

CITY 3
WORK WITH SPIRIT OF
NATION FIRST: YOGI

OPINION 6
INDIA RISING BUT
CHINA STILL AHEAD

WORLD 10
3 KILLED IN JERUSALEM
SHOOTING

LUCKNOW, FRIDAY DECEMBER 1, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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ROHIT WILL
HANDLE IT WITH
GRACE: ASHWIN
12 SPORTS

BJP to retain MP, Congress Chhattisgarh

Congress puts up tough fight against BRS in Telangana, but neck and neck with BJP in Rajasthan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/
AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

Most exit polls on Thursday predicted an edge to the Congress in Chhattisgarh and Telangana, but they forecasted that the advantage was with the BJP in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Pollsters also indicated that in Mizoram, Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) was locked in a close race with the Mizo National Front (MNF), with the Congress and the BJP lagging behind.

While the BJP holds power in the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly, the Congress governs Rajasthan (200) and Chhattisgarh (90). In Telangana, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) led by K Chandrashekhar Rao has been in power for the past 10 years, and in Mizoram, the MNF is currently in government.

Elections in these five States were held between November 7 and November 30, with the counting of votes scheduled for December 3.

In Madhya Pradesh, according to the India Today Axis My India, the BJP is predicted to secure 140-162 seats, while the Congress is expected to get 102-125 seats, but Jan Ki Baat exit poll predicted 100-123 seats for the BJP and 102-125 seats for the Congress in the State. The Republic TV-Matrise forecast suggests 118-130 seats for the BJP and 97-107 for the Congress, while TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat projects 106-116 seats for the BJP and 111-121 for the Congress.

Contrastingly, Today's Chanakya predicts a significant victory for the BJP in Madhya Pradesh, forecasting 151 seats with a margin of plus or minus 12, whereas the Congress is



anticipated to secure 74 seats with a similar margin.

According to Jist-TIF-NAI, the Congress appears to have a 2018-like edge in Madhya Pradesh, with a prediction of 107-124 seats for the party as opposed to the BJP's forecasted 102-119.

In Rajasthan, India Today-Axis My India anticipates a close competition, with projections of 86-106 seats for the

Congress, 80-100 seats for the BJP, and 9-18 for others.

Jan Ki Baat pollsters forecast 100-122 seats for the BJP and 62-85 for the Congress, while TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat predicts 100-110 for the BJP and 90-100 for the Congress.

Times Now ETG poll predicts 108-128 seats for the BJP and 56-72 for the Congress in Rajasthan.

Jist-TIF-NAI predicts a con-

tinuation of Rajasthan's revolving door tradition, forecasting 110 seats for the BJP and 70 for the Congress.

In Chhattisgarh, ABP News-C Voter predicts 36-48 seats for the BJP and 41-53 for the Congress, while India Today-Axis My India forecasts 36-46 seats for the BJP and 40-50 seats for the Congress.

India TV-CNX predicts 30-40 seats for the BJP and 46-56 seats for the Congress. According to Jan Ki Baat, the BJP is expected to secure 34-45 seats, while the Congress is anticipated to get 42-53 seats.

Today's Chanakya predicts that the BJP will secure 33 seats (plus-minus 8), while the Congress is expected to achieve a clear majority with 57 seats (plus-minus 8).

For Telangana, India TV-CNX forecasts 63-79 seats for the Congress, 31-47 for the

BRS, 2-4 for the BJP, and 5-7 for the AIMIM. Jan Ki Baat anticipates 48-64 seats for the Congress, 40-55 for the BRS, 7-13 for the BJP, and 4-7 for AIMIM.

Republic TV-Matrise predicts that in Telangana, the Congress will secure 58-68 seats, BRS 46-56, BJP 4-9, and AIMIM 5-9. Meanwhile, TV9 Bharatvarsh Polstrat states that the Congress will gain 49-59 seats, and the BRS will secure 48-58 seats.

In Mizoram, India TV-CNX forecasts that the MNF will get 14-18 seats, ZPM 12-16, Congress 8-10, and BJP 0-2. ABP News-C Voter suggests MNF will secure 15-21, ZPM 12-18, and Congress 2-8 seats. According to Jan Ki Baat, MNF is predicted to get 10-14 seats, ZPM 15-25 seats, Congress 5-9, and the BJP 0-2 in 40 members Assembly.

Make in India bolsters Defence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a major boost to Indian Defence industry, the Government on Thursday approved mega deals worth ₹2.23 lakh crore for acquiring more Tejas light combat aircraft, light combat helicopters, upgradation of SU-30 fighter jets, anti-ship missiles and towed gun systems.

These approvals by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here will also ensure availability of modern weapon systems for operational readiness. The DAC is the apex body for clearing procurement proposals put up by the Armed forces. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) gives the final clearance. Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "Excellent move towards bolstering our Armed Forces' operational prowess. The commitment to 'Make in India' in this decision marks a crucial stride in our pursuit of self-sufficiency in the Defence sector."

Giving details of the DAC decisions, the Defence Ministry officials said the apex body accorded approval in respect of Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) for various capital acquisition proposals amounting to ₹2.23 lakh crore.

Officials said out of the total amount, acquisition worth ₹2.20 lakh crore (98 per cent of total AoN amount) will be sourced from domestic industries. This will give a substantial boost to the Indian Defence Industry towards the aim of achieving the goal of "Atmanirbharta". One of the major proposals given the nod include an order for acquisition of 97 Tejas jets and 156 Prachand light combat helicopters (90 for Army and 66 for IAF).

The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will manufac-



ture these platforms for the IAF.

While the Tejas deal is worth over ₹55,000 crore, the helicopter deal is about ₹45,000 crore. These two deals are under Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category. 156 Prachand helicopters (90 for Army and 66 for IAF).

In February 2021, the Defence Ministry sealed a ₹48,000 crore deal with the HAL for procurement of 83 Tejas MK-1A jets for the IAF. With the additional fleet, the number of indigenously-developed Tejas aircraft being procured by the IAF would go up to 180. A major upgrade of the Sukhoi Su-30 MKI was also cleared by the DAC.

The IAF has over 260 Su-30 aircraft and the upgrade is expected to be an indigenous one, with India-developed radars, avionics and subsystems. Around 84 aircraft are expected to be upgraded initially. The AoNs have also been accorded by the DAC for upgradation of Su-30 MKI Aircraft indigenously from HAL. While procurement of these equipment will provide enormous strength to the IAF, acquisition from domestic Defence industries will take the indigenous capability to a new height. It will also reduce dependability on Foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) substantially, officials said.

The DAC also accorded approval for procurement of two types of Anti-tank Munitions namely, Area Denial Munition (ADM) Type- 2 and Type-3, which are capable of neutralising Tanks and Armoured personnel carriers and enemy personnel.

Continued on Page 9

Kejriwal seeks public opinion if he should run Govt from prison

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will initiate a referendum titled "Main Bhi Kejriwal" campaign starting on Friday to gather public feedback on whether Arvind Kejriwal should resign as the Delhi Chief Minister in the event of his arrest under an alleged "conspiracy by the BJP". As part of the campaign, AAP volunteers will distribute pamphlets and collect signatures from the public at all 2,600 polling stations across the city. These pamphlets will seek people's opinions on whether Kejriwal should step down from his role as Delhi Chief Minister if he faces arrest. Additionally, from December 21 to 24, MLAs and councillors will organise public dialogues in all wards to gauge the vox populi.

Addressing a press conference alongside party MP Raghav Chadha, Delhi Minister and Delhi AAP convener Gopal Rai alleged the BJP has orchestrated a conspiracy to have Kejriwal arrested under the "fake" liquor scam case, with the intention of dismantling the Aam Aadmi Party. Rai mentioned that Kejriwal had consulted with AAP MLAs and councillors, seeking their opinions on the matter, and there was a consensus that he should not resign but rather continue to govern from jail.

He said that from December 21 to December 24, the AAP will conduct "Jan Samvad" in every ward of the city to engage in discussions with the public about the alleged liquor scam and the BJP's purported conspiracy to have Kejriwal arrest-



ed. During these sessions, they will seek people's opinions on whether Kejriwal should resign as the Delhi Chief Minister in the event of his arrest or run the government from jail.

"Modiji placed Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain, and Sanjay Singh in jail through false cases. Even after that, since the BJP could not break the AAP, a conspiracy is being hatched to arrest Arvind Kejriwal. Despite ruling the MCD for 15 consecutive years, the people of Delhi, prioritising Arvind Kejriwal's work, uprooted the BJP from power. The way the AAP government under Kejriwal's leadership is working in Delhi has made BJP top leaders and PM Modi believe that at any cost, the BJP cannot form its government in Delhi. BJP intends that if its government does not form in Delhi, then Arvind Kejriwal should be eliminated, and the rapidly advancing caravan of the AAP should be halted," said Rai.

Sharing details, Rai mentioned that in the second phase, a public dialogue would be initiated across Delhi starting from December 21. From December 21 to 24, public dialogues will be organised in all wards of Delhi, encouraging the participation of residents from entire wards.

Continued on Page 9

TMC, BRS may skip all party meet

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

A few Opposition parties, including the Trinamool Congress, the BRS, and the AIADMK, may skip the all-party meeting convened by the Centre on Friday in view of the Winter Session of Parliament, which is scheduled to begin on Monday. The government has convened the customary meeting of floor leaders of political parties in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on Saturday.

Sources say that the Opposition parties have also convened a meeting of members of the INDIA bloc coalition on Monday before the Session begins. The meeting has been called to prepare a strategy for the Winter Session against the backdrop of intense

friction over a range of issues, including targets by Central probe agencies on Opposition leaders. The Opposition meeting will be chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, who is also the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi will conduct the meeting, which is expected to be attended by senior party leaders, including Union Ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Nitin Gadkari, Rajnath Singh, and Piyush Goyal, who is also the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha.

Sources said while Telangana Chief Minister led Bharatiya Rashtra Samiti (BRS) will go unrepresented as acrimonious exchange of words have been there between the BRS and the BJP in the just concluded elec-



tion campaign in the State, the AIADMK too is likely to give a miss over verbal duel between the BJP leadership of Tamil Nadu and AIADMK which till last month was the largest and longest serving alliance partner of BJP in the NDA from southern India.

Another major Opposition party that is certain to avoid participating in the all-party

meeting is the TMC led by West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee. The party believes that its Parliament representatives, such as Mahua Moitra and Abhishek Banerjee, are being victimised by the Centre. Abhishek, who is Mamata's nephew, was facing a probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), while Moitra has been implicated by the Parliament Ethics Committee over allegations of cash-for-query in the Lok Sabha question hour. While the party has defended Moitra, she now faces a probe by the CBI and the IT Ministry for sharing her Parliament login details beyond her jurisdiction. Sources said the report of the Ethics Committee on the "cash-for-query" allegations against Moitra will be tabled in Lok Sabha during the Session.

Continued on Page 9

Kissinger popularity in Kerala unexplained

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State during the Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford era, passed away on Wednesday at the age of 100. Despite having no connection to Kerala as he never visited this part of India, he was surprisingly popular in the State.

Kissinger, credited with a new style and art of diplomacy, reigned supreme during the peak of the Cold War and was recognised as one of the architects of US-China ties through Ping-Pong (the Chinese term for the game of table tennis). The diplomatic relations between the US and China received a boost from the Ping-Pong games between the two countries, paving the way for President Nixon's historic state visit to China in 1972.



The former Secretary of State was renowned for his ability to turn unfriendly countries into allies of the US. He believed in the principle that there were no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests, particularly focused on US commercial and strategic

interests.

Kissinger deserves full credit for his foresight and vision-ary forecasts. It was Kissinger who cautioned the world about the impending rise of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism, which would disrupt peace in Asia and pose a threat to

India. While addressing the Davos Symposium on January 31, 1980, Kissinger said, "The problem with India has the component that, for India, the existence of a strong, fundamentalist, Islamic state presents problems of its own internal cohesion and may create its own incentives for war. On the other hand, if India is concerned about our policies, it must provide assurances, beyond rhetoric, that it will not act in collusion with the Soviet Union and that it will not cooperate in an attack on Pakistan," as quoted in *Henry Kissinger: For The Record*.

Kissinger is also recognised for exposing what he saw as the folly behind the Non-Aligned Movement, which he deemed a means to fortify the hegemony of the then Soviet Union. His aversion to socialism and

communism was unmistakable. The Kerala media, quick to react to international developments, particularly in extolling the virtues of Communism and comrades in the USSR and China, portrayed Kissinger as a villain.

Despite the party cadre's ignorance about Kissinger's stance toward socialist countries, they seized every opportunity to taunt and ridicule the Nobel laureate.

In the early 1970s, when the Muslim League faced a split, Congress strongman K Karunakaran assigned Baby John, a leader of the RSP and a Congress ally, to negotiate with the League leadership to avert a breakup. Baby John, arriving at Parappanangadi in Malappuram district, aimed to reconcile the warring factions.

Continued on Page 9

Rashmi Saluja faces Gender Bias as she puts Religare on fast track

Religare Enterprises (REL), a key player in the Indian financial service sector, is currently mired in a battle for control as Burman family, its largest shareholder, seeks to augment its stake in the company. Dabur Ltd has proposed to acquire an additional 5.27 per cent stake in Religare Enterprises, thereby setting in motion, an open offer to buy an extra 26 per cent stake from the public in adherence to Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) guidelines. The Burman family's open offer for Religare Enterprises, is expected to amount to ₹2,116 crore upon full acceptance.

This comes close on the heels of a controversy around the issuance of ESOPs (Employment Stock Options Plans) to REL Executive Chairperson Rashmi Saluja for CARE Health Insurance, an entity in which REL owns

pioneer
News analysis

about 63 per cent stake. Saluja is currently the Non-Executive Chairperson for CARE. The issue of CARE ESOPs granted to her has become contentious in the ongoing battle between the Burman family and the REL board led by Saluja, who has expressed reservations about the idea of the Burman family taking over REL.

REL presently operates as a promoter-free company governed by an independent board. Zero-promoter companies have zero stakes with no promoter and are owned or managed by professionals. A "zero-promoter company" implies a company structure without active promoters driving the growth of its sub-



sidary companies. The performance of a zero-promoter company, like any investment, depends on the performance of its subsidiaries and the overall market conditions. Although there are a number of successful companies in India that have zero percentage of promoter holding, Religare Enterprises cuts above the rest with the businesses in its basket showing an increasing prof-

itability curve and a consistent increase in stock price. The net worth for all of them has been consistently improving with market capitalisation expansion going up from less than 100 million USD to 1 billion USD.

After the earlier promoters of REL stepped down in 2018, following gross misappropriation of funds, new management took charge to revive the company's financial stability through operational restructuring.

Saluja, an accomplished professional, joined Religare Enterprises as the Executive Chairperson in 2020. She is a doctor and an entrepreneur with an impressive portfolio and more than 25 years of administrative experience. She has been instrumental in bailing the company out of challenging times. REL now has various subsidiary companies under its umbrella providing a

range of financial services. The company's growth and success under her leadership reflect in the consistent rise of REL's market cap from a critical low to an impressively high market value. In the last three years, the company has grown to become one of the best RoE brands in India with its strong presence in the market. However, Saluja is now under scrutiny after the Burman family filed a complaint with SEBI, questioning the sale of her shares. Allegations include non-compliance with insurance regulator IRDAI's guidelines. The controversy intensified as the Burman family claimed that Saluja sold a portion of her personal holdings in Religare Enterprises a day after a meeting held with the Burmans where they discussed an open offer for a controlling stake in Religare Enterprises.

Allegations directed at Saluja not only question her competence but also cast doubt on the credibility of Religare's management and board. Saluja vehemently denies these claims, labelling them as unfounded attempts to damage her reputation, and asserts that the share sales adhered to proper procedures. The Religare board stands by Saluja, insisting that the allocation of ESOPs for CARE Health Insurance was conducted transparently and in accordance with regulatory guidelines. The company also contends that the allegations challenging its management, particularly the sale of shares by her are baseless and unfounded.

Despite Saluja's substantial contributions, her case reveals apparent gender bias, with accusations challenging her leadership and competence. Though her efforts in steering Religare toward financial

independence over the past three years are duly acknowledged by the company, the allegations underscore the broader challenges faced by other women entrepreneurs and corporate leaders, emphasising their ongoing struggle against discrimination and skepticism. The gender gap remains glaring in the upper echelons of the Indian corporate sector, reflecting a systemic challenge in achieving gender parity in top management.

The power struggle between the Burman family and REL management also sheds light on corporate complexities, particularly highlighting gender disparities. While government initiatives focus on women's empowerment, the ongoing conflict at Religare Enterprises underscores the imperative for an inclusive corporate model to eliminate gender biases in leadership positions.

Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra to fulfil PM resolve to develop India: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that to realise the resolve of a developed India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had taken several crucial decisions and initiatives in the past nine and a half years and both the Central and state governments had been quite supportive of the prime minister's commitment to accelerate growth of the country.

Speaking during the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Nishatganj, Balmikinar, the chief minister said that this yatra would establish the concept of developed India in the coming years under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. "The contribution of all of us is necessary for this. For this purpose, the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra was launched on Tribal Pride Day on November 15," he remarked.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also participated in discussions with the beneficiaries of diverse schemes nationwide via video conferencing during the programme. Before this, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath engaged with the beneficiaries of different schemes and distributed cheques, certificates, house keys and Ayushman cards.

He said, "India gained

independence in 1947 and since then, several governments have been formed. They might have undertaken projects and spent the country's money, but the perception of India and its people worldwide was different before 2014. Today, we witness a changed image, which reflects Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision."

Before 2014, schemes were formulated in the country by looking at faces, and often these initiatives involved no rules and regulations. The agendas did not include the poor, common citizens, women and youth. However, today, the government is extending the benefits of various welfare schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, free toilets in the homes of the poor, PM Jan Dhan Yojana, Ayushman Bharat Yojana, PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi and PM SVANidhi to the needy, Chief Minister Yogi pointed out.

He noted that these schemes were now providing benefits to the eligible people without any discrimination, despite the revenue sources of the country and the government being the same as in the past. "In the last nine years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has provided free toilets



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with a beneficiary during the programme in Lucknow on Thursday

to 12 crore families, houses to four crore families, and health insurance to 50 crore people under Ayushman Bharat. In Uttar Pradesh alone, over 55 lakh families have received houses, three crore families have been provided with toilets, and 10 crore people have benefited from the Ayushman Bharat card," he pointed out.

Chief Minister Yogi said, "Through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and MLA fund,

MLAs are contributing funds to ensure medical treatment for people in their respective areas. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, free rations are continuously being provided to 80 crore people in the country."

"If the government is thinking about you, it becomes your responsibility to extend your full cooperation in fulfilling Prime Minister Modi's resolve of 'Panch Pran'. Some

people do not want the country's development. They attempt to divide society on the basis of family, caste, religion and creed, pushing back the agenda of development. In order to bring happiness to the faces of the poor, we all need to come together," Chief Minister Yogi said.

He mentioned that when the country celebrates 100 years of independence in the year 2047, during the indepen-

dence centenary celebration, India should move forward with the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, taking the world along with it. For this, the mentality of slavery will have to be ended, he added.

The chief minister said that the Central and state governments were running various schemes to make every citizen self-reliant. "In this regard, the responsibility of all people and their families,

CM Yogi interacts with beneficiaries

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath handed over cheques, certificates, house keys and Ayushman cards to the beneficiaries of various schemes during the programme. He also handed over cheques and certificates to PM SVANidhi beneficiaries Sujit Kumar, Aameeda Khatoun, Ram Kishore and Vinod Yadav.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), he handed over house keys to Lakshmi Devi, Reena, Vimla and Sufia. Pinki and Neha Singh

received Ayushman cards.

The chief minister also directly interacted with the beneficiaries of various schemes during this event. During this, beneficiaries Badlu Rajput, Suman Singh, Divyansh Goswami and Tanushree Pandey expressed their gratitude for the benefits of the schemes.

Rajya Sabha member Dinesh Sharma, Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, Chief Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra, MLA Yogesh Shukla, Dr Neeraj Bora and others were present in the programme.

Poshan Mission in rural areas has been handed over to self-help groups, benefitting 60,000 women who are directly uplifting themselves through employment," he said.

Yogi further mentioned that BC Sakhi is responsibly providing banking facilities to rural areas. By being a part of this scheme, they are playing a crucial role in solving the banking-related issues of rural people and their families,

including withdrawing and depositing money from banks.

He further stated that through the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, various programmes aligned with Prime Minister Modi's vision are being promoted. In such a situation, the programme will be taken to new heights of success through video vans in more than 57,000-gram panchayats and more than 762 civic bodies of the state, he added.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Abdul Qayum to Abdul Qaiyum S/o Shujat Hussain R/o 92 Block-D Defence Colony Jajmau Nagar Kanpur

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Zabran Parvez to Zibran Parvez. In future I shall be known as Zibran Parvez S/o Parvez Ahamad, 405/376, Eastern Line Asharfabad, Jajmau, Kanpur-208010

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Roopender Kaur to Rupinder Saluja. In future I shall be known as Rupinder Saluja W/o Rajendra Singh Saluja, 60, Harjendra Nagar 2nd Lalbagla, Chakeri, Kanpur

NOTICE

I Shukla Ram Kishor Kashi Prasad S/o Late Kashi Prasad Shukla Residing At Flat/No-202, Shristi Suraj Apartment, Kanpur Nagar-208007 Have changed my name from Shukla Ram Kishor. Kashi Prasad To Ram Kishor Shukla vide affidavit No-84AE 411700 Dated 18/11/2023 At Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE

I, Nirmala Devi W/o Shukla Ram Kishor. Kashi Prasad Residing At Flat/No-202, Shristi Suraj Apartment, Kanpur Nagar-208007 Have Changed my name from Nirmala Devi to Nirmala Devi Shukla vide affidavit No-84AE 411698 Dated 18/11/2023 At Kanpur Nagar.

AUCTION NOTICE

दिनांक 11.12.2023 प्रातः 11:15 बजे कार्यालय आयकर अपीलीय अधिकरण, ए-ब्लॉक चंचम तल, सिकप मवन, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ में बुद्ध-वॉल पैनल पारटेशन की नीलामी, सिव्योरिटी रु 15,000 / -बैंकड्राफ्ट D.D.O., I.T.A.T, Lucknow नामित, जीएसएटीओ पंजीकरण के साथ जमा होगी। आईओपीओ सिंह एण्ड सन्स

सूचना

सूच्य हो कि प्रार्थनी का नाम सुरभि शाही (SURBI SHAHI) माता का कंचन शाही (KANCHAN SHAHI) पिता का अशोक कुमार शाही (ASHOK KUMAR SHAHI) सही है जो आधारकार्ड, पैनकार्ड व शैक्षिक अभिलेख हैं (SURBI SHAHI) (C.B.S.E.) के सहअंक प्रमाणपत्र (अनुक्रमांक- 5171764 / 2019) में त्रुटिवा से सुरभि शाही (SURBI SHAHI) माता का कंचन शाही (KANCHAN SHAHI) पिता का अशोक कुमार शाही (ASHOK KUMAR SHAHI) नाम दर्ज है जो गलत है। सुरभि शाही पुत्री अशोक कुमार शाही ग्रा. व पो.-भैरोपुर, तह.-मधुबन, मऊ (U.P.)

Two builders booked for blueprint violation

Lucknow (PNS): Two builders, said to be close to embattled mafia-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, have been booked for flouting rules pertaining to map approval by Lucknow Development Authority in Kaiserbagh police station area.

The accused — FI Builders owners Siraj Iqbal and Monis Iqbal — and their aide Michael Paul constructed an eight-storey building and a pent-house instead of the six-storey building which he had secured a permission for.

LDA junior engineer Imtiaz Ahmad stated in his complaint that Monis, Siraj, and Michael Paul of Lucknow Publishing House had secured permission for the construction of a six-storey housing tower in an area of 23,534.11 square metres. He alleged that the accused were given permission to construct 72 flats in the six-storey building, but they unauthorisedly constructed an eight-storey building with a penthouse. He said that the accused also constructed a setback area unauthorisedly. "They neither secured permission from LDA nor informed it about the same," the engineer alleged. He said a team of LDA visited the building and found

that most of the flats were occupied by inmates.

"The inmates told the team that the builders showed them fake papers related to permission from LDA before the deal. The builders kept the inmates in the dark and endangered their lives by unauthorisedly constructing extra floors in the building," the JE said.

Based on the complaint, the police registered a case against the builders and their aide for forgery, tampering with government documents and criminal conspiracy.

Sources said some LDA officials were aware about the unauthorised construction but they turned a blind eye towards it. "The builders may well have greased the palms of LDA officials concerned. There are several under-construction buildings in the city but many of them have bypassed the blueprint. Also, those flouting the rules are not just builders. In the past, several cases came to light in Gomti Nagar in which the house-owners got land for excavating foundation deeper than permitted, resulting in cracks in neighbouring houses," the source said.

They claimed that there are several houses in the city in violation of the blueprint

Class XI girl student hangs self

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A Class XI girl student was found hanging under mysterious circumstances in Sarojinagar on Wednesday night. Police claimed the girl committed suicide, but no suicide note was recovered from the place. The police said they were talking to the family members of the deceased to know about why she took the extreme step. It was alleged that the girl hanged herself after being scolded by her mother.

According to police, Prakriti (16) of Vasundhara Estate, was a Class XI student of Hiralal Degree College. After her mother Poonam found her talking to someone over phone late on Wednesday evening, she scolded Prakriti. Angered by this, Prakriti went to her room. After she did not come out of the room, her family members went there but found the doors bolted from inside. They knocked the doors repeatedly but there was no response from inside. They peeped through the window and found her hanging from the fan with a dupatta tied around her neck.

Meanwhile, mystery has shrouded the death of a peon, whose body was recovered from a locked room allotted to him in Mandi Parishad Colony in Vibhuti Khand police station area on Wednesday night.

Pawan (30) of Vrindavan Colony (Sector 5) in PGI police station area, lived with his wife in the room allotted to him in the Mandi Parishad Colony. He was all alone after his wife left for her parents' house around 5-6 days ago. On Wednesday night, arrangement officer Hakim Singh called the security guards manager and asked him to reach room number E-2/2. Singh reached the scene with security guards and found the doors bolted from inside. The guards broke open the doors only to find Pawan lying unresponsive. The room was filled with a putrid smell. On being informed, police reached the scene and sent Pawan to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. A spokesman said that the police reached the scene and came to know that the body had started decomposing. "He was all alone after his wife left for her parents' house. He got married in March this year. The body has been sent for autopsy to ascertain the cause of death," the spokesman said.

It surfaced during investigation that Pawan had not been seen in the area during the last 2-3 days and some of the colony inmates alerted Mandi Parishad officials. "An arrangement officer called the manager of security guards who found Pawan dead. They later informed police," the spokesman said.

In another incident, thieves made off with Rs 70,000 in cash, a laptop and ornaments worth several lakh from a house in Indira Nagar some time on the intervening night of November 29 and 30. Sandeep Singh stated in his complaint that he, along with his family, had gone to the wedding of a friend and the house was locked. "We returned around 2:30 am on Thursday and found the main gate lock broken and a window grill dismantled. When we entered the house, we found articles lying all across the floor. When we checked the lockers, cash, ornaments and other valuables were missing," he said.

IDOLS DESECRATED

Three idols were desecrated in a temple in Sarojinagar some time on Wednesday night. When the incident came to light on Thursday morning, locals staged protest demanding action against the culprits. The police reached the scene and ensured installation of new idols. Police said they were trying to track down the culprits. Reports said the idols of Goddess Durga & Lord Hanuman and a 'Shivling' installed inside Baleshwar temple in Hanuman Puri area of Sarojinagar on Wednesday night. When locals reached the temple on Thursday morning, they found the idols desecrated.

Youth booked for violating traffic rules after IG reel goes viral

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Police arrested a contractual employee of Transport department after his video posing with a gun-like object while riding a bike without a helmet went viral on social media. The accused, identified as Amit Rai (20) of Gomti Nagar Extension, was nabbed by the Sushant Golf City police on Wednesday night. His bike was also impounded.

"The youth said he is pursuing MBA and is also a contractual employee of the Transport department," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Vineet Jaiswal said. According to the DCR, the gun-like object turned out to be a cigarette lighter. "He has mentioned it in the caption of the video which he uploaded on Instagram," Jaiswal said.

In the 13-second video, with a Bhojpuri song playing in the background, the youth is seen riding a bike while flashing a gun-like object in the backdrop of Ekana stadium.

When the police checked the video, it had garnered around 1.5 million views and over 37,000 likes. It had also been shared 63 times. The youth has over 40,700 followers on Instagram, the police said, adding he was in the habit

of posting such videos to broaden his follower base.

There are several other Instagram reels on his profile in which he is seen riding a bike without wearing a helmet and violating traffic rules. These videos also have many likes and views, a senior officer said. The police registered an FIR against Amit and booked him for violating traffic rules and uploading "dangerous content" on social media.

Meanwhile, a group consisting of four youths were caught on CCTV removing barriers on G20 road so that they could make reels while rooming around, violating the speed limit.

The group of youths, including two minors, allegedly threw into the drain a barricade installed on G20 road. The video went viral on social media after which the youths were held on Thursday.

ADCP, East, Syed Ali Abbas said that the accused were identified with the help of a CCTV footage and arrested. "Two of them have been identified as Sahil of Amethi, and Akhtar of Lucknow. The other two are minors. All have been booked under Section 420 (cheating) of the IPC," he added.

Dalit minor gang-raped in Hathras

Lucknow (PNS): A 13-year-old Dalit girl was gang-raped in Pokharwala locality of Sadabad in Hathras district, police said on Friday.

The victim's mother has filed a complaint against three youths, including a nagar panchayat corporator. Police have arrested all the three accused after registering a case.

According to a report lodged by the victim's mother, on Thursday last, her 13-year-old minor daughter was having a stomach ache and was resting at home. "My daughter asked the youth living in the neighbourhood to bring her medicine for the pain. She consumed the medicine brought

by the youth and became unconscious," she said.

She further said that the youth and his two associates then raped her and also filmed the act and sent it on her mobile, threatening to make it viral if she reported the incident to anyone. She said the accused also created a fake ID and uploaded the video on social media. Police registered a case under Section 376D of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Prevention of Atrocities Act and other sections of the IPC.

Police also arrested the

accused Sahil, Nasir and one more and sent them to jail. Nasir is a corporator of Sadabad nagar panchayat.

Meanwhile, an 11-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a maulana in a mosque in Hamirpur district, police said on Thursday. The incident allegedly took place when the girl had gone to take Urdu class from Maulana Muntazir Alam, 28, in a mosque in the Kurara area, police said. It is alleged that the maulana asked the girl to stay back after the class and raped her. Later, when the girl reached home she told her parents about the incident.

Station House Officer,

Kurara, Prakash Yadav said that an FIR had been registered in this connection under the relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the POCSO Act, and the accused was arrested. The victim was also admitted in the hospital for medical examination. According to the villagers, the maulana had come to the mosque from Bihar four-five years ago. He used to teach children of Muslim community. The victim's father said that five years before the consent of the society, the maulana was hired to teach in the mosque on a salary of Rs 30,000 per month.

Fight with full might to win LS polls: Maya

Lucknow (PNS): Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati, on Thursday, called upon party workers to contest the upcoming Lok Sabha elections on their own and with all their might to gain power, saying that the next general elections will prove to be interesting and a struggle in which BSP will also play an important role.

Addressing a meeting of the party's Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhnad units, called to review the preparations for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the BSP chief said all the workers should fulfill their responsibilities with full vigour and honesty so that by achieving better results a 'Sarvajana Hitaya and Sarvajana Sukhaya, government could be formed.

Referring to the political situation in the country, Mayawati

said, "The political situation is changing rapidly due to the narrow, casteist and anti-people policies and functioning of the Central and various state governments, including that in Uttar Pradesh. People do not want the dominance of any one party, rather they seem eager to choose the path of multi-cornered struggle." She said that under these circumstances, there was a strong possibility that the next Lok Sabha elections would be contested in the larger public interest and national interest, in which BSP would also play an important role.

She said, "In such a situation, good results can be achieved by working honestly and sincerely on the important guidelines given to the party from time to time."

Mayawati further said that

with good results in the election, Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar's 'Self-Respect Movement' would be strengthened not only in Uttar Pradesh but in the entire country.

While giving instructions to organise the death anniversary of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar on December 6 in full missionary spirit, Mayawati said that this time people from six divisions of western Uttar Pradesh — Agra, Aligarh, Bareilly, Moradabad, Meerut and Saharanpur — would go to Noida to pay tribute to Baba Saheb at National Dalit Inspiration Site Green Garden.

She said that people of the remaining 12 mandals would pay homage to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar at the Doctor Ambedkar Memorial located at the place of social transformation in Lucknow.

 बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda	Regional Office Kanpur Dehat Region : 118/330, 2nd Floor, Kaushalpur Gumti No. 5, Kanpur -208012
Public Notice (Branch : Saffur, Distt. Unnao)	
Here by this is to inform that under named borrower has not repaid principal and interest thereon of the loan. Therefore the loan become NPA on below Dated . A notice under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 was issued at last known address, which was returned undelivered. Therefore we again inform to under named borrower/ Guarantor by this public notice to repay the loan amount due including interest and other expenses as mentioned in this notice within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice otherwise bank will take action u/section 13(4) of the SARFESI Act 2002.	
The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets, that after publication of public auction/inviting quotation/tender/ private treaty your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available.	
Name and Address of Borrower / Guarantor and Security agreement with brief description of securities/N.P.A. Date & Outstanding amount as per Demand Notice	
Borrower : M/s Shanti Trading Company, Address : Bhaishara Chauraha, Saffur, Distt. Unnao, Proprietor : Shri Yogesh Kumar S/o Shri Nand Pal, R/o : Brijpalpur, Mawai Lal, Saffur, Distt. Unnao. (Borrower in Housing Loan) : Shri Yogesh Kumar S/o Shri Nand Pal and Shri Sher Singh S/o Shri Nand Pal, Both R/o : Brijpalpur, Mawai Lal, Saffur, Distt. Unnao. Guarantor : Shri Sher Singh S/o Shri Nand Pal, R/o : Brijpalpur, Mawai Lal, Saffur, Distt. Unnao. N.P.A. Date : 18-10-2023 • Demand Notice Date : 02-11-2023	
Property (1) : Land and Building situated at Gata No. 223Mi, Situated at Village Bhaishara, Pargana & Tehsil Saffur, Distt. Unnao in the name of Shri Yogesh Kumar and Shri Sher Singh Both S/o Shri Nand Pal, Area : 133 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North : Agri Land of Ram Naresh, South : Agri Land of Sanjay, East : Remaining Land of Seller, West : Godown of Purchaser. Property (2) : Land and Building situated at Gata No. 223Mi, Situated at Village Bhaishara, Pargana & Tehsil Saffur, Distt. Unnao in the name of Shri Yogesh Kumar and Shri Sher Singh Both S/o Shri Nand Pal, Area : 78.84 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North : Agri Land of Ram Naresh, South : Agri Land of Sanjay, East : Remaining Land of Seller, West : Saffur Miyaganj Road.	
O/s Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 20,41,078.15 + Intt. + Others Charges	
Date : 01-12-2023	Place : Unnao
Authorised Officer	

CM: Tough decisions changed negative perception of UP

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that tough decisions had to be taken to change the negative perception of Uttar Pradesh among the people of the country and the world.

He emphasised that the government had made serious efforts, introducing several measures to transform this perception of UP.

The chief minister was addressing the 34th Foundation Day celebration of Gorakhpur Industrial Development Authority (GIDA). He said, “The tireless and determined work not only changed the perception of the people towards UP, but now every big entrepreneur of the country and the world aspires to invest in the state.”

During the grand event, the chief minister inaugurated and laid foundation stones of private sector investment projects worth Rs 800 crore in GIDA. He also handed over allotment letters for new plots to implement the investment proposals of Rs 500 crore. Besides, the chief minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of infrastructure development works worth Rs 150 crore.

Furthermore, he launched the first phase of Kalesar project to be developed as a new business area and GIDA Seva Portal with online services. He

Work with spirit of nation first: Yogi

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that the money collected through taxes from the public was spent on nation-building and was invested in welfare schemes and infrastructure development projects. He said chartered accountants need to raise awareness among taxpayers and alert those who were evading taxes and were not contributing to the nation-building process.

While inaugurating the national conference organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) at Baba Gambhir Nath auditorium, the chief minister said, “If India wants to stand among developed nations in the next 10 years, everyone needs to make the spirit of ‘Nation First’ a part of their work.”

He stated that our work is not just about the ease of doing business, but also about achieving the ease of living goals, i.e. ensuring that no one faces any problems at any level. “For this, the Central and state governments are ready to



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath releasing a book at ICAI seminar in Gorakhpur on Thursday

implement all kinds of reforms,” he pointed out.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that on the occasion of the 76th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had set five resolutions for the country for the coming 25 years, i.e., until 2047, which were called ‘Panch Pran’.

These Panch Pran include a developed India, freedom from the mentality of slavery, a sense of respect for the glorious past, a sense of unity and the fifth resolution emphasizes civic duty.

India is the world’s largest democracy and Prime

Minister Modi has made the 142 crore population a symbol of global confidence, he added.

Chief Minister Yogi said, “If 142 crore people work with full energy, India will become a global power. A developed India will be the India of our dreams, where opportunities to realise the dreams of every individual will exist.”

He stated that efforts are being made to showcase our expertise to address shortcomings, but we must demonstrate it in eliminating those shortcomings.

“Officials and employees of the Revenue Department

should engage in dialogue and educate about the process of GST (goods and services tax) registration and filing income tax returns,” he said.

In the programme, a research paper prepared by ICAI on the current situation and future of industries in Uttar Pradesh was released.

MP Ravi Kishan Shukla, Mayor Manglesh Srivastava, ICAI president Aniket Sunil Talati, vice-president Ranjeet Agarwal, Gorakhpur branch president Archana Tripathi and chartered accountants of Gorakhpur region and other dignitaries were present in the programme.

India Limited (GAIL) for the supply of raw material to the units in the Plastic Park.

On this occasion, Chief

Minister Yogi mentioned that the positive image of the state, created by the government’s efforts, led to the participation of every big entrepreneur from around the world in the Global Investors Summit held in February.

He said that during the GIS-2023, MoUs worth Rs 40 lakh crore were signed for investment proposals in the state. H said if these proposals came to the ground, it would guarantee jobs and employment for 1.10 crore people. “Therefore, swift action is being taken on the proposals received during the GIS-2023,” he added.

Yogi pointed out that a decade ago, having investments in Gorakhpur was merely a dream. “The area faced challenges like gang wars and anarchy, making people live in fear. There was a risk to the lives of entrepreneurs who were willing to invest in the region. The name Gorakhpur not only worried people in the state but also concerned people globally. Gorakhpur has now overcome gang violence and anarchy. Today, it is reaching new heights of investment, employment, and development,” he added.

The chief minister mentioned key achievements like the sugar factory, AIIMS, revitalisation of Ramgarh Tal, zoo and Pipraich sugar mill, stating that Gorakhpur was rapidly transforming.

“Gorakhpur not only influences its geographical area but also serves as a significant centre for education, health and employment for a population of five crore, spanning eastern Uttar Pradesh, western Bihar, and Nepal’s Terai region,” he pointed out.

“Gorakhpur boasts excellent connectivity, including a four-lane road to Lucknow, Varanasi and Nepal, as well as 14 flights to major cities. Vande Bharat Express contributes to the excellent rail connectivity,” he added.

The chief minister highlighted that the conducive environment and easy accessibility contributed to investment growth, aiding the youth in advancing in innovative fields. He said Gorakhpur had demonstrated its role in shaping the new Uttar Pradesh in the era of New India.

On the 34th Foundation Day, the chief minister extended wishes to all entrepreneurs, officials, employees and workers of GIDA, stating that GIDA is in a position to provide something (big) today. He mentioned various industries like India Glycols Limited, Gallant Group, Ankur Udyog, Varun Beverages, Keyaana Distillery, Gyan Dairy, Tatva Plastics, etc., emphasising that substantial investments have been made in Gorakhpur, leading to the creation of employment on a large scale.

“Now, the youth here will

not have to go outside for jobs; instead, people from outside will come here in search of work. With a little effort and a positive perspective, GIDA has witnessed an investment of Rs 12,000 crore in a short span,” he added. While discussing the development of GIDA, Chief Minister Yogi said that there would be new industrial development near Gorakhpur Link Expressway and in Dhuriapar. He said that funds had been made available to GIDA for 800 acres of land bank for this purpose.

“Dhuriyapur and Dakshinanchal, once considered the least developed region, will now transform into the most prosperous area, fostering new employment and self-reliance,” Yogi added.

In his address, he urged everyone to responsibly contribute to the development process.

On this occasion, many prominent leaders and entrepreneurs from the region were present, including State MSME, Khadi and Village Industries Minister Rakesh Sachan, MP Ravi Kishan Shukla, Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner Manoj Kumar Singh, Mayor Dr Mangalesh Srivastava, MLAs Vipin Singh, Pradeep Shukla, BJP’s regional president Sahajanand Rai, District Magistrate Yudhishtir Singh, and Chamber of Industries president RN Singh.

CM: Startups should not compromise on quality

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, urged the micro, small and medium entrepreneurs of the state not to compromise quality of their products, stressing the state government’s commitment to giving them priority in government purchases at all costs.

In his address during the Udyami Mahasammelan organised by the Indian Industries Association at the Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, the chief minister said, “The MSME sector of Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the biggest strength of self-reliant India. We have done remarkable work towards getting rid of ‘Inspector raj’ by strengthening technology.”

He added: “The results of our efforts to eradicate ‘Inspector raj’ by bolstering technology are evident today. The whole world is looking towards Uttar Pradesh with confidence. We should start preparing for the International Trade Show-2024 now.”

The chief minister also visited the exhibition related to Transforming MSME Towards Industry 4.0 and Skill 48, in which MSME startup entrepreneurs from across the state showcased their products.

Welcoming the organisers and entrepreneurs in the state capital, the chief minister noted the challenges that entrepreneurs faced in Uttar Pradesh prior to 2017 due to a lack of a conducive environment as well as lack of government encouragement and support.

“After our government came to power in the state in 2017, the result of the scheme

for promoting our traditional products as One District, One Product is in front of all of us. Not only the country, even the world considers it an innovative project,” he said.

Encouraging entrepreneurs to prioritise product quality and packaging in today’s competitive landscape, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath further said that by strengthening the technology, programmes to get rid of ‘Inspector raj’ had been run.

Discussing initiatives like the Nivesh Mitra Portal, Nivesh Sarathi Portal and Online Incentive Platform, Chief Minister Yogi underscored their remarkable contributions to enhancing investment possibilities and streamlining facilities for entrepreneurs within the state.

“UP’s ranking in ease of doing business was at 14th place six years ago. Extensive reforms were made to this. The result is in front of everyone,” he stated.

The chief minister said that whether it was the work of creating a land bank within the state or establishing better law and order, remarkable work had been done on every front.

“Investment proposals totaling Rs 40 lakh crore were received through the Global Investors Summit held in February 2023. The International Trade Show held in Greater Noida in September was also very successful. Over 70,000 buyers had come to the show while the total footprint was four lakh. More than 400 foreign buyers also visited the show.

This showcased the remark-

able potential of the new Uttar Pradesh of New India,” he pointed out.

The chief minister said that the whole world was looking towards India and UP with a sense of credibility. “While it took 46 years to develop Noida and Greater Noida, we are currently working rapidly towards a new industrial setup in Jhansi, Bundelkhand. In Jhansi, we already have about 38,000 acres of land bank in the first phase. For the first time in 46 years, under our government, the international airport in Greater Noida is ready, whereas in Jhansi we are going to provide an airport in the first phase.”

Addressing the entrepreneurs, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath encouraged the utilisation of local educational institutions for acquiring manpower. “For this, take the help of the PM and CM Internship Scheme,” he added.

The chief minister emphasised the importance of organising trade shows across every part of the state and urged entrepreneurs to harness solar power as a sustainable and pollution-free source of electricity.

On this occasion, UP’s MSME Minister Rakesh Sachan, Chief Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra, Additional Chief Secretary (MSME) Amit Mohan Prasad, IIA national president of Neeraj Singhal, senior vice-president Dinesh Goyal, general secretary Alok Aggarwal, and president of Udyami Mahasammelan were present. A large number of MSME entrepreneurs from across the state, including coordinator Rajeev Bansal also attended the programme.

Married woman, lover end lives in Bahraich

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A married woman and her lover ended their lives in Bahraich after the woman’s family objected to their affair.

Reports said that 24-year-old Suman of Kaundha village under Bondi police station of Bahraich district was having a love affair with Mohit Verma, a 21-year-old Pharmacy student living near her in-laws’ house.

According to the police, on Wednesday night, Suman’s brother-in-law and sister-in-law came to know about her love affair, leading to a scuffle. Miffed over this, Suman went to her room and after some time her body was found hanging from the ceiling fan.

Suman’s brother-in-law also threatened Mohit. When Mohit came to know that Suman had committed suicide, he also hanged himself in his room. Suman left behind a two-year-old daughter.

Her husband, Rakesh, said that there was a dispute between Suman and his brother, who accused Suman of having illicit relations with Mohit, after which she committed suicide.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (Rural) Pavitra Mohan Tripathi said that Rakesh had informed that his wife had committed suicide by hanging herself in the room while Keshav Ram of the same village said that his son Mohit had also hanged himself.

A case was registered and both the bodies were sent for post-mortem.

Govt encouraging establishment of small and cottage industries

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government, on Thursday, informed the state assembly during Question Hour that it was encouraging the establishment of small and cottage industries in the state through its policies and programmes, which includes several incentives for entrepreneurs.

Replying to a question raised by RK Verma of the Samajwadi Party, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Rakesh Sachan said that the state government was encouraging the establishment of small and cottage industries in the state through its policies and programmes, which included several incentives for entrepreneurs.

He said that under the Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme, there was a provision of funding up to 15-35 per cent of the cost of projects worth up to Rs 50 lakh whereas in the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarozgar Yojana, there was a provision for up to 25 per cent funding for projects of up to Rs 25 lakh.

Similarly, under the financial support scheme of the One District One Product scheme, there is a provision to provide grants of 10-25 per cent of the project cost, with the maximum limit of up to Rs 20 lakh, he added.

Under the Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana and One District One Product scheme, artisans associated with traditional products are provided training and modern tool kits through skill development and tool kit distribution, he pointed out.

The minister said that under the Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme, there was a provision of reservation for 20.70 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 0.57 per cent Scheduled Tribes candidates.

The minister further mentioned that under the Mukhyamantri Yuva Swarozgar Yojana, general category beneficiaries are required to contribute 10 per cent of the project cost, while Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Minorities, women, and persons with disabilities are required to contribute 5 per cent of the project cost.

The One District One Product financial support scheme aims to promote various categories of local products, and the Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana is implemented to uplift traditional artisans from different fields, he stated.

Replying to a question related to Scheduled Caste welfare, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Backward Class Welfare, Divyangjan Empowerment Narendra Kashyap

said that in the financial year 2022-23, under the post-matric scholarship and fee reimbursement scheme, the department received a total of 2,344,689 applications from Other Backward Classes students of which scholarships were provided to 1,596,455. He said that against the budget of Rs 1,450 crore for the financial year 2022-23, a budget provision of Rs 1,850 crore had been made in the current financial year 2023-24.

Minister of State for Social Welfare (Independent Charge) Asim Arun, replying to a question, said that under the fee reimbursement scheme, eligible students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and general categories studying in state-run and government-aided educational institutions within the state and in government and aided educational institutions outside the state were being provided fee reimbursement as per the rules and regulations.

In the financial year 2022-23, fee reimbursement was provided to 36,607 Scheduled Castes students. Online applications for the financial year 2023-24 are being accepted from students currently enrolled, and the disbursement of funds to eligible and accurate data-submitted students will be done in March 2024, he added.

Assembly passes bills for development of three pilgrimage centres

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh assembly, on Thursday, passed three bills to set up a pilgrimage development board for protecting and preserving the ancient cultural heritage in pilgrimage centres Ayodhya, Devi Patan in Balrampur district and Shukra Teerth in Muzaffarnagar district.

The bills, tabled by Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, are Uttar Pradesh Shri Shukra Teerth Development Board Bill, 2023, Uttar Pradesh Shri Devi Patan Teerth Development Board Bill, 2023 and Uttar Pradesh Shri Ayodhya Ji Teerth Development Board Bill, 2023. All the three boards are being set up on the lines of UP Braj Teerth Development Board. The three teeth boards will act as the nodal agency which would coordinate with various departments to make the pilgrim centres better and boost religious tourism through coordinated efforts.

The chief minister will be the chairman of all the three boards, the tourism minister will be the vice-chairman while five eminent persons will be nominated by the state government to these boards.

The headquarters of Shukra Teerth Board will be at Muzaffarnagar, and of Devi Patan Teerth Board in Balrampur dis-

trict.

The decision to set up the teeth boards was taken in the state cabinet meeting held at Ayodhya on November 9. The cabinet then had also adopted a proposal to accord status of international research institute to Ayodhya Shodh Sansthan, paving way for enhanced budget and resources for the centre that plays a key role in organising Deepotsav on the eve of Diwali and the important fairs held in the temple town.

Piloting the three bills in the assembly, Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh said the state government was vigorously working to protect and preserve the ancient cultural heritage of the state. He said all important religious centres of Sanatan dharma – Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi, Krishna Janmabhoomi temple at Mathura besides Vrindavan and Gokul, Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya, temple complex at Bateshwar in Agra, Shukra Taal Teerth in Muzaffarnagar district besides important ancient sites of Buddhism and Jain dharma were also in Uttar Pradesh.

The minister said after the inauguration of the first phase of the Kashi Vishwanath temple corridor in Varanasi in November 2020 and laying of the foundation of the Ram Janmabhoomi temple at

Ayodhya in August 2020, there had been a 199 per cent increase in number of pilgrims and tourist visiting the state. He said the increase in footfalls of pilgrims and tourists had led to sharp increase in revenue as one tourist creates at least six jobs.

He said new records were created by lighting ‘diyas’ in Deepotsav during the Deepawali in Ayodhya. “We have broken our own record by lighting 22 lakh diyas in Ayodhya this year,” he added.

He said diplomats from 54 nations attended the Deepotsav at Ayodhya ahead of Diwali.

“As many as 12 lakh diyas were lit in Varanasi on November 27 to mark the Dev Deepawali festival where diplomats from 70 countries were also present. The diplomats present at Ayodhya and Varanasi will act as cultural ambassadors of India back home in their native country,” the minister said. The opposition members opposing the three bills said “there is undue haste and the government wants to rush with the bills”. Samajwadi Party leader Lalji Verma demanded that the three bills be referred to the select committee of the assembly for further deliberation. Speaker Satish Mahana, however, did not agree with the demand of the opposition members and the bills were later adopted by the House.

Ayodhya (PNS): The entire state along with Ayodhya is gearing up for a spiritual transformation ahead of the consecration of the idol of Ram Lalla in the grand temple of Lord Shri Ram. An outline of various religious programmes has been prepared for this by Shri Ram Jannabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and the Yogi Adityanath

government. As part of these preparations, the continuous recitation of Ramcharitmanas and Hanuman Chalisa is planned in every temple across Uttar Pradesh.

The plan of the Yogi government is to have the Ramayana, Ramcharitmanas and Hanuman Chalisa recited continuously in the

prestigious temples of all the districts from January 14 (Makar Sankranti) to January 22, the day of consecration. The Tourism Department will arrange the budget for this. Regional Tourism Officer RP Yadav said that responsibility would be given to local artistes and people through the ‘Tourism and Culture Council’ in every district.

U.P. RAJKIYA NIRMAN NIGAM LTD.		
Re-Tender Notice		
On behalf of Managing Director, U.P.R.N.N.Ltd, E-Tenders are invited by General Manager (Varanasi zone) & (LKO zone-2) on two bid system for following works :-		
Sl.	NIT No.	Place of Work
1.	3719(gm/ RNN /tender/ RNN /23 Dated-25-11-2023	Construction of 300 Capacity Multipurpose Hall at 48 battalion PAC Sonbhadra
2.	2331(GM/Lko Zone-2)/tender/ RNN/23 Dated-25-11-2023	Construction of Modern Workshop at ITI Purwa Campus in District-UNNAO AND Unchahaar Campus in District-Raibareilly
The tender should be submitted up to 2.00pm on or before 16.12.2023 (SI no-1), 2.00 pm on or before 12.12.2023 (SI no-2). Other details on:- website: www.etender.up.nic.in and www.uprnn.upscd.gov.in		

नगर विकास सहकारी बँक लि०, हरदोई

नीलामी स्थल : नगर विकास सहकारी बँक लि. 162, रेलवेगंज, हरदोई, फोन : 05852-235110

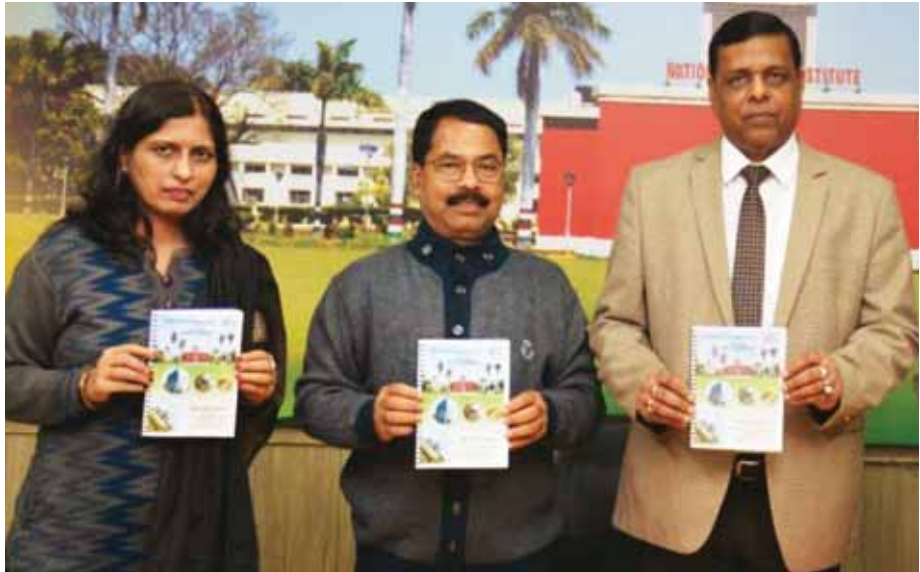
नीलामी/बिक्री सूचना

वित्तीय परिसम्पत्तियों के प्रतिभूतिकरण एवं पुननिर्माण और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम 2002 के अन्तर्गत बैंक के प्रभाराधीन अचल परिसम्पत्ति की बिक्री

नगर विकास सहकारी बँक, लि०, हरदोई के प्राधिकृत अधिकारी के रूप में अघोषाज्ञाशरीकर्ता ने वित्तीय परिसम्पत्तियों के प्रतिभूतिकरण एवं पुननिर्माण और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम-2002 की धारा 13(4) के अन्तर्गत निम्नलिखित सम्पत्ति का सांकेतिक / प्रतीकात्मक कब्जा ले लिया है। सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि बैंक की बकाया राशि की वसूली के लिए निम्नलिखित खाते में प्रभारित सम्पत्ति की नीलामी वित्तीय परिसम्पत्तियों के प्रतिभूतिकरण एवं पुननिर्माण और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम-2002 के अधीन " जैसा है जहाँ है" तथा "जैसा है जो भी है" के आधार पर आयोजित की जायेगी।

क्र.सं.	1.	
ऋणी का नाम एवं पता-	सौरभ सिंह भदौरिया पुत्र स्वर्गीय राम नरेश सिंह, निवासी: 9, अशरफ टोला एमजी मार्ग, जिला-हरदोई पिनकोड:- 241001.	
सम्पत्ति का मालिक-	श्रीमती उमा सिंह पत्नी श्री सौरभ सिंह भदौरिया, निवासी: 9, अशरफ टोला एमजी मार्ग, जिला-हरदोई, सम्पत्ति का विवरण-	
आवासीय संपत्ति का साप्यिक बंधक, खाता खतौनी नंबर-375 का मिल जुमला, भूमि नंबर 24 भूमि का क्षेत्रफल 1250 वर्ग फिट, सीतापुर रोड बरगाडी मागथ, परगना-महोना तहसील-बख्शी का तालाब जिला-लखनऊ, बकाया राशि जिसकी वसूली के लिए सम्पत्ति बेची जा रही है-16.01.2023		
रु० 14,79,711.00 +व्याज एवं अन्य खर्च। आरक्षित मूल्य-रु० 10,60,000.00 (दस लाख साठ हजार मात्र) धरोहर धनराशि-10 प्रतिशत आरक्षित मूल्य का अर्थात रु० 1,06,000.00 मात्र, नीलामी की तिथि व समय : 11.12.2023 दोपहर 12.00 बजे से अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक।		
क्र.सं.	2.	
ऋणी का नाम एवं पता-	स्वयं प्रकाश पुत्र श्री गंगा प्रसाद 158, बंशी बिहार बालागंज चुंगी, हरदोई। सम्पत्ति का मालिक -1. विशाल कुमार सैनी पुत्र स्व० स्वयं प्रकाश, निवासी: 158, बंशी बिहार बालागंज चुंगी, हरदोई। 2. अभिषेक सैनी पुत्र स्वयं प्रकाश, निवासी-158, बंशी बिहार बालागंज चुंगी, हरदोई। 3. नमृता सैनी पुत्री स्व० स्वयं प्रकाश, निवासी-158, बंशी बिहार बालागंज चुंगी, हरदोई। 4. श्रीमती राधा देवी पत्नी स्व० स्वयं प्रकाश निवासी-158, बंशी बिहार बालागंज चुंगी, हरदोई। सम्पत्ति का विवरण-1. भूमि सं० 00155, 702 ख० / 0.2060 हेक्ता 1 / 4 भाग स्थिति ठाकुर नगर परगना- औरंगाबाद तहसील मिश्रिख, जिला-सीतापुर। बकाया राशि जिसकी वसूली के लिए सम्पत्ति बेची जा रही है- रु० 41,28,625.00 +	
दिनांक 29.05.2010 से व्याज एवं खर्च, लागत प्रभार इत्यादि सहित आरक्षित मूल्य-25,00,000.00 (पच्चीस लाख मात्र) धरोहर धनराशि-10 प्रतिशत आरक्षित मूल्य का अर्थात रु० 2,50,000.00, सम्पत्ति का विवरण-2.प्लॉट सं० 158 'ए' 1750 वर्ग फिट एवं 162, 639 वर्ग मी० खसरा नमिन जुमला 810 व 811 स्थिति बरउरा हुसैन बाडी, लखनऊ। बकाया राशि जिसकी वसूली के लिए सम्पत्ति बेची जा रही है-रु० 41,28,625.00 +		
दिनांक 29.05.2010 से व्याज एवं खर्च, लागत प्रभार इत्यादि सहित 2. आरक्षित मूल्य-रु० 40,00,000.00 (वालीस लाख लाख मात्र) 2. धरोहर धनराशि-10 प्रतिशत आरक्षित मूल्य का अर्थात रु० 4,00,000.00, नीलामी की तिथि व समय -20.12.2023 दोपहर 12.00 बजे से अपराह्न 3.00 बजे तक।		
दिनांक : 30.11.2023	स्थान : हरदोई	प्राधिकृत अधिकारी
नीलामी की शर्तें : नगर विकास सहकारी बँक लि०, 162, रेलवेगंज, हरदोई (उ.प्र.) शाखा से प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।		

Manual for efficient operations in sugar factories released



Director NSI, Prof Narendra Mohan releasing the sugar factories manual on Thursday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Director of the National Sugar Institute (NSI), Prof Narendra Mohan while releasing the sugar factories manual "Efficient operations of sugar factories" on Thursday said this manual was meant to facilitate accident free and efficient operations in sugar factories. He said during the last couple of years, sugar industry had seen few serious accidents due to man and machine failures. He said in view of fast change of technology and operating staff required to have proper knowledge about standard

operating procedures it has become highly essential to set up certain parameters. He said as there is no comprehensive manual available, the NSI worked on developing the same from sugarcane unloading to sugar storage and it was going to help sugar industry in improving its working and avoiding any mishaps.

Assistant Director Rajbhasha Mallika Dwivedi said in most of sugar factories operators employed understand Hindi thus the manual had been prepared initially in Hindi but as NSI had large number of sugar units in

Maharashtra and Karnataka, its versions in Marathi and Kannada will follow soon. Consultant Jitendra Singh extended thanks particularly to UP Sugar Factories Federation Ltd. and staff of NSI in general for their efforts in bringing out the publication.

He informed that equipment used in the manufacture of sugar must meet certain requirements in order to promote a healthy work environment and must be equipped with easily accessible and identifiable emergency stop devices. He said another safety measure important was containment of

certain handling stations as essential when dealing with combustible materials upkeep and maintenance of machines and safety and protection from major fires. He said installation of explosion detection sensors in material receiving, handling, storage and shipping areas was also essential.

SUICIDE: A woman committed suicide by hanging herself in the verandah of her house in the Purwa police station area of Unnao on Wednesday. At the time of incident other family members were not present. Reports received here said that when her mother Jamuna returned from the field around 5 pm she found doors locked from inside. On entering the house through the neighbour's rooftop, she found her daughter hanging and fell unconscious. Her kin could not tell the cause of incident to the police. Brij Kumar of Chandigarhi, Purwa Kotwali, Unnao, along with son had gone to meet a relative on Wednesday while his wife Jamuna to the field. His daughter Ritu (24) was alone in the house. When mother Jamuna returned and found the door locked from inside she entered her house through neighbour Ramesh's rooftop and found her daughter hanging.

A family dispute is suspected to be the cause of it. Sub-inspector Jainarain Mishra said a probe is on.



Tourists visit the Taj Mahal amid rainfall during a cold winter morning in Agra on Thursday.

PTI

Man wanted in robbery case arrested after encounter

PTI ■ BANDA

A man wanted in a robbery case was arrested on Thursday after an encounter with police here in which he suffered leg injury, officials said. Acting on a tip off, a police team stopped bike-borne men near Chakia bridge during which one of them opened fire with a country-made pistol, Superintendent of Police (SP) Ankur Agarwal said. He added that the police arrested Jitu,

who suffered a bullet injury in his leg in retaliatory firing. Jitu's accomplice managed to flee the spot, police said. They said Jitu was involved in robbing a contractor, Motilal Verma, of ₹80,000 after shooting him. A country-made pistol and ₹51,000 were recovered from his possession, they said.

GUESTS 'POUR OIL ON COOK: Miffed at not getting hot rotis at a wedding, some guests allegedly poured boiling oil on the cook, who was

rushed to a hospital with serious burn injuries, police said on Thursday, a report from Badaun stated. The incident happened when Indrapal Pali, the groom's uncle and a few others sat down to have dinner at the wedding of Pannalal's daughter in Moosajhag Police Station area here late on Wednesday night and asked for hot rotis. They were told that it was not possible since it was very late in the night and the tandoor had been extinguished,

police said quoting the witnesses. Angry over the refusal, Indrapal and his three friends went to the spot where the cook was busy making preparations for the next feast and poured hot oil on him and fled. The cook, Rajesh, was admitted to a private hospital where his condition is said to be critical. Station House Officer Mahendra Pal Singh said that a case has been registered in the matter and the accused will be arrested soon.

Campaign for pregnant women, kids

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

CMO Dr Alok Ranjan while launching a special two-day campaign 'Pradhan Mantri Matra Vandan Yojana' especially meant for pregnant women and children on Thursday said it was meant to make their nutritional intake better and appealed to women to get themselves registered

under this yojana. He said it will continue on Friday as well. He said under it the target was to benefit 42,570 pregnant women and added that this can be registered within 571 days. He said it was a matter of great concern that pregnant women, especially in UP, were highly anaemic and this was majorly because of poor nutrition. He said the scheme was intended to provide partial compensation for wage loss in terms of cash incentives so that the women can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first child. He said the cash incentive will aid in addressing health behaviour among pregnant and lactating women. Dr Ranjan said the scheme is a maternity benefit programme run by the Government of India. He said it was a conditional cash transfer scheme for pregnant and lactating women of 19 years of age or above for the first live birth. He said to maintain a healthy pregnancy, approximately 300 extra calories were needed each day. He said these calories should come from a balanced diet of

protein, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. He added if possible sweets and fats should be kept to a minimum and a healthy, well-balanced diet can also help to reduce some pregnancy symptoms, such as nausea and constipation. The chief medical officer said women need to consume vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, spinach, cooked greens, tomatoes and red sweet peppers (for vitamin A and potassium).

KILLED: An elderly pedestrian died after being hit by a truck on Vidhnu-Kisan Nagar road under Sachendi police station on Wednesday night. According to complaint lodged by his son Ramji of Sakatpur, Post Barhampur, Kanpur, lodged at the Sidhi Itara outpost, Sachendi, when his father Krishna Pal was going to his shop on foot around 9.15 pm the speeding truck coming from Vidhnu knocked him down. He got his father admitted to the CHC, Vidhnu, where he died injury during treatment.

ARRESTED: The Hamirpur police arrested a criminal along with the nine-year-old girl kidnapped by him on Wednesday evening after an encounter with him on Thursday morning. During exchange of firing, the kidnapper sustained bullet injury in his left limb. The police rescued the girl safely within 10 hours of her kidnapping. SP Dr Diksha Sharma said police had also recovered the bicycle from the bush of city forest which was being used by the kidnapper and seen in CCTV. The accused, a resident of Kadaura

near Purani Kotwali, Jalaun, was identified as Sagar alias Suresh Dhuria (26), son of Ramdhin. The police recovered a country-made pistol, one empty and two live cartridges from him. He had been admitted to the district hospital for treatment, the SP said. The girl was kidnapped from Nagar Ambedkar Park of Nagar Palika, situated opposite the SP office on Wednesday evening when she had gone there to play with friends. Her friends had informed that a strange youth had enticed the girl on pretext of giving her a candy. The police had started a probe in the matter and examined CCTV footages when a youth was seen wandering around the children in suspicious condition. Accordingly, police launched the raids and reached city forest where cops recovered the bicycle of the kidnapper hidden in the bush. Amid heavy downpour, police and locals continued the operation and recovered the girl who informed about the location of the accused in the jungle. The criminal was arrested after an encounter.

CAMPAIGN: As part of their nationwide freshest influencer hunt, officials of Lakme India visited the Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar, on Thursday. Addressing them, they said through such platforms all students can show their hidden talents. The campaign aimed at finding talented college going girls and helping them to achieve their influencer dreams in future. A large number of students participated in the programme. Convenor Dr Anju Srivastava and co-conveners Dr Nishat Fatima, Dr Seema Kanaujia, Manish Mathur, members Dr Akansha Shukla, Dr Indu Mishra and Dr Sarita Sharma were present.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Under the annual function of the Jai Narayan Vidya Mandir Inter College, a 'Late Usha Chandra Memorial Intercollegiate Manas Antyakshari Competition' was organised on Thursday. Students of as many as nine colleges, including Jugal Devi Saraswati Vidya Mandir, BNSD Shiksha Niketan, Onkashreshwar Saraswati Vidya Mandir, host Jai Narayan Vidya Mandir Inter College, Seth Moti Lal Kheria, Durgawati Sanatan Dharm Balika Vidyalaya, Saraswati Vidya Mandir Damodar Nagar and SGM International took part in the competitions. Noted seer Prembhusan was the chief guest on this occasion. The judges panel included Pratima Prem and Usha Shukla. The programme began with the recital of a couplet.

Himesh Mishra and Himani Mishra of the host Jai Narayan Vidya Mandir Inter College won the first prize. They were followed by Nidhi Srivastava and Sania of Durgawati Durga Prasad Sanatan Dharm Balika Vidyalaya and Shikhar Tripathi and Prakhar Tripathi of BNSD Shiksha Niketan who were declared second and third winners respectively. Chief guest Prembhusan awarded prizes to winners. Vivekanand Srivastava and Rama Agnihotri conducted the proceedings while the vice principal Anil Tripathi proposed the vote of thanks. Other dignitaries, including Dr Rahul Chaturvedi, Dr Nishant Pathak, Vineet Chandra, Nidhi Chandra, Prem Babu Gupta, Vijay Ajmani, Prof Sunil Mishra and Santram Dwivedi were also present.

WORLD AIDS DAY:



Chief guest Prembhusan Maharaj awarding prizes to winners at the Jai Narayan Vidya Mandir Inter College on Thursday

Expert on AIDS (acquired human immunodeficiency syndrome) can affect anyone, no matter age, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Despite the sharp decline in HIV+ in India there still has been a large number of cases reported from various parts of the country. There were many reasons for spread but the most dangerous is unsafe sex which puts one to the highest risk. The HIV spreads from person to person, especially when one has unsafe sex. This was stated by noted HIV+ expert and ex-ID specialist, AIIMS, Dr RK Katiyar while addressing the presspersons on the eve of World AIDS Day. He said needle sharing and blood transfusion was also reasons for the spread. He said women can pass on HIV to their babies during pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding which was termed vertical transmission. He said these were the most common ways that children become HIV-positive but chances of such mother-to-

child transmissions can fall to as low as one per cent if both the women and the infant were given HIV medicine throughout the pregnancy and the first several weeks of the newborn's life. He said treatment with HIV medicines was called antiretroviral therapy (ART) which was recommended for everyone with HIV and people with HIV should start ART as soon as possible. He said people on ART take a combination of HIV medicines (called an HIV treatment regimen) every day. He said the "U=U" campaign was developed to spread awareness of the high efficacy of current HIV medications and individuals living with HIV cannot sexually transmit the virus to others if the viral load was suppressed by effective treatment to the point where it was undetectable in the blood. Dr Katiyar said although there is still no cure for HIV, those with access to anti-HIV therapy now have a near-normal life expectancy. He said impor-

tantly advances in anti-HIV therapy over the past few years have turned a deadly disease into a manageable chronic condition. He said everyone with HIV infection, regardless of the CD4 T cell count or symptoms, should be offered antiviral medication. He said remaining on effective ART with an undetectable HIV viral load in the blood was the best way for one to stay healthy. He advised that people need to keep their immune system strong and remain alert to reduce chances of getting an infection and also reduce chances of transmitting HIV to other people as well. He said there were umpteen myths and said HIV cannot be spread through touch, tears, sweat, saliva, or urine. He said one cannot catch it by breathing in air or using the same toilet seat or kissing or shaking hands. He said it also did not spread by sharing utensils or using equipment in gymnasiums.

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR NOTICE

Applications forms for allotment of Photostat Shop at Regional Campus, Jalandhar for session 2023-24 upto 30-06-2024 are invited till 10-12-2023. The details, terms & conditions and forms can be downloaded from the university website link- <https://online.gndu.ac.in/tenders-notice.aspx>

Dean Students' Welfare
Guru Nanak Dev University,
Amritsar
NA/12/20501/2023/30195
Dated CHD :- 11/30/2023

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR Short Term e-Tender Notice for Providing Un-Skilled, Semi-Skilled, Skilled and Highly-Skilled Manpower through Outsourcing

E-tender No.GNDU/REG/2023/03 Date: 30-11-2023
Online bids are invited for providing Un-Skilled, Semi-Skilled, Skilled and Highly-Skilled workers at Guru Nanak Dev University Main Campus, its Regional Campuses and Associated/Constituent Colleges on monthly wages on contract basis for a period of two years. Tender Documents can be purchased through online mode only from website www.eproc.punjab.gov.in. Last date for closing the online tender is 11.12.2023 upto 5:00 P.M. For more details visit the above mentioned portal.
Amritsar Registrar
30-11-2023
NA/12/20502/2023/30196 Dated CHD :- 11/30/2023

verka		
THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.		
SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX NO. 0172-5041812,66		
Notice Inviting Tender		
www.verka.coop		
e/Sealed tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-		
Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Gurdaspur Dairy a) Hiring of Car(Swift Dzire or its equivalent) b) Allotment of Milk Bars at Civil Hospital.	01 year, extendable for another one year/ 01No. 02 years, extendable for another one year / 01No.
2.	For Verka Sangrur Dairy a) Rice Husk b) Milkbar at- • Gurdwara Shri Mastuana Sahib, Sangrur - Bamala Main Road (reserved). • Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering & Technology (SLIET), longowal (Unreserved).	Jan 2024- 700 MT Feb 2024- 700 MT Mar 2024- 600 MT For 03 year on Rent / 01No. For 03 year on Rent / 01No.
3.	For Verka Ludhiana Dairy a) Supply of Liquid Nitrogen Gas. b) Sealed Tenders for Outsourcing of:- • Activity for Housekeeping (Sanitation & Cleaning) and Horticulture work. • Cycle, Scooter, Motor Cycle Stand Activities.	Annual
4.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy a) Purchase of Conduction lid film. b) Hiring of :- • Insulated single portion road milk tankers fitted with single phase milk pump for the loading of milk from BMC to tanker and Transportation of milk from BMC/MCC to Amritsar Dairy. • Powder plant for conversion of skimmed milk to SMP. c) Empanelment of road milk tankers for transportation of milk from milk union Amritsar to other unions/powder plants.	Annual Annual /05 No's Half yearly 05 No's (15 MT, 20 MT)
5.	For Verka Hoshiarpur Dairy Hiring of One vehicle for supply of LN2 Gas, Semen and other allied works related to procurement etc.	01 No.
NOTE: 1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop & e Tendering portal i.e. www.eproc.punjab.gov.in . 2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.		
Incharge (Purchase)		

Sigma Gripplock celebrates first anniversary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Sigma Group's popular product Sigma Gripplock celebrated its first anniversary in which directors of the company, including Navnit Jain, Vice-President, Dilip Mehra and many more officials of the group took part. Jain said the Sigma Gripplock bars were specially prepared products which gave better strength and life to cement and gravel and since its inception it had been making a special contribution to the basic infrastructure of Uttar Pradesh. He said on account of its superb quality the product has become the most trusted product and the company had planned to further introduce quality products and services in the market and the company was also committed to contribute majorly towards construction. He said one of the success mantra of the product was to continue to maintain



Sigma Gripplock celebrated its first anniversary on Thursday.

quality standards and prove worth to the expectations of the consumers. He said the company frequently organised special training session for masons to acclimatise them with the

product so that it gave value for money to its clients. The company has an in-house team of architects and it provided expertise to the customers. He said the company was highly

active on the social media so that it can provide the best information and finer details to its customers. Jain further informed that company considers its employees as its trust-

ed elements and also believed in moving ahead unitedly. He said in this manner the company can continue to march ahead on the roads of progress and carve a niche for itself in the quality market. In the past 32 years Sigma Group has successfully completed one year despite new challenges and emerged successful in all areas and these opportunities had provided the company with golden opportunities for progress. The company's major supplies were in eastern Uttar Pradesh and has a big network of dealers and marketing team as well. He said its team provides its expertise and guidance to its customers as an when needed and had never compromised on quality. He said this was evident with the massive success the product had received in one year. The company has been commended and provided BIS for its quality.

Meja Urja Nigam awarded

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Meja Urja Nigam of Prayagraj was awarded the ‘23rd Greentech Environment Awards 2023’ by Greentech Foundation for its achievements in the ‘Environmental Excellence’ category.

The award was presented to Saurabh Pathak, Senior Manager, Environment Management Department by Ravi Shankar Prasad, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam, during a programme organised at Sonamarg, Jammu and Kashmir. Apart from Ravi Shankar Prasad, Chairman of Assam Pollution Control Board, Dr Arup Kumar Mishra and Member Secretary of Pollution Control Board, Assam, Shantanu Kumar Dutta were also present. The efforts made by Meja Urja Nigam in environmental protection, especially in plantation and bio-diversity conservation, were appreciated by this award. The Meja Urja Nigam has so far planted more than 3,50,000 trees in the surrounding areas. It has also made a commendable contribution in the conservation of black deer. These efforts were especially appreciated during the awards ceremony.

Meja Urja Nigam Chief Executive Officer Sunil Kumar congratulating all the employees said: “This award reflects your hard work and commitment towards environmental protection. We will continue to make similar efforts in future also. So that Meja Urja Nigam can keep its surrounding environment pure. At the same time, it can make a significant contribution in meeting environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) goals.”

A P P O I N T M E N T PROCESS: As soon as the Cabinet approved the rules of the new Education Service Selection Commission, work on appointment process of its chairman and members has started. Advertisement for the



appointment of chairman and members is expected to be issued in a week and their appointment process is expected to be completed in a couple of month. The campus of Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Service Selection Board (UPSESSB), Prayagraj, will be the headquarters of the new commission. As soon as the new commission comes into existence, the pending teacher recruitment will be started first. Under advertisement number 51, recruitment is proposed for 1,017 posts of assistant professor in non-government aided colleges of the state and recruitment is to be made for 4163 posts of assistant teacher (TGT)/lecturer (PGT) in non-government secondary schools. The application process for both these recruitments has been completed in August-2022. While 1.14 lakh applications have been received for assistant professor, more than 13 lakh candidates have applied for TGT/PGT recruitment. Lakhs of candidates will get great relief by starting the incomplete recruitment process after the formation of the new

commission. According to sources in the Directorate of Higher Education, the headquarters of the new commission will be built in the premises of UPSESSB.

The process to transfer the building from the Selection Board to the new Commission has been started. Sources in the Directorate said preparations are being made to issue advertisement in a week for appointment to one post of chairman and 12 posts of members in the new commission. Besides, 21 to 25 days will be given for the application. After this the search committee will shortlist the applications. Five names will be selected for one post of chairman and three names will be selected for one post of member. That means a total of 36 names will be shortlisted for 12 posts of member. Later, one of the five selected for the post of chairman and 12 out of 36 people will be selected for the post of member. The process is expected to be completed by the end of December or beginning of January. Information regarding vacant posts of teachers will be sought from colleges.

Before the new commission comes into existence, the Directorate of Higher Education will seek information about the vacant posts of assistant professor in non-government aided colleges so that as soon as the new commission comes into existence a requisition is sent to the new commission for recruitment to the vacant posts. Preparations for this have been started and soon a letter will be issued to the principals of colleges and regional higher education officers. Hundreds of posts of assistant professor are lying vacant in non-government colleges. After the proposal for formation of a new commission came, these posts were not counted, because now the recruitment on these posts has to be done by the new commission. Till now Uttar Pradesh Higher Education Service Commission had the responsibility of this recruitment. The Higher Education Service Commission and the Secondary Education Service Selection Board are now being subsumed into the new commission.

Massive ticket checking conducted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Prayagraj division of North Central Railway (NCR) conducted a massive ticket checking at Prayagraj Junction railway station on Wednesday and collected revenue of Rs 6,55,392 as fine from persons without ticket or with irregular tickets.

Such drives will continue to check ticketless travelling and those who travel with unbooked goods, said DRM Himanshu Badoni.

In future the target of the ticket checking staff will be travellers without ticket or with irregular tickets, unbooked goods, smoking in train or within railway premises, besides those who litter the train and platforms.

The drive was conducted under the guidance of DRM, Senior Divisional Commercial Managers (Sr DCMs) Shashi Bhushan and Himanshu Shukla. As many as 407 passengers were caught travelling without ticket and had to pay charges with penalty to the tune of Rs 3,29,195. The number of people travelling with irregular tickets was 660 and they had to pay Rs 3,26,197.

MISHAP: The former head of Kodhnia village, who was returning on foot in Meja was hit by a bullet rider. Both the former head and Bullet rider were injured in the accident and were taken to the hospital where the former head died. The accident occurred in front of Manu Ka Pura village on Prayagraj-Mirzapur road. The police have sent the body for the post-mortem examination.



Massive ticket checking at Prayagraj Junction

tion. Reports said that Ramsajeevan Bharatiya (65), former head of Kodhania village of Meja police station area, had gone to see the fields half a kilometre away from the house around 8 am. While returning from there he was crossing the road when he was hit by the speeding Bullet from Mirzapur side.

As a result the former head fell on the road. When someone informed his family members about the accident, they

rushed to the spot. The former head was taken to a private hospital.

In view of his critical condition, the hospital doctor refused to treat him. He was taken to a hospital in the city where he died after two hours.

On receiving information, the police reached the spot and conducted the ‘panchnama’ and sent it for the post-mortem examination. On hearing the cries of the family members, a crowd of people

from the neighborhood gathered. Besides due to the collision, the youth travelling on the Bullet was also seriously injured. His family members have taken him to a hospital in the city for treatment.

Inspector Rajesh Upadhyay said on the complaint of the family members of the deceased a case has been registered against the bike driver. Further action will be taken soon.

In another incident, a teenager sitting on a tractor lost his balance and fell under it resulting in his death on the spot in the Meja police station area here.

On hearing the screams of the driver, people working in the fields at some distance reached the spot and the family members were informed. On being informed the Meja police reached the spot and sent the body for the post-mortem.

Amarnath Bind of Seenki village of Meja police station area, is a farmer. In the evening he went with the tractor to plough the field and his son Akash Bind sat on it. While ploughing, Akash, who was sitting on the tractor, suddenly fell in the field and the tractor went ahead, crushing him. As a result Akash died on the spot. Father Amarnath said he had forbidden his son from riding on the tractor but he did not listen.

Meja police station in-charge Rajesh Upadhyay said the body of the deceased has been sent to the mortuary for the post-mortem. He died after being crushed by the tractor, Upadhyay added.

BHU, Power Grid sign MoU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited have inked an MoU for the construction of a 200 bed rest house at the Sir Sunderlal Hospital of the varsity.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Wednesday in the presence of BHU Vice-Chancellor Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain and Director (Personnel), PGCIL, Dr Yatindra Dwivedi. The Public Sector Enterprise under the Government of India will provide Rs 17.88 crore under CSR for building the Vishram Sadan, which will benefit the family members of the patients coming to BHU for treatment. The BHU hospital caters to the medical needs of a vast geographical area of this part of the country and patients from various states visit the health facilities at the university. The facility is expected to be completed by March 2026 for which BHU and PGCIL both have reiterated their commitment.

Arun Kumar Rai, Senior General Manager, and In-charge, Varanasi, signed the understanding from Power Grid Corporation, while Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh inked the document on



V-C of BHU Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain (extremely right) and others on signing of an MoU with Power Grid.

behalf of the university. The Vishram Sadan will be constructed by the Central Public Works Department.

The V-C Prof Jain lauded PGCIL for this generous endeavour and its commitment for giving back to the society. He said that the university will do all that is required to ensure that the project progresses at the desired pace and is completed within

the timeline.

He suggested that collaborating with PGCIL in the areas of its expertise could greatly benefit the university.

Rector Prof VK Shukla, Director, Institute of Medical Sciences, Prof SN Sankhwar, Dy MS, Sir Sunderlal Hospital, Prof Ankur Singh, and Prof In-Charge, Trauma Centre, Prof Saurabh Singh were present on the occasion. Naveen

Srivastava, Executive Director, Head of Northern Region, Sibabrat Acharya, Head, Personnel, Northern Region, Md Sabahat Umar, Chief Manager, Power Grid, Lucknow, Binod Kumar, Sr. Executive Secretary, Power Grid, Varanasi, DK Mishra, Dy Manager, Power Grid, Varanasi, and Ravi Kant, Chief Engineer, CPWD, were also present during the MoU signing.

Mahanirvana Day of Aghoreshwar Lord Ram observed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Pujyapad Aughad Baba Gurupad Sambhav Ram Ji, President of Baba Bhagwan Ram Trust, Shri Sarveshwari Group and Aghor Parishad Trust and successor of Aghoreshwar Mahaprabhu has said “We can see that so much war and fighting is taking place all over the world. So much bloodshed and killing is taking place in the name of religion. Here in our country too, there are some people with such distorted mentality who see the same, hear the same, are taught the same. So all this is done to fool people to make their own money.”

He was speaking in a seminar held on Wednesday held as the part of the 32nd Mahanirvana Day of Aghoreshwar Lord Ram which was observed in the courtyard of Aghoreshwar Mahavibhuti Sthal located on the banks of Ganga in Padav, here.. Shramdaan was also made in the premises of Mahabibhuti Sthal besides religious programmes. The day concluded on Thursday with havan and puja.

God does not say to kill someone, rob someone and torture someone. It is a deception. We should give up our weaknesses. As long as it remains engaged, we will neither have awareness nor consciousness nor will we be able to achieve that path. So, increase your self-confidence, have faith and unwavering faith in yourself, keep doing your duties and act according to the time and circumstances, he said.

He said that it has been seen in the world that even when all the things are available, our desires never end and we keep entangling ourselves in the bondage of the illusion of Mahamaya. This veil of modernity is falling on the minds of our coming generations, which is the cause of their own and their degradation. In this year of ours, many people are trying to plunder India instead of progressing it.

Like termites, they are bent upon licking their own country and nation. There are so many taxes, so much inflation, yet no work is done without giving and taking. Think about them. Here we are betraying

our country and also betraying ourselves. Today's karma is tomorrow's future. But we are wasting this rare human life that we have received to be free from its coming and going. We ourselves are guilty of this.

Dr VP Singh presided over the seminar. Manvendra Singh conducted it. Dr SP Singh proposed the vote of thanks, while Dr Brajbhushan Singh, Paras Nath Yadav, Dr RK Singh, Col (Retd) Lokendra Singh Bisht, Dr Bamdev Pandey and Bhola Nath Tripathi also spoke. Arvind Kumar Singh and many others were present on the occasion.

MGKV CONVOCATION FUNCTION ON DEC 11: President of India Draupadi Murmu will be the chief guest of the 45th convocation function of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) scheduled to be held on December 11.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the University, Dr Navratna Singh informed that the university has received its approval from the President's office. It is noteworthy that for the first time in the history of the university that

the President of India is attending the convocation function.

The convocation ceremony of Kashi Vidyapeeth will be presided over by the Governor of Uttar Pradesh and Chancellor of the university, Anandiben Patel while the ministers at the Government of India and the ministers of Uttar Pradesh can also participate in this convocation.

The university administration has geared up hard for this programme. The V-C Prof Anand Kumar Tyagi has given instructions to all the teams formed for the convocation to perform better and all the teams have started their work from today itself, the PRO informed.

In view of the convocation ceremony, a meeting of all the department heads, deans and directors was held in the auditorium of the Central Library under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor, in which instructions were given to everyone to do their respective work.

The Diksha Utsav programme will start from December 4 in all departments, the PRO informed.

Revenue collection reviewed

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Divisional Commissioner Dr Muthukumarasami B on Wednesday in a meeting to review progress of districts on various points as per the ranking on the CM dashboard issued show cause notices to 15 officers for poor ranking regarding progress in work in the state.

The DC directed to issue show cause notice to deputy director Mandi for not attending the meeting. On bad ranking on the point of road construction in each district of the division he issued show cause notice to the chief engineer PWD. Besides show cause notices were issued to AD Health, CVOs Mirzapur and Bhadohi, assistant tourism officer Mirzapur, deputy director panchayat and EE Jal Nigam Mirzapur for bad ranking. He warned the officials concerned to improve ranking next month by performing better otherwise face the music. He asked the officials concerned to maintain the momentum on those 37 points in which districts of the division have secured A+ ranking.

Reviewing revenue collection the DC issued show cause notices to officials concerned, including deputy director, Excise, and stressed on improving collection next month. Regarding law and order situation the officials concerned were asked to adopt zero tolerance policy on crimes against women. He reviewed cases related to domestic violence, Goonda Act, POCOA Act etc and issued necessary directions. The meeting was conducted by Joint Development



Divisional Commissioner Dr Muthukumarasami B holding the divisional meeting on Wednesday

Commissioner Suresh Chandra Mishra and attended by DIG RP Singh along with divisional and district level officers concerned of the division.

HUMAN FACE OF POLICE COMES TO THE FORE: The human face of the police came to the fore when a weeping seven-year-old boy reached Imliya Chhatti police outpost under Ahraura on police station Wednesday. On seeing the condition of the child the cops made food available to him as he was hungry for three days and his mother was ill. He disclosed his name as Sudama a resident of Patihita village. Incharge of the outpost Dileep Gupta took went to his village and found his mother in lying in a sick condition in a temple. On the initiative of the police outpost incharge the officials of the Education department, panchayat and block came forward and promised to provide all support to him, including financial and benefit of other welfare

schemes of the government.

ARRESTED: In a joint operation with SOG and surveillance team the Dehat Kotwali police arrested two accused of drug smuggling and recovered heroin worth Rs 28 lakh on Wednesday.

Giving details to the media at Police Lines the ASP said during routine patrolling On being tipped off by an informer Station House Officer (SHO) Rana Pratap Yadav he informed the authorities, rushed to the spot and started vehicle checking. During the checking of a car the police recovered the heroin weighing 285 gms hidden in the car. Its occupants said they were transporting the drug to sell it to the customers. The police registered a case under NDPS Act, arrested the accused and recovered three mobile phones and Rs 3,200 cash. The car was seized under the MV Act. The accused were identified as Sandeep Sonkar alias Baba of Rajgarh and Sonu Singh of

Kanjar Basti Rajgarh under Rajgarh police station. In the operation the SHO Dehat Kotwali Rana Pratap Yadav, surveillance incharge Manvendra Singh and SOG incharge Sanjay Singh were involved. After completing the legal formalities the accused were sent to jail.

TWO BURIED ALIVE: Two labourers were buried alive when a wall collapsed in an area under Katra Kotwali police station on Wednesday. The labourers Shahjahan (40) of Ganeshgaganj under Katra Kotwali police station and Rakesh Varma (30) of Ghanatgarh under City Kotwali police station were workers in a spice factory. The wall collapsed on the labourers during working hours and they died on the spot.

On information the police reached the spot, conducted the rescue operation but the labourers were found dead. The police took their bodies into possession.

Arrangements for online challan at more intersections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Now arrangements for Nonline challan are being made at 12 more major intersections of the city. Till now there was a system of online challan of vehicles only at seven intersections of the city, but now 12 more major intersections have been identified where preparations are being made to issue online challan through hi-tech cameras. These

are the intersections of the city where there is a large number of vehicular traffic. Strict action is being taken against those breaking red lights at intersections, riding bikes without helmets and driving erratically.

In this sequence, this special planning is being done. This work is being done under the Smart City Mission. Sanjeev Sinha, manager of Smart City Mission, Prayagraj, said, if a driver moves ahead jumping

the red light the vehicle number will automatically be recorded in the hi-tech camera. After this, online challan will be generated.

After the challan is issued, the message of e-challan will be sent to the registered mobile of the vehicle owner.

This strictness will reduce traffic jams as well as road accidents.

The online challan will be issued at the intersections including Teliarganj intersec-

tion, Traffic Police Line, Hindu Hostel intersection, Bangar intersection, Dhobi Ghat intersection, Medical College intersection, TP Nagar intersection, Fire Brigade intersection, Kharbanda, Leprosy intersection, Bairahna intersection, Public Service Commission intersection, AG Office intersection, Jansanganj intersection, GT Jawahar Square, Mishra Bhawan Square and PS Dhoomanganj.

The CAA scare

Amit Shah rakes up citizenship Act amid State elections, much to the consternation of minorities

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent statement regarding the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has reignited a vigorous debate and speculation. The CAA, a bone of contention since being introduced in December 2019, aims to provide citizenship to persecuted minorities from neighbouring Muslim-majority countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. At the time, it faced widespread protests and criticism over its potential impact on India's secular principles and the rights of religious minorities. This time again, Shah's reiteration about the CAA's implementation has triggered doubts and discussions. Due to its association with the National Register of Citizens (NRC), the fear of potential discrimination and exclusion – especially against the Muslim community – fueled protests across the nation. The Government's response to these protests involved reassurances that the CAA was not meant to harm any particular community and that it aimed to provide a haven for persecuted minorities from the neighbouring countries. However, the controversy surrounding the Act persisted, leading to an unspecified delay in its implementation. But due to nation-wide protests Government chose to put it on the backburner. Meanwhile other issues took over and CAA was almost forgotten. But with Amit Shah's statement it is back on the centre stage. Proponents argue that the CAA is a humanitarian gesture, offering refuge to neighbours facing religious persecution. They contend that it aligns with India's tradition of sheltering persecuted communities and upholds the principle of religious freedom. On the



other hand, critics express concerns about the Act's potential impact on India's secular fabric. They argue that by selectively providing citizenship based on religion, the CAA undermines the principle of equal treatment for all regardless of religious affiliation. Critics fear it may set a precedent that challenges the secular foundation of the Constitution. Furthermore, the CAA has been closely associated with the NRC, a process aimed at identifying and expelling undocumented immigrants. The combination of CAA and NRC has raised apprehensions about possible discrimination and exclusion, particularly affecting vulnerable communities who may struggle to produce the necessary documentation. Shah's statement on the CAA's implementation, especially during Assembly polls, raises questions about the timing and political motivations. Elections often bring specific policy issues to the fore as leaders seek to rally support. The CAA, with its polarising nature, can be strategically used to appeal to certain voter bases. The nation does need a comprehensive refugee policy but that must not be discriminatory, to say the least. Besides, dislocating people living in India for generations would be inhumane as it violates India's commitment to uphold human rights.

PICTALK



School students form 'red ribbon', Universal symbol of awareness about HIV, in Moradabad

India rising but China still ahead

India is becoming proactive in international arena and getting good response but the China's dominance in the Global South remains undisputed



SANTHOSH MATHEW

In the ever-shifting landscape of global power dynamics, India finds itself at the forefront of a compelling narrative—the quest to be the “voice” of the Global South. As it assumes the G-20 Presidency, India's ambitions to represent the diverse nations of Africa, Latin America, and Asia echo loudly, challenging its formidable neighbour, China, in a musical chairs game of influence. The ongoing great power struggle between these two nations raises crucial questions about the future trajectory of the Global South and who will emerge as its torchbearer.

In this intricate dance of geopolitics, the article ultimately raises the question of what it truly means to be the “voice” of the Global South. As the world watches the interplay between the Dragon and the Elephant, whether India's soft power and ideals of brotherhood can attract nations, contrasting with China's more robust physical and economic might.

In the late 1980s, Deng Xiaoping prophetically declared the advent of the “Asian Century” during a meeting with India's then-Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This prediction has materialized, but the pivotal question remains: which nation will lead this Asian century? Statistical data, unequivocally, places China ahead of India in military prowess, economic size, and technological advancements. Yet, this article explores the unique strengths and potential contributions India can offer as it endeavours to become the “voice” of the Global South.

Coined in 1952 during the Cold War, the term “Third World” has evolved into the more neutral “Global South.” This term transcends through the diverse group of nations from Africa, Latin America, and Asia, evolving into a symbol of shared historical experiences of colonization, economic challenges, and a collective desire for a more equitable global order. India, currently hosting the G-20 Presidency, has taken proactive steps, hosting a virtual “Voice of the Global South” summit and championing the issues of developing nations.

As India positions itself as a



leader, it offers distinct advantages over China. India's vibrant democracy, commitment to pluralism, human rights, and the rule of law resonate with nations worldwide. With a young and tech-savvy population, India's scientific community has already made significant global contributions.

India's diplomatic finesse comes to the forefront as it navigates challenges posed by China's economic investments in neighbouring regions. Unlike China's perceived debt-trap diplomacy, India's trade relations and diplomatic acumen position it as a bridge between the Global North and South. The question lies in whether India's commitment to collaboration and building trust can outshine China's more assertive tactics. A recent report published by Pew Research Surveys has unveiled a noteworthy trend: India has greater favourability than China in the developed world. However, when it comes to developing countries (the Global South), China has an edge over India as the more favourably favoured nation. This trend can be seen because, within the Global South, many countries grapple with shared historical experiences, socio-economic challenges, and aspirations for equitable global representation. China's ascendancy as the preferred nation is predictable



INDIA'S ADVANTAGES LIE IN NOT BEING PERCEIVED AS AN AGGRESSOR OR ENCROACHER, IN CONTRAST TO CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE VIEWED AS A POTENTIAL DEBT TRAP

due to its economic prowess and infrastructure investments, which will help developing countries achieve their developmental goals.

Amidst a backdrop of geopolitical shifts and economic realignments, India's democratic values, commitment to human rights, and rule of law sets it apart. Its young, tech-savvy population and thriving scientific community position it as a catalyst for innovation. India, with its evolving intellectual property regime, excels in process technology and manufacturing. US-based multinationals heavily invest in both China and India. The allure of less expensive skilled labour, market access, collaboration opportunities, and government incentives draws these corporations to India. In sectors such as information technology, telecommunications, transport equipment, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and energy, India faces both opportunities and challenges. The lack of a sophisticated customer base hampers significant innovation in IT, but this gap may close in the coming decades. The growing sophistication of engineering and design services in aircraft and automotive industries positions India as a significant player in global markets. India is moving beyond replicating designs to contributing to cutting-edge innovation.

India's ascent in the Global South leadership struggle against China is not only influenced by geopolitical dynamics but also by its innovation landscape. Chinese and Indian firms are increasingly involved in early-stage research and clinical trials, showcasing a shift towards innovative product development.

India's advantages lie in not being perceived as an aggressor or encroacher, in contrast to China's Belt and Road Initiative viewed as a potential debt trap. India's trade significance and good relations globally position it as a bridge between the Global North and South. While China may have firepower, India's diplomatic prowess and cordial relations give it a better ability to lead the world.

India's journey from shadows to spotlight in the global innovation arena is nothing short of a triumph. As the dragon of China breathes its economic fire, the elephant of India is trumpeting its unique strengths on the global stage. So, as the dragon and elephant dance in this innovation duet, India's ascent is not just a rise; it's a melody, echoing across the realms of progress.

(The writer is Associate Professor, centre for South Asian Studies, School of International Studies & Social Sciences Pondicherry Central University, views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ALLOW DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Sir — Very often, this age-old issue about dual citizenship despite various utterances by different politicians over the years comes to the fore. It is an issue that has been of concern to many people. It would be in everyone's best interests to resolve this issue once and for all. The government and the courts need to find a solution that may resolve the issue faced by many who have obtained Portuguese and other nationalities find themselves in, many through birth and for historical reasons.

It would be prudent for the central government to allow people dual nationality or citizenship as they can have a foreign nationality and still maintain close links with the motherland. According to the World Population Review, 49% of all countries worldwide allow dual citizenship which means that a person can be a citizen of more than one country. We are living in an age where the world is a global village just like no man is an island.

Ramanath Krishan | Kozhikode

TELANGANA ELECTIONS

Sir — Telangana sees a triangular contest between the BJP, Congress, and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS). BRS has fielded candidates in all 119 seats. As per the seat-sharing agreement, the BJP and actor Pawan Kalyan-headed Jana Sena are contesting in 111 and 8 seats, respectively, while Congress has given one seat to its ally CPI and is fighting from 118 others. Meanwhile, Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM has put up candidates in nine segments in the city. The key candidates include Chief Minister KCR, his minister-son K T Rama Rao, state Congress president A Revanth Reddy, and BJP Lok Sabha members Bandi Sanjay Kumar and D Arvind. Ahead of the polls, the state saw top national leaders, including PM Modi, Rahul Gandhi, and ruling BRS supremo K Chandrasekar Rao, wooing voters.

Silkayara rescue operation



Prayers from the entire nation towards rescuing the 41 workers trapped inside the Silkayara tunnel in Uttarkashi bore fruit after a 17-day ordeal. The mission that has been accomplished is a triumph of human labour over

machinery, as the rat-hole mining experts managed to manually break through the final 12 metres of rubble using only hand drills and pulleys.

This extensive and challenging rescue work, spanning over 400 hours, showcases the resoluteness and determination of the rescuers and the indomitable spirit of the trapped workers. It also highlights the might of our nation and the combined spirit of its people to stand united in the face of any adversity, and we can go to great lengths when it comes to the well-being of our people. But as we watched on television the hardship and struggle over the operations, questions emerged as to whether the mountainous area in Uttarakhand can withstand the level of this kind of heavy tunnelling work.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

The saffron party's campaign stressed the necessity of electing a “double engine government” and pointed to the “family rule” of KCR and alleged corruption. The BRS's campaign centred around the previous Congress regime's failures and ongoing welfare measures for farmers, women, and other sections of society, as well as his struggle to achieve Telangana statehood. Congress's campaign focused mainly on the alleged corruption of the BRS government while highlighting its six poll guarantees. The results of Telangana will be out on December 3 along with the other four states that went to polls. It would be interesting to see which way the wind is blowing. The general elections are not very far and these results would definitely give an indication of public mood.

Ashraf Hussain | Howrah

ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICE

Sir — Since lower courts are the lifelines of the common man, picking their presiding officers with care and caution cannot be overemphasised. At present, the jurisdictional high courts or state

governments are vested with the power to select subordinate court judges either through examination, interview, or both. At the same time, however, the process of selecting lower court judges has not consistently met the nod of approval from the know-how. The need to have a uniform mechanism for picking judges at the entry level on an all-India basis is widely felt. President Drupadi Murmu recently pitched for an All India Judicial Service, and there are a plethora of legal experts who believe the time is ripe for such a system on the lines of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). The generally tough IAS exams attract the best talents in India. In the same vein, an All India Judicial Service could captivate meritorious young minds that are at present not keen on the judiciary as a career. The Centre does not seem averse to the idea, but it may not easily pass muster with the judiciary because the latter's authority stands threatened.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Are foreign universities best bet for better education?

Foreign university campuses in India may be good for many reasons but improvement of higher education is not one of them

With the latest UGC notification regarding the regulations for foreign universities to be set up in India, getting a degree from a reputed foreign university may not be difficult for the privileged class. In recent times, there has been an exodus of Indian students to foreign countries for higher studies and jobs. In states like Kerala and Punjab, this trend is increasing daily. The trend is so alarming that even after schooling, students leave the mother country, and many foresee a generation of old-age couples living in posh houses. Why are people moving to alien countries? Is it due to the lack of quality education in our country? Is it a lack of poor infrastructure in our educational institutions? Or is it the colonial mindset that made us look at foreign countries as better than our homeland? If we analyze the issues behind this exodus, we find that there are multiple issues, and it is challenging to pinpoint one problem. One main issue in our higher education is the unnecessary administrative procedures followed in our public



sector universities and colleges. It's more challenging to tackle the administrative people of these institutions than to learn complicated subjects. Half of the productive time of students doing doctoral degrees in these institutions is wasted on tackling the people in the administration. Students must get no-objection certificates from different sections, even sections unrelated to their course. Even after awarding the PhD degree, if the student wants a NET exemption certificate, they have to repeat the complete cycle of paperwork. What is the need for these complicated administrative procedures? Is it to protect the job of jobless staff members? Few new-generation public sector universities like the Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research (AcSIR) have streamlined these com-

plicated procedures, reducing the paperwork and completing the work within the stipulated timeline on their website. However, the majority still follow the old culture. Many students move to foreign countries to complete their degree within the specified time without hassles. The second reason for the mass exodus is their lucrative salary in foreign countries. Gone are the days when students worked jobs as service. Nowadays, for even minor assistance, a student expects remuneration. When we were students, we used to help our teachers to maintain departmental libraries and gardens. Only people from the affluent class could get admission to these universities because of the higher tuition fees. More than that, even if a student receives a degree from a foreign university having a campus in India, it won't have the same weightage as studying in their main campus in the respective countries. The culture of a university is directly related to the culture followed in society. So, even if a foreign university tries to follow an alien culture, the native societal culture is

bound to reflect on their campuses. Even though starting foreign university campuses is a welcome step, it won't bring long-term benefits. Instead, we must improve the quality of education and research in our public sector universities and attract international students to India. The presence of international students on our campuses will enhance our academic quality and bring money to the public exchequer. Since the Indus Valley civilization, education and learning have been deeply ingrained in the Indian subcontinent. Our ancient universities, like Takshashila and Nalanda, have attracted students from around the globe. We have to envision the day when students from foreign countries visit our public sector universities, and we start our university campuses in other countries. As a driving force, this will also help propagate Indian values and philosophy across the globe.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru; views are personal)



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

FIRST COLUMN

A METAPHOR FOR INDO-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS

Australian, Arnold Dix, personifies healthy Indo-Australian relationship



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

A miracle occurred this week, when a joint effort of nearly 1000 people working like a single organism and the prayers of millions, managed to move a mountain to rescue 41 trapped workers in eighteen days. While much would be written and hours of content would be created, chronicling the death-defying, Human vs/with Nature feat, there was one of the heroes who stood out like a lone lighthouse, signalling the way to large ships in the tricky geo-political waters. Arnold Dix, an international tunnel expert from Australia had been roped in earlier in the 17-day operation to assist the evacuation process. This expert besides, providing the necessary professional help, was perhaps the most visible face of the rescue mission, offering prayers at the temple of the local deity, beaming with confidence in his interviews with the media about the success of the mission and bringing hope to millions who prayed for the trapped miners. A week earlier, most Indians or at least cricket fans would not have batted an eyelid to lambast the Australians, as they defeated India in its dream run towards a cherished world cup. A week later Arnold Dix is a celebrated figure in India due to his ingenuity in handling the crisis. Taking a cue, leaders at the top from both nations were also busy finalising their geo-political strategy in 2+2 dialogue for greater cooperation bilaterally and at multilateral platforms. The joint statement released after the dialogue mentioned that the Comprehensive strategic dialogue between the two nations was to ensure "both countries sharing major Indian Ocean coastlines, and sharing a positive agenda of cooperation with countries across Asia and the Pacific Ocean region, their cooperation served to reinforce an open, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific.



As the India-Australia CSP continues to deepen bilateral cooperation with a shared commitment to democracy and pluralism, rule of law, and a multifaceted bilateral agenda, the Ministers reaffirmed that gender equality is of fundamental importance and investment in the empowerment of all women and girls is critical to full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for sovereignty and territorial integrity in the Indo-Pacific, democratic values, the rule of law, freedom of navigation and flight and the peaceful resolution of disputes. The Ministers underlined the importance of being able to exercise rights and freedoms in all seas and oceans consistent with international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), including freedom of navigation and overflight, in addressing challenges to the maritime rules-based order, including those in the East and South China Seas. They underscored the importance of disputes being resolved peacefully by international law without threat or use of force or any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo, and that countries should exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that could complicate or escalate disputes affecting peace and stability. They expressed serious concern about the militarisation of disputed features, the dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore exploitation activities. All was happening in the backdrop of India's close ally Sri Lanka allowing nearly \$4.5 billion Chinese investment in the strategic Hambantota port town. Hambantota is literally in India's backyard and offers strategic access to China on Indian critical infrastructure. Chinese shipping company already owns the port of Hambantota. The mention of a strong commitment by India and Australia in the joint statement was a show of recommitment to jointly address regional issues, with Chinese sharks lurking in their oceans. Perhaps Arnold was a greater symbol of what is yet to come out of the Indo-Australian relationship. *(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)*

Employability of skilled trainees is a must



DINESH SOOD

Aligning Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana PMKVY with the industry to match local economic needs is crucial to making skilled trainees employable

The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), launched in 2015, has trained 13.7 million candidates over seven years. However, only 18% or 2.4 million of these candidates have been successful in securing a job. This low placement rate is one of several concerning issues highlighted by a Lok Sabha standing committee. The committee also identified underutilized funds, infrastructure deficiencies, dropouts, a disconnect with industry, and insufficient state engagement as significant problems. To increase the effectiveness of the program, PMKVY must be aligned with the local economy's needs. Currently, only 2.4% of India's 530-million-strong workforce has received formal vocational education or training. This means that a vast majority of the workforce remains unskilled, making them less productive. Additionally, a quarter of India's workforce has less than primary education, further emphasizing the importance of skill development programs in reducing unemployment rates. Despite this, the latest data from the quarterly Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) reports an unemployment rate of 6.8%, with a youth unemployment rate (for ages 15 to 29) of 17.3%. The PMKVY has undergone three versions, with PMKVY 2.0 having the highest number of trained and placed candidates, with a placement rate of 19.5%. However, this rate has since fallen to 5.8% for PMKVY 3.0, the lowest yet. Overall, approximately 11 million trained candidates have completed certification. The government must take immediate action to address these concerns, align PMKVY with the local economy, and improve the program's effectiveness. It is imperative to note that Uttar Pradesh is the state with the highest number of candidates trained, with a staggering 1.59 million individuals, however, the placement rate in the state is only a meagre 20%. On the other hand, Telangana takes the lead with the highest placement rate of 35.1%, followed closely by Puducherry at 34.6%. Haryana and Punjab are not far behind with placement rates of 31.7% and 29.6% respectively. Maharashtra and Kerala, however, need to work on their placement rates, as they stand at a disappointing 9.3% and 10.4% respectively. It should be noted that NSDC primarily partnered with private vocational training providers due to the lack of private Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) at the time. However, the shorter training duration of NSDC courses (3-4 months) compared to the 1-2 year programmes offered by ITIs is a major challenge that needs to be addressed. Poor utilisation of funds: According to government data, the programme's fund utilization was poor in 2016-17, with only 56% of the allocated funds being used. Although the number improved to 98% in 2020-21, it fell back to 72% in 2021-22. The Lok Sabha standing committee reported that the suspension of training and placement operations due to COVID-19 restrictions led to a significant drop in enrollment and certification, resulting in low disbursement and utilization of funds. However, it is expected that the ongoing training under PMKVY 4.0 since January 2023 will lead to an increase in expenditure upon its completion. Connect to industry is missing: NSDC, established in 2008, collaborates with partner trainers to conduct skill development



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MOREOVER, THE ONLINE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE STATE-MANAGED COMPONENT WAS OPERATIONAL IN ONLY 15 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES, AND THIS HAS AFFECTED COORDINATION WITH THE UNION GOVERNMENT

programmes. However, the lack of industry participation and a disconnect between NSDC and the industry is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed. The current skill development programmes do not align with the actual regional demand for skills, creating a mismatch between training and local economic needs. This leads to a gap between the skills imparted and the market requirements, which is unacceptable. The quality of training and the choice of the particular skill being imparted must meet the market standards. Unfortunately, the skill centres are not adequately equipped for practical training, resulting in theoretical training with little practical exposure. This is unacceptable, and immediate action needs to be taken to bridge this gap. The Lok Sabha's standing committee has also highlighted this disconnect and suggested surveying industry representatives to better understand their needs. It is time to take the necessary steps to ensure that the skill development programmes align with the industry needs and bridge the gap between the skills imparted and the market requirements. Candidate dropout, infra deficiencies: A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Public Administration between 2016 and 2021 revealed that 20% of candidates who enrolled under PMKVY dropped out. The reasons for this were medical issues, family obligations, social challenges, lengthy commutes to training centres, marital status changes, increased livelihood demands, limited job opportunities, and perceived skill stagnation. Female candidates also dropped out due to pregnancy, marriage, and course duration.

The standing committee noted that the Ministry needs to take immediate action to address the factors that lead to candidate dropouts, such as distance to training centres and accessibility to jobs. For the female dropouts, the committee suggested that the Ministry should collaborate with ASHA and anganwadi centres to create awareness about the benefits of skilling and encourage them to resume training as soon as possible after delivery. It is unacceptable that out of 818 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKKs) or training centres allocated in all districts of India, only 722 have been established so far. Of the remaining, 58 PMKKs were surrendered to the government by private vendors due to operational difficulties. This is a significant issue and requires immediate attention from the government. The lack of eligible trainers is another issue that is preventing many centres from becoming operational. As a solution, the government must create a pool of National Assessors and Trainers under PMKVY 4.0. The government must take necessary actions to ensure that the PMKVY program is successful in creating a skilled workforce and reducing unemployment in India. Limited state participation: State disparities driven by varying economic and employment histories result in limited state participation. This is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed with a sense of urgency. For instance, while some states have a significant agricultural workforce that relies on programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, others like Maharashtra or Tamil Nadu have more employment opportunities. Therefore, it is imper-

ative to adopt localised, demand-driven approaches that extend employment schemes from metropolitan areas to tier-2 and tier-3 cities, thus addressing specific regional challenges. In 2016-20, PMKVY 2.0 introduced state participation to enhance support and monitoring and enable targeted training that aligns with local needs and aspirations. However, the state-managed model encountered several issues, including delays in the release of funds from the state treasury to respective departments, a shortage of trainers with the necessary eligibility criteria, a lack of available placement partners, and delayed payments to training partners. These issues need to be addressed immediately to ensure that the programme is efficient in achieving its objectives. Moreover, the online management system for the state-managed component was operational in only 15 states and union territories, and this has affected coordination with the Union government. It is imperative to expand this system to all states and union territories to ensure that the programme runs smoothly. In conclusion, enhancing the programme's effectiveness and aligning PMKVY with the industry to match local economic needs is crucial to making skill training programmes employable. It is time to take bold steps to address the challenges facing the programme and ensure that it achieves its objectives. *(The writer is a Co-Founder and MD of Orane International, a Training Partner with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and a Network Member of India International Skill Centres; Views expressed are strictly personal)*

Leveraging the power of advanced AI in the Edtech space

As AI continues to grow, its ethical considerations must be evaluated to ensure that it provides an equitable, inclusive, and successful learning environment

As the world of education continues to evolve, technology is playing an increasingly important role in the transformation of traditional teaching methods. A particularly significant development in this field is the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence in Educational Technology. This integration can fundamentally alter how we learn, instruct and interact with educational material. AI has made a huge impact on a lot of different industries, and it's no different in the education industry. AI is becoming more and more popular and it can be used in a variety of ways to get better and more diverse results. It can be used in schools, for professional learning and assessment, for lifelong learning or enterprise work-



DINESH KUMAR POOBALAN

force learning and assessment. Let's discuss the various ways in which advanced AI is reshaping the EdTech space and its implications for the future of education; Personalised Learning, AI can tailor educational content to meet individual student needs, adapting to different learning styles, speeds and preferences. The increasing acceptance of personalized learning by students is revolutionizing the way learning and assessment are conducted, as it is based on the student's capacity and career objectives, which enable them to achieve their professional and personal goals. AI-driven software can analyse student performance and the content available to them and suggest tailored study plans that are based on their

strengths and weaknesses, as well as integrate data on market skill demand to provide clearer options and advice for students when they finish their studies. Predictive Analytics for Early Intervention: By analysing large volumes of information, AI can detect trends and anticipate potential difficulties that students may encounter. Through predictive analytics, educators can be alerted early on and provide additional support to those students who are at risk of lagging. By taking a proactive approach, educators can provide more personalised and targeted intervention, resulting in improved student performance and a decrease in dropout rates. Automated Grading: Another important aspect to discuss

here is Automated Grading. Educators may find the process of grading and assessing to be laborious and time-consuming. Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms facilitate the automation of these activities, enabling rapid and precise assessment of assignments, tests and assessments. Not only does this save educators time, but it also provides students with prompt feedback, encouraging a continuous learning process. Adaptive Learning Platforms: One of the most significant applications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the field of Education Technology (EdTech) is the creation of adaptive Learning Platforms (ALPs). AI-powered adaptive learning platforms leverage the power of machine learning

to analyse student performance data and create educational content that is tailored to the individual needs and preferences of the learner. Adaptive learning platforms are distinct from traditional adaptive learning approaches in that they offer an individualised learning experience, allowing each student to progress at their speed. Refined Workflows: As the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the sector increases, tools will facilitate the automation of day-to-day operations and the reduction of mistakes. Schools will benefit from the elimination of redundant study materials and the assignment of appropriate learning models. Barriers and challenges associated: The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into

Educational Technology (EdTech) offers a range of advantages; however, it is important to consider ethical considerations and difficulties. Privacy, algorithmic biases and digital divide are some of the issues that need to be addressed. It is essential to strike a balance between the utilization of advanced AI to improve educational outcomes and providing equitable access to all students to develop EdTech solutions responsibly. Another key aspect is Enhanced Engagement, which explains that Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) applications that are powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), can provide students with an immersive learning experience. For example, medical students

may be able to perform virtual surgeries; history students may have the opportunity to explore ancient civilizations. AI can also assist in developing and updating educational content based on current trends and student performance data. Advanced technological features like 'Chatbot' generate a complete lesson plan and curriculum for teachers by just asking for it. AI is revolutionizing the way students learn, providing them with personalized experiences, immersive simulations and predictive analytics. The potential of AI in EdTech is boundless, and its potential to transform education is undeniable. *(The writer is the CEO & CTO, of Greatify; views are personal)*

Centre’s policies have taken economy to new heights: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said his Government’s policies and decisions have taken the economy to new heights, creating immense possibility for employment and self-employment generations. Speaking to newly inducted employees in different government departments at the Centre and in some states after distributing nearly 51,000 appointment letters as part of ‘Rozgar Mela’, he asked them to ensure that welfare initiatives reach the most deprived people wherever they are and said this will lead to the realisation of goal of making India a developed country by 2047. Modi said their biggest priority should be people’s ease of living, and took a swipe at past governments saying they ignored the equality envisaged by B R Ambedkar, the key figure behind the



Constitution, among all citizens. A big section of society was denied even basic facilities till 2014 when his government came to power, he said. The prime minister said his government prioritised the marginalised and adopted their development as a mantra, asserting that it reached out to those who for decades had not got any facility from any government. “We have been trying to change their lives,” he said. The same bureaucracy and system are in place but the

mindset and work culture has changed, changing the lives of people, he said. Citing a report, Modi said over 13 crore people moved out of poverty in the last five years. Many global agencies have come out of positive reports about the Indian economy, he said, adding that this also is an evidence of the immense possibility for employment and self-employment in the coming years. The prime minister told the new employees through video conferencing that they should

make a note of any hardship they might have faced due to some government employees and ensure that they never treat anyone in the same manner. His government, he said, has been spending lakhs of crores of rupees in building modern infrastructure, including expressways, airports and in rail sector, which have obviously created a lot of employment. India is witnessing an “infrastructure revolution,” he said. Development projects hanging fire for years and decades were accomplished by his government, he said, citing the construction of an airport in Sikkim and Paradip refinery. Real estate sector was headed to sure shot destruction when his government came to power but it ushered in reforms through the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act to restore its good health. The sector creates a lot of employment, he noted.

Rajnath lauds Coast Guard for ensuring maritime security

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday called upon the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) to continue working with dedication and professionalism towards bolstering the coastal defences and maritime capabilities of the country. Inaugurating the 40th Coast Guard Commanders’ Conference here, he also complimented the ICG for ensuring maritime security by being in the vanguard in the field of search and rescue and pollution response. “The ICG, since its inception, has rendered a yeoman service to the seafarers by ensuring their safety and security in all circumstances,” said Rajnath. He stressed on the need to continue the drive against contraband and drug trafficking. During the conference, the defence minister was given an overview on the ongoing development projects, opera-



tional readiness and future expansion plans of the ICG by Director General Rakesh Pal. The three-day conference aims at addressing contemporary maritime challenges and fortifying the country’s coastal surveillance mechanisms. It is being attended by senior officers of the Ministry of Defence and the ICG. The conference agenda

encompasses a wide spectrum of crucial topics, including enhancing maritime safety and security such as search and rescue operations, maritime pollution response, drive against contraband/drug trafficking, safety of fishermen/seafarers at sea, optimising coastal security measures, fostering inter-agency coordination,

and promoting Maritime Domain Awareness. The conference is held annually, where all the officers put forth the roadmap for the future and discuss various policy and strategic issues. It aims to carve out a futuristic vision for the service and to determine the modalities to overcome the challenges efficiently.

PM interacts with beneficiaries of Viksit Bharat Sankalp, launches Mahila Kisan Drone Kendra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Launching programme to increase the number of ‘Jan Aushadhi Kendras’ in the country from 10,000 to 25,000, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday affirmed that his work in the last 10 years has led to people having immense confidence in his government as he said the “vote bank” considerations of past dispensations guided their development initiatives. Interacting with beneficiaries of the ‘Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra’ via video conferencing , the Prime Minister also launched ‘Pradhan Mantri Mahila Kisan Drone Kendra. During the program, the Prime Minister dedicated the landmark 10,000th ‘Jan Aushadhi Kendra’ at AIIMS, Deoghar, Jharkhand. He also launched the programme to increase the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras in the country from 10,000 to 25,000. According to Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) , the Prime Minister interacted with beneficiaries from Deoghar in Jharkhand, Raigarha in Odisha, Prakasam in Andhra Pradesh, Namsai in Arunachal Pradesh, and Arnia in Jammu and Kashmir. In his address to beneficiaries of different schemes as part of the government’s Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra for saturation coverage of welfare schemes, he said four biggest “castes” for him are the poor, youth, women, farmers, and their rise will make India developed. The yatra, under which government ‘raths’ (chariots) are travelling to all corners, has generated huge enthusiasm among people with some describing the vehicles as



“Modi ki guarantee wali gaadi” (vehicles carrying Modi’s guarantees), the prime minister said, asserting that the masses know that he will fulfil all his promises. For this he needs their blessings, he said, underscoring that the programme will identify everyone left out of welfare schemes aimed for them and that he will ensure their saturation coverage in the coming years. A voice is emerging from people across the country that Modi’s guarantee begins from where people’s expectations from others end, he said. In his remarks after interacting with the beneficiaries, Modi said Bharat is neither going to stop nor tire as the people have resolved to make the country developed. “In various corners of the country there is such enthusi-

asm for the yatra and there is a reason for it, as people have seen Modi, his work, in the last 10 years and therefore, they have immense confidence in the government and its efforts.” “People have also seen that period when past governments used to consider themselves ‘mai-baap’ of the people. Therefore, even after decades of independence, a big portion of the population was deprived of basic facilities,” Modi said. Mai-baap is a Hindi term which loosely translates here as a government having a feudal mindset. More than half the population had lost faith in government as they had to depend on middlemen and running around offices to seek any benefit while his dispensation is reaching out to the masses to enrol them for various welfare measures, he said. Earlier govern-

ments were driven by political calculations and vote bank considerations, he said. “Therefore, the people never used to trust the announcements of such ‘mai-baap’ governments. We have changed this and the government in place now considers people as form of God and we work with ‘seva bhav’ not ‘satta bhav,’” Modi said. He said that in just 15 days of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, people are walking along and joining it. Until now, the vehicle of ‘Modi ki guarantee’ has reached over 12,000 panchayats and more than 30 lakh people have benefited from it, the prime minister said. “Mothers and sisters are reaching out to this vehicle of ‘Modi ki guarantee’. The initiative has taken the shape of a people’s movement and people are tak-

ing it forward,” he said. Many panchayats have received saturation coverage without any discrimination, he said, asserting that the youth are taking the lead in popularising the exercise and spearheading the goal to make India developed. Underscoring his commitment, he said he went to a remote tribal region in Khunti to launch the yatra instead of doing it at a place like Vigyan Bhawan, a venue associated with official programmes. The Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra is being undertaken across the country with an aim to attain saturation of flagship schemes of the government by ensuring that the benefits of these schemes reach all targeted beneficiaries in a time bound manner, according to the PMO. He also launched the ‘Drone Didi Yojana’. The scheme aims to provide drones to 15,000 select women Self Help Groups during the period 2024-25 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purpose. He said he wanted these women to receive ‘naman’ (respect) in their villages and that some people have suggested the name of ‘Namo Drone Didi’ for the initiative. Women trained as drone pilots will be financially empowered and receive people’s respect, he said. “My dream is to make 2 crore women living in villages and working with self-help groups lakshpati,” he said. Noting that the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna, which provide free grains to over 80 crore people, has been extended for another five years, he asserted that “Modi’s guarantee means the guarantee of fulfilling all guarantees.”

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Asserting that India has ‘walked the talk’ when it comes to climate action, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for supporting developing countries with adequate climate financing and technology transfer to enable them to deal with climate change. As he heads to Dubai to attend the World Climate Action Summit, a high-level segment of the COP28, Modi said, “During our G20 presidency, climate was high on our priority. The New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration includes numerous concrete steps on climate action and sustainable development. I look forward to the COP28 taking forward to the consensus on these issues.” The United Nations ‘Conference of the Parties’ on climate, known as COP28, is being held to discuss ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and effectively combat climate change. In his departure statement, the Prime Minister said the COP28 will provide an opportunity to review progress made under the Paris Agreement, and chart a path for future course on climate action. “At the Voice of Global South Summit convened by India, the Global South spoke for the need for climate action based on the principles of equity, climate justice, and common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as a greater focus on adaptation,” Modi said. The two-week-long meet comes at a time when the world for the first time witnessed a 2 degrees rise in temperature from the pre-industrial level (1850-1900)



and nearly 200 cities – more than half of them are in India which are set to become regions where extreme temperatures will persist for nearly half of the year. “It is important that efforts of the developing world be supported with adequate climate financing and technology transfer. They must have access to equitable carbon and development space to achieve sustainable development,” said Modi. “Our achievements in different sectors like renewable energy, energy efficiency, afforestation, energy conservation, Mission LiFE are testament to the commitment of our people towards mother earth,” he said. The prime minister said he was looking forward to joining special events including on climate finance and green credit initiative. “In keeping with our civilizational ethos, India has always laid emphasis on climate action even as we pursue social and economic development,” Modi said. The prime minister is scheduled to participate in three other high-level side events as well. Earlier, Foreign Secretary

Vinay Kwatra at a press meeting said that India expects a “clear roadmap” on climate finance at the ongoing COP28 in Dubai. “Our clear perspective and priority has been that climate finance and also climate technology are a very crucial segment of all the global efforts in addressing this challenge of environmental degradation,” Kwatra said at a media briefing. “We expect a clear roadmap to be agreed at COP28 on climate finance which would be important for delivering on the new, collective, quantified goals,” he said. “India has taken a leadership role in shaping the global agenda on climate and environment including through focusing on this issue in two Voice of Global South Summits organised by India,” he said. “Our approach to climate action is reflected in our principled positions in international negotiations and our global efforts to help the rest of Global South in combating this serious challenge of climate change as also its impact on the development framework of the developing countries,” said the official.

Panel for reduced punishment for assault on public servants

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Parliament standing committee has recommended that the two-year imprisonment given to anyone who assaults or uses criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty should be reduced to one year after taking into account submissions of some MPs that the law is widely “misused”. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs headed by BJP member Brij Lal made the recommendation after examining the three proposed criminal laws. In its report, the panel noted that some members of the committee submitted that section 353 under Indian Penal Code (IPC), which corresponds to clause 130 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) is “widely misused by public servants in the name of deterrence.” As the political demonstrations are the soul of democracy and there are instances in the past when political leaders were harassed and falsely con-



victed for offences under this section of IPC while demonstrating, therefore, it was suggested that the punishment under this clause may be reduced. “The committee agrees with the submission made before it and recommends that the punishment provided under clause 130 may be reduced from two years to one year,” it said. The clause 130 of BNS says: Whoever assaults or uses criminal force to any person being a public servant in the execution of his duty as such public servant, or with intent to prevent or deter that person from discharging his duty as such public servant, or in consequence of anything done or

attempted to be done by such person in the lawful discharge of his duty as such public servant, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS-2023) bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 11 along with Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS-2023) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA-2023) bills. The three proposed laws seek to replace the Code of Criminal Procedure Act, 1898, the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, respectively.

Toxic air in metros taking toll on lungs, says WHO

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Toxic air quality pervading in the air almost in all metros is taking a toll on the lungs of the people with health experts noticing a rise in lung cancer among non-smokers too besides tobacco smokers. As per the World Health Organization (WHO), outdoor air pollution is a Group 1 carcinogen. “There are environmental and occupational determinants of lung cancer,” said Dr. Abhishek Shankar Assistant Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology, AIIMS, Delhi, mentioning the rise in incidence of lung cancer among non-smokers. Lung cancer screening implementation can be part of a larger effort to educate the population about preventive healthcare and the benefits of early screening, he suggested at the ASSOCHAM 2nd Conference on ‘Lung Cancer- Enabling Innovations in Treatment Pathways’ held recently here to mark the ongoing lung cancer awareness month.



Dr Sudhir Kalhan Chairperson ASSOCHAM National Digital Healthcare Task Force focused on strong condemnation of deteriorating environment causing air pollution. “There is a definite link of rising incidence of lung cancer in non-smokers due to air pollution,” he said, underscoring the need for effective implementation of the policies to curb air pollution. The Five major air pollutants are Ground-level ozone (O3), Particle Pollution (also known as particulate matter, including PM2.5 and PM10), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Sulphur Dioxide (SO2), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2). “By integrating advanced diag-

nostics, accessible treatments, education, research, and support services, we aim to empower both healthcare professionals and patients in their journey toward better lung health,” he said. Dr. Yutaro Setoya, Team Lead, Non-Communicable Diseases, WHO, India, in his special address highlighted how 8.1% of cancer-related deaths are attributed to lung cancer. Annually, 1 lakh people are diagnosed with lung cancer and the disease significantly impacts the working-age population, said Dr Setoya while Dr. Dipjyoti Das, Head Medical Planning and operations, Assam Cancer care Foundation talked about delivering equitable and affordable healthcare in backward regions. Prof Dr D S Rana Chairperson ASSOCHAM National Healthcare Council and Board of Trustees, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital dwelled in detail how smoking is directly linked to lung cancer and how it acts as a barrier affecting lung health. “Smoking is by far the leading risk factor for lung cancer.

Indira, Haksar proved more than a match for Nixon, Kissinger in 1971: Ramesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As former US secretary of State Henry Kissinger passed away, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Thursday recalled that in 1971 then US President Richard Nixon and Kissinger created huge headaches for India but then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her close aide P N Haksar proved “more than a match for them”. Kissinger, who dominated foreign policy as the United States extricated itself from Vietnam, died Wednesday. He was 100. In a social media post, Ramesh said, “Henry Kissinger has passed away. He was as immensely consequential as he was hugely controversial.” In his long and eventful life he has been both celebrated and condemned, Ramesh noted. “But there can be no doubt about his sheer intellectual brilliance and awesome charis-

ma,” he said. For the last three decades, he positioned himself as a great friend and supporter of India and indeed he was, Ramesh said. “But this was not always so and in 1971 especially, President Nixon and he created huge headaches for India and thought they had us cornered. However, Indira Gandhi and P N Haksar proved more than a match for them,” the former Union minister said. “I have described the Kissinger-Haksar and Nixon-Indira Gandhi encounters with archival detail in my book ‘Intertwined Lives: PN Haksar & Indira Gandhi!’ Ramesh said. He also pointed out that Gary Bass in his book ‘The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger and a Forgotten Genocide’ indicts Kissinger severely for his role in the events of 1971 leading up to the creation of Bangladesh.

Key infra industries growth rises by 12.1% in October

5 sectors log double digit expansion

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The output of eight key infrastructure sectors jumped by 12.1 per cent in October 2023 against 0.7 per cent expansion in the year-ago period on account of a sharp uptick in production of coal, steel, cement and electricity, according to the official data released on Thursday. These numbers assume significance as the eight core sectors — coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity — contribute 40.27 per cent to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). Growth was primarily driven by a low base effect and double-digit growth in five sectors — coal, steel, cement and electricity. Infrastructure sectors grew by 9.2 per cent in September. The output growth of eight sectors was at 8.6 per cent in



April-October 2023-24 against 8.4 per cent in the year-ago period. Coal output rose by 18.4 per cent while steel production jumped 11 per cent during the month under review as against 3.8 per cent and 5.8 per cent in October 2022 respectively. Cement production grew by 17.1 per cent against a 4.2 per cent contraction in the year-ago period. Electricity generation rose by 20.3 per cent in October 2023 against 1.2 per cent in the

same month last year. Output of crude oil and natural gas increased by 1.3 per cent and 9.9 per cent in October this year respectively as against a negative growth of 2.2 per cent and 4.2 per cent in October 2022 respectively. Refinery products production stood at 4.2 per cent in October this year as against (-) 3.1 per cent in October 2022. Fertiliser production growth stood at 5.3 per cent in October this year as against 5.4 per cent in October 2022.

Stock markets edge up in volatile trade on derivatives expiry, rise for 3rd day

Market valuation of BSE-listed firms remain above \$4 trillion mark

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty eked out gains on Thursday to extend the winning run for a third straight day in a highly volatile trade amid the scheduled monthly derivatives expiry and muted trend in the US markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex closed 86.53 points or 0.13 per cent higher at 66,988.44, registering its third day of gains.

Stock markets witnessed heavy volatility due to the monthly expiry of derivatives contracts and oscillated between gains and losses during the day. Sensex hit a high of 67,069.89 and a low of 66,610.35 in day trade. Despite heavy volatility, the combined market valuation of all listed companies on the leading stock exchange BSE continued to remain above the USD 4-trillion mark for the second day in a row. The market valuation of all listed



companies on the BSE reached the USD 4-trillion milestone for the first time ever on Wednesday. The broader Nifty50 of the National Stock Exchange edged up 36.55 points or 0.18 per cent to close at 20,133.15. Analysts said that investors were awaiting GDP and other macro numbers scheduled for release after market hours. "Asian stocks mostly rose on Thursday to clock their strongest performance in 10 months, as investor sentiment warmed on a relatively benign global interest rates outlook and signs of economic recovery. European

stocks rose mildly," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities. In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.96 per cent and midcap index jumped 0.83 per cent. Among the indices, healthcare rallied 1.66 per cent, consumer durables rallied 1.61 per cent, realty jumped 1.52 per cent, industrials (1.48 per cent), capital goods (1.39 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.77 per cent). Utilities and bankex were the laggards. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled with gains.

Indian economy grows 7.6% in Sept quarter: Govt data



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's economy grew 7.6 per cent in the September quarter as against 6.2 per cent in the year-ago period, according to official data released on Thursday. India remains the fastest-growing major economy, as China's GDP growth in the July-September quarter this year was 4.9 per cent. As per the National Statistical Office (NSO) data, the GVA (Gross Value Added) of the agriculture sector recorded a 1.2 per cent growth, down

from 2.5 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2022-23. The GVA growth of the manufacturing sector accelerated to 13.9 per cent in the second quarter of the current fiscal against a decline of 3.8 per cent a year ago. The growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the April-September period in 2023-24 stood at 7.7 per cent compared to 9.5 per cent in the first half of the last financial year. The GDP growth in the first quarter of the current fiscal remained unchanged at 7.8 per cent.

India should not take new commitments at COP28 climate talks in Dubai: GTRI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India should not take new commitments at the ongoing United Nations COP28 climate talks in Dubai and continue its green transition without additional assurances, think tank GTRI suggested on Thursday. The climate conference is being held at the Dubai Expo City from November 30 to December 12. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that India has already made significant commitments at COP27 (Conference of Parties) and the Paris Agreement, aligning with its Long-term Low Emissions and Development Strategy. India's commitment to generating half of its electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2070 is noteworthy.



"At COP28 India need not take new commitments at COP28. Instead, it may continue its green transition without additional commitments," GTRI Co-Founder Ajay Srivastava said. However, he added that the country's high methane emissions, especially from the agriculture sector, pose a chal-

lenge. "Any improvement will require changing crop pattern which may take decades of efforts. Balancing emission reduction with the livelihood impact on the agriculture sector is crucial," Srivastava said. The think-tank also suggested that as 70 per cent of

electricity is generated from coal power here and many large industries rely on captive and not grid power, India needs to improve on these. "However, India should not agree to an immediate shutdown of coal-fired power plants to ensure energy security. India must highlight that developed countries are responsible for 89 per cent of historical emissions. They subsidized the fossil fuel industry with USD 1.8 trillion in 2020," it said. It added that India should advocate for broadening the scope of climate discussions to address these interconnected challenges, fostering a more effective approach to climate action. Further it said that despite fifty years of international efforts, annual GHG (greenhouse gas emissions) emissions have increased by 270 per cent, reaching 53.8 billion

metric tons of CO2 equivalent in 2022.. "The rising GHG emissions underscore the insufficiency of current efforts to meet the agreement's goals. Highlighting this will be the focus of COP28," it said adding India's role at COP28 is crucial, given its status as a developing nation and the third largest emitters of carbon dioxide gases after China and the US. But India must emphasise the fact that its per capita CO2 emissions at 1.9 tons are "very" low, far lower than the USA (14.5) and China (8.9) those of all developed countries and China, it said. "Large population converts even low per capita emissions into big total, India cannot be punished for being a large population. COP28 obligations must be tied up with per capita emissions and not a country's total emissions," Srivastava said.

PVR Inox to open 150 screens next fiscal with ₹500 cr investment

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The country's largest multiplex operator PVR Inox will open 150 screens in the next fiscal with an investment of about Rs 500 crore, a top company official has said. The company, which opened a six-screen luxury cinema at Maison Inox here on Thursday, already runs 118 screens across 23 properties in the megapolis. Overall, including its property in Colombo, it operates 1,711 screens at 359 properties across 114 cities. We are planning to add 150 more screens at an investment of around Rs 500 crore next fiscal, Sanjeev Kumar Bijli, an Executive Director at PVR Inox, told PTI here. On the Maison Inox, he said normally a screen required an investment of Rs 5 crore but given that it's a luxury collection and comes with the first



attached bar (Gastby Bar), the per screen cost is about Rs 7 crore. On the company's overseas expansion plans, he said they will have more screens in Sri Lanka only and not anywhere else. Despite the civil war and the deep financial difficulties, "Sri

Lanka has been an extremely good market for us so far", Bijli said. "Given the response to our first screen in the capital of the island nation, we are planning to have more properties there. But we have no other overseas market in mind for expansion," Bijli said.

Petrol, diesel price revision only when oil price stabilises below USD 80

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned fuel marketing companies are likely to revert to daily revision in prices of petrol and diesel only when international oil prices stabilise below USD 80 per barrel on a sustained basis, industry officials said. Three state-owned fuel retailers — Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum

Corporation Ltd (HPCL) — which control roughly 90 per cent of the market, have kept petrol and diesel prices on freeze for a record 20th month in a row. This is despite the raw material (crude oil) cost surging last year, leading to heavy losses in the first half of 2022-23 fiscal year before easing rates propelled them to profitability. "There is considerable volatility in the international oil market and prices fluctuate wildly," an official said. "Oil com-

panies can cut prices by Re 1 per litre and everyone will applaud. But when international oil prices go up, will they be allowed to raise rates remains in doubt." India is the world's third largest oil consuming and importing nation. It imports more than 85 per cent of its oil needs and hence domestic pricing is linked to international rates. The basket of crude oil that India buys has averaged USD 83.42 per barrel in November, down from USD 90.08 of

October and USD 93.54 of September. While at current prices, oil companies are making some money on petrol, diesel -- the most consumed fuel accounting for almost 40 per cent of all petroleum products consumed in the country -- but it has been in a "touch-and-go" scenario in recent weeks, another official said. "On some days there is profit on diesel but on other days there is loss. There is no consistent trend." Three retailers had been recouping losses

they incurred for holding rates when crude oil prices shot through the roof last year. In May, international oil prices and retail pump rates had come at par, but the subsequent surge widened the gulf between cost and price realised. "For oil companies to revert to daily market based price revision, oil prices will have to come below USD 80 on a sustained basis," an official said. Petrol and diesel prices have been on a freeze since April 6 last year. Petrol costs

Rs 96.72 a litre in the national capital and diesel comes for Rs 89.62 per litre. The three firms made bumper profits in April-September -- first half of the current fiscal -- but considering the low earnings of last year, they are yet to recoup all losses, officials said. Consider this, IOCL posted a net profit of Rs 26,717.76 crore this year as compared with a full year profit of Rs 8,241.82 crore in 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023).

FROM PAGE 1

MAKE IN INDIA BOLSTERS DEFENCE

To replace the Indian Field Gun (IFG), which has completed its service life, AoN for procurement of state-of-the-art Towed Gun System (TGS) has been granted which will become a mainstay of Artillery forces of Indian Army. The AoN was also accorded for 155 mm Nubless projectile for use in 155 mm Artillery guns which will enhance lethality and safety of the projectiles. All these equipment of the Indian Army will be procured under Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category. The AoN for procurement and integration of Automatic Target Tracker (ATT) and Digital Basaltic Computer (DBC) for T-90 Tanks under Buy (India) category have also been accorded which will help in maintaining combat edge of T-90 tanks over adversary platforms. The AoN for procurement of Medium Range Anti-Ship Missiles (MRASHM) for surface platform of Indian Navy under Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category has also been accorded. The MRASHM is envisaged as a lightweight Surface-to-Surface Missile which will be a primary offensive weapon onboard Indian Naval Ships. Further to maximise indigenisation, the DAC gave the go-ahead for a major amendment in the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020. It has been decided that henceforth, in all categories of procurement cases, minimum 50 per cent of indigenous content shall be in the form of material, components and software that are manufactured in India. For the purpose of calculation of Indigenous content, cost of Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC)/Comprehensive Maintenance Contract (CMC)/After Sale Service shall be excluded. Also, the DAC has taken decision to further encourage start-ups/MSMEs participation in the defence ecosystem. For all procurement cases with AoN cost up to ₹300 crore, registered MSMEs and recognised start-ups will be considered for issue of Request for Proposal (RFP) without any stipulation of financial parameters, which can further be relaxed with approval of Defence Procurement Board (DPB) for AoN cost upto ₹500 crore on case-to-case basis.

TMC, BRS MAY SKIP ALL PARTY MEET

The House will have to adopt the report before the expulsion recommended by the panel comes into effect and in all likelihood the TMC firebrand leader who has been attacking industrialist Adani Group will be disqualified from the lower house this session. Sources in other political parties like Congress, JD(U), Shiv Sena, NCP, AAP, Shiromani Akali Dal, RJD, BJD amongst others will be attending the meeting. The Winter session of Parliament begins on December 4 and will have 15 sittings till

December 22, during which it is expected to consider key draft legislations, including three bills to replace the colonial era criminal laws. As of now 37 Bills are pending in Parliament of which 12 are listed for consideration and passing, and seven Bills for introduction, consideration and passing. Sources said the government also plans to present the first batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for the year 2023-24. Also, the three key bills which seek to replace the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Evidence Act are likely to be taken up for consideration during the session as the standing committee on Home has already adopted the three reports recently. Another key bill pending in Parliament relates to the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners. Introduced in the Monsoon session, the government had not pushed for its passage in the special session of Parliament amid protests from the opposition and former chief election commissioners as it seeks to bring on a par the status of the CEC and ECs with that of the cabinet secretary. At present, they enjoy the status of a Supreme Court judge.

EXTRA JUDICIAL KILLING NOT OUR POLICY: INDIA ON PANUN PLOT

The MEA spokesperson said the US side shared some "inputs" pertaining to nexus between organised criminals, gun runners and terrorists and that India takes such inputs seriously since they impinge on "our national security interests as well" and that relevant departments were examining the issue. "During the course of discussions with the US on bilateral security cooperation, the US side shared some inputs pertaining to nexus between organised criminals, gunrunners, terrorists and other extremists," he said. Bagchi said India will take necessary follow-up action based on the findings of the enquiry committee. "We cannot share any further information on such security matters," he said. Pannun, a leader of the so called 'Sikhs for Justice', is wanted by Indian probe agencies on various terror charges. *The Financial Times*, citing unnamed sources, first reported last week that US authorities foiled a plot to assassinate Pannun, and issued a warning to the Indian Government over concerns it was involved in the plot. *The Washington Post* on Wednesday said the Biden Administration was so concerned after discovering the plot that it sent CIA Director William J Burns and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines to India in August and October respectively to demand investigation and hold those responsible to account. Gupta faces "murder for hire" charges

for his participation in the alleged plot to kill Pannun, a US citizen. Gupta was arrested in June in the Czech Republic under an extradition treaty between the US and the Czech Republic. According to a US Department of Justice statement, documents before a New York court allege that an Indian Government employee worked with Gupta and others to hatch a plot to murder Pannun. The statement does not name the Government employee. Washington's allegations relating to the failed plot came weeks after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau alleged that there was a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in a Vancouver suburb in June. India had strongly rejected Trudeau's charges. On Canada's allegations, Bagchi said the main issue with Ottawa has been that of activities of anti-India elements in that country. "In so far as Canada is concerned, we have said that they have consistently given space to anti-India extremists and violence and that is actually the heart of the issue. Our diplomatic representatives in Canada have borne the brunt of this," Bagchi said. "We expect the government of Canada to live up to its obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. We have also seen interference by Canadian diplomats in our internal affairs," he said.

KISSINGER POPULARITY IN KERALA UNEXPLAINED

The CPI(M), in opposition, desired the Muslim League to split, anticipating support from the breakaway faction. Baby John's mission was to prevent the split and maintain good relations with the leadership. The day after Baby John arrived in Malappuram, the CPI(M)'s mouthpiece featured this headline as the lead news: 'Kerala Kissinger in Parappanangadi to broker peace in Muslim League.' Despite this Kissinger's charming manners, he failed in the mission, and the League experienced a brief vertical split. The uniqueness of Kissinger was his expertise in making the impossibilities a possibility.

KEJRIWAL SEEKS PUBLIC OPINION IF HE SHOULD RUN GOVT FROM PRISON

"Our MLAs and councilors will be part of this public dialogue. Public opinion will also be sought in this dialogue on whether Arvind Kejriwal should resign if arrested or not," he added. For AAP, a 'referendum' is a political tool to galvanize public

opinion, more often used to make an unconventional decision palatable to the citizens. AAP convener Kejriwal, in the past, has often chosen the referendum route for making difficult decisions. When the Anna Hazare anti-corruption campaign was at a crossroads on whether to continue as a movement or morph into a political party, Kejriwal sought the people's opinion. Similarly, when AAP won 28 seats in 2013 and fell short of the eight more needed to form the government, Kejriwal relied on the opinion of the public, and 'referendums' were conducted in every assembly constituency of Delhi on whether to form the government by taking the support of the Congress. Recently, when AAP had to declare a chief ministerial face for Punjab, it sought public opinion. The Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, responded by stating that this is a new drama by Kejriwal to divert attention from his corrupt government. Bidhuri claimed that Kejriwal is attempting to gain sympathy in case of an arrest, asserting, "Kejriwal has become a master of all scams. He realized that sooner or later he would be arrested. That's why he is doing all this drama," Bidhuri added. Criticizing AAP convener Kejriwal, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva said that Kejriwal should train his volunteers to answer questions about the "corruption" and "failure" of his government in developing the city. "AAP leaders are free to go home to home to carry out a signature campaign, but when they go to people, they should be prepared to answer people's questions on how party leaders did the liquor scam, Jal Board scam, tanker scam, panic button scam, school room scam, and how they have played with the livelihoods of contractual workers like civil defense volunteers, guest teachers, para-medical staff," he said. Chadha stated that the BJP is doing everything possible to weaken and eliminate AAP. He mentioned that AAP doesn't make any decision without asking the public, which is why they are starting this signature campaign. Through this campaign, by going door-to-door, they will collect opinions from the people of Delhi on whether, by casting their precious votes, they made Kejriwal their elder son, their brother, the Chief Minister. Chadha added, "If the BJP arrests Kejriwal, should he resign, or should he run the government from jail? The opinions of the people in the signature campaign will be presented to everyone." Earlier this month, the Enforcement Directorate had summoned Kejriwal for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. Kejriwal skipped the summons, calling them "illegal," and traveled to poll-bound Madhya Pradesh to address a rally, alleging that the federal anti-money laundering agency was acting at the behest of the BJP to malign his image.

Kissinger, secy of state under Presidents Nixon and Ford, dies at 100

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the diplomat with the thick glasses and gravelly voice who dominated foreign policy as the United States extricated itself from Vietnam and broke down barriers with China, died Wednesday, his consulting firm said. He was 100. With his gruff yet commanding presence and behind-the-scenes manipulation of power, Kissinger exerted uncommon influence on global affairs under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, earning both vilification and the Nobel Peace Prize. Decades later, his name still provoked impassioned debate over foreign policy landmarks long past.

Kissinger's power grew during the turmoil of Watergate, when the politically attuned diplomat assumed a role akin to co-president to the weakened Nixon.



"No doubt my vanity was piqued," Kissinger later wrote of his expanding influence. "But the dominant emotion was a premonition of catastrophe."

A Jew who fled Nazi Germany with his family in his teens, Kissinger in his later years cultivated the reputation of respected statesman, giving speeches, offering advice to Republicans and Democrats alike and managing a global consulting business. He turned up in President Donald Trump's White House on multiple occasions. But Nixon-era documents and tapes, as they

trickled out over the years, brought revelations — many in Kissinger's own words — that sometimes cast him in a harsh light.

Never without his detractors, Kissinger after he left government was dogged by critics who argued that he should be called to account for his policies on Southeast Asia and support of repressive regimes in Latin America.

For eight restless years — first as national security adviser, later as secretary of state, and for a time in the middle holding both titles — Kissinger

ranged across the breadth of major foreign policy issues. He conducted the first "shuttle diplomacy" in the quest for Middle East peace. He used secret channels to pursue ties between the United States and China, ending decades of isolation and mutual hostility.

He initiated the Paris negotiations that ultimately provided a face-saving means — a "decent interval," he called it — to get the United States out of a costly war in Vietnam. Two years later, Saigon fell to the communists.

And he pursued a policy of detente with the Soviet Union that led to arms control agreements and raised the possibility that the tensions of the Cold War and its nuclear threat did not have to last forever.

At age 99, he was still out on tour for his book on leadership. Asked in July 2022 interview with ABC whether he wished he could take back any of his decisions, Kissinger

demurred, saying: "I've been thinking about these problems all my life. It's my hobby as well as my occupation. And so the recommendations I made were the best of which I was then capable."

Even then, he had mixed thoughts on Nixon's record, saying "his foreign policy has held up and he was quite effective in domestic policy" while allowing that the disgraced president had "permitted himself to be involved in a number of steps that were inappropriate for a president."

As Kissinger turned 100 in May 2023, his son David wrote in The Washington Post that his father's centenary "might have an air of inevitability for anyone familiar with his force of character and love of historical symbolism. Not only has he outlived most of his peers, eminent detractors and students, but he has also remained indefatigably active throughout his 90s."

China grieves death of 'dear old friend'

Beijing (PTI): China, a major beneficiary of former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger's ping-pong diplomacy that broke the ice between the two countries in 1971, on Thursday called him a "dear old friend" of Chinese people and mourned his death, saying he was "pioneer and builder" of ties between Beijing and Washington.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, who held close consultations with Kissinger to find ways to halt the steep slide of US-China ties, sent a message of condolences to his US counterpart Joe Biden over the death of Kissinger.

Kissinger, who enjoyed a red-carpet welcome, has visited China more than 100 times, the most recent one being in late July this year to pave the way for a summit between Xi and Biden in Seattle earlier this month.

Considered the architect of the US-China relationship since the early 70s, Kissinger died at his home in Connecticut on Wednesday at the age of 100. On behalf of the Chinese government and people, and in his own name, Xi extended profound condolences and expressed sincere sympathy to Kissinger's family, official media here reported.

In his message, Xi said Kissinger was a world-renowned strategist and an old friend and good friend of the Chinese people. Half a century ago, with an outstanding strategic vision, Kissinger made historic contributions to the normalisation of China-US relations, which has not only benefited the two countries but also changed the world, Xi said. Kissinger had made it his lifelong pursuit to promote the development of China-US rela-

tions and enhance the friendship between the two peoples, and his name will always be associated with China-US relations, Xi said. Noting that Kissinger will always be remembered and missed by the Chinese people, Xi said that China is ready to work with the United States to carry forward the cause of friendship between the two peoples and promote the sound and steady development of China-US relations, so as to benefit the two peoples and make due contribution to world peace and development. Speaking at a daily press briefing on Thursday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin called Kissinger a "dear old friend" of the Chinese people and a pioneer and builder of China-US relations, who has made historic contributions to the normalization of ties between the two countries.

Truce in Gaza extended by another day

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel and Hamas agreed at the last minute Thursday to extend their cease-fire in Gaza by another day. But any further renewal of the deal that has seen dozens of hostages and prisoners released could prove more daunting since Hamas is expected to set a higher price for many of the remaining captives. International pressure has mounted for the truce to continue as long as possible after nearly eight weeks of Israeli bombardment and a ground campaign in Gaza that have killed thousands of Palestinians, uprooted more than three-quarters of the population of 2.3 million and led to a humanitarian crisis.

Israel has vowed to resume its offensive once the cease-fire expires.

And the talks appear to be growing tougher, with Hamas having already freed most of the women and children kidnapped during the deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel that triggered the war. The militants are expected to make greater demands in return for freeing scores of civilian men and soldiers.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other top officials on his third visit to the region since the start of the war, said he hoped the cease-fire could be extended and more hostages could be released.

"This process is producing results. It's important, and we hope that it can continue," he said.

Qatar, which along with Egypt has played a key role in mediating, announced the latest extension of the truce, under which Hamas has released at least 10 Israeli hostages per day in exchange for Israel's release of at least 30 Palestinian prisoners. The two Arab countries are now seeking to prolong the deal by another two days, according to Diaa Rashwan, the head of Egypt's State Information Service.

As word of Thursday's extension came, gunmen opened fire on people waiting for buses along a main highway entering Jerusalem, killing at least three people and wounding several others, according to police.

The two attackers, brothers from a Palestinian neighborhood in annexed east Jerusalem, were killed. Hamas' armed wing claimed the attack, casting it as retaliation for the killing of women and children in Gaza and other Israeli "crimes." The attack did not appear to threaten the truce in Gaza.

Netanyahu is under intense pressure from families of the hostages to bring them home. But his far-right governing partners are also pushing him to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed, and could bolt his coalition if he is seen as making too many concessions.

Israel says it will maintain the truce until Hamas stops releasing captives, at which point it will resume military operations aimed at eliminating the group, even as the Biden administration has urged it to operate with far greater precision if it resumes its offensive.

"As soon as Hamas stops releasing mothers, we're coming for the fathers. As soon as

it stops releasing daughters, we're coming for the sons," Israeli government spokesman Eylon Levy said. "We are going to continue putting unrelenting military pressure on Hamas to release everyone."

The initial truce — which began Friday and has now been extended twice — called for the release of women and children. Israeli officials say Gaza militants still hold around 30 women and children, who would all be released within a few days if the swaps continue at the current rate.

It's not clear how many of the women might be soldiers. For soldiers and the civilian men still in captivity, Hamas is expected to demand the release of high-profile Palestinians convicted of deadly attacks, something Israel has strongly resisted in the past.

Israel says around 125 men are still held hostage, including several dozen soldiers.

An Israeli official involved in hostage negotiations said talks on a further extension for the release of civilian men and soldiers were still preliminary, and that a deal would not be considered until all the women

and children are out. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because talks were ongoing.

So far, most Palestinians released have been teenagers accused of throwing stones and firebombs during confrontations with Israeli forces. Several were women convicted by Israeli military courts of attempting to attack soldiers.

With Wednesday's releases, a total of 73 Israelis, including during the six-day truce, most of whom appear physically well but shaken. Another 24 hostages — 23 Thais and one Filipino — have also been released, including several men.

Before the cease-fire, Hamas released four hostages, and the Israeli army rescued one. Two others were found dead in Gaza. On Thursday, the military confirmed the death of Ofir Tzarfat, who was believed to be among the hostages, without providing any further details. The 27-year-old attended a music festival where at least 360 people were killed and several others were kidnapped on Oct. 7. Hamas and other Palestinian militants killed over

1,200 people — mostly civilians — in their wide-ranging attack across southern Israel that day and captured around 240. Authorities have only ever provided approximate figures.

Israel's bombardment and ground invasion in Gaza have killed more than 13,300 Palestinians, roughly two-thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which does not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

The toll is likely much higher, as officials have only sporadically updated the count since Nov. 11. The ministry says thousands more people are feared dead under the rubble. Israel says 77 of its soldiers have been killed in the ground offensive. It claims to have killed thousands of militants, without providing evidence.

During the pause in fighting, Palestinians in Gaza have been consumed by the search for aid and horror at the extent of destruction.

Residents described entire residential blocks as leveled in Gaza City and surrounding areas in the north.

Top Ramaswamy aide leaves to join Trump campaign: Report

Washington (PTI): A top aide to Republican presidential aspirant Vivek Ramaswamy has resigned and joined former president Donald Trump's campaign, according to a media report which called the departure the latest indicator of Indian-American's stagnating election campaign.

Brian Swensen formally resigned from his role as national political director for the Ramaswamy campaign over the weekend, CNN reported. Swensen has joined the Trump campaign, the news network quoted a source familiar with his departure, as saying. Swensen is expected to be working on the campaign's political operation in the early-voting states, specifically in Nevada, two Trump campaign sources told CNN. Swensen's departure is the latest indicator of 38-year-old Ramaswamy's stagnating campaign, which has struggled to gain momen-

tum even as the candidate closely aligns himself with Trump, the front-runner for the 2024 Republican nomination, the report said. Ramaswamy has repeatedly praised Trump, the Republican front-runner, whom he trails by double digits, often calling him the "best president of the 21st century." Earlier this month, Brandon Goodyear, the Ramaswamy team's videographer, stepped away from the campaign, a source familiar with the departure told CNN. Tricia McLaughlin, a spokesperson for the Ramaswamy campaign, thanked Swensen for his work with the campaign and wished him well in the future. "We absolutely love Brian and completely wish him the best," McLaughlin said. Swensen's responsibilities handling Ramaswamy's political operations in New Hampshire will be overseen by senior adviser Mike Biundo, McLaughlin said.

3 killed in Jerusalem shooting

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

At least three Israelis were killed and six others injured when Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a bus stop here, breaking an uneasy peace in the city since the outbreak of the current round of violence in the region.

"At around 7:40 am (local time) two Palestinian gunmen got out of a vehicle on Weizman Street at the main entrance to the capital and opened fire at people at a bus stop," the police here said.

Three persons were killed and six wounded, two of them seriously, in a terror shooting attack at the entrance to the city, police and medics said.

Two off-duty soldiers and an armed civilian in the area are said to have returned fire, killing the two terrorists.

Videos circulating on social media platforms show a handful of people waiting at the bus stop starting to run away in dif-



ferent directions as the two gunmen start firing indiscriminately.

Israel's internal security agency, Shin Bet, named the two attackers as brothers Murad Namr, 38, and Ibrahim Namr, 30, from East Jerusalem.

"The pair were Hamas members and previously jailed for terror activity," the agency said.

Murad was jailed between 2010 and 2020 for planning terror attacks under directions of terror elements in the Gaza Strip and Ibrahim was jailed in

2014 for undisclosed terror activity, it said.

Footage showed that the two were armed with an M-16 assault rifle and a handgun.

A police search of the vehicle found large amounts of ammunition. Police were searching the area to rule out any additional attackers.

Medics with Magen David Adom ambulance service that reached the site of the attack declared a 24-year-old woman dead at the scene, while an elderly man and a woman among the eight others injured were declared dead at the hospital.

Two of the wounded were listed in serious condition.

The bus stop was the scene of a deadly bomb attack almost exactly a year ago.

Thursday's attack came shortly after Israel and Hamas agreed to extend the ceasefire for a seventh day.

"The War Cabinet unanimously decided last night that

if a list, as was agreed upon in the outline, were not delivered by 07:00 this morning (Thursday, 30 November 2023), fighting would resume at once," an announcement from the Israeli PMO said in the morning as people anxiously waited to hear on the fate of the fragile ceasefire for exchange of Israeli hostages against Palestinian prisoners.

"A list of women and children — in accordance with the terms of the outline — was delivered to Israel a short time ago; therefore, the pause will continue," it added.

In a press release, the PMO said, "Pursuant to receiving the list of hostages slated to be released today (November 30), the families have been notified."

Jerusalem has been relatively quiet since the outbreak of the recent round of violence and no major skirmishes have been reported despite several calls by Hamas to Palestinians in Jerusalem to support them.



President Joe Biden takes a photo with people on the tarmac before he boards Air Force One at Denver International Airport in Denver, Wednesday, to travel to Pueblo Memorial Airport in Pueblo, Colo.

Kim's sister rejects US offer of dialogue with North Korea

Seoul (AP): The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Thursday dismissed US calls for a return to diplomacy and lambasted condemnations of the North's recent spy satellite launch, vowing more launches in violation of UN bans.

During a UN Security Council meeting earlier this week, the US ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, called the North's satellite launch a "reckless, unlawful" action that threatens its neighbours. But she reiterated the US offer for dialogue without any preconditions, saying North Korea "can choose the timing and topic."

Kim's sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, rejected the US overture and threatened more satellite and other weapons launches.

"The sovereignty of an independent state can never be an agenda item for negotiations, and therefore, (North Korea) will never sit face to face with the US for that purpose," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by state media.

"(North Korea) will continue to make efforts to develop everything belonging to its sovereign rights and continue to exercise the sovereign rights, enjoyed by all the member states of the UN, in a dignified manner without being restricted in the future, too," she said.

Multiple UN Security Council resolutions ban North Korea from performing any launches using ballistic technology, such as satellite liftoffs and missile tests.

But the North has argued it has sovereign rights to launch spy satellites and test-flight ballistic missiles to cope with what it calls US-led military threats. It views major US-South Korean military drills as invasion rehearsal and often reacts with its own weapons tests.

S Korean farmers protest against proposed anti-dog meat legislation

AP ■ SEOUL

Dozens of South Korean dog farmers scoffed with police during a rally near the presidential office on Thursday to protest a push by authorities to outlaw dog meat consumption. Earlier this month, government and ruling party officials agreed to introduce legislation by the year's end that would ban the centuries-old practice. Individual lawmakers have submitted similar anti-dog meat bills in the past, but this would be the first time for the government to back such legislation.

About 200 farmers, restaurant owners and others involved in the dog meat industry gathered in Thursday's rally. They chanted slogans, sang, raised their fists and took turns making speeches criticizing the government's move. One

protester said he would kill himself if the government and governing party move ahead with the legislation.

"We'll fight. We'll fight," the protesters shouted.

Some farmers brought dogs in cages on their trucks but were prevented from taking them to the protest site. A shoving match between some protesters and police occurred, with some farmers rushing to a street when a truck, apparently carrying dogs, approached.

Police detained three protesters, farmers said. Police said they couldn't immediately confirm the detentions.

Dog meat consumption is neither explicitly banned nor legalized in South Korea. But there have been calls to prohibit it over worries about South Korea's international image and a growing public awareness of

animal rights. World celebrities including American actress Kim Basinger and French actress Brigitte Bardot have called for a ban.

The bill pushed by the government and governing party would phase out the dog meat industry by 2027. It would provide financial support to farmers for dismantling their facilities and opening new businesses and offer vocational training and other benefits.

"To have a government-backed bill with the political will behind it to see it passed swiftly is a highly significant milestone, a point we have never reached before in this campaign to phase out this abusive industry," the anti-animal cruelty group Humane Society International's Korea office said in written responses to questions from The Associated Press.

'2023 hottest year on record'

AP ■ DUBAI

The UN weather agency said Thursday that 2023 is all but certain to be the hottest year on record, and a warning of worrying trends that suggest increasing floods, forest fires, glacier melt, and heat waves in the future.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) also warned that the average temperature for the year is up some 1.4 degrees Celsius (2.5 degrees Fahrenheit) from pre-industrial times — a mere one-tenth of a degree under a target limit for the end of the century as laid out by the Paris climate accord in 2015.

The WMO secretary-general said the onset earlier this year of El Nino, the weather phenomenon marked by heating in the Pacific Ocean, could tip the average temperature next year over the 1.5-

degree (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) target cap set in Paris.

"It's practically sure that during the coming four years we will hit this 1.5, at least on temporary basis," Petteri Taalas said in an interview. "And in the next decade we are more or less going to be there on a permanent basis."

WMO issued the findings for Thursday's start of the U.N.'s annual climate conference, this year being held in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates city of Dubai.

The UN agency said the benchmark of key Paris accord goal will be whether the 1.5-degree increase is sustained over a 30-year span — not just a single year — but others say the world needs more clarity on that.

"Clarity on breaching the Paris agreement guard rails will be crucial," said Richard Betts of Britain's Met

Office, the lead author of a new paper on the issue with University of Exeter published in the journal Nature.

"Without an agreement on what actually will count as exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius, we risk distraction and confusion at precisely the time when action to avoid the worst effects of climate change becomes even more urgent," he added.

WMO's Taalas said that whatever the case, the world appears on course to blow well past that figure anyway.

"We are heading towards 2.5 to 3 degrees warming and that would mean that we would see massively more negative impacts of climate change," Taalas said, pointing to glacier loss and sea level rise over "the coming thousands of years." The nine years 2015 to 2023 were the warmest on record, WMO said. Its findings for this year

run through October, but it says the last two months are not likely to be enough to keep 2023 from being a record-hot year.

Still, there are "some signs of hope" — including a turn toward renewable energies and more electric cars, which help reduce the amount of carbon that is spewed into the atmosphere, trapping heat inside," Taalas said.

His message for attendee at the UN climate conference, known as COP28—"We have to reduce our consumption of coal, oil and natural gas dramatically to be able to limit the warming to the Paris limits," he said. "Luckily, things are happening. But still, we in the Western countries, in the rich countries, we are still consuming oil, a little bit less coal than in the past, and still natural gas." "Reduction of fossil fuel consumption — that's the key to success.

NATIONAL BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Panghal, Thapa sail into semifinals

PTI ■ SHILLONG

World Championships runner-up Amit Panghal (51kg) and 2021 Asian Champion Sanjeet (92kg) continued their impressive run as 12 SSCB boxers secured semifinal spots at the Men's National Boxing Championships here on Thursday. Six-time Asian Championships medallist Shiva Thapa, representing Assam, also progressed to the last-four stage.

Panghal dominated the proceedings throughout and ultimately won the bout comfortably in a unanimous decision against Mohammad Aarif of Jammu and Kashmir.



He will next face Ankit of RSPB in the semifinals.

Up against 2018 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Naman Tanwar of RSPB, Sanjeet was at the top of his game as he controlled the bout and played from a distance, landing hard punches throughout to register a win with a unanimous decision in the 92kg quarter-final.

Sanjeet will take on All India Police's (AIP) Vicky in the semifinals.

The other 10 SSCB boxers who qualified for the semifinals include Barun Singh (48kg), Pawan (54kg), Sachin (57kg), Akash (60kg), Vanshaj (63.5kg), Rajat (67kg), Akash (71kg), Deepak (75kg),

Lakshya (80kg), Jugnoo (86kg).

In other significant bouts, Thapa showcased his skill set and power packed punches to secure a commanding 5-0 victory over Shashank Pradhan of Delhi to set up a clash against Hariyansh Tawari of Maharashtra.

Commonwealth Games silver medallist Sagar (92+kg), who represents RSPB, was up against Navjot Singh of Chandigarh. He started the bout with an aggressive approach and landed a flurry of hard hitting punches in the first round itself that led to the referee stopping the contest.

He will fight it out against Vishal Kumar of Delhi.



SYED MODI INTERNATIONAL

Priyanshu lone Indian in men singles quarters

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Priyanshu Rajawat was the lone Indian shuttler to qualify for the quarterfinals in men's singles, while Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand made the cut in women's doubles at the Syed Modi International badminton tournament here on Thursday. Priyanshu, who won the Orleans Masters this year, emerged victories after compatriot Sathish Kumar Karunakaran retired while lagging 18-21 6-11 in the second round match.

The world no. 31 Indian will now clash against Indonesian qualifier Alwi Farhan.

Commonwealth Games bronze medallists Treesa and Gayatri, seeded fourth, defeated compatriots Dhanya Nandakumar and Ridhi Kaur Toor 21-9 21-5 and are set to face another Indian pair next.

As many as 10 Indians had participated in the men's singles draw which has world no. 12 Japanese Kenta Nishimoto and world no. 14 Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei as the top two world-ranked players.

While HS Prannoy and Lakshya Sen had withdrawn at the last-minute, the rest of the shuttlers, apart from Priyanshu, cut a sorry figure after failing to

cross the second round of the Super 300 tournament.

World no. 40 Kiran George, who won the Denmark Masters this year, fought hard before losing 16-21 21-18 20-22 to world no. 36 Chia Hao Lee of Taiwan.

Things were more gloomy in women's singles as none of the Indian players could cross the second round, though as many as 11 of them participated in the tournament. The draw has Japan's world no. 17 Aya Ogori as the top ranked player.

While the left-handed Ashmita Chaliha, who had won Maldives International this season, was outclassed by third seed Ogori 21-7 21-13, 16-year-old Unnati Hooda, the 2022 Odisha Open and 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters winner, was humbled 9-21 13-21 by former world champion Nozomi Okuhara of Japan and qualifier Janani Ananthakumar lost 15-21 12-21 to Malaysia's Wong Ling Ching.

Anupama Upadhyaya, the former junior world no. 1 and current senior national champion, lost 16-21 17-21 to Taiwan's Sung Shuo Yun, seeded eighth, while Ruthvika Shivani Gadde, who was part of the 2018 gold-medal winning Commonwealth Games mixed team, was no match for Thailand's Lalinnat Chaiwan, losing 8-21 12-21.

India need more people to take up sport for bigger Olympic success: Bindra

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Abhinav Bindra reckons that investing in just elite athletes will not make India a sporting superpower and if the country aspires to take its medals tally to double digits in the Olympics, more people need to enter the playing arenas and sport should not be looked at from the narrow prism of high performance.

India's top athletes have been receiving tremendous financial support from the government and corporate houses, of late, and the results have only got better as elite athletes get to train abroad and they now work with best support staff. Bindra said the investment in just top level athletes will not suffice.

"If you want to get to 50 (Olympic medals), it is not just going to be pumping money into the elite (athletes). It is only going to be a very small percentage of your population that is going to get involved in sports, so you need more people to play," Bindra said during the RCB Innovation Lab Leaders Meet here.

Bindra, the 2008 Beijing Olympics gold medallist in 10m air rifle, added that India was at a juncture where sport must become a mass movement now.

"The by-product of that hopefully will be that more people will be involved in sport. So I believe that the shift in perspective needs to happen and it needs to happen now." The former world champion also said that for India to become a sporting nation, a "sustainable" and "thriving ecosystem" should be created where sport is not judged from the narrow lens of high performance.

"What I would really like to see India as a country is to start looking at sport more holistically and not singularly from the prism of high performance.

"It is a very narrow view and if you only look at it from



a high-performance perspective, it will be very challenging to make that next leap from seven Olympic medals in Tokyo," he said.

India had its best-ever tally at the 2022 Tokyo Olympics, where it returned home with seven medals, including a gold in javelin throw from Neeraj Chopra.

Bindra, 41, added that more than just celebrating India's success in major events, if the country could celebrate sports, it could bring about the "real change" in the ecosystem.

"Giving more opportunities to young people to simply enjoy sport is that to me an important element that has to be developed for the whole Olympic project. The number two point is developing an economy for the future. The whole country needs to be involved in not just celebrating Indian success but also celebrating sports.

"If you have that larger goal in mind and you have this more holistic thought process in mind, I think you come up with an interesting project that will not just be limited to the two weeks of sports, but to how the Olympic Games can truly be the driver for real change," he said referring to India's endeavour towards hosting 2036 Olympic Games.

On RCB Innovation Lab creating a platform for a dialogue on sports, Bindra said, "Event like these bring experts from all over the world to ideate, which in turn make one aware of the "newest global trends, and opportunities that exist".

India start with 12-0 thrashing of Canada in FIH Women's Junior World Cup

PTI ■ SANTIAGO (CHILE)

The Indian team made a resounding start to its FIH Women's Junior Hockey World Cup campaign by securing a commanding 12-0 victory over Canada here.

Annu (4th, 6th, 39th minute), Dipi Monika Toppo (21st), Mumtaz Khan (26th, 41st, 54th, 60th), Deepika Soreng (34th, 50th, 54th), and Neelam (45th) were the goal scorers for India on Wednesday. India began the match with an attacking approach, and swiftly secured an early advantage as Annu scored two early goals through penalty corners.

Despite taking a two-goal lead, India persisted with their aggressive style, maintaining pressure on Canada. However, they were unable to find more goals in the opening quarter as



it ended 2-0 in their favour.

The momentum from the first quarter was carried into the second by India, who continued their dominance. They maintained possession, consistently penetrating the circle,

resulting in Dipi Monika Toppo and Mumtaz Khan netting a field goal each, further extending India's lead.

In the meantime, Canada won a penalty corner but they were unable to make the most

French soccer league struggling with violence

AP ■ PARIS

There's been discriminatory chanting in the stands, a team bus pelted with stones, a game called off because of crowd trouble, and precious few goals on the field.

The French soccer league is making headlines for all the wrong reasons this season. And now even the French government is calling for something to be done about it.

After 13 rounds of games this season, the number of incidents is worrying officials who have been dealing with an upsurge of violence in stadiums over the past two campaigns.

According to Interior minister Gerald Darmanin, more than 100 police officers were injured in soccer-related incidents last season, and 870 people were detained. And there is no sign of abatement.

"There's no other sport with this level of violence," Darmanin said recently.

In October in Montpellier, a match was stopped in added

time after fans threw a firework from the stands that landed next to Clermont goalkeeper Mory Diaw. The Senegal player had to be taken off on a stretcher, but was not seriously injured.

A new nadir was reached a few weeks later in Marseille when the bus carrying Lyon players was stoned by fans outside the Velodrome stadium. The windows were smashed and Lyon coach Fabio Grosso was left with his face bloodied, an injury that required stitching.

Supporters were also targeted, five police officers were injured, and nine people placed in custody, according to Darmanin.

Another episode of violence broke out in Montpellier last weekend when a bus transporting Brest fans back home was attacked as they left the southern city following a 3-1 win for the away team. Their bus was hit by stones reportedly thrown from a motorway bridge.

"What happened was very



serious. When you look at the impacts on the vehicle, you quickly understand the violence," said Pascal Robert, the club's managing director. "If the paving stone that was thrown at the front of the bus had fallen two meters lower, the driver would have been hit... I can't imagine the tragedy that would have ensued with our sixty supporters on board."

Meanwhile, the league isn't offering up a whole lot in terms of entertainment or suspense.

about. According to the league's statistics, the average number of goals per game after 12 rounds was lower than in the last three seasons - at under 2.5 - with the number of scoreless draws on the rise. Some supporter groups are finding other ways to stay entertained.

Before the match between Marseille and Lyon was ultimately called off, fans from both teams remained in the stadium and exchanged insults as they waited for play to resume. Taunting their Marseille rivals, some Lyon fans were filmed making Nazi gestures and mimicking monkeys.

Vicent Labrune, the French league president, believes the violence reached a new high after stadiums welcomed supporters back again following the COVID-19 pandemic during which games were played with no fans.

With the reopening of venues, violent individuals who had served stadium bans during the interruption were allowed back, he said. "The

guys had served their time. We ended up with a completely above-average number of crazy people," Labrune said during a hearing with French lawmakers this month.

Labrune estimated that about 50 violent fans at each French league club are causing trouble.

"If we manage to get them out of stadiums, the situation should improve," he said.

Labrune added that the "zero tolerance" policy implemented by the league - with point deductions and the closure of stadium sections - is needed to improve the situation. But he seemed under no illusion that the violence can be eradicated without a bigger change in mentalities.

"Football is a reflection of society, we're not going to stop it all on our own," Labrune said.

Faced with an increasing number of homophobic chants in stadiums, Labrune also called for matches to be systematically stopped as soon as the first offensive chant can be heard.

Dortmund gaining confidence

AP ■ BERLIN

Borussia Dortmund's success in the Champions League is giving it confidence it can recover its faltering Bundesliga campaign.

Dortmund defeated AC Milan 3-1 away on Tuesday to reach the knockout stage of Europe's premier competition despite a poor start to what many regarded as the toughest group with big-spending Paris Saint Germain and Newcastle.

The German team lost 2-0 at PSG in its first game, followed up with a scoreless draw with Milan at home, but recovered with back-to-back wins over Newcastle before Tuesday's win in Italy. "It's a real statement to qualify from the group already in the fifth match-day," Dortmund sporting director Sebastian Kehl said.

"Not many believed we could do it."

Part of the reason for that is Dortmund's patchy form in the Bundesliga so far this season. The team ended a run of three games without a win in the league last weekend with a 4-2 victory over Borussia Mönchengladbach, but had looked set for more disappointment after finding itself 2-0 down after 28 minutes.



Instead, hopes are high again after two consecutive wins including Tuesday's success in Milan. But Dortmund next faces a trip to unbeaten Bundesliga leader Bayer Leverkusen on Sunday - a team that has averaged more than three goals a game so far and is already 10 points clear of Dortmund after just 12 rounds.

Leverkusen leads 11-time defending champion Bayern Munich by two points. Bayern can move provisionally top on Saturday with a win at home over struggling Union Berlin - a team that hasn't won any of its last 15 games across all competitions.

Leverkusen faced Swedish team Hacken away in the Europa League on Thursday.

Before that game, Leverkusen had won every match across all competitions this season with one exception - a 2-2 draw at Bayern in the fourth round of the league.

Since Xabi Alonso took charge of the team in October last year, Leverkusen has only failed to score in its own stadium once - against Dortmund last season in a 2-0 loss in January. That defeat ended Leverkusen's five-game winning run.

But Alonso's team seems to have more resilience this season - Leverkusen has the second-best defense in the league with 10 goals conceded compared to Bayern's nine. Both teams are the only unbeaten sides after 12 rounds.

Golfer Lee tied for lead in Australian Open women's field

AP ■ SYDNEY

Teenage amateur Rachel Lee was almost late to the first tee but finished the first round of the Australian Open in a tie for the lead with American Jenny Shin.

The 16-year-old Lee had to hurry to start her round Thursday after getting the times confused, and she carried momentum to a 6-under 67 at The Lakes Golf Club in a tournament that has men's and women's fields and a two-venue format.

"I was putting and my coach says, Rachel, you're on the tee," Lee, who attends a Sydney high school, explained. "So I just ran out there. I've learned my lesson." Jenny Shin was also 6 under after a 66 at The Australian Golf Club. The pair had a one shot lead over two-time major winner Jiyai Shin of South Korea.

Ashleigh Buhai of South Africa and local Stephanie Kyriacou were in fourth place at 4 under.

Cameron Davis led the men's field by a stroke at 9 under after

an opening 63 at The Lakes. The 2017 champion had an eagle at the par-5 14th and seven birdies to finish one ahead of American Patrick Rodgers.

Scotland's Connor Syme was equal third at 7 under after an opening 64 at The Australian.

All but two of the leading 10 players in the men's field had their first rounds at The Lakes, including Min Woo Lee, who was 5-under just four days after winning the Australian PGA Championship title in Brisbane last Sunday.

His older sister, two-time major winner Minjee Lee, was in a three-way tie for sixth in the women's field at 3 under.

Cameron Smith, who missed the cut in his attempted title defense at the Australian PGA last week, was in a group of 20 players at 1 under after opening with a 71 at The Lakes.

"There's definitely something to build on there," he said.

Adam Scott had two birdies and two bogeys in an opening, even-par 71 at The Australian and was among a big group of players nine shots off the pace.

Bellingham keeps scoring

AP ■ BARCELONA (SPAIN)

Real Madrid wasn't supposed to still be this good after losing its top scorer this summer and being decimated by injuries. But, in came Jude Bellingham and the England midfielder has kept Madrid on course to compete for titles this season. Madrid is leading La Liga and is the only team other than Manchester City to have won all five of its games in the Champions League.

The key to the ongoing success of the 14-time European Cup winners can be boiled down to the depth and overall talent of its squad, and the incredible impact that Bellingham has made since arriving from Borussia Dortmund. Bellingham led Madrid to another commanding victory on Wednesday when he scored his team-high 15th goal of the season to help beat Napoli 4-2 and remain perfect in the Champions League group stage.

Madrid is also leading the title fight in Spain, where it is in first place, level on points with Girona before hosting the relegation-threatened Granada on Saturday.

"He's been a wonderful signing," Madrid coach Carlo



Ancelotti said about Bellingham on Wednesday, before he dug deep to find a supposed flaw in his new star.

"He needs to improve his Spanish because, like I have said, nobody's perfect."

Madrid lost the pillars of its attack and defence when Karim Benzema, its top scorer for the five previous seasons, was lured with other European players to Saudi Arabia in June and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois tore a knee ligament just before the season kicked off in August.

Then came more season-threatening injuries. Eder Militao, the team's best central defender, ruptured his ACL in the season opener, and Eduardo Camavinga, Madrid's most versatile midfielder, tore

a knee ligament while training with France this month.

Vinicius Junior also went down during the most recent international break when he tore a leg muscle with Brazil, an injury that will keep him out of action for the remainder of the year. Toss in minor injuries to Kepa Arrizabalaga, who came in to replace Courtois, veteran leader Luka Modric, and starting holding midfielder Aurelien Tchouameni, and it seems Madrid should have struggled against Serie A champion Napoli. Instead, it rolled over the Italian club just like most of its rivals this campaign. Its only loss this season came at Atletico Madrid in the domestic league in September.

INDIA NEED YOUNG BOWLERS TO DELIVER

PTI ■ RAIPUR

India's young bowling unit, which has been under the pump, will look to better its death overs performance while utilising Glenn Maxwell's absence to its advantage in the fourth T20 International against Australia here on Friday.

India's second-string attack did not paint a good picture of itself by not defending 40-plus runs in the final two overs in the third match which the Australians won while chasing a daunting 223-run target.

There is a possibility of a minor tweak in the Indian line-up after Prasidh Krishna gave away 68 runs in four overs, including 21 in the final over.

Deepak Chahar is back in the T20 mix and his ability to move the new ball should be considered for his inclusion in the playing XI along with death overs specialist Mukesh Kumar, who is back after one-match break.

Both Prasidh and Avesh Khan lack variety and innovation as they keep pitching the ball at the same length. Both bowl in late 130s or early 140s but consistently pitch it back of the length and the nature of Indian tracks make it a cannon fodder for batters.

Also not being able to use variations like conventional or wide yorkers has been the undoing of these bowlers who also didn't execute



slower deliveries properly.

In the batting line up, Shreyas Iyer's comeback means only Tilak Varma looks a candidate who could be benched as five others -- Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, skipper Suryakumar Yadav

and finisher Rinku Singh select themselves. India will also look to exploit the absence of a marauding Maxwell who pulled off a heist of sorts to singlehandedly bring Australia back into the five-match series with a win in a last-ball finish

in Guwahati. But the hosts will fancy their chances with Maxwell, and other influential players such as Steve Smith and Adam Zampa not figuring in the playing XI here, having left for home after a long stay in the country where they won their

sixth World Cup title recently.

Cricket Australia (CA) released many of its top players including Maxwell midway into the series keeping in mind their workload and fitness ahead of the T20 World Cup.

The Suryakumar Yadav-led second-string India are smarting from a classic Maxwell innings, and the home team bowlers will be relieved that he will not walk out to bat at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium.

Instead, they will probably be bowling to players such as Tim David, Josh Philippe and big-hitter Ben McDermott, a far better proposition at the moment than challenging Maxwell, who has enhanced his reputation as one of Australia's greatest white-ball batters in the past five-six weeks.

The runs, and the manner and situation in which he has accumulated them, has catapulted Maxwell into a level not meant for others.

India's bowlers, though, will still have to contend with Travis Head, on a high after his scintillating match-winning hundred in the World Cup final against India, and the seasoned Matthew Wade, who is leading the side in the ongoing series.

Like in Guwahati, dew could again have a say on a December evening in this part of the world, and the captain winning the toss would opt to bat second without an iota of doubt, leaving the team batting first to deal with the wet ball in the second innings.

The reinforcements have already joined the Australian squad and are available for the penultimate match of the series that started barely three

days after their triumphant World Cup campaign, the tight scheduling leaving many former players surprised. India's batting has been served well by the likes of young Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ishan Kishan, Rinku Singh, Tilak Varma and the skipper himself when required.

These players are expected to fire again but one man whose confidence will be sky high is Ruturaj Gaikwad, who is coming off a blazing 123 off 57 balls. The likes of Jason Behrendorff, Kane Richardson and Tanveer Sangha could find the going tough one more time.

So far, the unfriendly conditions meant the series has been a nightmare for the bowlers with five 200-plus totals in six innings, and the trend is expected to continue in the remainder of the rubber.

TEAMS (FROM):

India: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Ruturaj Gaikwad (vice-captain), Ishan Kishan, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Washington Sundar, Axar Patel, Shivam Dubey, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Avesh Khan, Deepak Chahar.

Australia: Matthew Wade (capt), Jason Behrendorff, Tim David, Ben Dwarshuis, Nathan Ellis, Chris Green, Aaron Hardie, Travis Head, Ben McDermott, Josh Philippe, Tanveer Sangha, Matt Short, Kane Richardson.



Rohit will handle it with grace: Ashwin 'If Mumbai Indians make Hardik captain'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Spin stalwart Ravichandran Ashwin feels that if all-rounder Hardik Pandya is made the Mumbai Indians skipper, Rohit Sharma will "handle it with grace" as the Team India captain "does not have much ego".

Pandya returned to Mumbai Indians recently after an all-cash deal trade-off with Gujarat Titans, the IPL side he led for two years.

Pandya, who had started his IPL journey with Mumbai Indians in 2015 and won four titles, moved to Gujarat Titans in 2022 and led the side to title triumph the same season, besides helping it finish runners-up in IPL 2023.

The trade-off to bring Pandya back to the MI fold raised several eyebrows, especially in terms of the franchise's captaincy, which is currently with Rohit.

"Rohit Sharma does not have much ego. He is a great human being and a sound leader. He will handle it with grace (if Pandya is made MI leader)," Ashwin said during his YouTube interaction with former cricketer S. Badrinath. "In the history of IPL, apart from the top four to five teams, all have released players. Mumbai and CSK have never done it. I know Hardik to an

extent. I see this move as a milestone achievement," he added.

"The day I lose this motivation, I know it's over"

Asked about his retirement plan, Ashwin, 37, said the day he loses motivation, he would call it quits.

"I am not being diplomatic, but for four to five years (since 2019), I found myself in a very dark space in life, and took help for mental health as well. In the dark space, I realised I have to be ready for any eventuality," he said.

"I have been preparing for life after cricket for five years. But I continue to work hard on my cricket; to contribute with the bat, I went to the USA and practised baseball.

"The day I lose this motivation, I feel irritated about waking up in the morning to bowl or bat, I know it is over. I will then quit immediately, say thanks to all and go on to the next chapter in life."

Ashwin, however, clarified that he has not yet decided on his post-retirement career.

"I am searching for something to do beyond cricket. I am interested in marketing and a lot of other things. But even if nothing else, I can't stop watching cricket. I am a cricket-tragic. I will do something in cricket and something other than that," he concluded.

Shanto's century helps Bangladesh

AP ■ SYLHET (BANGLADESH)

Najmul Hossain Shanto became the first Bangladeshi cricket to hit a century on his debut as captain as the hosts tightened its grip on the first Test against New Zealand here on Thursday.

Shanto's 104 helped Bangladesh extend its lead to 205 runs by reaching 212-3 at stumps on Day 3. Mushfiqur Rahim was batting on 43, after adding 96 runs with Shanto for the fourth wicket.

The captain helped his team regain the upper hand on a spin-friendly track after Bangladesh lost two openers in quick succession to leave them on 26-2.

Left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel got the better of Zakir Hasan (17) for the second time in the match, with a delivery that spun sharply to rap him in front of leg-stump.

Mahmudul Hasan, who top-scored for Bangladesh with 86 in the first innings, was run out in unluckiest manner as a drive from Shanto touched bowler Tim Southee's palm on the followthrough to hit his stump.



The two wickets in two overs brought the Black Caps back into the game but Shanto and Mominul Haque added 90 runs for the third wicket to give Bangladesh the edge.

Mominul survived a leg-

before shout as New Zealand reviewed in vain but appeared to be confident against his favorite opponent, against which he has averaged a whopping 55.61. He was run out on 40 after hitting four

boundaries from 68 balls.

Unlike his aggressive first-innings 37, Shanto stayed clam throughout the day to frustrate the New Zealand bowlers. He raised his fifth test hundred off 192 balls and his third in the

last four innings, pushing a fuller delivery of Patel past extra cover from a single.

He then hit a boundary in the last ball of that over, his 10th in 193 balls as bad light forced stumps for the third consecutive day.

New Zealand had resumed the day on 268-8 and was bowled out for 317, in reply Bangladesh's 310 in the first innings. Captain Tim Southee Southee played the key role, scoring 35 off 62 with three fours while Kyle Jamieson added 23 off 70.

With the main bowlers failing to make any breakthrough, Shanto introduced occasional bowler Mominul who wrapped up New Zealand's innings, dealing a double blow.

He trapped Jamieson leg-before to end a 52-run ninth-wicket partnership and, four balls later, also got the better of Southee to finish on his career-best 3-4.

Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam took four wickets on Wednesday, including top scorer Kane Williamson for 104, but didn't add to his haul on Day 3 and returned figures of 4-109 from 39 overs.



Uganda qualify for T20 World Cup, join Namibia

PTI ■ WINDHOEK (NAMIBIA)

Uganda qualified for next year's T20 World Cup, set to be held in the West Indies and the USA, with a nine-wicket win over Rwanda here on Thursday.

It will be joining Namibia as the second side to enter the main tournament from the ongoing Africa Qualifier.

In the regional final of the Africa Qualifier, Uganda ensured a top-two finish with the victory over Rwanda, their fifth in six matches.

Batting first, Rwanda were all out for 65 in 18.5 overs. In reply, Uganda completed the formality in 8.1 overs while losing just one wicket.

Uganda will become the fifth African nation to play in the T20 World Cup.

On the other hand, Africa Qualifier favourite Zimbabwe failed to secure a berth. Zimbabwe are currently placed third in the regional final with six points, having won three of their five games. After the results of the Africa Qualifier, the slots for the 20 participating teams have been filled.

The main tournament is set to take place between June 4-30 next year.

The top two sides from each group make it to the Super 8 stage, followed by the semi-finals and the final.

The qualified teams for the 2024 T20 World Cup:

USA, West Indies, Australia, England, India, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ireland, Scotland, Papua New Guinea, Canada, Nepal, Oman, Namibia and Uganda.

Delhi didn't keep promise to retain me: ABD recalls 2010 snub

PTI ■ DURBAN

One of the greatest batters of modern era, AB de Villiers has revealed that he was snubbed by erstwhile Delhi Daredevils after spending three seasons at the IPL franchise.

"Before making it big at the Royal Challengers Bangalore, the South African batting legend had three lukewarm season with the Delhi franchise, now known as Delhi Capitals.

"But in a team meeting, also attended by explosive Australian opener David Warner, de Villiers was told that he was going to be "retained" but it happened otherwise as the franchise released him before the 2011 auction.

"Recalling the incident in his YouTube channel, 'AB de Villiers 360', the former South African skipper said: "When I played in the 2010 season, I got called into the office and was told 'you are going to get retained, young AB de Villiers'."

"I sat alongside David Warner in that meeting. It came as a huge surprise to me a week or two later when I realised I had been released.

"So the communication wasn't great back in the day, that must be different these days but it's not a nice feeling," De Villiers added.

"The 39-year-old said it was a huge blow and he was very nervous before the auction.

"You're unsure of your



career, at that time in 2010 I think I only played five games in that IPL season so a lot of doubts crept up in my mind.

"But I did have a very good international season. I kept

playing good cricket and luckily for me the auction happened and I got picked up by RCB, and it changed my life forever, so great memories with regards to that.

"I was so nervous. Then I got the news from Twitter that I was picked by RCB and the next moment Virat (Kohli) called."

"De Villiers went on to mesmerise the Indian fans with his stroke-making and formed a dream combination with star batter Kohli at the top of the order for 11 seasons.

"De Villiers said the released players should not feel disappointed as it's not the "end of the road".

"For all the released players, it's not the end of the road, keep a close eye on the auction. But if you're not picked up, it gives an opportunity to go back to the drawing board and work even harder," he added.

'Rohit, Virat were crying in dressing room after heartbreaking loss'

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Skipper Rohit Sharma and star batter Virat Kohli were in tears in the dressing room following India's heartbreaking loss to Australia in the recent ODI World Cup final in Ahmedabad, veteran off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin said.

Australia beat India by six wickets on November 19 in the

final to win a record sixth ODI World Cup title. After the loss, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Indian dressing room and tried to cheer up Rohit and Kohli. But Ashwin said the dressing room witnessed some heartbreaking scenes.

"Yes, we were feeling the pain. Rohit and Virat were in tears, (and) seeing it felt bad. Anyway, (it was) not meant to

be. This team was an experienced side, (and) everyone knew what to do," he told former cricketer Subramaniam Badrinath on his YouTube channel. "Although India failed to emerge successful in the World Cup, Kohli and Rohit lit up the event up with their explosive batting.

Ashwin heaped praise on Rohit, both as a batter and



leader.

"If you take a look at Indian cricket, everybody will be telling you that MS Dhoni is the best captain. (But), Rohit Sharma is an outstanding person, (and) he understands every single player in the team," he said.

"He knows the likes and dislikes of each of us and has a great understanding. He puts in the effort to know each player

personally," he reckoned.

Ashwin played just a game in the entire World Cup, India's opener against Australia in Chennai, finishing with figures of one for 34.

Asked why Rohit didn't include him in the playing XI for the final, he backed the skipper saying it's not easy to change the winning combination.

"As far as I playing the final

is concerned, the team combination and all is secondary. Firstly, it's about empathy, (and) I keep stressing it a lot.

"It's like standing in someone else's shoes and looking at things from his/her perspective. Had I been in Rohit's shoes, I would have thought 100 times about altering the (winning) combination," he said.

"It was going alright for the

team, so why rest a fast bowler for three spinners?" he wondered Ashwin said he was prepared for the grand finale, but was not certain about his place in the playing XI.

"Honestly, I understood Rohit Sharma's thought process. Playing the final is big, (and) I was preparing for three days in the lead-up," Ashwin said.