narrative. His lifestyle, marked by simplicity and an almost ascetic discipline, sets him apart from many of his peers. This personal solitude, mirroring his political path, speaks to a leader whose life is inextricably linked to his mission, a mission he pursues with a singular focus that often requires walking a path less trodden.

As Article 370 is assigned to the dustbin of history, PM Modi is already onto his next mission,

with a zeal and relentlessness that is seen so rarely. The praise and criticism a mere footnote. In the end, the lonely courage of Narendra Modi is not just about the decisions he makes or the policies he implements. It's about the profound sense of responsibility he carries — a responsibility to a nation of over a billion, each with their own hopes and dreams. It's about the willingness to be misunderstood, to be solitary in one's conviction, and yet remain unwaveringly committed to the vision of a resurgent India.

As the world watches India's trajectory under Modi's leadership, one cannot help but reflect on the blend of solitude and strength that defines his journey. It's a reminder that in the theatre of politics, the most impactful roles are often played by those who dare to walk alone.

# 2 J&K Bills passed in Parliament

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Parliament on Monday passed two Bills related to Jammu and Kashmir as the Rajya Sabha cleared them with a voice vote, with Home Minister Amit Shah assuring the country that the beginning of a "new and developed Kashmir" that will be free from terrorism has been made under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



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being seditious, challenging our integrity, going against our Constitution?" Shah then intervened amid shouting from both sides and said it is for the chair to decide if the remarks by Abdullah are to be kept in the records or not. In response, Kharge said Abdullah had only quoted Periyar and whether supporting it or against it can be a matter of discussion but "it is very undemocratic to stop someone from speaking in the house".

# Mamata flays Centre for fund blockade

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA



Continuing her diatribe against the Centre for depriving her State of its rightful dues, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday reminded the BJP Government of its constitutional duties to treat all the States alike when it came to releasing their rightful dues.

will request him to release the funds because it belongs to the poor ... no government has the right to withhold the rightful dues of the labourers," Banerjee said, adding how the Centre was not clearing a total of Rs 1.15 lakh crore of the State.

with the Prime Minister, the State CPI(M) leadership said that she was "running with the hare and hunting with the hound." CPI(M) Central Committee member Sujan Chakrabarty said that "she should make the agenda of the meeting clear to the public ... one is not sure whether she is meeting the Prime Minister to save her nephew from arrest," in lieu of some seats in Bengal in the Lok Sabha elections.

# Do not believe in commenting on affairs of other parties: TMC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress leadership maintained a studied silence on the Dheeraj Sahu case but at the same time reminded the tri-colour party how it had failed to show the same "alliance dharma" while dealing with the arrested TMC leaders.

# Maharashtra Congress organises morcha over State farmers plights

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Congress on Monday organised a noisy 'halla-bol' morcha in Nagpur to protest against the "blind, deaf and dumb" Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena-BJP-NCP (Ajit Pawar) alliance government over the plight of farmers, workers, jobless, women, inflation, crime and other issues.

has the help gone? The state is reeling under acute water scarcity. We are facing both dry drought and wet drought in the state. Unseasonal rains have wreaked havoc on farmlands. Under the circumstances, we demand a loan waiver for the distressed farmers."

Ajit Pawar regime is destroying the lives of the farmers... The farmers will teach a lesson to the MahaYuti government. Today's 'halla-bol' morcha is aimed at preserving the Constitution of late B. R. Ambedkar," Wadetiwar said.

# Deaths from cardiovascular disease surge globally

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Global death counts due to Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) increased from 12.4 million in 1990 to 19.8 million in 2022 reflecting global population growth and ageing and the contributions from a preventable metabolic, environmental, and behavioural risks, an alarming study has said as it called for an urgent action for a heart-healthy world.

each year. The report showed high blood pressure, high cholesterol, dietary risks and air pollution are the leading causes of high CVD cases. Asia, Europe, Africa and the Middle East reported the highest burden of CVD mortality.

# Atishi expresses anguish over non functioning of street lights, dark spots

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After PWD Minister Atishi expressed her anguish on the non-functioning of street lights and dark spots in the national capital, the Public Work Department (PWD) has shown case to five engineers over non-functional of street lights in several parts of the national capital.

# PM and Amit Shah...

From Page 1

The verdict is not just a legal judgment, it is a beacon of hope, a promise for a brighter future and a testament to the collective resolve to build a stronger, more united India, the Prime Minister said on the microblogging platform, using the hashtag #NayaJammuKashmir.

brought new meaning to life in the Valley, which was once torn apart by violence. Shah said prosperity in the tourism and agriculture sectors has raised the income levels of the residents of both Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. "Today, the Supreme Court's verdict has proved that the decision to abrogate Article 370 was completely constitutional," he wrote on "X" using the hashtag #NayaJammuKashmir.

# Sharad joins onion farmers protest in Nashik

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Veteran NCP leader Sharad Pawar on Monday joined the onion growers in their massive protest organised in Nashik demanding the revoca-

tion of the ban on the exports of onion and highlighting other peasant issues, even as the Opposition Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) staged a vociferous protest in Nagpur to demand that the onion growers be allowed to export their produce.

north Maharashtra which is one of the onion-growing hubs, and threw his weight behind the farmers who have for some time been demanding the revocation of the ban on onion exports.

export of the produce. This has led to anger among the farming community. Owing to the Centre's anti-farmer policies, the tillers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce."

we hit the streets, the government will not take note of your problems" Recalling that when he was the Agriculture Minister (May 2004-May 2014) he had clearly assured the farmers that the prices of onion would not be allowed to fall, Pawar said that the Modi government had precisely done that, as a result the onion prices were crashing in the markets.

# People jubilant...

From Page 1

PDP chief and former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti urged people not to lose hope, even as her party suspended all its political activities for a week.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is to inform the general public that Mr. Ravi Sharma is the GPA Holder of Property Bearing No. G-82/B-3 (Adjoining Plot No. G-83), Area measuring 107 Sq. Yds., Out of Mustafi no. 8, Killa No. 3, Situated in the Revenue Estate of Village Malafala Delhi State Delhi in the Abadi Known as Kiran Garden Extension, Jain Park, On Najalgarh Road, Ullam Nagar, New Delhi - 110059. He acquired the above property through Notarized GPA dated 10.06.2014 and ATS & Will dated 10.07.2014 executed by Mr. Ram Niwas Gupta.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
To be known to all, SANDEEP SINHA S/O LATE SH. S. K. SINHA R/O FLAT NO. 67-D THIRD FLOOR P POCKET-A, SUDHEY VIHAR, NEW DELHI-110025, Mutatee/Owner of DDA SFS Flat NO. 67-D, Third Floor, Alongwith Scooter Garage, Pocket-A, CAT-II, Sukhdev Vihar, NEW DELHI-110025, have applied for certificate copies in DDA. The original documents i.e. Allocation Letter, Demand-cum-allotment Letter, Possession Letter, NOC For Water And Electricity Connection, Site Possession Slip & Other Documents of the above said flat has been lost. An F.I.R./NCR/LR NO. 1213892/2023 dated 08/12/2023 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/PhoneNo: 9871595415 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (AB-Housing) SFS or Director (AB-Housing) SFS, Delhi Development Authority, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi-110023

**MP gets a new BJP...**  
from Malharagh by nearly 60,000 votes and Shukla from Rewa by around 21,000 votes. The appointments end suspense over the identity of two of three Chief Ministers for the States the BJP won on December 3 as tribal leader and former Union Minister Vishnu Deo Sai was named Chhattisgarh Chief Minister on Sunday.

**MP gets a new BJP...**  
leader. Yadav is the first leader to become Chief Minister from the temple town of Ujjain where Prime Minister Narendra Modi had dedicated the newly-constructed Mahakal Lok corridor last year. His appointment as the Chief Minister-elect comes 10 days after the saffron party swept the Madhya Pradesh Assembly election by winning 163 of 230 seats, successfully beating anti-incumbency. Now, of the five States that voted in November, only Rajasthan is without a Chief Minister; the Congress, which won Telangana, has installed Revanth Reddy in the top post and, in Mizoram, the fledgling Zoram People's Movement claimed an impressive win and Lalduhoma is Chief Minister. The BJP will now pick the new Chief Minister for Rajasthan after meeting with newly elected MLAs on Tuesday.

**MP gets a new BJP...**  
signed by the various erstwhile princely States were to be reflected in the Constitution of India itself. "However, insofar as Jammu and Kashmir State was concerned, Article 370 was a special procedure contemplated due to the 'special conditions' in the State and hope was expressed that in times to come, 'Jammu & Kashmir will become ripe for the same sort of integration as had taken place in the other States," Justice Kaul said.

**MP gets a new BJP...**  
in Part XXI, which was titled "Temporary and Transitional Provisions" at the time. The marginal note to the provision was titled "Temporary Provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir," he noted. In his separate verdict, Justice Khanna said the judgment penned by the CJJ was scholarly and it elaborately annotates the complex legal issues. He said the judgment authored by Justice Kaul pragmatically demystifies the factual and legal position. "Both judgments are in seriatim and uniformly agree that Article 370 of the Constitution of India was a feature of asymmetric federalism and not sovereignty. Article 370 was enacted as a transitional provision and did not have permanent character," Justice Khanna said.

**mpstc** म.प्र. राज्य पर्यटन विकास निगम मर्यादित पर्यटन भवन, भद्रभद्रा रोड, भोपाल-462003  
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वेबसाइट पर अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति के प्रपत्र (टेंडर डॉक्यूमेंट) वेबसाइट के माध्यम से देखे जा सकते हैं। अभिरुचि की अभिव्यक्ति के प्रपत्र ऑनलाइन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 01.01.2024 समय सायं 05:00 बजे तक निर्धारित है।  
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**MP gets a new BJP...**  
Chouhan proposed the name of Yadav, for the top post at a meeting of the newly-elected legislators held in the evening in Bhopal in the presence of party's central observers. During the meeting, BJP observers, including Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, BJP OBC Morcha president K Laxman and national secretary Asha Lakra discussed the names with the victorious MLA-elects. Former Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, who was fielded from Madhya Pradesh in the recently held State legislative Assembly elections, will be the new Speaker. According to the BJP, outgoing Finance Minister and two time MLA Jagdish Devda from Mandasaur and outgoing Public Relation Minister MLA Rajendra Shukla from Rewa have been elected as Deputy Chief Ministers. Devda was elected

**MP gets a new BJP...**  
from Malharagh by nearly 60,000 votes and Shukla from Rewa by around 21,000 votes. The appointments end suspense over the identity of two of three Chief Ministers for the States the BJP won on December 3 as tribal leader and former Union Minister Vishnu Deo Sai was named Chhattisgarh Chief Minister on Sunday. "I am a small worker of the party. I thank all of you, the State leadership and the central leadership. With your love and support, I will try to fulfill my responsibilities," Yadav said after being named as the Chief Minister-elect. Yadav, who was not seen as among contenders for the CM post, is considered to be close to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and is a three-time MLA and a prominent leader of OBCs, who account for more than 48 per cent of the State's population. Yadav is seen as a vocal Hindutva

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in Part XXI, which was titled "Temporary and Transitional Provisions" at the time. The marginal note to the provision was titled "Temporary Provisions with respect to the State of Jammu and Kashmir," he noted. In his separate verdict, Justice Khanna said the judgment penned by the CJJ was scholarly and it elaborately annotates the complex legal issues. He said the judgment authored by Justice Kaul pragmatically demystifies the factual and legal position. "Both judgments are in seriatim and uniformly agree that Article 370 of the Constitution of India was a feature of asymmetric federalism and not sovereignty. Article 370 was enacted as a transitional provision and did not have permanent character," Justice Khanna said.

# JNU bans protests within 100 metres of academic buildings

## Students may face expulsion for flouting restrictions: Varsity manual

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Jawaharlal Nehru University's (JNU) new manual has mentioned that putting up wall posters and staging dharnas within 100 metres of the academic buildings can lead to a fine of up to Rs 20,000 or expulsion from the institution while any "anti-national" act will attract a Rs 10,000 fine. The manual also names the academic buildings of different schools house offices of chairpersons, deans, and other important office-bearers, apart from classrooms and labs. Earlier, protests within 100

metres of the administrative blocks, which house the offices of the Vice-Chancellor, registrar, and proctors, among others, was prohibited as per a High Court order. However, according to the revised Chief Proctor Office (CPO) manual, the university has now barred protests within 100 metres of academic buildings as well where classes are conducted. This development comes after the JNU in October witnessed an incident where an "anti-national" slogan was scribbled on the School of Languages building wall and the administration announced to set up



a committee to look into the repeated nature of such incidents on the campus. The JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) has opposed the new rules saying that it is an attempt to stifle dissent on campus and demanded its withdrawal. "The stringent measures out-

lined in the manual are aimed at stifling the vibrant campus culture that has defined JNU for decades. The JNUSU demands that the university administration immediately revoke the new manual of the office of the Chief Proctor Manual," the

students' union said. Under the new rules, approved by the Executive Council in a meeting on November 24, the Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit or the competent authority will have the power to deem an act punishable if they find it in violation

for two months or be rusticated and declared out of bounds for up to two months, the CPO manual said. All forms of coercion such as gheraos, sit-ins or any variation of the same which disrupt the normal academic and administrative functioning of the university or any act inciting violence will be punished as well, it added. A student who has received five or more punishments during the duration of their study shall be expelled from the university, the manual noted. In case a student is found guilty of being involved in any of the prohibited activities and is given a punishment, he or she will not be allowed to register for the semester and they would not be given a 'no-dues' certificate until the imposed fine is cleared. The administration will also

send a copy of the punishment to the parents or guardian of the student besides uploading it on the official website. If a student fails to appear before the proctorial enquiry, the committee will assume that the complaint was filed with a malafide intention and the student may be asked to perform community service in JNU. Any false allegation against any student by the complainant can also lead to rustication from the university. Furthermore, the university now will not allow cross-examination between defendant and complainant or the witness, which use to be an important rule of the proctorial enquiry earlier. The Vice-Chancellor's decision will be the final call, in case any dispute arises with regard to the interpretation of any of these rules, the manual said.

# Miscommunication forced shooters to change escape plan, led to their arrest

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A "miscommunication" between the alleged shooters of Karni Sena chief Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi and their handlers over the escape plan from Rajasthan's Jaipur after the killing led to their arrest. According to police, shooters Rohit Rathore and Nitin Fauji were supposed to get out of Jaipur immediately by boarding a truck after killing Gogamedi on December 5.

However, they could not because of a "miscommunication" between them and their handlers over the vehicle's location, forcing the accused to come up with an alternative escape plan that involved using several vehicles and hiding at different locations, the officials said.

Rathore and Nitin Fauji were arrested in a joint operation of the Delhi Police Crime Branch and the Rajasthan Police from a hotel in Chandigarh, five days after the incident. Delhi police official aware of the developments in the investigation, said that according to

## Karni Sena chief murder case



a plan, "the duo were supposed to board a truck arranged by their handlers soon after killing Gogamedi". The truck would have taken Rathore and Nitin Fauji to "somewhere out of Jaipur but they could not find the vehicle", the official said and added that when they again contacted their handlers, they were told that they were at a location far away from the truck. The official said Rathore and Nitin Fauji, then, stole a scooter to move and hid in a farm near the Jaipur-Ajmer bypass for at least an hour, waiting for a mes-

sage from their handlers. They were in contact with their handlers on the Signal app, the official said on the condition of anonymity. "While at the field, they met with farmers, whom they told that they were students and had lost their way," the official said. When they did not get any reply from their handlers, they made their own plan and hired a taxi for Didwana and further took a bus, a train and another taxi to move to Hisar, then Manali and finally reach Chandigarh, the official added. The officials said the attackers

were in contact with Virender Charan, who provided them arms through couriers on the direction of Rohit Godara, a close associate of the Lawrence-Goldy Brar criminal gang. Charan and Godara, both are suspected to be hiding in European countries, sources said. Godara, was the one who claimed responsibility for Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena chief Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi's killing in a Facebook post, saying the Karni Sena chief was backing his enemies. The officials said Rathore and Nitin Fauji were promised passports and visas within 20 days of the incident to flee the country, but still then they had to remain in hiding. Godara, a former LLB student who was earlier arrested in a case of rape in Rajasthan, believed that he went to jail because of Gogamedi. Nitin Fauji, who quit the Indian Army after he was named in a kidnapping case in Haryana, wanted to settle abroad, the officials said.

# City records coldest morning of season

## Temperature recorded at 6.5 degrees Celsius: IMD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said Delhi has recorded the season's coldest morning on Monday with the minimum temperature settling three notches below normal at 6.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature recorded at the observatory at Lodhi Road was 6.3 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal, it said. The national Capital has been seeing below-normal temperatures for the last couple of days. The air quality was recorded in the 'very poor' category. The maximum temperature was recorded at 24.8 degrees Celsius, normal for this time of the year. The national capital has been witnessing below-



normal temperatures during the last couple of days. On Saturday, the city recorded a low of 8.5 degrees Celsius. On Sunday, the minimum temperature was recorded at 8.3 degrees Celsius. The forecast for the period between December 12 and 17 indicates that the minimum temperature will oscillate between 6 and 8 degrees Celsius. At 4 pm, Delhi's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) stood at 317. Meanwhile the Commission of Air Quality Management (CAQM) claimed that Delhi has registered its lowest daily average AQI in 2023 for the first 10 days of

December as compared to the corresponding period in last 5 years. "Delhi's average AQI clocked 398 on Monday as per the 4PM AQI Bulletin by CPCB. The GRAP Sub-Committee met and took stock of the current air quality scenario and forecast of meteorological conditions as well as the projected air quality index by IMD/IITM," said a Met department official. Delhi has not reported a single day of 'Severe' air quality during this period of 2023 as compared to the corresponding period in last 5 years. For the first 10-days period of December, Delhi registers its lowest daily average

AQI in 2023 as compared to the corresponding period in last 5 years. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good'; 51 and 100 'satisfactory'; 101 and 200 'moderate'; 201 and 300 'poor'; 301 and 400 'very poor'; 401 and 450 'severe' and above 450 'severe-plus'. On Monday, the humidity levels oscillated between 40 per cent and 100 per cent. The weather office has forecast clear skies for Tuesday with shallow fog in the morning. The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 24 and 6 degrees Celsius, respectively. The air quality is likely to remain 'very poor' till Thursday.

# Extension of services impeded by lack of seamless connectivity with Blue Line, says NMRC



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) Monday said the extension of services between Noida and Greater Noida West has been impeded by the lack of "seamless connectivity" between the NMRC's Aqua Line and Delhi Metro's Blue Line. Currently an interchange between the Blue Line and the Aqua Line is at Noida's sector 51 and 52 metro stations. However, commuters face hassle as they need to travel a distance of 430 metre and undergo ticketing and security process once again for switching over.

An extension of the Aqua Line is proposed from Noida Sector 51 to Knowledge Park-V in Greater Noida West, also known as Noida Extension. Local residents have been protesting with demand for metro service for years and seamless connectivity with the Blue Line in Noida. NMRC Managing Director Lokesh M said in the current detailed project report (DPR) of extension of Noida- Greater Noida metro service, "there is constraint of seamless connectivity" between Sector-51 station of Aqua Line and Sector-52 station of Blue Line of Delhi Metro.

"Although Foot Over Bridge connection (FoB) has been planned to connect sector-51 and sector-52 station, it is not going to resolve commuters' problem permanently owing to the 430 metre distance between the two stations. Travelling a distance of 430 metre between

the two stations will always be deterrent to encourage commuters to use this FoB connection even after provision of travellers," he noted. The officer noted that a similar problem has been encountered between the Dhaulana Kuan station of Airport Express Line and the Durga Bai Deshmukh station of Pink Line of Delhi Metro. Later on FoB connectivity was provided with traveller, however it is not a long term permanent solution. "The connectivity solution has to be found at this stage and if an extension is pursued as per DPR, the seamless connectivity issue of Aqua Line and Blue Line will remain unresolved forever with no scope of further correction. It would be prudent to take up extension of Aqua Line without aforementioned constraint as it will have long term adverse effect on footfall," the NMRC MD said in a statement. "Accordingly, a permanent solution has been worked out for seamless connectivity of Aqua Line and Blue Line by slight change in alignment of extension of Aqua Line going up to Knowledge Park-V. Action has already been initiated to carry out these changes in DPR. Revised DPR will be processed soon for approvals," he added. The senior IAS officer said slight changes in alignment are being done in the planning of the project with the sole aim of providing comfort due to ease of interchange to the commuters of Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida as well as Greater Noida West.

# Set up special cells on campuses to work on Viksit Bharat @2047: LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday suggested that heads of academic institutions in the national Capital set up special cells on campuses to work on the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. More than 500 academics and students listened to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's virtual address on the vision for Viksit Bharat @2047 at an event hosted by Raj Niwas. Launching "Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth" -- an initiative that aims to provide a platform to youngsters for contributing ideas to the vision of a developed India by 2047 - the prime minister said India's

youth power is both the "agent of change" and the "beneficiary of change". Saxena on Monday urged university faculties to motivate students for nation building and suggested that the heads of institutions set up special cells on their campuses to engage the students and monitor the progress, the Raj Niwas said in a statement. Vice-chancellors of central and state universities, along with directors of institutions in Delhi, participated in the programme. After the prime minister's speech, a panel discussion and question-answer session were held with the vice-chancellors and the faculty members discussing the theme of "Empowered Indians". The



ideas expressed at the event will be taken up by the students. The event was streamed live to the campuses of all the institutions represented at Raj Niwas, the statement said.

A brainstorming session was also held in which the academics presented their ideas on the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. Saxena said that, as outlined by the prime minister

in his address, all those present will have to work towards making India the most powerful economy in the world where every Indian is happy, content, healthy and empowered. He said academia has a responsibility in the shaping of a new India and underlined its role in engaging with the youngsters and preparing them for the path ahead, it noted. It is important for the youngsters to join this movement and share their dream and vision on Viksit Bharat @2047, he said. The LG added that in the country of 140 crore people with 28 States and 08 Union Territories, subscribing to 08 different religions, speaking 122 languages and 1600 dialects, different culture and

food habits, there was one identity that bound them all. This identity, the LG underlined was that of being an Indian - Bharatiya. The dream of Viksit Bharat cannot be realised until all the people have employment and every deprived individual on the margins gets justice, Saxena added. The LG requested the faculty and teachers to motivate all students of Colleges and Universities to be associated with the Maha Kumbh of nation building. He advised the Heads of the Institutions to establish special cells in their campuses, that could engage with students and monitor the progress of endeavours being undertaken.

# Report on menstrual hygiene management in India released

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A comprehensive report on menstrual hygiene management in India was released by NGO Sulabh International on Monday found that girls are "fearful" of using school toilets during menstruation owing to lack of water, soap, sanitation and missing doors. According to the report, the fear in school girls provokes absenteeism from schools during their menstrual cycle. "Our data indicates that girls are fearful of using school toilets during menstruation owing to lack of water, soap, sanitation, missing doors and taps, and even missing dustbins," the report by Sulabh International said. "This provokes absenteeism from schools during periods, which implies that for up to 60 days in a school year a menstruating girl is either unable to attend classes or goes half-heartedly, feeling ill-at-ease," it said. "It emerges from our findings that distance from



home to school is not as big a deterrent for girls to miss school, as is lack of menstrual hygiene management facilities," it added. The report further stated that it is a "forced choice" for the school girls to stay at home during their menstrual cycle. "If school girls do not get regular menstrual hygiene material such as pads, they find it safer to stay at home. It is a forced choice when young girls choose security, privacy and safety of their home to manage their periods over the dismal absence of sanitation and menstrual hygiene management facilities in schools," the report

# Infrastructure of city run schools no less than top private institutions: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday inaugurated the auditorium of a government school in the Civil Lines area and asserted that the infrastructure of state-run schools is no less than any top private institution. Addressing the event, Kejriwal said many prominent people studied in government schools during the 15-20 year period after India gained Independence since there were few private schools. Kejriwal reiterated that education is the focus of the AAP dispensation and said the infrastructure of government schools in Delhi underwent a transformation in the last eight years. "The infrastructure of government schools is no less than that of top private schools. The children have also grown in confidence and one can see that they are more confident than their counterparts in private schools," he said. "Money is needed if quality education is desired and many



people don't have that. In the past eight years, we have changed this belief," he said. The chief minister said the dropout rate from government schools was quite high earlier since studies did not happen but that issue has been addressed. "Before entering politics, when I worked with NGOs, I often witnessed that children in government schools were not receiving education properly and their parents would pull them out of school after a year or two and engage them in work. Now, there are nearly 18 lakh students studying in government schools," he said. Kejriwal further said there has been a significant change in the education sector in the past eight years.

"When I interact with children and their parents, I find that government schoolchildren have more self-confidence compared to those in private schools. Children in government schools must communicate confidently and this is the most important aspect," he said. Addressing the gathering at the inauguration event, Education Minister Atishi said, "When we go for the inauguration of any school building, we think that our schools have surpassed private institutions. After the inauguration of this auditorium, I think this has now surpassed big multiplexes too." She further stated that no private school in Delhi has better facilities than the ASoSE in Raj Niwas.

# India to take quantum jump during current period: Modi

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi exuded confidence on Monday that India will take a quantum jump during the current period and said the young generation has to be prepared in such a way that it provides leadership to the country and prioritises national interest over everything else. Launching "Viksit Bharat @2047: Voice of Youth", an initiative that aims to provide

a platform to the country's youngsters for contributing ideas to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, the prime minister said India's youth power is both the "agent of change" and the "beneficiary of change". "In the life of any nation, history provides a time period when it can make exponential strides in its development journey. For India, the Amrit Kaal is ongoing and this is the period in the country's history when it is going to take a quantum leap. For India, this

is the right time," he said, adding that each and every moment of this "Amrit Kaal" should be utilised. Modi also addressed vice-chancellors of universities, heads of institutes and faculty members at workshops organised at Raj Bhawans across the country. "The exam date has been declared for us as the citizens of the country. We have 25 years of Amrit Kaal in front of us. We have to work 24 hours a day. We have to prepare the young generation in such a



way that it gives the country leadership and prioritises national interest over everything else," he said. Noting that the country's rapidly-increasing population is empowered by youngsters, the prime minister informed that India is going to be the leader in terms of the working-age population for the coming 25-30 years and the world recognises this. Modi stressed moulding the voice of the youngsters into the policy strategy for building a developed India and

highlighted the role of educational institutions that maintain maximum contact with them. The prime minister added that teachers and universities should ponder about finding ways to make India a developed country at a faster pace and also, identify specific sectors for improvement. Viksit Bharat@2047 is the vision to make India a developed country by 2047, the 100th year of its independence. The vision encompasses various aspects of

development, including economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability and good governance. The prime minister suggested running special campaigns in every college and university in the country to connect more and more youngsters with the campaign. He mentioned the launch of the "Ideas" portal related to Viksit Bharat and informed that suggestions on the portal can be given on five different themes.

## 'New law needed to give power to CBI to probe cases without States consent'

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
Asserting that withdrawal of a general consent by some States has led to severe limitations in the CBI's powers to investigate crucial cases, a Parliamentary panel on Monday said there was a dire need to enact a new law and give wider powers to the federal agency so that it can probe cases without a "State's consent and interference".



According to the provision of Section 6 of the DSPE Act. For investigation of any matter in such state, which is not covered in the aforesaid consent, specific consent of the state government is required for the CBI to investigate in the state and the agency seeks such consent on a case-by-case basis. "With reference to this only the Committee reiterates that as on date, nine states have withdrawn the general consent they had given to the CBI for investigating cases. This has led to severe limitations on the powers of CBI to investigate crucial cases impartially and objectively which will give rise to corruption and organised crimes in states," it said. Hence, as recommended earlier, apart from the DSPE Act,

1946, there is a dire need to enact a new law and define the status and functions and give wider powers to CBI to investigate such crucial cases without the need for a state's consent and interference, the panel said. The panel's report comes in the back of non-NDA governments in some states withdrawing general consent to the CBI while accusing the Centre of misusing agencies to target political rivals. "At the same time, in the same Act, some safeguards should also be laid down to ensure objectivity and impartiality in the functioning of CBI so that the states also don't feel discriminated and absolutely powerless," the panel said. 'State's consent clause' should

be removed only in such cases that are considered to be a threat to the nation's security and integrity and any delay in investigation of such cases by the CBI may lead to a general dissatisfaction among the citizens of the country, said the 135th report of the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice. The CBI has recently proposed suitable amendments in recruitment rules for its various posts including that of inspector, it said. Accordingly, the federal agency has proposed that 60 per cent of posts of inspectors are to be filled by "promotion" and 40 per cent on a "deputation/absorption" basis, the report said. The existing mode of recruitment follows the "50:50" formula for filling up these posts. "The aforesaid proposal is already under consideration. However, the position will be reviewed in case the proposed amendment does not meet out the functional requirement," the report said. The panel was informed that as many as 308 posts (including that of a joint director, deputy inspector general, superintendent of police, etc.) in the CBI were filled last year alone.

## Nadda leads BJP stir after ₹350 crore cash haul from premises linked to Congress MP

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
A day after Home Minister Amit Shah slammed Congress and raised concerns about Opposition parties' muted response on over Rs 350 crores recovery from Congress MP Dhiraj Sahu, BJP Parliamentarians led by party chief J P Nadda on Monday held a protest in the Parliament Complex. Earlier Prime Minister Narendra Modi too had questioned the ulterior motive of the Congress and Opposition on recovery of the huge amount. Holding placards, BJP MPs alleged the cash seized by the income tax department during raids on a distillery company linked to Congress Rajya Sabha MP from Jharkhand proved that the opposition party was "neck-deep" in corruption. However Opposition parties including Congress, Shiv Sena (Uddhav) came out in defence of Sahu saying the person against whom corruption charges are made get cleaned when the pass through 'Modi washing machine'. Congress is seeking clarification from the MP in question of IT raids said that the matter is related to Sahu's business of more than four decades and whether the finance recovered are illegal



will be known after investigations. Party MP Manickam Tagore said the matter is not that of party but an individual case and should be looked through that prism. BJP members in Lok Sabha also raked up the issue of cash seizure in the House on Monday. Sanjay Seth, the BJP member from Ranchi, raised the issue during the Zero Hour, seeking a reply from the Congress. "I am very surprised. After independence, such a large amount of cash has been seized from an MP's house. Crores of rupees have been recovered but the whole INDI alliance is silent on this corruption. I understand Congress is silent as corruption is in their nature but JDU, RJD, DMK, and SP all are sitting silently.

Now I understand why a campaign was run against PM Modi that agencies are being misused. It was run because there was a fear in their mind that all the secrets of their corruption would be revealed," the Home Minister had stated prompting the party members to take the protest ahead. "This is just the tip of the iceberg... Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will have to answer whose money it is and how it was looted," Nadda said after Rs 351 crore were seized by income tax sleuths during searches against Boudh Distillery Private Limited, owned by the family of Congress MP Dhiraj Prasad Sahu. Holding placards near Mahatma Gandhi's statue, the protesting MPs also demand-

ed Sahu's arrest. The cash seizure is the "highest-ever" haul in a single action by any probe agency in the country, official sources had said on Sunday. Several other BJP MPs sitting next to him displayed newspapers with reports of the recovery of cash to drive home their point. Rajendra Agrawal, who was chairing the proceedings, urged members not to name the Rajya Sabha member and asked them to put down the newspapers. Opposition INDIA bloc Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said if a leader of the INDIA alliance is found with Rs 200 crore, then the black money with the BJP would be Rs one lakh crore, "The BJP is shouting from the rooftops about the Dhiraj Sahu case but are not commenting on the Rs 400 crore issue regarding Praful Patel (of the Aji Pawar faction of NCP). I will write to Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis on this," Raut told the media. Another party MP Priyanka Chaturvedi asserted that the opposition should not be blamed for Congress MP Dhiraj Sahu's business interests. "BJP always finds a chance to accuse; it is wrong to say that they (opposition party) are standing with him.

## Rang De Korea showcasing Korean culture organised

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
Rang De Korea, the festival organized by the Korea Cultural Centre India (KCCI) here recently showcasing a variety of Korean cultural aspects, ranging from leading Korean brands such as LG, Hyundai, Kia, Orion, Atomy, Innisfree, Sulwhasoo, and Laneige to K-Pop and K-fashion was a huge delight for the South Korean culture fans

across age and gender in India. The fest was held to mark conclusion of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and India this year. Saurabh Kumar, Secretary East Asia, Ministry of External Affairs, highlighted the support provided by the Republic of Korea to infrastructure projects in India, and the steady growth in cooperation areas, including defense. The festival marked



the conclusion of the 50th-anniversary celebrations of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Korea Ambassador Chang Jae-bok outlined three key goals set by the embassy earlier in the year, focusing on increasing high-level interactions, fortifying economic relations, and fostering people-to-people contacts. Over 500 Korean companies are currently investing in India, and bilateral trade

reached a record high of almost 28 billion US dollars last year. Hwang Il Yong, Director of the KCCI, expressed satisfaction with the success and interest generated by the "Rang De Korea" festival, stating that it is thriving in India. The festival featured various traditional Korean performances, including Namsadangnori, Pansori, tightrope walking, Pungmul Beona, and modern fusion

performances like Gwangtal. Additionally, X:IN, a K-Pop multinational girl group that included the first Indian member in K-pop history, was a highlight of the evening. The event was hosted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Korea and organized by the Korean Embassy, Korean Cultural Centre India, and Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange. Ends

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**  
**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Neha Sharma/ Pushpa/ LBGH200005767914	Flat No-1206, 12th Floor tower A, Nagar Nigam Sky Tower, Awasth Vikas Colony, Sasni Gate, Aligarh/ December 07, 2023	February 25, 2023 Rs. 37,86,318/-	Delhi & NCR/ Aligarh
2.	Ranjit Kumar/ Sakshi Sisodia/ LBDEL00002847048	G-24, Lavin'life Service Suites, Commercial Plot No. 01, Sector 05, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad/ December 07, 2023	August 31, 2017 Rs. 32,62,420/-	Delhi & NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: December 12, 2023  
Place: Delhi/NCR  
Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

## 'Corridor based road safety practices can save 40,000 lives each year'

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
Scaling successful corridor-based road safety practices can save as many as 40,000 lives each year. This was revealed in a study released by Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, on Monday. The report highlights good practices, such as the National Highway 48 (Old Mumbai-Pune Highway) Zero Fatality Corridor (ZFC) project, that registered a remarkable 61% decrease in fatalities between 2018 and 2021. Similarly, the Belgaum Yarangatti Highway's Safe Corridor Demonstration Project (SCDP) in Karnataka recorded a notable 54% reduction in deaths over three years from 2015 to 2018. Most remarkably, the Sabarimala Safe Zone has maintained zero road crash deaths between 2019 and 2021, serving as a blueprint for pilgrimage sites nationwide. In each of the aforementioned cases, a concerted effort was undertaken to analyse road crashes and take a 360-degree approach to address them. These include enhancement of road safety furniture on the road, effective and targeted enforcement, and improvements in emergency medical response. "This timely report aims to chart a safer course for India's roadways. Its comprehensive analysis will serve as a resource



for policymakers, administrators, and stakeholders to identify and replicate strategies that have been effective in reducing road crash deaths. I am certain that the report will serve as a much-needed catalyst for fostering collaboration and encouraging the sharing of knowledge, through its practical solutions, drawn from real-world examples, that can be tailored to suit the diverse conditions found throughout India. By honing in on successful interventions specific to certain corridors or localities, the report provides a nuanced understanding of what works- and what can work elsewhere if appropriately adapted," Gadkari said on the occasion. Undertaken by SaveLIFE Foundation in close cooperation with the World Bank Group and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), the study, titled "Road Safety Good Practices

in India", showcases road safety success stories from across the country. These are interventions that have led to a measurable and, in many cases, a remarkable reduction in road crash fatalities on target road corridors. The report, released in the presence of senior officials from Central and State Governments, categorises interventions as corridor-based, network-based, and state-based, covering nine corridor-based, two city/network-based, and two state-based interventions across ten states. The report not only documents "what has worked" but also "how it was done," and enable effective adoption and replication of the good practices. To gather these practices, all the relevant departments (i.e., police, transport, health, etc.) of all 28 States and 8 Union Territories across India were contacted with questionnaires.

## Centre likely to introduce Drugs, Medical Devices & Cosmetics Bill 2023 in House



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**  
The Central Government is likely to introduce the Drugs, Medical Devices and Cosmetics Bill, 2023 in the ongoing session of Parliament with an aim to repeal the 80-year-old Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and introduce a new law that amends and consolidates the regulatory requirements for the import, manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs, medical devices, and cosmetics in the country. The proposed law will have an entirely separate section to prescribe regulatory norms for medical devices. It will not only result in a separate set of rules for medical devices but also provide for a separate team of regulatory officials with specific skill sets to approve and monitor all types of medical devices. The new law is expected to help advance clinical trials of new drugs and clinical investigation of investigational medical devices in the country.

Regulation of e-pharmacies will be another important feature of the proposed law. Incidentally, the Bill was listed to be introduced in the Monsoon session of Parliament but had to be withheld due to opposition from the medical device manufacturers. The Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AIMEDI) had complained that the Bill does not propose an independent regulatory regime for medical devices but continues with the current practice of treating devices as drugs with the same punitive actions for errant manufacturers. The medical device industry had also questioned the proposal to have a central medical device testing laboratory by stating that one laboratory in a single location to do biocompatibility testing, animal studies and testing, mechanical and chemical testing or electronic component and product testing for over 6,000 types of medical devices may not be practical.

**SC RULING ON ARTICLE 370**

**Historic day for India, says Fadnavis; hails Modi**

PTI ■ NAGPUR

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday hailed the Supreme Court ruling on Article 370 and called it a historic day for the country. The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the Union government's decision to abrogate Article 370, which bestowed a special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, and said steps should be taken to conduct the election to the Union Territory's Assembly by September 30 next year. The apex court also directed that statehood to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir be restored at the earliest. Speaking to reporters on the Vidhan Bhavan premises here, Fadnavis said, "Today is a very important day in the history of the country. The SC, in a way, has today given a stamp to the decision taken to remove Article 370 under the leadership of Prime Narendra Modi. The SC order is a victory for the peo-

ple of the nation as well as J-K." After the abrogation of Article 370, terrorism has reduced in Jammu and Kashmir and development is taking place there on a grand scale, Fadnavis claimed. The decision has paved the way for "Eksangh Bharat" (United and Together India), the senior Bharatiya Janata Party leader asserted. Queried about Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray's comments on whether Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir (PoK) will come back to India, Fadnavis said this is what every Indian wants. "We are people who believe in Akhand Bharat. Modiji has done things considered impossible. I feel we should wait for the time to come," he said. Speaking to reporters earlier in the day here, Thackeray had said "we also hope POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) is merged into Kashmir so that elections are held in greater Kashmir which is an inseparable part of our country". Thackeray had also asked if PM Modi would give a "guarantee that Kashmiri



Pandits will return to their home state safely?" Hitting back, Fadnavis said Thackeray did not have the right to speak on the issue. Fadnavis said Shiv Sena founder late Bal Thackeray had sought removal of

Article 370 for a long time, and the demand was fulfilled by PM Modi. "However, when PM Modi was doing this work, the (undivided) Shiv Sena had different stand in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha. Hence, he (Uddhav Thackeray) does not have the right to

speak about it," Fadnavis said. Asked whether others would also be treated in the same manner as NCP leader Nawab Malik, who was jailed and is out on bail on medical grounds, Fadnavis said it would be the same if they too faced such charges. Fadnavis had written to deputy CM Ajit Pawar expressing the BJP's reservations on inducting Malik into the ruling alliance. However, opposition parties have questioned Fadnavis over why the BJP did not have an issue with Praful Patel of the Ajit Pawar faction of the NCP who too is facing similar allegations. Asked to comment on Thackeray's statement that TDR (transferable development right) of the Dharavi redevelopment project must not be with (industrialist Gautam) Adani, Fadnavis pointed out that the MVA government had cancelled an earlier tender of the project despite Adani not being the winning bidder. Thackeray has a policy of opposing development works, Fadnavis said in a swipe at the former chief minister.



The Pioneer fondly remembers its Founder Editor Dr Chandan Mitra (December 12, 1954 to September 1, 2021) on his 69th birth anniversary.

**₹6,000 flood relief will be given to all ration cardholders: TN**

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The flood relief sum of Rs 6,000 announced by the Tamil Nadu government will be provided to all ration cardholders in the four cyclone Michaug ravaged districts, including Chennai, state Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu said on Monday. Tokens to avail the relief would be distributed on December 16 to all the ration cardholders in Chennai and the process of disbursing the amount would be completed in about 10 days, he noted. On December 9, Chief Minister M K Stalin announced financial assistance of Rs 6,000 to each of the flood-hit families and said the sum would be given in cash. Chennai, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, and Tiruvallur were inundated due to the influence of cyclone Michaug on December 3 and 4. Speaking to reporters here, Thennarasu said the state government averted a catastrophe by effectively handling the situation. "Major loss of human lives were prevented due to timely measures initiated by the state government," he claimed. On the release of water from Chembarambakkam dam, he said the government reduced the storage ahead of the cyclone and later regulated the release of the reservoir water thereby staving off inundation in many parts of the city.



"Normalcy has returned to Chennai now. Due to the Chief Minister's direct involvement, a major catastrophe to Chennai has been averted," Thennarasu said. He flayed the BJP and AIADMK for needlessly criticising the state government for its handling of the floods triggered by the cyclone. Meanwhile, an official release here said Rs 17.80 crore worth of relief has been distributed to the flood-affected people. This includes 10,77,000 drinking water bottles, 3,02,165 bread packets, 13,08,847 packets of biscuits, 73.4 tonnes of milk powder, 4,35,000 kg of rice, 23,220 kg of gram and cooking ingredients. Also, 82,400 bedspreads, dress, and other essentials were provided to them.

**Assam CM calls on PM, discusses State issues**

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi here and discussed with him a number of issues concerning the state. Sarma also invited the Prime Minister to visit Assam to lay the foundation stone of the Kamakhya corridor project, dedicate to the nation the imposing statue of Bir Lachit Barphukan at Jorhat and inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of two medical colleges. "Chief Minister of Assam Shri @himantabiswa met Prime Minister @narendramodi," the Prime Minister's Office wrote on 'X'. Sarma wrote on 'X': "I had the privilege to call upon Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji today. Shared Assam's immense gratitude for his continuous guidance & leadership and briefed him on the ongoing pro-people programs during



our interaction." The chief minister said it was his pleasure to extend an invitation to the prime minister to visit Assam and lay the foundation stone of the Kamakhya corridor project, dedicate the grand statue of Bir Lachit at Jorhat, inaugurate the Tinsukia medical college and lay the foundation of Sivasagar medical college. "Furthermore, I took the opportunity to seek the prime minister's counsel on organising the Assam Business Summit in 2024. Our aim is to establish it as a platform to attract private investments and accelerate our economic growth," he said.

**SC ruling victory of India, says Chhattisgarh CM designate Sai**

PTI ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister-designate Vishnu Deo Sai on Monday welcomed the Supreme Court ruling on Article 370 and termed it as the victory of India. In a post on his 'X' handle Sai wrote in Hindi. "The Supreme Court's decision on abrogation of Article 370 is historic. It is the victory of India. It is a resounding declaration of hope, progress and unity for our sisters and brothers in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh". The Supreme Court on Monday upheld the government's decision to abrogate Article 370, which bestowed a special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, and said steps should be taken to conduct the election to the Union Territory's Assembly by September 30 next year. The apex court also directed that statehood to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir be restored at the earliest. "It is not just a legal judgment



but it is a testament to our collective resolve to build a united India. Congratulations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji and Union Home Minister Amit Shah ji for this victory," Sai added. Sai was on Sunday elected as legislative party leader during the meeting of newly-elected 54 BJP MLAs here. Chhattisgarh Governor Biswa-

**BJP legislative party in Rajasthan meets today, new CM likely to be announced**

PTI ■ JAIPUR

The newly elected BJP MLAs in Rajasthan will meet here Tuesday to formally pick the next chief minister of the state, party leaders said. The MLAs were informed Monday about the meeting of the legislative party, where the BJP's central leadership is expected to make known its choice for the post and end days of suspense after the party won the assembly election. The results of the November 25 polls in Rajasthan were declared on December 3. BJP MLA Jogeshwar Garg said the observers appointed for the legislative party meeting will come to Jaipur on Tuesday and hold one-on-one talks with the MLAs in the morning. After lunch, a formal meeting will be held in which the MLAs will choose the legislative party leader, or the CM-designate. The party has appointed Defence minister Rajnath Singh, Saroj Pandey and Vinod Tawde as observers. MLA Kirodi Lal Meena said the MLAs have been informed about the legis-



lature party meeting. When asked about the MLAs who met former chief minister Vasundhara Raje at her home Monday, Meena said 17 MLAs have met him as well after the results and this should not be seen as lobbying. Several MLAs have called on former CM Vasundhara Raje in recent days in what was seen as a show of support for her, amid speculation over whom the party's central leadership will pick as the next CM. Raje also met party leaders in Delhi. The BJP won 115 seats out of 199 for which elections were held in November. Polling in one constituency was postponed. Raje is being considered as one of the frontrunners for the post. Other leaders said to be in the running include Union ministers Arjun Ram Meghwal, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Ashwini Vaishnaw.

**Air quality in Mumbai has improved but not satisfactory: Bombay HC**

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The air quality index (AQI) in Mumbai has improved but continues to be moderate and not satisfactory, the Bombay High Court said on Monday, while asking the Maharashtra government to come up with a comprehensive plan to find a final solution to the issue. A division bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice G S Kulkarni asked the government to take the issue seriously, as lakhs of people continue to suffer because of the air pollution in the city. The court took note of a news report which stated that seven project sites - road concretisation at suburban Bandra and Khar, the bullet train site at BKC, Versova-Bandra sea link project, Mumbai Metro-III, Mumbai Coastal Road and the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link - were generating a lot of dust adding to the worsening air quality. The court noted that large mounds of construction material and rubble are reportedly left open at these sites. The bench directed the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) to con-



duct a joint inspection at these seven sites and immediately take requisite steps, pass orders and ensure that all the norms are followed. "We also direct that in case the stakeholders at these sites are found to be not following or deviating from the norms, legal action may be taken by the MCGM and MPCB," the court said. The court noted that the AQI in the city continues to be at moderate levels, which indicates that such air quality will continue to cause breathing problems for people with heart and lung ailments, children and older adults. "The satisfactory level of AQI is 51 to 100. And therefore, a collective effort is required to be taken to bring the AQI to below 50 in the entire city," the court said.

"Anything beyond 50 is not good...It has to be brought down to below 50," it said. The bench said a statutory body needs to be set up to address the issue regularly. "We need to have a comprehensive plan for the entire city of Mumbai. Ultimately, you need to find a final solution or mechanism so that every six months we need not intervene," the court said, asking the government to at least start the process. Advocate General Birendra Saraf, appearing for the government, said senior government officials were busy with the Nagpur winter assembly. The bench then said the government should take this issue seriously. "Are you wondering if there could be a situation more serious than this? Lakhs of people

are suffering daily. Be serious now. Last eight to ten days, there is this fog. But it is not fog," Justice Kulkarni said. The court said the state government should consider framing some legislation mechanism along the lines of the central legislation - The Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act of 2021. The court said Saraf would take up the matter with the government and some appropriate decision be taken. The bench also directed the MPCB and the Central Pollution Control Board to file affidavits stating how air quality is measured and if the machines are adequate. The court said the expert committee set up by it last month will continue to monitor the situation and submit its periodical reports. The state government will consider the suggestions made by the committee and take an appropriate decision, it said. The court was hearing a bunch of petitions along with one it had taken up on its own regarding the rising air pollution in the city. The court said it would hear the matter further on February 6, 2024.



**India at turning point in history: Nagaland Governor**

PTI ■ KOHIMA

Nagaland Governor La Ganesan on Monday said that India is at a turning point in history as the country pole-vaults into the future confident of its capabilities. Addressing a programme in the Raj Bhavan, he said India is the fifth largest economy in the world at present and will become the third largest by 2027 as its GDP is expected to cross USD 5 trillion. The country is poised to be a USD 30 trillion economy with all the attributes of a developed nation by 2047, he claimed. The governor said that there has been a massive expansion in

social and economic infrastructure through various policies and schemes of the government over the last few years. He said India is one of the youngest nations with a median age of 29 years and it accounts for nearly 20 per cent of the world's total young population. This is an enormous opportunity, likely to last till 2047, he said. The governor called upon vice-chancellors of universities and heads of other educational institutions who were present at the function to motivate students to participate in the nation-building process. A panel discussion on "Thriving and Sustainable Economy" was also held as a part of the programme.

**Granted ASI nod, Bihar gears up for excavation of 2,600 years old site**

PTI ■ PATNA

The Bihar government is preparing the process for exploration of Buddhist sites visited by Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang in present-day Vaishali district, and excavation of the remains of 2,600-year-old structures in Banka, officials said on Monday. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) recently granted permission to the Bihar Heritage Development Society (BHDS), a wing of the state's Art, Culture and Youth department, to work in these two places. The excavations will be made in Bhadaria village with links to

Hindu mythology and Buddhism, in Banka district near the Chandan river. "It has been established that Bhadaria is a historical place. As per initial studies, the remains found there are 2,600 years old," said Harjot Kaur Bamrah, Additional Chief Secretary of the state's Art, Culture and Youth department. The ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey, a geophysical method that uses radar pulses to image the subsurface, has already been conducted in Banka and surrounding areas to trace ancient structures that are buried below the earth, she told PTI. "A team of experts from IIT

Kanpur conducted the survey at Bhadaria village, where ancient-age brick structures were found under the ground, both in the bed and on the bank of Chandan river," Bamrah said. The Mandar hill in Banka has many references in Hindu mythology. In ancient Buddhist literature, Bhadaria is mentioned as a place where Buddha himself visited and one of his chief disciples, Visakha (a nun), stayed in that village. "This hill was used for churning the ocean to extract the nectar from its bosom, as per mythology," said BDHS Executive Director Bijoy Kumar Choudhary. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar



had visited the site in December 2020. In the case of Vaishali visited by Hiuen Tsang over 1,000 years ago, the BDHS will start exploration work there. "Hiuen Tsang, also known as

Xuanzang, came from China and travelled to places in India between 629 and 645 CE to obtain Buddhist scriptures during the reign of King Harsha Vardhana. "Xuanzang's travelogue helped

Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1860s and 1870s identify famous sites such as Nalanda and Vaishali," Choudhary told PTI. Cunningham was a British army officer and archaeologist who

had also served as the first director of the ASI. However, no systematic work has been undertaken since then to follow the footsteps of Xuanzang who gave distances, directions and descriptions of several ancient sites that he visited between 630 AD and 642 AD in Vaishali and other areas in Bihar, Choudhary said. "Now, after obtaining permission from the ASI, the BHDS has decided to begin the process for the exploration of the Buddhist pilgrim sites visited by Xuanzang in Vaishali this month," said Choudhary. The BHDS has already explored several sites visited by Xuanzang in South Bihar.

Bamrah said Xuanzang spent several years in Nalanda and Vaishali. "Buddhist pilgrim sites visited by Xuanzang in South Bihar have already been discovered in Patna-Jehanabad-Gaya-Nawada-Nalanda sector by the BHDS. In this process, all major hills falling in the region have been explored, and its sculptures, antiquities and archaeological features scientifically documented and studied," she said. Now, the BDHS will start exploration work in the Vaishali area. "Exploration of these sites would help us discover and piece together our great heritage," said Bamrah.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Validation

Saying the Centre was well within legal rights while abrogating Article 370, the SC lays the controversy to rest

Upholding the Union Government's decision to abrogate Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, the Supreme Court wants the Assembly elections to be conducted there by September 30, 2024. Also, putting to rest any confusion regarding future status of J&K, the court has said its statehood should be restored at the earliest. Despite a longwinded and vicious campaign by parties in the Valley and in the Opposition, especially the Congress, the apex court put its seal of approval on the Government's decision of August 5, 2019, to abrogate Article 370, which gave special status to the State of J&K. The national security considerations were paramount in the decision. The special status had been a contentious issue, often exploited by separatist elements. The Narendra Modi-led NDA Government's move was intended to integrate the region more closely with the rest of India and marked a crucial shift in the political landscape. The region now adheres to the same constitutional



and legal provisions as other States and Union Territories of India, fostering a sense of equality among citizens. Economically, the decision was seen to work as a catalyst for development in J&K. Aligning with the Centre's policies, the region would attract more investments, subsequently fostering economic growth and job opportunities.

However, the repeal of Article 370 also triggered political unrest, with leaders angry over the perceived infringement on J&K's unique identity. This discontent manifested in protests and demonstrations, indicating the complexities of regional dynamics. Internationally, too, the abrogation drew attention, with

a few countries expressing concern about the situation. The move prompted debates on the global stage, highlighting the intricate relationship between national sovereignty and international human rights standards. There are very few decisions that change the course of history, or correct it. The revocation of Article 370 was one such decision; of course, it was the BJP's poll promise, too. However, had it perhaps been done after taking local people's concerns into account and in a more democratic way, it might not have raised the storm it did. It goes to the credit of the Modi Government that no related violence was reported but it did lead to some hardships for the people. However, geopolitics and ground reality have vastly changed since Article 370 was promulgated. Now any State having a separate flag or, for that matter, separate Constitution does not hold relevance. Ultimately, the move will lead to betterment of J&K as the region would have access to many Government policies and plans which could not be implemented earlier due to its special status. The decision has profoundly impacted J&K and the broader Indian polity. The Supreme Court verdict plays a pivotal role in determining the constitutional validity of the abrogation and shaping J&K's future.

## PICTALK



Students in jubilant mood after receiving their degree on 98th Foundation Day celebration of IIT in Dhanbad

## Supreme Court vindicates abrogation of Article 370



NARENDRA MODI

The Supreme Court has given its seal of approval to the Government's decision to abrogate Article 370 saying it was temporary in nature



On 11th December, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India delivered a historic judgment on the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A). Through its judgment, the Court has upheld the sovereignty and integrity of India, something that is cherished by every Indian. The Supreme Court rightly observed that the decision taken on 5th August 2019 was done with the purpose of enhancing constitutional integration and not disintegration. The Court has also recognized the fact that Article 370 was not permanent in nature.

Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh's breathtaking landscapes, serene valleys, and majestic mountains have captivated the hearts of poets, artists and adventurers for generations. It is a place where the sublime meets the extraordinary, where the Himalayas reach for the sky, and where the pristine waters of its lakes and rivers mirror the heavens. But, for the last seven decades, these places have witnessed the worst form of violence and instability, something which the wonderful peo-

ple never deserved. Unfortunately, due to centuries of colonisation, most notably economic and mental subjugation, we became a confused society of sorts. Rather than taking a clear position on very basic things, we allowed duality, leading to confusion. Sadly, Jammu and Kashmir became a big victim of such a mindset. At the time of independence, we had a choice of making a fresh start for national integration. Instead, we decided to continue with the confused society approach even if it meant ignoring the long-term national interests.

I have had the opportunity of being connected with the Jammu and Kashmir Andolan from a very early part of my life. I belong to an ideological framework where Jammu and Kashmir was not merely a political issue. But, it was about addressing the aspirations of society. Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee held an important portfolio in the Nehru Cabinet and could have remained in government for a long time. Yet, he quit the Cabinet over the Kashmir issue and preferred the tough road ahead, even if it meant paying with his life. His efforts and sacrifice led to crores of Indians becoming emotionally attached with the Kashmir issue. Years later, Atal Ji, at a public meeting in Srinagar gave the powerful message of 'Insaniyat', 'Jamhooriyat' and 'Kashmiriyat', which has also always been a source of great inspiration.

It was always my firm belief that what had happened in Jammu and Kashmir was a great betrayal- to our nation and to the people living there. It was also my strong desire to do whatever I can to remove this blot, this injustice done to the people. I have always wanted to work to alleviate the suffering of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

In very basic words- Articles 370 and 35 (A) were like major obstacles. It seemed like an unbreakable wall and the sufferers were the poor and downtrodden. Articles 370 and 35(A) ensured that the people of Jammu and Kashmir never got the rights and development that the rest of their fellow Indians got. Due to these Articles, a distance was created between people belonging to the same nation. Due to this distance, many people from our nation who wanted to work to solve the problems of Jammu and Kashmir were unable to do so even if they clearly felt the pain of the people there. As a Karyakarta who has seen the issue closely over the last several decades, I had a nuanced understanding of the specifics and the complex-

“WHILE SERVING THE PEOPLE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR, WE GAVE PRIMACY TO THREE PILLARS — UNDERSTANDING OF THE CITIZENS' CONCERNS, BUILDING TRUST THROUGH SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS, AND PRIORITISING DEVELOPMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND MORE DEVELOPMENT”

ities of the issue. Yet, I was crystal clear about one thing- that the people of Jammu and Kashmir want development and they want to contribute to the development of India based on their strengths and skills. They also want a better quality of life of their children, a life free from violence and uncertainty. Thus, while serving the people of Jammu and Kashmir, we gave primacy to three pillars- understanding of the citizens' concerns, building trust through supportive actions, and prioritising development, development and more development.

In 2014, just after we assumed office, deadly floods struck Jammu and Kashmir, with a lot of damage in the Kashmir valley. In September 2014, I went to Srinagar to assess the situation and also announced Rs. 1000 crore as a special assistance for rehabilitation, signalling our government's commitment to supporting the people during crises. I had the opportunity to meet people from different walks of life and there was one common thread in these interactions- the people not only wanted development but they also wanted freedom from the rampant corruption prevailing for decades. The same year, I decided not to mark Diwali in remembrance of those we lost in Jammu and Kashmir. I also decided to be in Jammu and Kashmir on Diwali day.

In order to further strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's development journey, we decided that our Government ministers would frequently go there and interact with people directly. These frequent visits also played a crucial role in building goodwill in Jammu and Kashmir. From May 2014 to March 2019, over 150 ministerial visits took place. This is a record in itself. The special package of 2015 was a significant step in addressing the developmental needs of Jammu and Kashmir. It contained initiatives for infrastructure development, job creation, tourism promotion and support to the handicraft industry. We harnessed the power of sports in Jammu and Kashmir, recognising its

potential to ignite the dreams of the youth. Through sporting initiatives, we witnessed the transformational impact of athletic pursuits on their aspirations and futures. Sporting venues were upgraded, training programmes were organised and coaches were made available. One of the most unique things was to encourage the setting of local football clubs. The results were outstanding. The name of the talented footballer Afshan Ashiq comes to my mind- in December 2014 she was a part of a stone pelting group in Srinagar but with the right encouragement she turned to football, she was sent for training and excelled in the game.

I recall interacting with her in one of the Fit India Dialogues where I said it was time to move over 'Bend it like Beckham' because it is now 'Ace it like Afshan.' Other youngsters began to shine in kickboxing, Karate and more. The Panchayat polls were also a watershed moment in the region's quest for all-round development. Once again, we were faced with a choice of either remaining in power or standing by our principles- the choice was never tough and we let go of a Government but preferred that that ideals that we stand for, the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir are given top priority. The success of Panchayat polls indicated the democratic nature of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. My mind went back to an interaction I had with Pradhans from the villages. Among other issues, I made a request to them- that at no point must schools be burnt and that must be ensured. I was delighted to see that this was adhered to. After all, if schools are burnt the biggest sufferers are the small children.

The historical day of 5th August is etched in the hearts and minds of every Indian. Our Parliament passed the historic decision to abrogate Article 370. Since then, much has changed in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The judicial court verdict came in December 2023 but seeing the wave of development across Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh,

the people's court have given a resounding thumbs up to the Parliament's decision of abolishing Articles 370 and 35(A) for four years now.

At a political level, the last 4 years have been marked with a renewed faith in grassroots democracy. The women, tribals, SC, ST and marginalised sections of society were not getting their due. At the same time, the aspirations of Ladakh were totally ignored. 5th August 2019 changed all that. All Central laws now apply without fear or favour Representation has also got more widespread- a three tier Panchayati Raj System is in place, BDC elections have been held, and refugee communities who were all but forgotten have begun to enjoy the fruits of development. Key Central Government scheme have attained saturation levels, thus covering all sections of society. These include Saubhagya, Ujwala and Ujjwala schemes. Strides have been made in housing, tap water connection and financial inclusion. Healthcare, otherwise a major challenge for the people has witnessed an upgradation of infrastructure.

All the villages achieved ODF Plus status. Government vacancies, which were otherwise a den of corruption and favouritism have been filled in a transparent and process driven manner. Other indicators like IMR have shown betterment. The boost to infrastructure and tourism has been for everyone to see. The credit for this naturally goes to the resilience of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, who have shown time and again that they want only development and are willing to be drivers of this positive change. Earlier, there was a question mark on the status of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Now, there are only exclamation marks about record growth, record development, record tourist inflow.

In its verdict on 11th December, the Supreme Court has strengthened the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' - it has reminded us that what defines us is the bonds of unity and a shared commitment to good governance. Today, every child born in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is born with a clean canvas, where he or she can paint a future full of vibrant aspirations. Today, the dreams of the people are no longer prisoners of the past but are possibilities of the future. After all, Development, democracy and dignity have replaced disillusionment, disappointment and despondency.

(This is a special article by the Prime Minister on the historic verdict of the Supreme Court)

## Soil pollution can lead to a major catastrophe

If the soil pollution is not checked, the environment will suffer and life as we know it, may come to a grinding halt

Soil and water are the essential components that sustain life, including that of humans, on our planet. Soil is the medium on which all types of living organisms are maintained. Every religion that has evolved with us has highlighted the importance of soil. The Vedic civilization held the soil in the highest regard as Mother Earth. The prayer to Prithvi, the Earth, is invoked in the Atharva Veda: "Let what I unearth from thee, O Earth, sprout and develop once more in a swift manner." The veneration of vegetation, trees, animals, and soils is exclusive to India. Consequently, it discourages the application of harsh chemicals and pesticides, as they may inadvertently cause harm to the beneficial nutrients and living microorganisms inside the soil. The Earth teems with biodiversity and is the foundation for all living organisms. Earth is where plants, trees, animals, and even soils are revered. Unfortunately, the present generation is doing more harm to the lifeline of our species. We have done enough damage to the soil by focussing on development and ascetics. The fertile agricultur-



al lands pay way to flats and gardens with exotic plants. Soil is a fundamental resource for agriculture, providing essential nutrients and a medium for plant growth. Erosion, loss of topsoil, and degradation can significantly reduce soil fertility, leading to decreased crop yields. The cycling of nutrients in the soil is critical for the health and productivity of plants. Soil is home to various microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi, and protozoa. Unfortunately, these microbes are destroyed by chemical fertilizers, weedicides and pesticides. The health of soil and water is interlinked. Pollution caused by anthropogenic activities ultimately reaches the soil through water. We take soil for granted. We dispose of solid waste,

plastics, and toxic chemicals in the soil. We burn our solid waste on its surface without concern for its rich biodiversity.

The ecological impact of soil pollution incurs significantly higher costs. It is imperative to refrain from using contaminated soil for agricultural purposes, as the chemicals can seep into the crops, harming consumers. Utilizing polluted soil for crop cultivation typically leads to lower yields than uncontaminated soil, exacerbating the issue by causing additional erosion due to a lack of plant cover, thereby transferring toxins to previously uncontaminated areas.

Addressing soil pollution is crucial for the long-term health of ecosystems, agricultural sustainability, and human well-being. Sustainable land management practices and a collective effort to reduce pollution sources are essential for mitigating the impacts of soil pollution. Healthy soils act as carbon sinks, sequestering carbon and mitigating the impacts of climate change. The fundamental meaning of the term "nature" is closely connected to notions such as natal, nativity, and native, indi-

cating that anything that is born and destined to die is intrinsically natural. Understanding this interdependence demonstrates that nature and mankind are inseparable. Hence, our interactions with nature have a direct influence on our own well-being. Our connection with nature is based on mutual reliance. It has been argued that the unrelenting destruction of rainforests and deciduous forests is justifiable to expand the amount of land used for agricultural purposes. Similarly, transforming agricultural lands into commercial areas is justifiable in the name of development. Our ignorance prevents us from seeing that even if we were to emerge victorious in this conflict, we would still be on the losing side. Our idea that the job of nature is to run the motor of our economy is the driving force behind this war against nature, which we intend to wage. The economy is an owned subsidiary of ecology.

(The Writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, views are personal)



BIJU DHARMAPALAN



## FIRST COLUMN

## BE STRONG AND HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

A mentally strong person always remains rooted in the present moment



RAVI VALLURI

Readers may recall that remarkable Sunday afternoon at Lords. The year was 1983 when India was defending a paltry 183 and Mohinder Amarnath ambled in and trapped Michael Holding, LBW. We won the World Cup - which was then known as the Prudential Cup - for the first time and Indian flags fluttered across the stadium and Indians in unison celebrated the victory.

This was a case of positive thinking by the Indian cricket team which metamorphosed in positive results. Bertha Calloway writes, "We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails." Why are some people mentally strong and some not? What distinguishes a decisive person from a person who only frets and fumes and lives in the past? Mental strength and attitudes greatly depend on two important factors. These are extraversion and introversion. Now who are extraverts and introverts? Extraverts are normally opened, sociable and socially assertive, oriented towards the world outside. On the contrary introverts are withdrawn and more than often shy by nature. They normally tend to focus on themselves, on their own thoughts and feelings. Noted psychologists like Carl Jung elaborate this in depth by stating that humans have strains of both the attitudes - that is extraversion and introversion.

Invariably extraverted thinking leads to logical and objective thinking which at times can become dogmatic. Such individuals are creative by nature and seize opportunities. On the other hand, introverted thinking leads to reserved and undermonstrative thinking. So, on that salubrious Sunday when Lords (the Mecca of Cricket) was soaked in brilliant sunshine the Indian cricket team became extraverted and the West Indian cricket powerhouse turned into introverts. Perhaps we can configure an equation



mathematically in our minds. Mental strength = Positive Attitude + Extraversion Attitude-Introversion Personality. From a different space humans can become achievers in life and surmount problems, by living in the present. A couple lost their daughter in a tragic accident, yet through the powerful techniques imparted by Art of Living in the form of Sudarshan Kriya, pranayama, yoga, meditation, and seva/service were able to confront the problem and reconfigure their lives.

Another colleague lost his wife, but by attending various courses of Art of Living regained his mojo. He is not only attending courses but is continuously conducting courses and spreading waves of happiness. Yet another friend from the railways discovered that his daughter was suffering from life-threatening cancer. It was his surrender to the Master and following the techniques of Art of Living that transformed his life. Today he has quit railways and is running a software firm which is making path breaking advances.

All these people have one common strand. Their unflinching belief in Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and following the fundamental tenets of Sadhana, Satsang, practice of Sudarshan Kriya, being in knowledge and performing seva. This has brought sanity to their lives. There are innumerable such instances, where Gurudev has provided the necessary direction and devotees have followed the path. And they are all living in the present moment. A mentally strong person does not succumb to macabre thoughts. Such an individual maintains a positive disposition and controls emotions and not the other way round. Such individuals do not fall prey to stress easily, improve the quality of their lives and enhance their performance. But this the seeker can achieve through regular practice. They do not wallow in self-pity. "Self-pity is easily the most destructive of the non-pharmaceutical narcotics; it is addictive, gives momentary pleasure and separates the victim from reality."

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd and is a faculty of the Art of Living. Views are personal)

## Consumer Protection Act needs to be revamped



SUBHASH CHANDRA AGRAWAL

Despite many changes, consumer protection is weak and not taken seriously by many companies. Besides, many consumers in rural areas cannot afford legal remedy

Consumer Protection Act 2019 needs root-level changes either in the Act itself or by modifications in rules so that the need for filing complaints may not arise. A very small fraction of consumers approach consumer forums for their consumer rights against the malpractices of big manufacturers.

Portal Jago-Grahak-Jago on the website of the Department of Consumer Affairs (Government of India) acts like a post office to deliver eye-wash replies from companies against whom complaints are lodged. Consumers are advised to approach Consumer Court if they are not satisfied with the replies of the companies received through the portal. The portal must be made practically effective with the Department made to scrutinise replies from the companies, and take the matter further in case replies are found unsatisfactory. It should be made compulsory that all companies on their websites provide contact details including names of concerned senior officers and Directors. All such websites of companies should compulsorily give details of government portals and consumer forms. Annual-Maintenance-Contracts (AMCs) should be practically made Extended Warranties since most companies fool consumers by not entertaining many aspects covered under AMCs.

All packaged commodities must be packed in the true metric spirit in either unit of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, or 1000 and thereafter in multiples of 1000 basic units abolishing any need for printing unit-price on packs. A popular milk brand (Namaste-India) has started packaging milk packs in 950 meters and 1900 meters to look like earlier packs of 500 meters and one litre respectively. There are so many packages in milk and milk products like 400 mltrs, and 450 mltrs, confusing consumers to look like 500 mltrs.

Drug manufacturers at times cheat consumers by packing commonly advertised medicines like cough lozenges in eight per strip rather than the normal ten. Many drug manufacturers started packing medicines in strips of 15 rather than 10 simply to increase sales. The suggested packaging system may be for medicines unless exemption is sought from the competent authority for dose-wise administration. At times free gifts given by manufacturers to promote other products are swallowed by traders. The system should be to tie free gifts with marketed products. "Not for sale alone" should be prominently printed on the free gift.

Commodities like Ghee are packed in litres in packs of 1 or 5 litres, but in packs of 15 kgs. A uniform system should be for marketing such products either by weight or by volume. Since the Supreme Court has allowed the use of A-4 size paper, any further production of legal-size paper must be banned. A slight modification in A-4 size paper is made from the present 29.5 cms x 21 cms to 30 cms x 20 cm to be in tune with the metric spirit.

Commodities with government-administered prices should be in round figure of rupee one per unit (like for petrol-diesel) and in multiples of rupee ten in commodities having sale price above rupees 100 (like LPG refill). It will not affect consumers, since delivery-persons never return balance coins. Rounding-off prices can earn extra revenue for governments.

Since the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India and the



INDIA BEING THE LARGEST CONSUMER BASE, CAN IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON FOREIGN COMPANIES EXPORTING COMMODITIES TO INDIA TO SET UP THEIR MANUFACTURING UNITS IN INDIA

National Restaurant Association of India challenged guidelines issued by the Central Consumer Protection Authority on levying service in bills of hotels and restaurants in the court, the Consumer Protection Act should be amended so that hotels and restaurants may not be able to impose any extra levy other than government-taxes. Moreover, the Consumer Protection Act should ban the colonial practice of paying tips directing hotels and restaurants to prominently display "No Tips" boards.

India being the largest consumer base, can impose conditions on foreign companies exporting commodities to India to set up their manufacturing units in India especially when many such foreign companies flood Indian markets with products manufactured in countries other than the country of origin. An example is the setting of the biggest manufacturing plant of Samsung mobile phones in Noida (UP). It will result in huge earnings of foreign exchange by way of export from India rather than the drain of foreign exchange in importing such commodities. The union government should ban the import of items that are already available in India of much superior quality.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) should call a meeting of printer manufacturers including representatives of foreign companies to minimise types of ink cartridges. The largest selling foreign company Hewlett-Packard (HP) has too many types of ink cartridges of similar shape and size for their vast range of inkjet and laser printers. Such standardisation will heavily reduce the cost of ink cartridges. The condition should be that such accessories may be allowed to be manufactured by Indian manufac-

turers. Standardisation of mobile chargers on lines of electrical plugs and sockets should also be done for mobile phones of all makes and companies.

The Union government should also induce standardization of common accessories like tyres and batteries so that the same parts may be used in different models of cars produced by various car manufacturers. It will heavily bring down the cost of consumables through their bumper production in extra large numbers in some limited sizes and specifications. It can be achieved by merging some nearing sizes and specifications. Such guidelines, though also mentioned in the auto-policy of the Union government, are never followed in actual practice. There may be just two variants apart from the third with automatic gears, one basic Lx for economy customers and the other Vx with all company-fitted extra accessories and luxuries for affording customers.

Presently there is no limit to the allowed total profit margin on a commodity between the Maximum-Retail-Price (MRP) and Ex-factory price of commodities allowing huge total trade margins. Even economically priced generic medicines have printed MRP which is ten times higher than their wholesale price. Such big trade margins induce corruption in purchases. Moreover, victims are normal consumers, especially in rural areas, who do not have access to and knowledge of wholesale markets. The Department of Consumer Affairs must fix the maximum total trade margin for any commodity to bring down the MRP of commodities.

Even renowned confectioners having daily sales in lakhs of rupees, do

not issue bills resulting in big losses to the exchequer. Confectioners should be directed to compulsorily stick a copy of the GST invoice on each box of unbranded sweets sold in loose. GST authorities should be advised to have a common GST rate of say 12 per cent on all food items presently luxury sweets attract a GST rate of just 5 per cent while salted items attract 12 per cent GST giving liberty to confectioners often selling both items to show more sale of sweets to save GST under composite-scheme. Such can be the case with other unbranded commodities taxable under GST sold loose. Fear psychology should be developed whereby traders may themselves voluntarily issue GST invoices to customers even without being asked for.

The National Anti-Profitteering Authority (NAPP) working under the Department of Revenue should be shifted to the Department of Consumer Affairs. There is no provision for entertaining suggestions coming from experts either by NAPP or by other authorities. There must be some authority that may have the power to study and implement suggestions (if feasible).

A consumer forum in Chandigarh once imposed a fine of rupees 9000 on a renowned shoe company for charging rupees 3 as the cost of paper-bags. But the same shoe company and many famous branded shopping malls, are still charging the cost of paper bags from the shoppers. The Department of Consumer Affairs should prohibit by law the "selling" of shopping bags just for packing goods.

(The writer is an RTI consultant holding the Guinness World record, views are personal)

## Building an inclusive world without boundaries

The advocacy of activists has made a dent in societal attitude towards people with disabilities but still a lot needs to be done

December is a month of celebration, commemoration and above all recognition of the abilities of innumerable people who also make a difference. The world commemorated the 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' on December 3rd, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by individuals with disabilities (different abilities) and advocating for their rights and well-being. This day emphasises the potential for empowerment through inclusion and support.

Closely following this, on December 5th, 'International Volunteers Day' recognises the countless volunteers globally who contribute their time and effort to make a positive impact in their communities. In 1992, the United Nations



RAJDEEP PATHAK

General Assembly proclaimed the International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) via resolution 47/3. Dedicated to promoting awareness of disability issues and advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities, it also ensures dignity for the differently-abled. This year's IDDP focuses on "United in action to rescue and achieve the SDGs for, with, and by persons with disabilities," as its theme. The aim is to deepen understanding, gain support for their rights and dignity, and highlight the benefits of their inclusion in all aspects of life, fostering overall well-being and societal inclusivity.

Similarly, International Volunteers Day (IVD), observed yearly on December 5th, celebrates the invaluable

contributions of volunteers globally. Established by the UN General Assembly in 1985, IVD honours all those who selflessly dedicate time and skills to address societal challenges and make a difference in the lives of others. With over a billion volunteers worldwide, the day emphasises the transformative impact of collective efforts on social, economic, and environmental progress.

India, propelled by the 2016 Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act championed by activist Javed Abidi, has made notable strides in acknowledging and promoting inclusivity. Despite progress, challenges linger, including attitudinal barriers and many times, insufficient infrastructure. Drawing on a robust tradition

of volunteerism, ranging from grassroots initiatives to established NGOs, India taps into the transformative potential of volunteers to dismantle stereotypes, provide support, and cultivate inclusivity for individuals, society per se, and the differently-abled.

The 'Accessible India' campaign launched by the Government of India, aims to make public spaces, transportation, and information more accessible to persons with disabilities. Volunteers have been instrumental in driving this initiative, actively participating in awareness campaigns, accessibility audits, and advocacy efforts. Similarly, their role in the Clean River (Ganga and Yamuna) campaign is undeniable. None can forget Hellen Keller

the American author and activist who has been instrumental in changing perspectives about disability. She not only overcame her challenges but also worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities.

The journey towards inclusivity has been guided by the wisdom and advocacy of thinkers and activists who have tirelessly worked to dismantle barriers and challenge societal attitudes. The late Stephen Hawking, a renowned theoretical physicist diagnosed with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), made groundbreaking contributions to science. Also, great individuals like Beethoven, Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia, Sudha Chandran and others have demonstrated unparalleled dedication to

their art. Beethoven composed remarkable music despite losing his hearing. Chaurasia mastered the flute despite a childhood finger loss, and Chandran, an acclaimed dancer, returned to the stage triumphantly after losing a leg in an accident.

Their stories exemplify how passion and commitment can triumph over physical obstacles, challenging societal perceptions in the world of performing arts. In the sporting world, the Paralympic Games highlight extraordinary feats by athletes with disabilities, showcasing resilience and athletic prowess. Icons like Deepa Malik (paralyzed from the waist down), exemplify indomitable spirit. Moreover, India's stellar performance in

the 2023 Asian Para Games, with 111 medals, including 29 gold, 31 silver, and 51 bronze, reinforces admiration for these remarkable sportspersons and their unparalleled achievements. None can forget Arunima Sinha's determination as she scaled Mount Everest with her prosthetic leg. Volunteerism acts as a catalyst for social change by fostering inclusivity and challenging societal norms. Commitment to the UN CRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) signals a global push for inclusivity. To truly make a difference, a shift in attitude is imperative for a more equitable world.

(The writer is programme executive Gandhi Smriti Sansthan, views are personal)

Israel battles militants in Gaza's main cities

Israeli forces battled Palestinian militants in Gaza's two largest cities on Monday, with civilians still trapped in the fighting even after hundreds of thousands have fled to other parts of the besieged territory. Israel has pledged to keep fighting until it removes Hamas from power, dismantles its military capabilities and returns all of the hostages taken by militants during Hamas' Oct. 7 surprise attack into Israel that ignited the war.

Sunday. "The building shook," she said. "We thought it was the end and we would die." Hussein al-Sayed, who fled Gaza City earlier in the war with his three daughters, is staying in a three-story home in the city with around 70 others. He said they have been rationing food for days. "I don't know where to go," he said. "No place is safe."

mass exodus from what is now Israel during the 1948 war surrounding its creation. That gave rise to built-up and seemingly permanent refugee camps like Jabalya and Maghazi. "Expect public order to completely break down soon, and an even worse situation could unfold including epidemic diseases and increased pressure for mass displacement into Egypt," U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told a forum in Qatar on Sunday.

Sunak apologises to COVID-hit families

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday apologised to the families who lost loved ones in the COVID-19 pandemic as he opened his evidence to an ongoing public inquiry in a tough week, which will also see him tackle a feared revolt over a parliamentary vote on his Rwanda policy to deport illegal migrants.



AP ■ LONDON

Polling centres open in Egypt's presidential polls

AP ■ CAIRO
Polling centres in Egypt opened on Monday, the second voting day in a presidential election that is certain to see President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi secure another term. The vote, which began across the Middle Eastern nation on Sunday, has been overshadowed by the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, on Egypt's eastern borders.



AP ■ CAIRO

The vote is also taking place amid a staggering economic crisis in Egypt, a country of 105 million people in which nearly a third live in poverty, according to official figures. The crisis stems from mismanagement of the economy but also from the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine, which rattled the global economy.

Iraq scrambles to contain fighting between US troops and Iran-backed groups

AP ■ BAGHDAD
Dozens of attacks on US military facilities by Iran-backed factions in Iraq over the past two months have forced the government in Baghdad to perform a balancing act that is becoming more difficult by the day. A rocket attack on the sprawling US Embassy in Baghdad on Friday marked a further escalation as Iraqi officials scramble to contain the ripple effects of the Israel-Hamas war.

consequences" if Iraq does not act to stop the attacks, an Iraqi official said. The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity in line with briefing regulations. In a call with the Iraqi premier earlier this month, Blinken said that the Americans would take matters into their own hands, arguing that Baghdad had not done enough to pursue the perpetrators, according to two Iraqi officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly.

Poland's outgoing govt loses confidence vote

AP ■ WARSAW
Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's government lost a confidence vote in parliament on Monday, ending the rule of his national conservative party after eight years in power. The vote paves the way for the majority in parliament to elect Donald Tusk, a centrist and former EU leader, as prime minister, a role he held already from 2007-2014. The lawmakers plan to tap him later Monday. Morawiecki's government was defeated 266-190 in the 460-seat lower house.

By the president, who chose to keep his political allies in office as long as possible. Parliamentary proceedings have ignited widespread curiosity and emotions, leading to a spike in the number of subscribers to the Sejm's YouTube channel. Szymon Holownia, a former TV showman who leads a party allied with Tusk, became the speaker of parliament last month and has been trying to encourage discipline in the sometimes raucous assembly. A Warsaw cinema which livestreamed Monday's proceedings drew hundreds of spectators who munched popcorn and erupted in laughter as the outgoing prime minister spoke. "So many disturbing things took place in the past eight years that I'm not surprised by this joy that it's over," said Justyna Lemanska, a young female ad agency employee in the audience.

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AP ■ DELHI
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It is to inform to the public at large that Ms. Sonia who is purchasing the First Floor, (Front Side R/S), part of Plot No. 4 and 4-A, New No. B-22, area measuring 177.25 Sq. Mtrs., out of Khastri No. 112/18, Block B, situated at village Palam, Madhu Vihar, Near Dwarika, Sector-II, Delhi.

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UN officials ramp up urgency as climate talks enter final days

AP ■ DUBAI
Visibly tired and frustrated top United Nations officials urged climate talks to push harder for an end to fossil fuels. Time seems to be running out both in the talks in Dubai and for action that could keep warming at or below the internationally agreed-upon threshold.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres returned to the summit on Monday and said it was "time to go into overdrive, to negotiate in good faith, and rise to the challenge". He said negotiators at the COP28 summit in particular must focus on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and climate justice. He said the global stock-take — the part of talks that assesses where the world is at with its climate goals and how it can reach them — should "phase out all fossil fuels" in order to reach the goal of limiting the rise of global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with pre-industrial times. That phase-out was, he said, "a central aspect" for the summit to be considered a success. "We can't keep kicking the can down the road," Guterres said in brief remarks. "We are out of road and almost out of time."



Activists display signs reading "hold the line" near United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as he speaks during a news conference at the COP28 U.N. Climate Summit, Monday in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

the bar for success is high," said EU Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra. "And that is not because these Europeans say so, or because small islands say so, or Africa or Latin America say so. But because scientists tell us that we have no alternative if we want to keep future generations safe." Delegates were still waiting on a new text on Monday afternoon. "Why hasn't the text arrived? Because it is difficult," said Dan Jorgensen, Denmark's minister of climate







JUNIOR WORLD CUP HOCKEY

# INDIA FACE TOUGH DUTCH TEST

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Two-time champions India will need to raise their game by a few notches while curbing complacency during their quarter-final encounter against a formidable Netherlands in the men's Junior World Cup hockey tournament here on Tuesday. India won the tournament twice in 2001 in Hobart, Australia and at home in Lucknow in 2016. Besides they were runners-up once way back in 1997 in Milton Keynes, England, losing 2-3 against Australia in the final. The Indians started the tournament on a bright note, beating Korea 4-1 and then suffered a 1-4 defeat at the hands of Spain before getting their acts together to thrash Canada 10-1 in their final pool match. India sealed their quarterfinal place as the second-placed team from Pool C with two wins out of three games behind Spain, who had an all-win record. The Netherlands, on the other hand, finished atop Pool D with two wins and a draw. Having started off on a positive note, the Indians were taken to the cleaners by Spain, who relied on crisp, short passes



to create spaces in the Indian defence which worked perfectly for them. So, the Indian team will have to be on its toes against a clinical side like the Netherlands, which is capable of breaching any defence with its structured hockey. The Indians will also have to do away of their habit of conceding unnecessary penalty corners when put under pressure. A big win against Canada should act as a confidence booster for India going into Tuesday's match, a fact which skipper Uttam Singh agreed. "We have played some good hockey in this World Cup. Coming off a big 10-1 win certainly boosts our confidence going into the knockout stages. We'll look to put our best foot forward and play to the best of our ability like we always do," he said. India coach CR Kumar said his players are ready to tackle whatever comes in their way. "The players are in a good space and are ready to take on whatever is thrown at them. We'll continue to take this tournament one match at a time. "Yes, the quarterfinal is a big match but it's nothing the boys aren't prepared for." The semifinals and final will be held on Thursday and Saturday.



## Oosthuizen overcomes Schwartzel

AP ■ MALELANE (SOUTH AFRICA)

Louis Oosthuizen came out top in his final-round duel with close friend and fellow South African Charl Schwartzel to win the Alfred Dunhill Championship on Monday for his first European tour title in five years. Oosthuizen closed with a 3-under 69 to win by two strokes, but only after a nervy finish that saw him make bogey at No. 17 and roll in a long par putt at the par-5 18th hole after hitting his drive into water. "Just got lucky on this one," said the 2010 British Open champion, who finished on 18-under 270. The climax to the tournament was pushed back a day after much of Sunday's play was wiped out because of stormy weather. Oosthuizen and Schwartzel, major champions and friends since their days playing junior golf, resumed on the eighth hole in a tie for the lead - three strokes clear of their nearest challenger, Christiaan Bezuidenhou - and with puddles dotted around the course at Leopard Creek Country Club because of heavy rain on Sunday. They were still tied with six holes to play, when Oosthuizen made birdies from 10 feet, 30 feet and 6 feet to move into a three-shot lead. He gave one back on No. 17 and

arrived at the 72nd hole with a two-stroke lead over Schwartzel, only to push his tee shot into a water hazard. He took a drop, chipped into the fairway and hit his fourth shot to about 25 feet, with Schwartzel on the green for a birdie opportunity from closer in. However, Oosthuizen holed his putt and pumped his fist, knowing he'd claimed a 10th win on the European tour and a first since the South African Open in December 2018. Schwartzel, who was looking to win the event for a fifth time, shot 71 and finished in second place, two strokes clear of Bezuidenhou. "I knew I needed to play well - Charl plays really well around this place," Oosthuizen said. "I made a few putts there in the middle of the round and got ahead of Charl. I was in between what to do on 18, and made five the hard way." It means the tour's three season-opening events in South Africa were all won by home players, with Dean Burmester triumphing in both the Joburg Open and the South African Open Championship. Oosthuizen and Burmester are both players in the Saudi-funded breakaway LIV Golf series. There is another tournament in Africa - the Mauritius Open starting Thursday - before the tour takes a break until mid-January ahead of events in the Gulf region.

## Girona trying to lower expectations



AP ■ MADRID

Girona was trying to lower expectations after proving itself a genuine contender for the Spanish league title with its biggest win yet in a historic start to the season. A 4-2 statement win at defending champion Barcelona on Sunday put the Catalan club in sole possession of first place nearing the halfway point, and showed that it might have what it takes to keep up with the usual powerhouses in Spanish soccer. But coach Michel Sánchez was quick to point out that winning the league still isn't the team's main goal. He acknowledged that Girona can aspire for more than just avoiding relegation, which was the main objective at the start of the season, but it is too early to think about the possibility of lifting a trophy. "I think mathematically we have escaped demotion, which was the goal," Michel said. "I don't think we can keep up with Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid and win the league. It's not our objective. But we are very pleased. Today soccer fans are a bit of Girona fans as well. A lot of people are saying, these guys can play." Girona has won 13 of its 16

Spanish league matches and is the team with most victories in the top five European leagues so far. It has a two-point lead over Madrid and is seven ahead of both Atletico Madrid and Barcelona. Michel praised his team for not being scared of Barcelona and challenging the defending champion from the start at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium on Sunday. He said it showed that the team has the character and attitude to try to fight for loftier goals. "We are not in the lead because the top teams are struggling. It's been a historic year for us," Michel said. "But winning it all still is something too far away to think about. When we get to the final third of the season we will see how things are and what our goals will be." Girona, partly owned by Manchester City's Abu Dhabi ownership, has finished 10th in the league last season after three consecutive years in the second tier. "Girona deserves a lot of credit. It has a great team," Barcelona coach Xavi Hernández said. "It's the best team I've seen play so far." Girona, which has the league's best attack with 38 goals, has been near the top of the standings from the start. There were

some doubts regarding Michel's team after it failed in its first big test - a 3-0 loss at home to Real Madrid in September. But that was Girona's only defeat of the season. Its other setbacks were a draw at fifth-place Real Sociedad in its league opener and a home draw against sixth-place Athletic Bilbao last month. "We'll see what happens," said Girona defender Miguel Gutierrez, who scored one of the goals on Sunday. "We are in the lead and we will keep fighting to stay in the lead. We have been doing things well and we need to continue like this." **BARCELONA'S REALITY** Xavi said it was an even match against Barcelona's Catalan rival but the loss represented a step backward in the club's rebuilding process. "It's our reality," he said. "This is a Barcelona team that is being rebuilt. And this is part of it. You take a step backward to be able to take two steps forward." Barcelona next visits Valencia in the Spanish league, while Girona hosts Alaves. Barcelona visits Antwerp in the Champions League on Wednesday. It has already secured a place in the knockout stage, something it had failed to do in the last two seasons.



Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Youth Affairs and Sports, Anurag Singh Thakur, inaugurates the first ever Khelo India Para Games, in New Delhi, on Monday. Photo: Ranjan Dimri / The Pioneer

## Want to put up a show in bigger events: Ashwini

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A sensational run over the last two weeks has given wings to Ashwini Ponnappa's Olympics dreams, and the ace Indian shuttler now wants to continue her fine run in the upcoming bigger tournaments to stay on course for a trip to Paris. Ashwini, 34, and the 20-year-old Tanisha Crasto, who joined hands in January this year, secured their third women's doubles title and the second Super 100 crown with a 21-13, 21-19 win over Chinese Taipei's Sung Shuo Yun and Yu Chien Hui in the final of the Guwahati Masters on Sunday. The pair had finished runners-up at the Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament last week in Lucknow and will start as favourites this week at the Odisha Open Super 100 in Cuttack. Their exploits in Guwahati will lift them to world No. 23 when the BWF ranking is issued on Tuesday, taking them closer to top 16, which is the cut off mark for the Paris Games. "... The goal of course is to play at the Olympics but since we are a new pair, our focus is to do well in every single tournament we



are playing, to put up a good show and that is what we are focusing on right now," Ashwini, a two-time Olympian, told PTI. "I think there are a lot of factors to get to the Olympics, and for us it is important to simplify our journey and focus on our performance, and if we are meant to be in the Olympics, then it's fine." Currently, world No. 19 pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly are the frontrunners in the Olympic race. Ashwini and Tanisha had won the Abu Dhabi Masters Super 100 and Nantes International Challenge also this year. "Now, we will get an entry in to

bigger tournaments. We actually started off the year playing in a Super 500 event (Indonesia Masters) where we reached the quarterfinals, that gave us a lot of confidence because it was our first tournament together. "Now, having had this journey of playing smaller tournaments and gradually working our way up, it gives us a lot of confidence. We have a lot of matches under our belt. So, now, the idea is to take all this positivity into next year but before that our focus is giving our best in Odisha." One of India's finest doubles exponents, Ashwini has enjoyed a lot of success with Jwala Gutta, winning the 2011 World

Championships bronze and gold and silver medals at the 2010 and 2014 Commonwealth Games respectively. Ashwini and Jwala had also participated in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics in London and Rio de Janeiro but couldn't cross the group stage on both the occasions. After the 2016 Games, the duo parted ways and Ashwini forged an alliance with N Sikki Reddy. The pair parted ways last year. Asked how she sees her role of a senior partner, Ashwini said: "Tanisha makes it easy for me because she is someone who is a fast learner and understands things really well. She holds her own on court and she keeps me calm when I go off track, having that freedom makes a difference." It is not easy to keep performing at 34 and Ashwini said focus on her diet and nutrition was the key. "I made a few changes, especially in terms of looking after my body. I now understand the importance of being mindful of what I am eating and drinking. In the past, I got away by eating things in moderation but now it doesn't work. I used to love sweets but now I don't even eat sweets in moderation."



## May go pro but don't know what I will do: Kom

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Olympic bronze medallist pugilist Mary Kom is not ruling out turning pro in the coming years as the veteran boxer admitted that she can no longer fight in amateur boxing due to age restrictions. The six-time world champion boxer has not competed since tearing her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) during the Commonwealth Games selection trial in 2022 though she is yet to announce her retirement. As per the rules, a boxer above the age of 40 cannot compete in amateur category and Mary Kom is 41 now. "If I say from my heart, I am still hungry to do something. I still want to compete and represent the country. But I am not being able to compete from this year because of age limit," Mary Kom told PTI after giving away medals to the podium finishers of the inaugural Khelo India Para Games here on Monday. "But I will still try to do something relating to boxing. (I) May go to pro but don't know yet what I will do. I still have the spirit to play one to two years or even four years," she added. The legendary boxer said she missed competitions because of injuries also. "I could not compete this year due to age bar, I missed a lot of competitions. I had a major injury, an ACL and after recovery I missed a lot of competitions like Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and World Championships." She said the para athletes are the real heroes as they had to fight against odds to bring laurels for the country.

AP ■ DUESSELDORF (GERMANY)

Six years and 39 games. That's how long it's been since Bayern Munich lost a Champions League group stage game. That makes Tuesday's game against Bayern an especially daunting task for Manchester United. After its own loss to Bournemouth, United needs to beat Bayern to have any chance of avoiding an embarrassingly early exit from the Champions League. Bayern - which is already qualified for the knockout stages - won't just be playing to add a 40th game to that unbeaten record. After a shock 5-1 loss to Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday, forward Thomas Müller called on his teammates to show their emotion at Old Trafford. "There has to be a reaction following this. We need to tap into our anger, but we can't lose our heads," he said. The Frankfurt game was much closer than the score suggests - Bayern actually had four more

## Bayern Munich brings anger, unbeaten record to Man United

shots than its opponent - but Bayern is keen to bounce back. Midfielder Leon Goretzka suggested Bayern hadn't been helped by having 10 days without a game after its last Bundesliga match was called off because of heavy snow. He told broadcaster ZDF that Bayern had been training well, though "we couldn't have sensed in training that we'd fallen into a hole, but after kickoff today it looked very much like that." Against United, Bayern needs to show the Frankfurt loss was just a "slip-up," Goretzka said. It was Bayern's third loss of the season but the first with England captain Harry Kane in the starting lineup. Kane had tasted defeat on his debut for Bayern against Leipzig in the German Super Cup in August, but on that occasion



Bayern was already 2-0 down before Kane came on for a half-hour cameo - and he had the excuse of having been up late the night before for a medical and contract signing. Kane was an unused substitute in Bayern's

only other loss of the season, an upset away defeat to third-division Saarbruecken in the German Cup. Kane has 22 goals in 19 games for Bayern, numbers that resemble his Munich predecessor

## France to host Germany in a friendly game

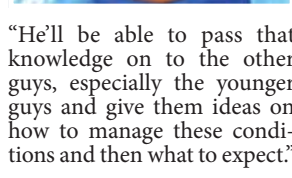
AP ■ PARIS

World Cup runner-up France will face Germany in a friendly next March as part of its European Championship preparations. Coach Didier Deschamps' side take on Julian Nagelsmann's struggling Germany team on March 23 at Lyon's Groupama Stadium in its first friendly match leading up to Euro 2024, which will be hosted by Germany from June 14-July 14. Germany's 2-0 loss to Austria last month capped a year of bad results, with Germany having lost six of the 11 games it played and winning just three. One of those, however, was a 2-1 friendly win over France in Dortmund in September under caretaker coach Rudi Völler. Of the teams who beat Germany - Belgium, Poland, Colombia, Japan, Turkey and Austria -

only Belgium is ranked in the top 10 in the world. By contrast, free-scoring France coasted into Euro 2024 on the back of seven wins and a draw in qualifying, scoring 29 goals and conceding only three. France routed Gibraltar 14-0 along the way for a record win, while star striker Kylian Mbappe led Les Bleus with nine goals in qualifying. Germany also confirmed a friendly for March 26 against the Netherlands in Frankfurt. The Dutch team lost twice to France in European Championship qualifying this year but finished the year with three consecutive wins without conceding a goal. "Two tradition-rich duels against big soccer nations are the perfect way to start the European Championship year," Nagelsmann said in a statement.

# Kohli is a massive player: Kallis Amanjot earns praise for all round show

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Virat Kohli's form and knowledge about South African conditions will be key to India's success in the upcoming two-Test series, reckons legendary all-rounder Jacques Kallis. India will play two red-ball games in Centurion and Cape Town from December 26-30 and January 3 to 7 respectively as part of the ICC World Test Championship. "I am sure he will want to have a big series here in South Africa. He has been in good form. He will play a major role in helping India. If they are to win here, he will have to have a good series," Kallis told Star Sports. Kohli amassed 932 runs from 30 innings to emerge as the highest run-scorer for India during the last WTC cycle. He has already scored a century and a fifty in two completed Tests against the West Indies as part of the current cycle. Kohli is in imperious form, having racked up a whopping 765 runs in the ODI World Cup on home soil to be awarded the Player of the Tournament. "He's a massive player, no matter where it is. Having played here quite a bit and had a fair amount of success," Kallis said.



"He'll be able to pass that knowledge on to the other guys, especially the younger guys and give them ideas on how to manage these conditions and then what to expect."

Kohli, 35, scored two of his 29 Test centuries against the Proteas away from home. India had suffered a 1-2 loss in South Africa during the last World Test Championship cycle.

"This is a good Indian team but South Africa is tough to beat in South Africa," Kallis said. "Centurion will probably suit South Africa and Newlands will probably suit India. It will be a good series and it will come down to one or two sessions that one team might play better than the other. It would be a closely-fought contest."

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
India fielding coach Munish Bali has described Amanjot Kaur as an 'impact player' after her all-round heroics helped the hosts register a consolation win in the third and final women's T20I against England here. India defeated England by five wickets in the third match after losing the first two T20Is comprehensively in the three-match series. On Sunday, Amanjot not only hit the winning runs for India but also produced impactful performances throughout the course of the game as she returned 2 for 25 in her three overs and also took a splendid catch. India were in a tricky situation after a couple of quick wickets fell and 11 runs were required to win in the last two overs. Amanjot hit 13 of just four balls, including three boundaries, to finish the game with six balls to spare. "She's an impact player, if you see she bowled the fourth over in the powerplay and bowled very well," Bali told the media after the conclusion of the series. "She fielded very well. She bowled for 3-4 overs yesterday (on Saturday during second T20I) and made an immediate impact with a brilliant catch. England head coach Jon Lewis, who also holds a similar responsibility with Women's Premier League side UP Warriorz, was impressed with the fact that India chose to go with young players in the series such as Shreyanka Patil and Saika Ishaque. "She (Ishaque) obviously had a really good WPL and it was not a surprise to me that she has been selected for India. She has got great control," Lewis said. "I actually really like, Shreyanka Patil. She is really smart. She uses angles, she turns the ball. She looks a real prospect to me and obviously we played against RCB for UP and yeah, I was really impressed. "She looks a really good cricketer. She fields well and she moves well and she can hold the bat. She is a real talent." Lewis said England want to play an 'aggressive' brand of cricket as the two teams now move to Navi Mumbai for their one-off Test to be played at the DY Patil from December 14-17. "We want to play aggressive cricket, but we want to play smart cricket as well. Putting bowlers under pressure and absorbing pressure is all part of Test cricket, so the way we bat, we will very much be looking to put the opposition bowlers under pressure," he added.



When we were chasing today (on Sunday), 12 off 12 balls, the first ball she (faced was) whipped through the covers." India looked shoddy on the field in the first game and Bali said it was difficult for the players to adjust to playing under lights which led to some glaring errors but they improved as the series progressed. "We played a day-night game after almost six to seven months. The last game that the girls had played was in WPL after that they have not played in the night time," he said. "It is always very difficult as a team when you are playing after 6-7 months but we started practising under lights that is why the results are coming." England coach Jon Lewis impressed with young Ishaque and Shreyanka



## Stop clock trial to get underway during West Indies, England series

**PTI ■ DUBAI**  
The stop clock trial, which will restrict the amount of time taken between overs, will get underway during the white-ball series between West Indies and England, the sport's governing body ICC said on Monday. The trial will start with the first T20 between the West Indies and England on Tuesday in Barbados. The stop clock will restrict the amount of time taken between overs, meaning that the bowling team will need to be ready to bowl the first ball of their next over within 60 seconds of the previous over being completed, the ICC said in a statement. Failure to do so for the third time in an innings (following two warnings) will result in a five-run penalty being imposed against the fielding team. "We are continually looking at ways to speed up the pace of play across international cricket. "The stop clock trial in white ball international cricket follows the introduction of a successful new playing condition in 2022, which resulted in the fielding team only being allowed four fielders outside of the inner circle if they were not in a position to bowl the first ball of their final over in the stipulated time. "The outcomes of the stop clock trial will be assessed at the end of the trial period," Wasim Khan, ICC General Manager - Cricket, said.



ed, the ICC said in a statement. Failure to do so for the third time in an innings (following two warnings) will result in a five-run penalty being imposed against the fielding team.



## Holder, Pooran, Mayers decline West Indies central contract

**PTI ■ KINGSTON (JAMAICA)**  
Former captain Holder last played for the West Indies in July - Test and T20I against India at home and in ODIs against Scotland during the ICC World Cup qualifiers in Harare. Pooran, also an ex-Windies captain in white ball formats, last played a T20I against India in August while his last ODI appearance was against Sri Lanka. Mayers' last T20I and ODI were against India in August while his previous Test appearance came against South Africa at Johannesburg earlier this March. List of contracted WI players: Men: Alick Athanaze, Kraigg Brathwaite, Keacy Carty, Tagenarine Chandernaul, Joshua Da Silva, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Gudakesh Motie, Rowan Powell, Kemar Roach, Jayden Seales, Romario Shepherd. Women: Aaliyah Alleyne, Shemaine Campbelle, Shamilla Connell, Afy Fletcher, Cherray-Ann Fraser, Shabika Gajrani, Jannillee Glasgow, Sheneta Grimmond, Chinnelle Henry, Zaida James, Mandy Mangru, Hayley Matthews, Karishma Ramharack, Stafanie Taylor, Rashada Williams. Joining the growing tribe of cricketers who stay away from the country's central contract, premier white ball players Nicholas Pooran, Jason Holders and Kyle Mayers have declined to join the West Indies roster for the 2023-24 season. However, the trio will be available to play T20Is for Windies during the above-mentioned season, announced the Cricket West Indies (CWI) in a media release. The latest West Indies central contract list includes 14 men and 15 women players. "We are very clear in the direction we want to go. The players who have been offered contracts are among those who we expect to feature, as we look to build towards challenging for the top spot when we host and compete in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 on home soil," said Desmond Haynes, WI men's chief selector. "We also have away Test Series in Australia and England - these are two major assignments. In the 50-over format we look to build a nucleus of players aimed towards the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027," added

## Gavaskar urges CSA to follow Eden Gardens model

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Legendary Sunil Gavaskar urged Cricket South Africa to take a leaf out of Eden Gardens' book after rain forced the abandonment of the first T20I between India and South Africa at Durban without a ball being bowled. Gavaskar said the South African board should follow the Eden method of covering the whole perimeter of the ground during the rain to minimise the damage. "What the boards need to do now is to cover the entire ground. Let's have no excuse. Everybody (cricket boards) is getting a lot of money. Let's make no mistake. "All the cricket boards have got plenty of money. If they say they don't, they are lying," Gavaskar told Star Sports. "They might not have as much money as the BCCI. Fair enough. But every board has got money to buy these covers to cover the entire ground," Gavaskar said. Kolkata's Eden Gardens is currently the only stadium in the country to have the facility to cover the whole ground in the event of rain, an initiative taken by Sourav Ganguly when he was at the helm of the Cricket Association of Bengal. The former Indian captain then pointed at the 2019 World Cup in England where four matches were washed out. "So many World Cup matches in England did not take place because the ground was not covered. The rain had stopped, but the rest of the ground was, you know, wet. So, a lot of tests lost points. "South Africa, I remember that they wanted to play against some team and the match didn't take place or something had happened, mainly because the outfield was wet," Gavaskar said. Gavaskar then lauded the vision of Ganguly in making Eden Gardens a rain-safe venue. "I think there was one Test match at Eden Gardens called off. During the next game, Eden Gardens had the entire ground covered. That is the kind of initiative that you want to have. "Sourav Ganguly was the man in charge and he made sure that nobody could point the finger at Eden Gardens," Gavaskar recalled.

## Women cricket progressed more than men since 2019: Ganguly

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly felt women's cricket has attained immense strides in its growth and reach since 2019, perhaps more than their men counterparts. Ganguly based his argument on the emergence of the Women's Premier League, a pool of talented players like Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti Mandhana and the team's good efforts in some global events of late. "The progress the women's cricket in India has made since 2019 is, perhaps, more than the men's team. The men's team has always been very good. "But from where the women's team was to where they went -- from winning the Asia Cup, the way they played in the World Cups. They were the best team in the Commonwealth Games (runners-up in 2022)," Ganguly told Jio Cinema. "Harmanpreet, Smriti, you name them, Richa, Jimimah, Shafali, the way they have progressed is impressive." Ganguly was also effusive in his praise for young pacer Renuka Singh. "When Jhulan (Goswami) finished, we thought where the next seamer would come from, and then Renuka (Singh) Thakur has developed over the last three years. So, that's the best thing about women's cricket," said the former BCCI president. Ganguly, the Director of Cricket at the Delhi Capitals, was delighted to see the side picking up some talented Indian players from the recent WPL auction. "I think Ashwani Kumari is someone who they (DC) kept an eye on because she can hit the ball a long way and she bowls. We needed a back-up keeper, so we got another keeper. We had three slots to fill, we knew one will always be the most important one and we got (Annabel) Sutherland," said Ganguly. The Capitals had purchased Australian cricketer Sutherland for Rs 2 crore from the recent player auction held at Mumbai.



## Indian men, women hockey teams leave for 5 Nations Tournament in Valencia

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**  
Indian men's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh has set his eyes on climbing up the FIH rankings, while his female counterpart Savita hopes to iron out the kinks ahead of next month's Olympic Qualifiers at the 5 Nations tournament in Spain. Both the Indian hockey teams will begin their campaign against Spain in Valencia on December 15. For the men, the tournament will serve as a preparatory event ahead of the 2023-24 Hockey Pro League season. India will play against Spain, Germany, France and Belgium during the tournament. The event also gains significance for the women's team as it will serve as the preparatory assignment ahead of the all-important Olympic Qualifiers in Ranchi beginning January 13. "The women's team will take on Spain in the first game before taking on Belgium on December 16, Germany on December 19, and Ireland in their last match on December 21. Similarly, the men's team will open against Spain on December 15, followed by matches against Belgium (Dec 16), Germany (Dec 19), and France (Dec 20).

# With only 5 games left ahead of T20 World Cup, auditioning youngsters running out of time

**PTI ■ GQEBERHA (SOUTH AFRICA)**  
After a washout in the series-opener robbed the auditioning Indian youngsters of valuable game time, the think tank will be hoping for clear weather in the second T20I against South Africa here on Tuesday. Even the toss could not be held in Durban on Sunday and there is a rain forecast even for the second game of the three-match series. Now only five games are left in the build up to the T20 World Cup in June and the management has a very small window to try out players. In the current scenario, form in the IPL will carry a lot of weight for selection in the Indian team bound for USA and Caribbean. The selectors announced a 17-man squad for the series and it is highly unlikely that all of them would get an opportunity in the remaining two games. Shubman Gill, who was not part of the T20 series against

Australia held right after the World Cup, Suryakumar Yadav and Rinku Singh seem to be the only certainties in the batting order for the ICC event six months later. Both Yashasvi Jaiswal and Rituraj Gaikwad have got runs under their belt but if Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma make themselves available for the World Cup, the two fringe players would need a sensational effort in the IPL to make the cut. The only other series India play before the World Cup is against Afghanistan at home next month. The selectors will be forced to consider only IPL performance for World Cup selection, raising questions over the scheduling of India's T20 commitments before the World Cup. Like Rinku, Jitesh Sharma is also being seen as the finisher for India in the shortest format. After showing promise against Australia, Jitesh will be hoping for game time against the Proteas. The extra bounce on South Africa pitches will pose a stiff test for the young batting lineup. In the bowling department, multiple spots are up for grabs with only Arshdeep Singh and Jasprit Bumrah, who is not playing this series, straightfor-



ward selections for the World Cup. Deepak Chahar, who was picked for his comeback series, remains in India due to a personal emergency. Both Kuldeep Yadav and Ravi Bishnoi, who impressed in the T20s against the Aussies, would like to carry their good form into the series. Ravindra Jadeja, who went on a break after the World Cup, has also linked up with the squad. Like India, South Africa too have only five games left to identify their core for the World Cup. Pace duo of Marco Jansen and Gerald Coetzee were only picked for the first two games. **TEAMS:**  
**India:** Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Rituraj Gaikwad, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Shreyas Iyer, Ishan Kishan (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Ravindra Jadeja (VC), Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Mohd. Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Deepak Chahar.  
**South Africa:** Aiden Markram (captain), Otniel Baartman, Matthew Breetzke, Nandre Burger, Gerald Coetzee (1st and 2nd T20Is), Donovan Ferreira, Reeza Hendricks, Marco Jansen (1st and 2nd T20Is), Heinrich Klaassen, Keshav Maharaj, David Miller, Andile Phehlukwayo, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, and Lizaad Williams.