OPINION 6

US PRESIDENCY:

THE DESI DREAM

the pioneer

MONEY 5

INFLOW IN MUTUAL FUND INDUSTRY

DROPS TO ₹34,765 CRORE IN Q2

WORLD 10

MYANMAR ARMY FACES

NEW CHALLENGE

Late City Vol.33 Issue 314 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

INDIA WILL BE

NERVOUS FACING NZ, SAYS TAYLOR 12 SPORT

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NEW DELHI, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3

Mystery of cracker infiltration in Capital

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In flagrant disregard of the Supreme Court order, the residents of Delhi and its neighbouring areas defied the ban and were openly seen bursting firecrackers on the night of Diwali amid deteriorating air quality. This caused PM10 and PM2.5 levels to soar in several parts of the city on Sunday night, resulting in heavy pollution across the entire city.

quality on Diwali day in eight years on Sunday, with the 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) settling at 218 at 4 pm. The AQI stood at 275 (in the poor category) at 7 am on Monday and gradually rose to 358 by 4 pm. However, the bursting of firecrackers until late Sunday night led to a spike in pollution levels amid low temperatures.

Delhi recorded its best air

Senior citizens, patients, children, and individuals with breathing ailments had to stay indoors, but the noise from crackers was a concern not only for them but also for animals, particularly pets and domestic animals. Every noise from the crackers in the surrounding areas unnerved the pets, making them scream for a safe shelter indoors.

However, legal experts said the judiciary cannot enforce the Supreme Court's orders on the ban of firecrackers and stubble burning to curb air pollution, as it can be addressed only by creating mass awareness.

The Supreme Court's recent order, which banned the manufacture and sale of firecrackers containing barium, was violated across the country on Diwali, leading to a worsening air quality index.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing the main petitioner Arjun Gopal and others seeking a ban on the sale and manufacture of firecrackers, has decided to move a contempt petition in the top court against law enforcement agencies for the flagrant violation of the court's recent order

Speaking on the violation of judicial orders, senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi expressed the view that no contempt proceedings will be effective in cases like these, where there are many contributors to the rise in air pollution. These are social issues. The

contempt action seems to be very difficult. How many people, and whom they (the Supreme Court) will catch? Basically, this is the issue of social awareness. People should be made more aware. I don't find much of a role for courts and lawyers," he said. Dwivedi further mentioned

that there are so many culprits like manufacturers, sellers, retailers, buyers, and those who are bursting firecrackers, and advocated for a year-round awareness campaign.

Advocate and environmental ist Gaurav Kumar Bansal, actively pursuing such cases at



Fireworks during Diwali celebrations in New Delhi

various judicial forums, also agreed with Dwivedi. He stated that a social awareness campaign is needed to achieve desired results, emphasising that the Supreme Court orders alone cannot curb the rising menace.

Dwivedi highlighted that a multi-pronged strategy is needed to address air pollution because the bursting of firecrackers is not the only contrib-

According to IQAir, a Swiss company specialising in air quality monitoring, Delhi was the most polluted city in the world on Monday, followed by Lahore and Karachi in Pakistan. Mumbai and Kolkata

ranked fifth and sixth among the most polluted cities global-

Ranjan Dimri I Pioneer

Social media visuals showed people gathering in the parks of the locality to burst crackers. Many others questioned the

implementing it. Insiders say many shopkeepers stored firecrackers a month ago, while the Supreme Court stated that its order banning firecrackers containing barium applies to every State and is not limited to Delhi and NCR on November

In the India Gate area in the heart of the city, the AQI level stood at 999. According to aqicn.org, in the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium area as well, the AQI stood at 999 in the morning and later came down to 553. The index was recorded at 970 in Pusa, and in the Anand Vihar area, it stood at 849. Most real-time air monitoring platforms this morning pegged the air quality index (AQI) above 500, with some places reaching as high as 999. Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium recorded an AQI of 910, Lajpat Nagar 959, and Karol Bagh 779 around 6 am.

Firecracker bursting pushed the PM2.5 concentration at many places, including Okhla and Jahangirpuri, in the capital to over 1,000 micrograms per cubic metre in the early

morning hours. An AQI level of 400-500 impacts healthy people and is dangerous to those with existing diseases, while a level of 150-200 brings discomfort to people with asthma, lung, and heart problems. Levels of 0-50

are considered good.
The ruling AAP Government

Supreme Court ban and the failure of the authorities in associated with the BJP instiassociated with the BJP instigated residents to burn firecrackers on Diwali, leading to an overnight increase of over 100 points in the national Capital's air quality index. Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai claimed that the police of these States permitted the transportation of firecrackers to Delhi. He also blamed the BJP governments in the States for

being behind it. Terming the Arvind Kejriwal Government as visionless, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva shared details, saying on November 4, the AQI of Anand Vihar was 498 and questioned whether crackers were being burnt then, whereas after the Diwali festival, the AQI was around 250. The BJP further stated that the Kejriwal Government has not deployed any team to ensure the ban. "No team was found on the ground," the Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh

Bidhuri said. Meanwhile, BJP leader Kapil Mishra on Monday said he is "proud of Delhi" for bursting crackers on Diwali, terming the move as "voices of freedom and

democracy." The city recorded its best air quality on Diwali day in eight years on Sunday, with its 24hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) settling at 218 at 4 pm. However, firecrackers bursting till late Sunday night led to a spike in pollution levels amid

How much did you pay Delhi Darbar: Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE RAIPUR/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday attacked the Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress Government in Chhattisgarh over the Mahadev Betting App scam.

Seeking an answer from Baghel cash have been seized in raids by investigation agencies and pointed out that the Chief Minister's aides are in jail.

Addressing an election rally in district Mungeli Chhattisgarh, the Prime Minister hit out at the Congress over corruption and said the countdown has begun for the exit of its government in Chhattisgarh.

Modi also took a veiled jibe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi saying that "some great sages of the Congress have developed an interest in math".

"The Congress is so interested in teaching math. Today I want to ask them some questions," Modi said. The PM said that more than ₹508 crore were allegedly distributed in the Mahadev Betting App scam. "The Chief Minister's close aides are behind bars. These

mathematicians of Congress

Mahadev Betting App scam



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during a public meeting ahead of the Chhattisgarh Assembly elections in Mungeli district on Monday

share the CM has received in this, what is the share of the money gone to other Congress netas and how much money has gone to the Delhi darbar? PM Modi said in a stinging attack on Gandhi-Congress. Last week, the probe agency ED said that an email statement

will have to tell how much of the operation paid bribes worth ₹508 crore to Chief

Minister Bhupesh Baghel. The BIP later shared a video of Shubham Soni, an accused in the Mahadev Book betting app case, saying he is its owner and had the "proof" of paying ₹508 crore so far to Baghel. Baghel has rejected the claim.

from a suspect in the alleged scam revealed that promoters has named several top busi-A separate FIR in Mumbai nessmen, including industrialists, as reported by The Pioneer

on Sunday. Modi also took a dig at the purported power-sharing agree-ment between Baghel and Deputy CM TS Singh Deo, saying that when the Congress can ditch its own senior leaders, it is certain that it will cheat people and not fulfill the promises made to them.

ed area, slackening the progress of rescuers. So it needs to be

stabilised through shotcreting,

an official engaged in the oper-

"About 15-20 metres of rubble

has been removed so far and the process is on. We plan to

push in a steel pipe of 800 MM diametre by boring a hole into the heap of debris. We hope to

rescue the trapped by Tuesday

night or Wednesday," the

Secretary of Disaster Management told reporters in

The first communication with

'The Congress has also understood that now its time is over in Chhattisgarh. Some journalist friends from Delhi and political analysts have told me that the Chief Minister (Baghel) is himself going to lose (election from Patan seat)," Modi said.

PM Modi also said the that it abuses the entire OBC

community in his name.

The Congress hates Modi. They have started hating even Modi's caste. For the last several months, Congress has been abusing the entire OBC community in the name of Modi...They have even refused to apologize after a court directed them to do so," he said. 'This is an example of how much hatred they have for the OBC community. It is the Congress which insulted Babasaheb Ambedkar. It is the Congress which conspired to end Babasaheb's politics," Modi

The Congress can do anything for vote bank and appeasement, he added. Polling for 20 out of the total 90 Assembly seats in Chhattisgarh was held on November 7. Voting in the remaining 70 seats will be held on November 17.

Row over Palestine rally takes UK Home Secy job

Suella Braverman and appointed former premier David Cameron back into the frontline Government as his new Foreign Secretary, in a dramatic reshuffle of his Cabinet ahead of general elections next vear.

Braverman, a Goan-origin Cabinet Minister, repeatedly courted controversy in her senior UK Cabinet role, most recently by accusing the Met Police of "playing favourites" when tackling aggressive Israel-Gaza protests in an article in 'The Times'

"The King has been pleased to approve the following Government appointments: Rt Hon James Cleverly MP as Secretary of State for the Home Department; Rt Hon David Cameron as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs," a Downing Street statement said.

"It has been the greatest privilege of my life to serve as United Kingdom Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday sacked controversial

Home Secretary. I will have more to say in due course," Braverman, 43, said in a brief

> The reshuffle came at a time when outgoing Foreign Secretary Cleverly was scheduled for bilateral talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who is in the UK for a five-day official visit during which he held tea-time talks with Sunak at 10 Downing Street on Sunday.

It now remains to be seen how his further meetings will unfold and if he will be meeting Cameron as his new UK counterpart in place of Cleverly.

"Though I may have disagreed with some individual decisions, it is clear to me that Sunak is a strong and capable Prime Minister, who is showing exemplary leadership at a difficult time," Cameron posted in a statement on X.

'I want to help him to deliver the security and prosperity our country needs and be part of the strongest possible team Kingdom and that can be presented to the country when the General Election is held," he

Prime Minister from 2010 to 2016 and leader of the Conservative Party from 2005 to 2016. The 57-year-old had resigned as Prime Minister in June 2016 soon after he lost in the Brexit referendum, having campaigned for the UK to remain within the European Union (EU). At the time, he was directly at odds with Sunak — then a junior Minister –

who had campaigned for Britain to leave the EU. While I have been out of frontline politics for the last seven years, I hope that my experience as Conservative Leader for eleven years and the Prime Minister for six will assist me in helping the Prime Minister to meet these vital challenges. added Cameron, who has been made a peer in the House of Lords to meet the parliamentary

requirement for appointing the

former member of Parliament

O trapped in tunnel, but

PNS/PTI UTTARKASHI

ll 40 workers trapped in an Aunder-construction tunnel on the Char Dham route are safe and being sent food and water, authorities assured on Monday but said the rescue operation could take up to two more days.

A portion of the tunnel under construction between Silkyara and Dandalgaon on the Brahmakhal-Yamunotri national highway collapsed in the early hours of Sunday.

All workers trapped are safe and communicating, officials said on Monday as Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited the site.

While oxygen was being supplied to the trapped labourers through a pipe immediately after the launch of rescue operations on Sunday, they could only receive drinking water and light food after contact was first established with them past



construction between Silkyara and Dandalgaon on the Brahmakhal-Yamunotri national highway collapsed in Uttarkashi district on Monday

Disaster Management Ranjit Kumar Sinha, who visited the tunnel, said the trapped labourers could be rescued by Tuesday night or Wednesday. The rescue strategy is now

focused on stabilising loose muck by shotcreting (concrete spraying) and pushing in a large diametre steel pipe through the rubble to evacuate trapped workers.

Loose muck falling constantly from above clogs the excavat-

the labourers was established through wireless past midnight on Sunday, Circle officer Prashant Kumar said.

Silkyara.

ations said.

NHIDCL director Anshu Manish Khalkho said the rescuers have contacted the labourers several times since through a pipe meant to supply food to them. Rescuers who worked overnight trying to prepare an

the release said.

escape passage for the labourers have sent them dry fruits, among others food, he said. "We are trying out all options to secure their early and safe evacuation. We have a plan A, plan B and plan C ready and

Khalkho said.
The collapsed area is spread over 30 metres and located 270 metres inside the tunnel from the Sikyara side, an official statement released from State

capital Dehradun said. The tunnel, supposed to be 4,531 metre-long when ready, is already built 2,340 metres from Silkyara side and 1,750 metres from Barkot side.

are progressing accordingly,"

A technical committee headed by Uttarakhand Landslide Minimisation Management Centre is looking into the circumstances that led to the partial collapse of the tunnel following a landslide,

According to a list of the

trapped workers issued by the District Emergency Operation Centre, 15 are from Jharkhand, eight from Uttar Pradesh, five from Odisha, four from Bihar, three from West Bengal, two each from Uttarakhand and Assam, and one from Himachal Pradesh.

Dhami during his visit told reporters that all efforts were being made for the safe rescue of all those trapped in the debris. Safely rescuing the trapped

workers is our priority. The rescue operation is being carried out expeditiously. I want to assure the families of the trapped labourers that they will be rescued soon," he said. The CM said the Centre and his Government were working together to rescue the trapped labourers. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a detailed update on the rescue operations and assured of all possible help, he added.

MHA issues notification on armed militias in Manipur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

The Government on The Government Monday banned nine Meitei extremist groups and their associate organisations which mostly operate in Manipur, for their anti-national activities and launching fatal attacks on security forces.

According to a notification issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the groups declared banned for five years are the Peoples Liberation Army, commonly known as PLA, and its political wing, the Revolutionary Peoples Front (RPF); the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and its armed wing, Manipur Peoples Army (MPA); the Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) and its armed wing, Red Army; the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) and its armed wing

(also known as the Red Army); the Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL); the Coordination Committee (CorCom); and the Alliance for Socialist Unity Kangleipak (ASUK).
PLA, UNLF, PREPAK,

KCP, KYKL were declared banned by the MHA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967) years ago and the latest action extends the ban by five years. The declaration as outlawed by the other organisations is fresh.

In its notification, the MHA said the Central Government is of the opinion that if there is no immediate curb and control of the Meitei extremist organisations will take the they opportunity to mobilise their cadres for escalating their secessionist, subversive, terrorist and

TMC leader shot dead, houses of CPM workers burnt in WB

Memories of the chilling horror in Bagtui resur-

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04002

04022

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02246

02260

03436

03228

04048

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04004

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04490

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04016

05070

04028

05316

05090

04058

02256

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04066

01676

05284

04002

04022

02252

05116

02248

02246

04012

01678

02250

02246

02260

04004

05072

04052

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New Delhi

10:30 Jaynaga

00:05 Patna Jn

07:25 Patna Jn

23:45 Patna Jn

18:15 Bhagalpur

18:30 Malda Town

15:30 Purnea Jn.

00:10 Sitamarhi Jn

19:10 Patna Jn

23:45 Patna Jn.

19:35 Darbhanga

10:15 Prayagraj Jn.

14:55 Banmankhi

00:30 Gorakhpur

14:00 Chhapra

15:30 Jaynagar

19:20 Varanasi Jn

23:15 Muzaffarpur Jn

15:30 Saharsa Jn

07:25 Patna In

14:45 Chhapra

00:30 Patna Jn

23:45 | Patna Jn

10:30 Jaynaga

19:10 Patna Jn

23:45 Patna Jn

18:15 Bhagalpur

00:10 Sitamarhi Jn

10:00 Chhapra

19:20 Varanasi Jn

19:35 Darbhanga

10:15 Prayagraj Jn.

Bapudham Motihari

Jaynaga

23:45 Patna Jn

08:05 Barauni Jn.

19:10 Patna Jn

23:45 Patna Jn

09:30 Ara

13:25 Muzaffarpur Jn

Bapudham

Chhapra

Gorakhpur

22:45

23:15

14:55

08:30

01:00

14:00

EAST BOUND TRAINS FROM

19:20 Darbhanga Jn

Muzaffarpur Jr

Jaynaga

Bapudham Motihari

Banaras

Jaynaga

Saharsa Jn.

TRAINS FROM

09:30 Ara

22:45

23:05

01:00

18:15

13:25

Anand Vihar Terminal | 00:05 | Patna Jn

15:30 Saharsa Jn

23:45

19.20 Darbhanga Jn

Jogban

16:45

16:05

20:00

14:45

09:50

14:00

16:30

16:45

15:50

03:30

24 Parganas. At least 16 houses belonging to CPI(M) workers

cash, were looted. Inmates,

EAST BOUND FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2023

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during Chhath Puja Festival, Northern Railway has planned to run

the following East Bound Festival Special Trains from 14.11.2023 to 19.11.2023 in addition to normal regular

EAST BOUND TRAINS FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 14.11.2023 (TUESDAY)

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Sleeper & General

AC Chair Car

3 Tier AC Economy Class

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC,

Sleeper & Genera

General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC Economy Class

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Sleener & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & Genera

Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC Economy Class

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper, General

3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Sleeper & General

AC Chair Car

1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC,

Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC,

Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC Economy Class

3 Tier AC Economy Class

Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC Economy Class

Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & Genera

DELHI AREA

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC & Sleeper

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC,

Sleeper & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Sleeper & General

3 Tier AC Economy Class

General

Sleeper, General

3 Tier AC Economy Class

3 Tier AC, Sleeper, General

3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

Sleeper & General

1st AC, 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

3 Tier AC Economy Class

FROM DELHI AREA

15:45 2 Tier AC 3 Tier AC Sleeper & General

BOUND TRAINS FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 16.11.2023 (THURSDAY)

15:45 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & Genera

lage of Jainagar block in South erties, including livestock and them injured and homeless. This incident occurred hours including women, were beaten after a local Panchayat-level

Moradabad, Bareily, Lucknow, Raebareily, Amethi, Pratapgarh, Varanasi, Pt.Deen Dayal Upadhyaya,

Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga & Madhubani Stations

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Chandausi, Bareilly Cantt., Sitapur, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur,

Deoria Sadar, Siwan, Chhapra, Sonpur, Hajipur, Shahpur Patoree, Barauni, Begu Sarai

Khagaria, Naugachia, Katihar, Purnea, Arariya Court, Arariya and Forbesganj Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patna, Kiul, Abhaypur, Jamalpur & Sultanganj Statior

DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 15.11.2023 (WEDNESDAY)

Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Siwan, Chhapra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur,

Samastipur, Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria & Simri Bhakhtiyarpur Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar & Ara Stations

Govindpuri, Pryagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patna, Simri Bakhtiyarpur, Mokameh, Kiul.

Abhaipur, Jamalpur, Sultanganj, Bhagalpur, Kahalgaon, Pirpainti, Sahibganj, Barharwa & New Farakka Statior

Kanpur Central, Pryagran, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Dildarnagar, Gahmar, Buxar, Dumraon & Bihiya Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, PT. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patliputra, Hajipur,

Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria, Mansi & Katihar Stations

Hapur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Hardoi, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Deoria Sadar, Siwan, Chhapra,

Haiipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria & Simri Bhakhtiyarpur Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Narkatiaganj & Raxaul Stations

Kanpur Central Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar & Ara Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Paniahwa

Narkatiaganj, Raxaul & Sitamarhi Stations

Aligarh, Tundla, Etawah, Govindpuri & Fatehpur Stations

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareily, Lucknow, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Chhapra, Hajipur,

Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga & Madhubani Stations

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Burhwal, Gonda, Basti & Khalilabad Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahiahanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur

Paniya Hawa, Narkatiagani, Bettiah & Sagauli Jn

Delhi Shahdara, Ghaziabad, Hapur Jn., Amroha, Moradabad, Chandausi Jn., Aonla, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Lucknow

Ayodhya Cantt., Akbarpur, Shahganj, Jaunpur, Kerakat, Dobhi, Aunrihar, Gazipur City, Yusufpur & Ballia

Moradabad, Bareilly, Alam Nagar, Lucknow, Rae Bareli, Amethi

Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh & Bhadohi,

Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patna Jn., Mokama Jn.

Barauni Jn., Samastipur & Darbhanga Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patliputra, Hajipur,

Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga & Madhubani Stations

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Lucknow & Pratapgarh Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Varanasi, PT. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya & Danapur Stations

Moradabad, Chandausi, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Chhapra & Hajipur Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Sonpur & Hajipur Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Siwan, Chhapra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur,

Samastipur, Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria & Simri Bhakhtiyarpur Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Burhwal, Gonda, Basti, Khalilabad, Gorakhpur,

Deoria & Siwan Stations

Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya., Buxar & Ara Stations

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Burhwal, Gonda, Basti & Khalilabad Stations

Kanpur Central, Pryagran, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Dildarnagar, Gahmar, Buxar, Dumraon & Bihiya Stations

Moradabad, Bareily, Lucknow, Raebareily, Amethi, Pratapgarh, Varanasi, Pt.Deen Dayal Upadhyaya,

Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga & Madhubani Stations

Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Bhabua Road, Sasaram & Dehri-on-Son Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Gorakhpur Jn., Narkatiaganj, Raxaul & Sitamarhi Stations

Kanpur Central Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya., Buxar & Ara Stations

Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patna, Kiul, Abhaypur, Jamalpur & Sultanganj Station

Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Narkatiaganj & Raxaul Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, PT. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patliputra, Hajipur,

Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria, Mansi & Katihar Stations

Hapur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Hardoi, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Deoria Sadar, Siwan, Chhapra,

Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria & Simri Bhakhtiyarpur Station

Ghaziabad, Moradabad, Lucknow & Pratapgarh Stations

Ghaziabad Moradabad, Chandausi, Bareilly Cantt., Sitapur, , Gonda & Basti Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Narkatiaganj, Raxaul & Sitamarhi Stations

Aligarh, Tundla, Etawah, Govindpuri & Fatehpur Stations

Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur,

Paniya Hawa, Narkatiaganj, Bettiah & Sagauli Jn.

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar, Ara, Patliputra, Hajipur,

Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Darbhanga & Madhubani Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur,

Paniya Hawa, Narkatiaganj, Bettiah & Sagauli Jn.

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya., Buxar & Ara Stations

TERMINALS ON 18.11.2023 (SATURDAY)

Govindpuri, Prayagraj, Pt.Deen Dayal Upadhyay, Sasaram

Dehri-On-Sone, Gaya, Koderma & Dhanbad Stations

FROM DELHI AREA TERMINALS ON 17.11.2023 (FRIDAY)

2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Ghaziabad, Kanpur Central, Aishbag, Gomtinagar, Barabanki, Gonda, Basti, Khalilabad, Gorakhpur, Deoria & Siwan Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Sitapur, Gonda, Gorakhpur, Siwan, Chhapra, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur

Barauni, Begusarai, Khagaria, Simri Bhakhtiyarpur, Saharsa & Dauram Madhepura Stations

Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow, Gorakhpur Jn., Narkatiaganj, Raxaul & Sitamarhi Stations

shot dead by unknown miscreants. One of the murderers was also chased, caught and lynched

a large posse of police force that allowed the incidents to take place before conducting raids. Things started in the small hours of Monday when Saifuddin Laskar, a TMC Panchayat member and a local party strongman was shot dead.

According to sources, Laskar (43) was on the way to a local mosque when miscreants opened fire at him. He died enroute to hospital, sources said. Soon after the firing incident local TMC men gathered and chased the assailants catching two of them. While one of them was arrested the other was lynched, sources said adding they confessed to having been paid for the murder.

While the incident took place at 5.30 am by 7.30 am about 300 people attacked Baluakhali village 5 km away looting and burning properties, molesting women beating and stealing locals said adding they were "poor people" who "knew nothing of the murder" and who were "being targeted because we are CPI(M) supporters."

Even as TMC MP Shantanu Sen

called it a public outrage where people spontaneously came out of their houses and attacked the miscreants ...the party is not involved in this act," adding the murder was a CPI(M) handiwork to regain its toehold in the area. Joynagar MLA Biswanath Das too lashed out at the CPIM, accusing the party of "bringing back violence in politics. Laskar's father too accused the CPI(M) for the murder saying, "my son's only fault was that he was in the TMC.

However Baruipur MLA Bivas Sarkar who was one of the first senior leaders to rush to the spot said, "some armed miscreants murdered him while he was going to offer his namaz."

Laskar of running a mafia raj in the area CPIM leadership said "this murder is the result of one of their numerous intra-party rivalries ... this was a murder to get control over the mafia empire much like Bagtui where 10 people were burnt to death after a similar murder of a TMC leader ... The TMC men are fighting for their shares in the booties ... we want a thorough investigation into the matter, CPIM central committee member Sujan Chakraborty said, adding the TMC were trying to frame the poor villagers for their CPI(M) leanings.

State ADG Law and Örder who later visited the area said "investigations are on ... and the guilty from both the sides will be apprehended soon." District SP Palash Dhali rejected the allegations that police were mere onlookers as the raiders torched the houses.

Mahua gets new role in Trinamool

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress may I not have stood by party MP Mahua Moitra in need but it has apparently stood by her in deed. Sending a loud and clear message to the BIP Government, Moitra — implicated by the parliamentary Ethics Committee in the cash-for-query case — was on Monday appointed the Krishnagar district TMC chief considered a powerful and discernible elevation by party standards.

Soon after the appointment Moitra expressed her gratitude to TMC president and Bengal Minister Mamata Chief Banerjee. She wrote on her X "thank handle (@MamataOfficial) ... for appointing me District President of Krishnagar (Nadia North). Will always work with the party for the people of Krishnagar." Moitra had earlier told her district party colleagues that regardless of her "victimization" she would bounce back and "win the Lok Sabha elections by an even larger number of votes.

The Ethics panel led by BJP MP Vinod Sonkar had earlier rec-

ommended the expulsion of Moitra from Parliament for allegedly accepting cash and favours from a business group to raise questions in his favour in the House against a rival business group considered close to the BJP Government.

Moitra had hit back asking whether before acting against her the Government would take action against what he called "Rs 13,000 crore Adani coal scam." Considering the TMC's dwindling stocks in Nadia where both the BJP and the Left have come up in a big way, Moitra's elevation to the district president post appears to be the ideal example of two birds being hunted in one shot by Banerjee, party insiders

Maharashtra Opposition leader seeks extra security

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

eader of Opposition in the **∟**Maharashtra Assembly Vijay Wadettiwar of the Congress on Monday urged Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy Devendra Fadnavis to provide him an enhanced security cover in the wake of fresh threat messages received by him over his mobile phone.

Confirming the development, Wadettiwar said that after recent threatening messages, he had written to Shinde and Fadnavis, seeking additional security cover for him as a precaution.

Of late, Wadettiwar — in the backdrop of the vehement demand for reservation to Maratha community in jobs and education — has come in for flak for his stand that the Maratha should not be granted reservations through the OBC quotas.

Maurya questions Lakshmi's 4 hands. SP slams its leader for 'harming party'

leader Swami Prasad Maurya has questioned how Goddess Lakshmi can have four hands, triggering a row and facing rebuke from his own party, whose spokesperson asked him to "stop harming" the SP. The leader had earlier made head lines with his controversial remarks on Ramcharitmanas and Badrinath shrine.

A Congress leader and the BJP also took exception to the comment. Maurya in a post on X on Sunday, said he worshipped his wife on Diwali as she is in a true sense, a "Devi"

. Every child born in every religion, caste, race, colour and country of the whole world has two hands, two legs, two ears, two eves and a nose with two holes. There is only one head, stomach and back..."Maurya said in a post on X.

Movie watchers booked for bursting firecrackers during Tiger 3 screening

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Some fans of Salman Khan Created a commotion of sorts by setting off firecrackers during the screening of his new film Tiger-3 in a cinema theatre at Malegaon in north Maharashtra on Sunday night, prompting the local police to register a case against the fans concerned.

On the first day of its release when Tiger-3 netted a record box office collection of Rs 94 crore in India and abroad, Salman Khan's latest film elicited a boisterous reaction from fans during the night show at Mohan theatre at the powerloom town of Malegaon, where the actor's fans burst crackers the moment Shah Rukh Khan who plays a cameo in the film made an entry on the screen. The local police said Salman's fans ignited firecrackers, including sparklers, 'rockets,' multiple bursts, 'sutli" bombs, posing a risk to those inside the theatre The incident took place around 10.15 pm.

Before long, a video clip of Salman's fans bursting crackers inside a Malegaon theatre went viral, sparking an intense debate in the political and social circles about some actor's fans exposing other audiences in theatre to a massive risk of a major mishap So much so that a concerned Salman Khan took to social media to advise his fans not to put themselves and others at risk by bursting crackers in a cinema theatre. "I'm hearing about fireworks inside theaters during Tiger3. This is dangerous. Let's enjoy the film without putting ourselves and others at risk. Stay safe," Salman wrote on X.

India, UK review strategic, defence ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Tndia and the United Kingdom **L**on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their strategic and defence ties during telephonic talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his counterpart Grant Shapps. Rajnath also congratulated Shapps on his appointment as Secretary of State for Defence.

Giving details of the talks, defence ministry officials said here both ministers discussed a range of defence and security issues with particular emphasis on the Indo-Pacific. They briefly reviewed the ongoing engage ments and discussed possible cooperation in new domains. Both Ministers explored ways and means to develop closer defence relations. Shapps also invited Rajnath to visit the UK in the near future, officials said.

Ceiling price of nine scheduled formulations including brain cancer drug fixed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed the ceiling price of nine more formulations, taking the total number of formulations to 700. The Authority, in its latest meeting, decided to apply monopoly provisions under the DPCO, 2013 while fixing the prices of brain cancer drug formulations temozolomide 20 mg and 250 mg, with around 27.8 per cent and 21.15 per cent price

cut, respectively. According to the sources, the NPPA, however, also excluded the proposed pricing of temozolomide tablets 100 mg from the deliberations to fix the prices, since all the companies that were considered in the draft worksheet have represented that their products are capsules and not tablets. For temozolomide 20

mg, the price was reduced from

466.49 per tablet to Rs. 336.63 per tablet with a 27.8 per cent cut and for temozolomide 250 mg, the price has been reduced from Rs. 4,765.73 per tablet to Rs. 3,757.94 per tablet, with 21.15 per cent cut.

The draft worksheet suggested a 30 per cent cut for temozolomide 20 mg tablets to Rs. 330.51 per tablet and a 35 per cent cut for temozolomide 250 mg to Rs. 3,098.21 per tablet.

The NPPA said that the ceiling prices of these two formulations were uploaded without applying monopoly reductions under Para 6 of the DPCO, 2013.

"However, based on the repre sentation received with regard to incorrect dosage form only one company qualified with more than one per cent market share Hence, ceiling price is fixed by applying monopoly reduction as per Para 6(1) of DPCO, 2013 applied," said the NPPA after the meeting, as per the sources.

Delhi Shahdara, Ghaziabad, Hapur Jn., Amroha, Moradabad, Chandausi Jn., Aonla, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi. Lucknow Ayodhya Cantt., Akbarpur, Shahganj, Jaunpur, Kerakat, Dobhi, Aunrihar, Gazipur City, Yusufpur & Ballia. TERMINALS ON 19.11.2023 (SUNDAY) Aligarh, Tundla, Etawah, Kanpur Central, Lucknow, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Siwan, Chhapra & Hajipur Stations

Kanpur Central, Pryagran, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Dildarnagar, Gahmar, Buxar, Dumraon & Bihiya Stations Kanpur Central Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Buxar & Ara Stations Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya., Buxar & Ara Stations

Kanpur Central, Prayagraj, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay, Buxar, Ara, Danapur, Patliputra, Sonpur & Hajipur Stations

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DELHI RECORDS HIGHER POLLUTION THIS DIWALI

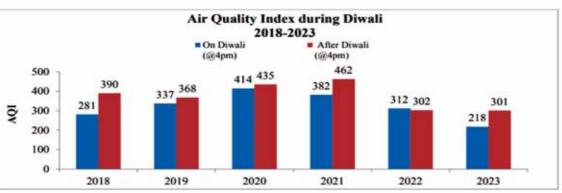
 $P^{\text{ost Diwali, an analysis by}}_{\text{the Delhi Pollution Control}}$ Committee (DPCC) revealed the concentration of fine, lungdamaging particulate matter PM2.5 and PM10 increased by 45 per cent and 33 per cent respectively as compared to last year. The analysis also highlighted

that nearly all air quality monitoring stations in the nation al capital recorded increased pollution levels on Diwali as compared to the previous year. The analysis showed Delhi's 24hour average PM10 concentration on Diwali (Sunday) stood at 430 micrograms per cubic meter, an increase from 322 micrograms per cubic meter last year, and 748 micrograms per cubic meter in 2021. On Monday, the AQI stood at 275 (poor category) at 7 am and gradually rose to 322 by 12 noon. After the air quality in Delhi took a turn for the worse the morning after Diwali, the

the 'severe' category once again on Tuesday and Wednesday. The air quality index is likely to reach in severe category from November 14m to 15. It has also predicted that the air quality is likely to remain in Severe to Very Poor category for the next six days. The DPCC report emphasized that all gaseous pollutants, including ammonia, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, and benzene, remained within prescribed standards. The city recorded a 24-hour

average PM2.5 concentration of 314 micrograms per cubic meter, compared to 217 micrograms per cubic meter last year and 607 micrograms per cubic meter in 2021.

The Analysis report says PM2.5 pollution levels at the . Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium soared to 1,423 micrograms per cubic metre by 2 am before it gradually came down to 101 micrograms per cubic metre by 12 noon due to rise in temperatures. The PM2.5 conComparison of Air Quality Index (AQI) Diwali (Year 2018- 2023)



On Diwali Day AQI Reduction in 2023 wrt 2021- 43% AQI Reduction in 2023 wrt 2022- 30%

centration at Okhla stood at 1,629 micrograms per cubic metre at 1 am and dipped to 157 micrograms per cubic metre by 12 noon. At 12 midnight, the air quality monitoring station at Anand Vihar recorded a PM2.5 concentration of 1,985 micrograms per cubic metre, the data showed.

The data revealed that, except for Alipur, Patparganj, Najafgarh, Karni Singh Shooting Range, and Okhla, all stations (total 24) observed an increase in the concentration of PM10 in 2023 compared to

It showed that all stations, with the exception of those at Sri

Aurobindo Marg, Vivek Vihar, and Karni Singh Shooting Range, witnessed an increase in the concentration of PM2.5. The DPCC said that all gaseous pollutants, including ammonia, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, and benzene, were found to be within the prescribed stan-

Real Time Noise Monitoring was undertaken at 31 locations in Delhi during Diwali Day (12 Nov 2023), the range was observed with minimum value of 53.7 dB(A) (Najafgarh) and maximum value of 84.5 dB(A) (Karol Bagh) on Diwali Day. Before Diwali day (06 Nov

2023), the range was observed with minimum value of 44.9 dB(A) (Najafgarh) and maximum value of 74.7 dB(A) (Karol Bagh). The analysis further stated that six major Gaseous Pollutants are measured that are Ammonia, SO2, NO2, CO, O3 & Benzene. All the pollutants were within the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS)

Standard (NAAQS)
Within Delhi, pollution levels reached the 'severe' category (AQI between 400 and 450) in some areas, including RK Puram (402), Jahangirpuri (419), Bawang (407), and (419), Bawana (407) and Mundka (403). The concen-tration of PM2.5, fine particulate matter that can penetrate deep into the respiratory system and trigger respiratory problems, exceeded the safe limit of 60 micrograms per cubic metre by six to seven times in these areas.

Delhi recorded an AQI of 312 on Diwali last year, 382 in 2021, 414 in 2020, 337 in 2019, 281 in 2018, 319 in 2017 and 431 in 2016, according to Central The city's AQI a day after Diwali stood at 360 in 2015; 445 in 2016; 403 in 2017; 390 in 2018; 368 in 2019; 435 in 2020, 462 in 2021 and 303 in

In the 24 hours ending at 4 pm on Monday, the AQI rose from 186 to 349 in Ghaziabad, from 193 to 349 in Gurugram, from 189 to 363 in Noida, from 165 to 342 in Greater Noida, and from 172 to 370 in Faridabad with intense firecracker bursting being reported in these places. Delhi recorded its lowest minimum temperature of the season so far early on Monday—11.8 degrees Celsius, and the minimum temperature is likely to remain around 11 or 12 degrees from Tuesday to Thursday, according to the Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast. Calm conditions are also likely to persist in the morning hours from Tuesday to Thursday, as indicated by the Air Quality Early Warning

Odd-Even will be implemented if air pollution reaches 'severe plus': Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aday after Diwali, as the air quality in Delhi plummeted to "very poor" on Monday, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said that the government will implement the odd-even vehicle rationing scheme if the air quality index (AQI) reaches 'severe plus' (450 or above). He even made it clear that till the Commission for Air Quality Management's next meeting, GRAP-IV will continue in New Delhi, adding from 14 November to 14 December, the 'Anti Open Burning' campaign will be in place in Delhi. The announcement was made after Rai held a pollution review meeting at Delhi Secretariat. Addressing a press conference,

Rai said the Delhi Government is going to run an 'Anti-Open Burning Campaign' in Delhi from November 14 to December 14. Under this campaign, 611 teams have been deployed. All teams will work round the clock to monitor and prevent open-burning incidents in Delhi.

Rai added that the Delhi government has decided to extend its campaign to control dust pollution till November 30 and

launch a month-long drive against open burning of waste from November 14. The minister said teams related to the Anti-Dust campaign have so far inspected about 20,000 construction sites and issued notices and challans to 1161 sites for violation of guidelines issued for construction sites and a fine of Rs 2.47 crores. In the first phase in Delhi, the Anti-Dust campaign ran from October 7th to November 7th. In the second phase, the Anti-Dust campaign will run from November 14th to 30th. A total of 591 teams have been deployed for this campaign

The minister said these steps have been taken based on suggestions from experts who have predicted worsening of meteorological conditions which could allow accumula-

tion of pollutants over the next

three to four days. Rai also said a call on the implementation of the oddeven car rationing scheme will be taken only after the air quality reaches the "severe plus" category (AQI above 450).

There was a plan to enforce the scheme, which restricts cars to operate on alternate days based on the odd or even last digit of their registration numbers, earlier but it was deferred last week, after a considerable improvement in air quality due to rain on Friday.

He also alleged that crackers burnt in the national Capital on Diwali night were sourced from Uttar Pradesh and

Rai claimed that the firecrackers burst in the city on Sunday night for Diwali came from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and also blamed the BJP governments in the states of being behind it.

"If there had been a ban in UP and Haryana, this wouldn't have happened. In all three states (UP, Haryana and Delhi), the police force is under the BJP," Rai said.

"There is a ban on production, storage and sale of firecrackers in Delhi. The firecrackers were brought to Delhi from UP and Haryana. The police of Delhi, Haryana and UP are under the control of the BJP and no common man can easily supply the firecrackers amid the monitoring of these three police forces. Some specific people have done this," Rai

Amid the national capital surrounded by haze and a severe rise in air pollution levels, with the air quality index jumping over 400 at maximum places after Diwali night. Delhi recorded a jump in pollution levels and a smoky haze returned on Monday morning after residents flouted the ban on firecrackers on Diwali night.

AAP, BJP trade charges over worsening air quality after Diwali

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As air quality worsened on Diwali night after bursting of firecrackers, the ruling AAP government here and the BJP traded charges on the issue on Monday. While the AAP claimed people associated with the BJP instigated residents to burn firecrackers, the BJP said the AAP government in Punjab failed to rein in stubble burning in Punjab. The BJP further alleged that the AAP government has failed to enforce the ban on firecrackers despite the Supreme Court's ruling. Blaming the BJP for the pre-

sent situation, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said some BJP leaders reportedly instigated residents to burn firecrackers on Diwali, leading to an overnight increase of over 100 points in the national capital's air quality index.

Át a press conference here, he

said the firecrackers burnt in Delhi were sourced from Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, and that certain individuals, including police personnel from these states, permitted the transportation of those firecrackers to the city.

"Delhi would not have been suffering had these states implemented the ban on firecrackers and their police done their duty properly," Rai said. Rai said, "The AQI was over 300 last year and this year it was less than 300. Due to rain, there was wind and pollution levels went down. People of Delhi followed the SC ban and government restrictions on bursting of firecrackers.

We saw in some places, especially BJP leaders promoting firecrackers. There was a targeted bursting of firecrackers at some places and due to that, the AQI has gone up today. If those crackers had not burst, the AQI would have remained

Trinamool Congress MP Saket Gokhale also lashed out at the BJP for asking people to burst crackers. "BJP's idea of Hindu pride is choking you & your

children with toxic air and destroying your cardiac and lung health by asking you to burst crackers. Refuting these claims, the Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh

Bidhuri stated that the Kejriwal

government has completely failed to impose a ban on fireworks in the capital. The notification for the ban was deliberately issued late after the announcement. He further said the Delhi government took no steps to enforce the ban on fireworks. "On the night of Diwali, no DM, SDM or any team from the Delhi government was seen on the ground. Gopal Rai should tell how many teams of the Delhi government toured

the capital, witnessed the burst-

ing of crackers, or sought police assistance for raids," he said. Delhi BJP vice president Kapil Mishra called Rai's statement on air pollution "shameful." He said "It's foolish to hold crackers responsible for air pollution. A week ago, Delhi's air quality index was around 400-500. Post Diwali, it's 296. If crackers caused pollution, then Gaza would have the highest level of pollution. There should be a fight against pollution," he

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla in a post on X accused the AAP and opposition alliance INDIA of targeting Hindus and Diwali.

'AAP & I.N.D.I alliance now targets Hindus & Diwali," he said. "Are we surprised?" He said that there were 900 cases of stubble burning on Diwali in Punjab despite ŠC warnings. "Over all there have been above 23,000 incidents of Parali burning in Punjab.

Fire service received 208 calls in Delhi on Diwali



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELH

 $T^{\text{he Delhi Fire Service (DFS)}} \\ \text{On Diwali received 208} \\ \text{calls related to fire, 22 of them}$ caused by firecrackers, and other stress situations. According to DFS officials, there were major fire incidents at Sadar Bazar, East of Kailash, Shastri Nagar, Sultanpur and Tilak Nagar on Sunday but no one was injured. Sharing details of last 13 years, the Fire Department said that 206 fire calls were received in 2011, 184 in 2012, 177 the year after, 211 in 2014, a total of 290 in 2015, 243 in 2016, 204 in 2017. A total of 271 fire-related calls were received in 2018, 245 in 2019, 205 in 2020, 152 in 2021 and 201 in 2022. He said 22 fire tenders took two

hours to control the blaze at a godown at Sadar Bazar in Central Delhi, he said. In West Delhi's Tilak Nagar, there was a fire at a market that gutted half a dozen shops. A fire incident was reported in outer Delhi's Sultanpuri as well. "We received 16 non-fatal fire

calls from Mangolpuri, Bajleet Nagar, Bhorgagh, Rajouri Garden, Kohat Enclave, three road accidents," said the official, adding three calls were received about locked houses. The DFS further said that out of 208 calls, 166 were related to blaze, including 22 caused by firecrackers and 21 fire in

Safdarjung reports 89 burn injuries cases, LNJP 11

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Several hospitals in Delhi reported cases of burn injuries, largely caused by firecrackers, on the day of Diwali. The festival was celebrated on Whilé the Centre-run

Safdarjung Hospital, which has the largest burn unit in the country, received 89 burn cases on Sunday, the Delhi govern-ment's largest facility, LNJP Hospital, had 11 such cases, according to doctors.

Of the 11 people who were brought to the emergency department on Diwali, one had a serious injury in the hand, a senior doctor at the LNJP Hospital said. Most of these patients are male, the doctor said, adding that all the 11 people suffered burns due to firecrackers.

Bursting of firecrackers is prohibited in Delhi, yet violations were reported from many parts of the city, especially on the night of Diwali. This also added to air pollution.

At the Safdarjung Hospital, of the 89 cases, 77 patients had suffered minor burns and were treated through OPD, while 12 patients with major burns (more than 25 per cent) admitted, said Dr Shalabh Kumar, head of department of burns and plastic surgery at the hos-

Seventy-one cases of burns were caused by firecrackers and 18 from 'diyas' (earthen lamps), he said. Of the 89 patients at the Safdarjung Hospital, 83 were from Delhi, doctors said, adding that 22 were children below 12 years. A total 18 patients had to be operated on, they said. On November 11, the hospital had received 11 cases of burns. The All India Institute of



Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here received 31 cases of burns in its emergency department during festivities on Saturday and Sunday, of which 21 were firecracker-related burn cases, doctors said.

Six needed ICU admissions, one bed ward admission while 14 others were discharged after OPD checkups from 8 am on November 11 to 8 am November 13, they said. Besides, there were two electricity-related burn cases -caused during Diwali decora-

tion -- admitted to the ICU. Also, 42 cases of eye injuries were reported at the RP Centre at AIIMS, said Dr Rima Dada, professor in-charge of the media cell at the Centre-run hospital. The RML Hospital in Delhi received 30 patients of burn injury related to firecrackers or 'diyas' on November 11-12, doctors said. "Most of injuries were related to hand while some had suffered facial injuries. Of these, three patients had suffered extensive blast injury in hands. They were admitted for surgical repair. Rest of the patients were given first aid and discharged with medication, and they will be followed up regularly in OPD till their wounds get healed. Majority of the firecracker-related burns were suffered by young males," said

Dr Sameek Bhattacharya, pro-

fessor and head of department

of burns and plastic surgery at

RML Hospital.

PWD cancels bungalow allotment to Kejriwal's PS **STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government's Public Works Department (PWD) has cancelled the allotment of a bungalow to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's private secretary Bibhav Kumar. Kumar is currently residing at D-II, Type-VI, Chandrawal Water Works-II, Civil Lines. In August, the Directorate of Vigilance (DoV) has directed the PWD to stick to house allotment rules and allot only the mandated category of quarters i.e., Type IV to Kumar after cancelling the Type VI bungalow currently allocated to him "illegally".

"The Competent Authority has

accorded approval for cancellation of the allotment of government accommodation No. D-II, Type-VI, Chandrawal Water Works-II, Civil Lines, Delhi allotted to Bibhav Kumar, PS to Hon'ble CM, which was two categories above his entitlement of a Type-IV government accommodation, as per extant rules. Kumar is hereby informed to hand over the possession of government accommodation No. D-II, Type-V1, Chandrawal Water Works-II, Civil Lines, Delhi to the area JE, PWD concerned," the PWD's deputy secretary (allotment) said in its order. The department has asked Kumar to intimate the pre-



ferred location of Type-IV government accommodation, for allotment as per his entitle-

Earlier, the DoV observed that a Type VI bungalow has been allotted to Kumar illegally in violation of Delhi Allotment of Government Residences

(General Housing Pool) Rules against Type IV accommodation for which he is eligible. The department on Wednesday also wrote a letter to the PWD secretary on the matter.

The allotment of Type-V accommodation at Rajpur Road is void ab initio as per the extant rules. The proposal of regularising the Type-V accommodation was also not regularised by Hon'ble LG. Now therefore, the competent authority has directed that PWD may stick to the rules of allotment and allot only the entitled category of quarter i.e. Type-IV to Bibhav Kumar after cancelling the Type-VI bungalow allotted to him,"

Buniyad Singh, assistant director, vigilance department, said in a lettet to PWD in August. Last week, the DoV has issued a show-cause notice to Kumar, stating that his engagement is "illegal" and citing a pending criminal case against him. The case pertains to Kumar allegedly obstructing a public servant from discharging his duty and abusing/threatening him. As per the notice, Kumar was appointed by the government subject to the outcome of an FIR against him under Sections 353 (assault to deter public servant), 504 (insult with intent to provoke breach of peace), and 506 (intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code.

CBI seeks sanction to file FIR against Satyendar Jain for extorting prisoners

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sought sanction from the government to file an FIR against former Delhi jail minister Satyendar Jain and former director general of prisons Sandeep Goel for alleged extortion of crores of rupees from high-profile prisoners, including Sukesh Chandrashekhar, in return for

a comfortable life in jail, officials said Monday. It has also sought permission to investigate Raj Kumar, the then Tihar Jail Superintendent Danics officer, who allegedly aided in extorting money from one of the prisoners.

The request seeking sanction against Jain and jail officer Raj Kumar was sent to the office of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, while for suspended IPS Goel and retired IAS Mukesh Prasad, the central agency has approached the

Union Home Ministry.

Jain and ex-Jail Superintendent Raj Kumar have been accused of extorting a large sum of money from "high profile prisoners", including conman Sukash in exchange for protection in jails. The Tihar jail is under the AAP government's jurisdiction.

Sources said the LG's nod has also been sought to conduct a similar investigation against Danics officer Raj Kumar, who was posted as jail superintendent of central jail number 4 in Tihar prison complex. Kumar allegedly aided the then director general of prisons in extorting money from Sukesh.

Raj Kumar refused to comment on the development.CBI, in its communication, said Satyendar Jain allegedly "extorted and received Rs 10 crore from Sukesh in various tranches between 2018 and 2021, either himself or through his accomplices, as protection money" to help him "live peacefully and com-fortably" in jail.

Currently lodged in Mandoli jail, Sukesh was earlier lodged in Tihar and Rohini jail complexes as an undertrial in judicial custody.

Sources said it was also alleged that a "high-level corruption and extortion racket was being run" by Jain along with the then director general, the additional inspector general of prisons, and their accomplices. The note added that the two top prisons officials, who have been suspended by the Union home ministry for dereliction of duty, also allegedly extort-ed and received Rs 12.5 crore from Sukesh in several tranches during 2019-22 as protection money.Raj Kumar, who is currently posted as secretary to the Delhi legislative assembly, is facing disciplinary proceedings in a case related to alleged irregularities in con-

struction of Rani Jhansi fly-

The CBI communication alleged that Raj Kumar "misused his official position" as a public servant in the capacity of the jail superintendent of central jail-4 and "aided" top jail officers in extending undue favour and advantage to Chandrashekar and other high-profile inmates "in lieu of valuable considerations" from

him. Meanwhile, the CBI has sent a request seeking mandatory sanction against 1989 batch IPS officer Goel, who was suspended by the ministry last year, and retired IAS officer Prasad, who was posted as the additional inspector general in Tihar, they said. The probe agency needs a goahead from the home ministry, the cadre controlling authority, under Section 17 A of the Prevention of Corruption Act before proceeding with an investigation against them, they said.

700 challans issued on Diwali for driving without PUC

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi Traffic Police **▲** issued more than 700 challans on Diwali to vehicle owners for driving without valid Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates, officials said on Monday.

On November 5, after the city's on November 3, after the city's air quality plummeted to the 'Severe Plus' category, Stage IV of the Centre's pollution control plan -- Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) -- came into effect in Delhi. Under GRAP Stage IV, all kinds of construction work and the entry of polluting trucks into the city are banned.

GRAP -- a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the Delhi-NCR region in the winter season -- outlines actions winter season -- outlines actions under four different categories - Stage I - 'Poor' (AQI 201-300), Stage II - 'Very Poor' (AQI 301-400), Stage III - 'Severe' (AQI 401-450), and Stage IV - 'Severe Plus' (AQI > 450).

Do not handcuff economic offenders: Parliamentary panel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A Parliamentary panel has recommended that people taken into custody for economic offences should not be handcuffed and clubbed with those arrested for heinous crimes such as rape and mur-

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, chaired by BJP MP Brijlal, also recommended changes to the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) on the issue of police custody of an accused beyond the first 15 days from arrest.

The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS-

along with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS-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.

The parliamentary panel noted that it felt the use of handcuffs, as outlined in Clause 43(3) of the BNSS, is appropriately restricted to select heinous crimes to prevent escape of individuals accused of serious offences and ensure safety of police officers and staffers during

However, the committee is of effecting the arrest of a per-

offences" should not be included in this category. This is because the term "economic offences" encompasses a wide range of offences -- from petty to serious -- and therefore, it may not be suitable for blanket application of handcuffing in all cases falling under this category.
"The committee, therefore,

recommends that Clause 43(3) may be suitably amended to delete the words 'eco-nomic offences' from the clause," the panel said.
Clause 43(3) of the BNSS states: "The police officer may, keeping in view the nature and gravity of the offence, use handcuff while



offender who escaped from custody, who has committed offence of organised crime, offence of terrorist act, drug related crime, or offence of illegal possession of arms and ammunition, murder, rape, acid attack, counterfeiting of coins and currency notes, human trafficking, sexual offences against children, offences against the State, including acts endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India or economic offences.'

On the issue of police custody of an accused, the committee noted that Clause 187(2) of the BNSS stipulates a total of 15 days for police custody, to

initial 40 days or 60 days out of the detention period of 60 days or 90 days, as applicable. However, there is a concern that this clause could be vulnerable to misuse by authorities as it does not explicitly clarify that the custody was not taken in the first 15 days either due to the conduct of the accused or due to extraneous circumstances beyond the control of the investigating officer.

"The committee recommends that a suitable amendment may be brought to provide greater clarity in the interpretation of this clause. The commission also recommends that in Clause 482 of the BNSS, the words 'the accused may be beyond the first fifteen days' may be added," it noted. Under the current Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), police custody can be sought and granted only during the first 15 days of detention, for

a maximum of 15 days. The clause stipulates a total of 15 days for police custody, but allows authorities to use this in whole or in parts at any time during the initial 40 days (for offences carrying up to 10 years of punishment) or in the first 60 days (for offences carrying punishment

The reports of the parliamentary panel were submitted to the Rajya Sabha on

a prayer is said for the soldiers guarding our borders. At every home, one diya is lit

for the soldiers, he said. He said security posts where soldiers are deployed are no less

than temples. Modi said India is now emerging as a "global player" in the defence sector

beyond 10 years).

PM to launch ₹24,000 cr scheme on Janjatiya Gaurav Divas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a ₹24,000 crore scheme aimed at holistic development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) on the occasion of 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' on November 15 in Jharkhand, official sources said on Monday

The scheme - PVTG Development Mission — will be a huge step towards the empowerment of tribals, they said, adding that this will be a first-of-its-kind initiative. In the 2023-24 Budget, the scheme was announced for improving socio-economic conditions of the PVTG.

In 2021, the Modi Government announced that the birth anniversary of revered tribal warrior Birsa Munda, who was born in Jharkhand, will be commemorated as the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas.

According to officials, there are 75 PVTG in 18 states and Union territories living in



22,544 villages spread across 220 districts having a population of around 28 lakhs

These tribes stay in scattered, remote and inaccessible habitations, often in forest areas and hence the mission has been planned to saturate PVTG families and habitations with basic facilities such as road and telecom connectivity, electricity, safe housing, clean drinking water and sanitation, improved access to education, health and nutrition, and sustainable livelihood opportunities, they said. The mission will be implemented through the convergence of 11 interventions of nine ministries under a host of existing welfare programmes covering rural roads, rural housing and drinking. Some scheme norms will be relaxed to cover these remote habitations, the officials said.

In addition, saturation coverage will be ensured for Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna, Sickle Cell disease elimination, TB elimination, 100 per cent immunisation, PM Surakshit Matritva Yojana, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, PM Poshan and PM Jan Dhan Yojana, among others.

Modi celebrates Diwali with troops in Lepcha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated this year's Diwali with the troops in Lepcha, Himachal Pradesh and said in his address to them India is safe as long as our Army stands firm and unshakable like the Himalayas, on its borders. He also remarked on his tra-

dition of celebrating Diwali with Army jawans and said he has been doing it for the last 30 to 35 years.

He said it was a tradition he has been observing even before he became the chief minister of Gujarat or the Prime Minister.

Modi lauded the Army's role in securing the borders amid the conflicts around the world. "Given the situation in the world today, expectations from India are continuously increasing. In such a situation it is important that India's borders remain secure. We are creating an atmosphere of peace in the country and you have a big role in this," he told the troops. He added that India's Army

and security forces have constantly contributed towards



The Prime Minister also applauded the troops for spending the Diwali away from their families and said, "It is said that the festival is your devotion to duty."

Centre notifies new norms for appointment of IIM directors

celebrated only where there is family, but today, you are all stationed at the borders while being away from your families. It shows the pinnacle of

He added that for him, a place where the security forces are deployed is no less than a temple. At every Puja across the coun-

try, the Prime Minister said,

and not only are the country's defence needs fulfilled, but also those of friendly countries. He added that between Diwali in 2016 and this year, India's defence exports have risen eightfold and the domestic defence production is now Rs 1 lakh crore.

In 2014, when he became the Prime Minister, Modi visited Siachen glacier on Diwali. In 2015, he was at the border in Punjab. The next year, he was near the China border in Himachal Pradesh. In 2017, he was in Kashmir's Gurez sector. The Prime Minister was at Harsil in Uttarakhand for the 2018 Diwali.

Rajouri near Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir.The Prime Minister visited Longewala in Jaisalmer for the 2020 Diwali and Nowshera in Jammu and Kashmir the year after that. Last year, he was at Kargil for Diwali.

The next year he was at

Number of Indians going to US for higher studies rises by 35 per cent

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

⊥ the United States for higher education recorded an all time high in academic year 2022-23 and US Ambassador to New Delhi Eric Garcetti congratulated them and said "You are bringing our countries closer together and leading us towards a bright future."

The number of Indians who travelled to the United States for higher education increased by 35 per cent and resulted in an all-time high of 2,68,923 students in academic year 2022-23, according to a report. Indian students constitute more

than 25 per cent of the over one million foreign students studying in the US and for the third year in a row, a record number of Indian students travelled to the country to pursue higher education, the Open Doors Report said.

"You did it, India! Each and every Indian student in the United States and the families supporting their success deserve recognition for this achievement. The decision to study abroad, and your choice of the United States, represents a valuable investment by you and your families. You are bringing our countries closer together and leading us towards a bright future," said Garcetti.

"We celebrate the strength of the Indian educational system that prepares students to compete globally and look forward to seeing India continue to lead," Garcetti said.

"We also look forward to balancing these record numbers. We want to see equal numbers of women pursuing studies in the United States and see more US students coming to experience all that India has to offer," he added.

According to Open Doors Report(ODR) data, India surpassed China to become the largest source of international graduate students in the United States for the first time since 2009-10. The number of Indian graduate students rose by 63 per cent to 1,65,936 students,



an increase of nearly 64,000 students, compared to last year, while Indian undergraduate students also increased by 16 per cent.

ODR data also shows India leading in the number of individuals (69,062) who pursued optional practical training (OPT), a type of temporary work permission that allows eligible students to get real-world experience related to their field of study.

The US Embassy and Consulates in India issued record high numbers of student visas during the main student visa season of June-August 2023. Consular officers across India issued 95,269 visas in the F, M, and J categories. This is an 18 per cent increase over 2022 during the same time

According to a statement by the embassy, the US Department of State offers free advising services to prospective students, both virtually and in-person, at six EducationUSA advising centres throughout India in New Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, and two in Hyderabad

All six centres are staffed by EducationUSA advisors who offer accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date information about opportunities to study in the United States, helping Indian students find the best programme and fit from among more than 4,500 accredited US higher-education institutions.

IIE conducts an annual statistical survey on international students in the US since its founding in 1919 and in partnership with the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972.



 $T^{\text{he Centre has notified new}}_{\text{norms} \text{ for the appoint-}}$ ment of directors of Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), making it mandatory degrees in both Bachelor's and Master's, along with a PhD or equivalent from a reputed

Also, the President will now be "Visitor" to the prestigious Bschools with powers to appoint chairperson of the board of governors, appointment and removal of directors and dissolving the board for not performing duties or complying

with visitor's directions. Under the new rules, the eligibility for appointment as an IIM director now will be having a "distinguished" academic record with "first class degree in both Bachelor's and

institute". Earlier, the criteria used to be a "distinguished academic with PhD or equivalent" and there was no mention of the required division for the degrees. Recently, there was a controversy over the appoint-

Master's level, and with PhD or

As per the new norms, the Visitor will have the final say ment Dheeraj Sharma as IIMin the appointment of the Rohtak director as he had a director of any IIM. The second division in his Visitor shall nominate one of the names recommended by

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

social media X that he was

"happy to share that the

recently concluded CITES

NEW DELHI



board for appointment.

"Provided that where the Visitor is not satisfied with the names recommended by the

Board, he or she may ask the

Benefit for red sandalwood

farmers after CITES' decision

Board to make fresh recommendations. If the Visitor is mendations. If the visitor is not satisfied with the panel of names recommended by the Board, the Board shall get a fresh panel of three names recommended through the same directors. search-cum-selection comselection committee," the notification said. Earlier, the board was solely responsible for the appointment of the director. The concept of a Visitor in IIMs had first found a mention in the draft of the present act released by the Centre in 2015. However, IIMs had resisted it

saying that it would "put a

question mark on their said

autonomous powers". It was

later removed from the final

The President of India is the Visitor of all the central universities and IITs and appoints their vice-chancellors and

Under the new norms, the power to dissolve the board, at any time, under three circumstances -if the visitor is of the opinion that the board is unable to discharge the functions, is persistently defaulted in complying with any direction given by the Visitor under this Act, and in the public interest. Earlier, no such clause for the dissolution of the board

Foreign diplomats to witness BJP's poll campaign



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

three-member delegation A three-member delegation of foreign diplomats based here will visit Indore on November 14-15 to get a first hand experience of the BJP's election campaign, the party said on Monday.

Michael Rees, second secretary in the Australian high commission, Bazil M Lyakinana, minister plenipotentiary (consular affairs) in the high commission of Tanzania, and Mayumi Tsubakimoto, second secretary in the Japanese embassy will be part of the delIndore is in Madhya Pradesh where campaign is in full swing November 17.

tions comprising representatives of diplomatic missions from Nepal, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark and Singapore had visited Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat December 2022 to observe the

by the party's national president

J P Nadda on its 43rd founda-

ahead of the assembly polls on The BJP said similar delega-

ing Red sanders to increase their income through cultivation can also export Red Sanders from the plantations without any legal hurdles. "It would ultimately help in during assembly polls in the two states in November and motivating farmers to grow more red sanders trees as a source of sustainable income," party's election campaign.
The programme is part of the added the official. Union Environment Minister "Know BJP" initiative launched Bhupender Yadav posted on

The Government on Monday claimed that the Standing Committee of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES) has removed India from the Review of Significant Trade process for the Red Sanders, which it

said has come as a major Standing Committee meeting boost to the farmers engaged proved to be a major boost for in the cultivation of the high India's wildlife and ecosystem valued timber in the global conservation efforts. The 77th meeting of the globmarket.

The Red sanders (Pterocarpus al panel was held in Geneva, santalinus) is a high market Switzerland from November value tree, endemic to few dis-6-23, 2023. India is a Party to tricts in Andhra Pradesh. the CITES since 1976. A delegation led by Dr S.P. The removal from the list means that the farmers grow-

Yadav, Additional Director General of Forests (PT) & Management CITES Authority-India, participated presented India's compliance report.

The Minister explained that consequent to amendment of Wildlife Act, placement of the CITES legislation of India in Category 1 of the National Legislation Project of CITES has been confirmed.

Yadav further said India was under Review of Significant Trade (RST) process for Red



reporting, India has been removed from the Review of Significant Trade for Red Sanders, he said adding that the development is a major

boost for the farmers who grow Red Sanders." The species has been sub-

jected to threats of illegal harvesting and smuggling leading to their depletion from natural forest. However, red sanders wood sourced from artificially propagation (plantations) comprise a major part of legal export, added an official from the Ministry

The Red sanders species was listed for Review of Significant Trade (RST) process more or less since 2004. The CITES RST process enables disciplinary action in

the form of trade suspensions directed at countries that do not meet their obligations. This is a process through which the CITES Standing Committee places increased scrutiny on the exports of a species from a country to determine if the Convention is being properly implemented. In the past, it has even led to a recommendation to suspend trade with India. India had been updating the

CITES Secretariat on the status of export of red sanders from India. India had also conducted Non

Detrimental Finding for the species and had finalised a zero quota for export of Red sanders from wild. Continuous pursuance on the matter with the CITES Secretariat, Standing Committee and Plants Committee has led the Standing Committee in this (77th) meeting to decide on removing Red sanders from the RST process. The removal of Pterocarpus santalinus from the RST process from India was unconditional, thus encouraging farmers to take up more red sanders trees cultivation as a source of sustainable income," added the

India, ADB sign USD 400 mn loan pact to build urban infra

he Central Government on Monday signed a USD 400 million policy-based loan with the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) to support its urban reform agenda to create high-quality urban infrastructure, improve service delivery, and promote efficient governance systems.

The signatories to the loan agreement for sub-programme 2 of the Sustainable Urban Development and Service Delivery Programme were Juhi Mukherjee, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and Takeo Konishi, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission.

While Sub-programme 1 approved in 2021 with a financing of USD 350 million established national-level policies and guidelines to improve urban services, Sub-programme 2 supports investment planning and reform actions at the state and urban local body (ULB) levels, the finance ministry said in a state-

After signing the loan agreement, Mukherjee stated that



the programme supports the government's urban sector strategy with a focus on reforms aimed at making cities livable and centres of economic growth through the provisioning of inclusive, resilient and sustainable infrastructure. Sub-programme 2 supports the reforms initiated by states and ULBs in operationalising the national flagship programme of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 targeted for universal access to water supply and sanitation, said Konishi.

The sub-programme also sup-

mote the modernisation of building bylaws, land pooling, urban agglomeration, and comprehensive urban mobility planning through transit-ority planning through transit-oriented development to help cities become well-planned centres of economic growth, the ministry added.

Such integrated planning

processes will incorporate climate and disaster resilience promote nature-based solutions, improve the urban environment, and improve cities' financial sustainability through the generation of additional revenues, it noted.

Moreover, cities will be incentivised to become creditworthy through various reforms on enhancing their revenues like property taxes and user charges, improving their efficiencies and rationalising their expenditures.

This will substantially help cities to mobilise innovative financing, such as commercial borrowings, issuance of municipal bonds, sub-sovereign debts, and public-private partnerships to bridge significant deficits in urban infrastructure investments, it added

Procurement from GeM portal crosses ₹2 L crore so far this fiscal

The procurement of goods and services from the government portal GeM has crossed Rs 2 lakh crore so far this fiscal due to higher buying activities by different ministries and departments.

The government e-Market (GeM) portal was launched on August 9, 2016, for online purchases of goods and ser-vices by all the central government ministries and departments.

"Gem of a landmark! Government e-Marketplace achieves an impressive Rs 2 lakh crore gross merchandise value in just eight months of 2023-24," Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on social media platform X.

In 2021-22, the procurement value stood at Rs 1.06 lakh crore. It crossed Rs 2 lakh crore last year, and going by the trend this year, it may cross Rs 3 lakh crore.

GeM has over 63,000 government buyer organisations and over 62 lakh sellers and service providers, offering a wide range of products and services.



departments, ministries, public sector units, state governments, and central armed police forces are allowed to carry out transactions through this portal.

The portal provides a wide range of products from office stationery to vehicles.

Automobiles, computers and office furniture are some of the major product categories. Services, including transportation, logistics, waste

management, webcasting and analytical, are listed on the portal.South Korea's KONEPS

is the largest such platform in

the world.

Currently, GeM stands at the third position Singapore's GeBIZ.

The commerce ministry, in a statement, said that central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) account for 83 per cent of the total buying. States/UTs like Uttar Pradesh,

Gujarat, Maharashtra, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Odisha, Bihar, Assam, and Uttarakhand have placed significant amounts of procurement orders in the current financial year.

'GeM's expansion into the services sector has played a pivotal role in driving its accelerated adoption," it said, adding services sector contribution in the total procurement has increased from 23 per cent in 2021-22 to about 46 per cent in the current fiscal

The portal displays a diverse catalogue of nearly 312 service categories and more than 11,800 product categories. Cumulatively, GeM has surpassed the Rs 5.93 lakh crore procurement since its incep-

Further, nearly 49 per cent of the total order value transacted through the platform has been awarded to micro and small enterprises (MSEs). "In just seven months, more than 45,000 MSEs have registered as sellers/service providers registered on GeM," it said, adding that the portal has led to the government's saving of over Rs 45,000 crore since 2016.

industry drops to ₹34,765 crore in Q2

The mutual fund industry **I** continued with the positive momentum in the September quarter, attracting Rs 34,765 crore, although it was a massive reduction as against the Rs 1.85 lakh crore inflow in the preceding quarter, primarily due to withdrawal from debt segment. Most of the asset classes saw net inflows during the July-September period of the current financial year barring the fixed-income or debt segment, which witnessed net outflows. Overall, flows started on a strong note during the quarter under review, with net inflows of Rs 82,467 crore in July, which dipped to Rs 16,180 crore in August and ended with a disappointing Rs 63,882 crore of net outflows in September, according to a "Net flows over the last few years over each quarter have been patchy. The flows seen in the June quarter were the highest in four years," it noted.

The assets under management of the industry ended at Rs 46.22 lakh crore as of September, up 5 per cent since the previous quarter.

"The world economy is now facing issues related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, rampaging inflation across countries, and the inevitable raising of interest rates by central banks to bring the easy-money policy to an end. Relative to other countries. India has been resilient in terms of market performance, where other countries have seen a much sharper correction recently," Melvyn Santarita, Analyst Morningstar India, said. With regard to equity seg-



ments, inflow has been positive for the asset class over the past 10 quarters, though the momentum of flows has been

In the September quarter, net flows increased to Rs 41,962 crore, up significantly from the last quarter, when it saw net inflows of Rs 18,358 crore. On the other hand, the asset class experienced net outflows of Rs 65,944 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal. This came after the first 1.38 lakh crore -- the first net inflow after six consecutive quarters of net outflows.

Industry experts attributed the huge net outflow in the quarter under review to the advance tax requirement that corporates need to meet with it being quarter end.

Further, the allocation category witnessed a net inflow of Rs 48,153 crore in the quarter, lower than Rs 14,021 crore it received in the previous quarter. It was the second consecutive quarter the asset class witnessed net inflows after experiencing net outflows for three

consecutive quarters. "The solutions-oriented and other categories have never seen a quarter of outflows. Both categories have been witnessing regular net inflows despite volatile market condi-

Inflow in mutual fund FinMin asks Ministries to follow guidelines on issuance of mobiles, laptops to officers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{he finance ministry has}}_{\text{asked various departments}}$ and ministries to follow the guidelines with regard to issuance of mobiles, laptops and similar devices to officers and withdraw any policy which is at variance with the Department of Expenditure's The Department of

for ensuring urban water secu-

rity through reducing water

losses, recycling treated sewage

for non-domestic use, rejuve-

nation of water bodies, and

maintaining sustainable groundwater levels, the state-

ment said. The programme

also envisages integrated urban

planning reforms to control

urban sprawls and foster sys-

temic and planned urbanisa-

tion through enhancing the

entire ecosystem of legal, reg-

ulatory, and institutional

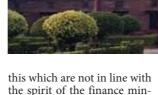
reforms, along with capacity

building of ULBs and commu-

nity awareness, it said.

Expenditure under the finance ministry had in July issued guidelines for issue of mobile, laptop, tablet, phablet, notebook, notepad, ultra-book, netbook or devices of similar categories to eligible officers of Government of India for official work.

Issuing a fresh office memorandum, the Department of Expenditure said it has come to its notice that various ministries/departments have issued their own policies regarding



istry's guidelines. "Ministries/Departments are hereby directed to stop/withdraw their own policies on the subject and strictly adhere to the instructions issued by this

Expenditure said.

Department in letter and spirthe Department of

As per the guidelines issued in July, central government officers were entitled to mobile, laptop or similar devices costing up to Rs 1.3 lakh, which can be retained by them for personal use after 4 years.

All central government officers of the rank of deputy secretary and above were entitled to such electronic devices

In the case of Section Officers and Under Secretaries, 50 per cent of the sanctioned strength can be issued such devices. Regarding the cost of the device, the guidelines said it could be Rs 1 lakh plus taxes. However, for devices with a Make-in-India component of more than 40 per

cent, the price ceiling will be Rs

1.30 lakh plus taxes.

Raymond's billionaire head announces separation from wife The couple has two children

PTI ■ MUMBAI

 $B_{\rm Gautam\ Singhania\ on}^{\rm illionaire\ industrialist}$ Monday said he has separated from his wife Nawaz, in an announcement that comes amid speculation over the future of the 32-year relation-

Singhania, the chairman and managing director of Raymond, who's net worth is reported to be over Rs 11,000 crore, made the announcement over the microblogging platform X, saying it is not the same Diwali as in the past.

The industrialist, who is helming the multi-decade group having roots in textiles and branched out into newer ones like real estate, said Nawaz, a fitness trainer, and he were together for 32 years as a cou-

and Singhania said they grew together in their years of companionship and were a source of strength for each other. 'We traversed with commit-

ment, resolve, faith as along came the two most beautiful additions of our lives," he The announcement came min-

utes after a video surfaced online which purportedly shows Nawaz allegedly not being allowed to enter a party hosted by Singhania at Thane last week despite an invite for the pre-Diwali bash.

In his post, Singhania made a mention of "unfortunate developments in the recent past", and added that there has been a lot of "unsubstantiated rumour mongering and gossip' fanned by what he called as "not so well wishers".

As many as 417 infrastructure projects show cost overruns of ₹4.77 lakh crore in Sept: Official report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

s many as 417 infrastruc-Ature projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than Rs 4.77 lakh crore in September this year, an official report

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, which monitors infrastructure projects worth Rs 150 crore and above, out of 1,763 projects, 417 reported cost overruns and as many as 842 projects were

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1,763 projects was Rs 24,86,402.70 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 29,64,345.13 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,77,942.43 crore (19.22 per cent of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for September 2023 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till September 2023 is Rs 15,44,600.67 crore, which is 52.11 per cent of the anticipated cost of the projects. However, it stated that the

decreased to 617, if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion. number of delayed projects Further, it stated that for 298



projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been

Out of the 842 delayed projects, 194 have overall delays in the range of 1-12 months, 190 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 323 projects for 25-60 months and 123 projects have been delayed for more than 60 months. The average time overrun in these 842 delayed projects is 36.94 months.

Reasons for time overruns as reported by various project implementing agencies include delay in land acquisition, delay in obtaining forest and environment clearances, and lack of infrastructure support and linkages.

Delay in tie-up for project

financing, finalisation of detailed engineering, change in scope, tendering, ordering and equipment supply, and law and order problems were among the other reasons.

The report also cited state-wise lockdowns due to COVID-19 (imposed in 2020 and 2021) as à reason for the delay in implementation of these projects. It has also been observed that project executing agencies are not reporting revised cost estimates and commissioning schedules for many projects, which suggests that time/cost overrun figures are underreported, it added.

Sensex, Nifty fall amid caution ahead of inflation data

PTI MUMBAI

 $B^{\text{enchmark}}_{\text{Sensex}} \ \text{and} \ \text{Nifty} \ \text{declined}$ on Monday due to selling pressure in IT, consumer durables and financial stocks as investors turned cautious ahead of the release of inflation data. Besides, persistent foreign fund

outflows and weakness in the rupee hit investor sentiments, traders said.

Giving up Diwali day gains, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 325.58 points or 0.50 per cent to settle at 64,933.87. During the day, it dropped 406.09 points or 0.62 per cent to 64,853.36.

The Nifty declined 82 points or 0.42 per cent to 19,443.55. "Post-Diwali, Indian equities continued consolidation amid global uncertainty. The sharp

deceleration in IIP growth, from 10.3 per cent in August to 5.8 per cent in September, and weakening manufacturing PMI reflect global trends driven by rising interest rates and infla-



"The Indian rupee's weakness keeps FIIs cautious. However, the market's downside is limited by strong earnings, economic stability, and domestic institutional flows," said Vinod Among the Sensex firms, Bajaj

Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Finance, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, ICICI Bank, Nestle, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries were the major lag-

In contrast, Mahindra & Mahindra, JSW Steel, NTPC, Power Grid and IndusInd Bank were among the gainers. In the broader market, the BSE

midcap gauge climbed 0.10 per cent, while the smallcap index dipped 0.01 per cent. Among the BSE indices, IT declined by 0.77 per cent, consumer durables fell by 0.75 per cent, teck (0.66 per cent), FMCG (0.39 per cent), services (0.20 per cent) and financial services (0.17 per cent). On the other hand, energy, util-

ities, power and auto were the Markets started the week on a feeble note and lost nearly half a per cent, tracking weak global cues," Ajit Mishra, SVP -

Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. India's industrial production growth decelerated to 5.8 per cent in September from 10.3 per cent in August, though on an annual basis, the output of

manufacturing and mining sectors showed an improvement, according to the official data released on Friday. Inflation data will be released later in the day.

In Asian markets, Seoul settled in the negative territory while Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the green. European markets were trading

with gains. The US markets ended with significant gains on Global oil benchmark Brent

crude declined 0.20 per cent to USD 81.27 a barrel. Stock exchanges conducted a one-hour special Muhurat trading session on the occasion

of Diwali on November 12.

The BSE benchmark jumped 354.77 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 65,259.45 on the first trading session of Samvat 2080 on Sunday. The broader Nifty advanced 100.20 points or 0.52 per cent to 19,525.55.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 190.06 crore on Sunday, according to exchange data.

The rupee consolidated in a

narrow range and settled lower by 4 paise at 83.32 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking a negative trend in domestic equities. Equity markets will remain closed on Tuesday for 'Diwali

Balipratipada'.

Coal Ministry to ensure sufficient dry fuel at thermal power plants

The coal ministry on Monday said it has plans to produce additional quantity of the dry fuel to ensure sufficient availability for thermal power plants

Production enhancement measures include opening of new blocks, expansion of mines capacity and production from captive, commercial mines.

"All these three operational components are contributing and have clear plans for further enhancement. The production plans for year 2027 and 2030 will far exceed the likely domestic requirement of ther-mal power plants in the country, including that for likely additional capacity," the coal ministry said in a statement. The ministry plans to produce

ity to be added by 2030. The coal requirement for 1,404 million tonnes (MT) of coal by 2027 and 1,577 MT by additional thermal capacity



2030 from the current level of production of about one billion tonnes per annum.

Coal supplied to domestic coal-based power plant is around 821 MT for the current year. The ministry said it has taken note of the additional coal requirement for the additional 80 GW of thermal capac-

would be around 400 MT at 85 per cent PLF (plant load factor), and the actual requirement may be lower depending on the generation requirements in the coming times due to contributions from renewable sources," it said. Coal stocks have started build-

ing up at thermal power plants and have reached around 20 MT. At various mines, the stock is at 41.59 MT.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Back to square one

Unlawful bursting of firecrackers worsens air quality, smog returns to Delhi-NCR after Diwali

ear after year, it is the same old story; perhaps it will be better to rechristen the 'Festival of Lights' as the 'Breathing Challenge'. Though the fervour and enthusiasm for the festival is totally understandable and acceptable, the dark shadow of the 'breath of death' it leaves in its wake is not, especially in the Delhi-NCR and the Hindi heartland. The Capital region is grappling with alarming levels of air pollution because the tradition of bursting firecrackers, deeply ingrained in Diwali celebrations, has contributed significantly to the hazardous air quality. A day after the revelry, Delhi woke up to a thick layer of smog, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) readings in several areas recording shockingly high levels. The city's overall AQI reached a staggering 434 on Monday, making Delhi the most polluted city in the world, as reported by IQAir, a Swiss group that specialises in measuring air quality. The impact of such pollution on public health cannot be over-



stated, with respiratory issues, allergies and other health complications on the rise. While Diwali is a time to celebrate, it is also high time for a collective realisation of the toll it takes on public health and environment. The storage, sale and use of all types of firecrackers in the NCR were banned by the National Green Tribunal in 2020 but bans seldom work. People need options, therefore green crackers must be promoted as they use less polluting raw materials compared to traditional crackers. They have a reduced amount of particulate matter (PM) emission, and they produce 30 per cent less noise. Green crackers are certified by CSIR-National Environmental Engineering Research Institute.

The need for a behavioural shift in Diwali celebrations is evident, and perhaps an example can be drawn from Maharashtra or West Bengal where serious efforts are being made to perform mega festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi or Durga Puja in an environment-friendly way. They have started using organic colours and mud, besides specially created ponds to immerse idols so that the environment is not polluted. Interestingly, a Ganesha statue with seeds has been developed which can be put in a planter and Lord Ganesha transforms into a plant in no time. Delhi too needs to think about such innovations. As we reflect on the recent degradation of Delhi's air quality, it becomes imperative to reconsider our approach to celebrations. Sustainable and eco-friendly ways of observing festivals can be adopted without sacrificing the essence of our traditions. From light displays to cultural events, there are myriad ways to celebrate Diwali that do not involve harmful practices. The ban on firecrackers should not be seen as an attack on religious freedom. Thankfully, there are means to celebrate differently; all one needs to do is adopt newer ways.



People worship their tools on the occasion of 'Vishvakarma Puja', in Amritsar

US presidency: The desi dream



The confidence of the three candidates for the US presidency is also the story of the rising Indian Diaspora. Whether they win or lose in 2024, they will make the news

ow do the Indian dential hopefuls fare in the 2024 polls? With a year before 2024, they are far behind Republican leader and former President Donald Trump. It is noteworthy that Trump has a significant lead over other contenders, which could make the race more competitive and exciting. No one said they would win the presidential nomination from their parties, as the gap between them and Trump was vast. Ultimately, Trump and President Biden will be chosen as the official candidates.

Knowing they have slim chances of winning, why did the three Indian Americans throw their hats in the Presidential ring? First, their bid had skyrocketed their political profile, whether they won or lost. Their names are better known nationally. Second, though they are polling far behind former President Donald Trump, Haley and Ramaswamy represent the growing political influence of American Indian descent. Thirdly, the Indian diaspora has become a robust and influential community in countries like the US, UK, and Australia. They have emerged as a powerful lobby in Congress and society. Fourthly, there was a time when Indian Americans were satisfied with giving hefty donations to Political parties. Of late, they have realised where the power lies and try to become candidates. Fifthly, Kamala Harris and Nikky Hailey have already established themselves, and Vivek Ramaswamy has emerged just now. All three are children of immigrants and were raised

Some sections of the Indian Diaspora continue to support, fund, and engage in American politics. There has been some attention and pride regarding the three candidates. During her presidential campaign, Hailey said, "I am the proud daughter of Indian immigrants. Neither lack nor white. I was different." Kamala Harris has already broken the glass ceiling and become ment. The five Indian the first woman vice President. American members of Kamala's mother, Shyamala, Congress make up slightly



Indians, and Haley has a Punjabi heritage. They are a source of pride for their respective communities in India. When Kamala Harris became the vice president in 2020, Tamil Nadu burst crackers and celebrated the

The parents of the first major Indian American presidential candidate, former Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, came in 1971. Hailey and earlier Bobby Jindal, both of Indian origin, became Governors and made a significant impact. While Jindal had faded away, Nikki still made the news.

A former South Carolina governor and later U.N. ambassador for Trump, Haley generally aligns with the party's traditional establish-



SOME SECTIONS OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA CONTINUE TO SUPPORT, FUND, AND ENGAGE IN AMERICAN POLITICS. THERE HAS BEEN SOME ATTENTION AND PRIDE REGARDING THE THREE CANDIDATES less than their share of the population. There are no current senators or governors of Indian descent.

According to the Migration

Policy Institute, in 1960, there were only 12,000 Indian immigrants residing in the United States. However, today, census data reveals that the number has increased significantly to more than 4 million. Indian Americans comprise about 1.3% of the country's population and have become prominent members of both major political parties. Although the Republican Party may not be able to win over the Indian diaspora in America, even slight gains could be significant in closely contested states. Kamala Harris, who was hoping to succeed, is now reconciled as Biden's running mate.

Haley and Ramaswamy have 6 per cent and 5 per cent support, respectively. The political parties are yet to announce their candidates officially. In 2020, Indian Americans

voted over 74 per cent for Biden compared to 15 per cent who voted for Trump. The PEW found similar results, with 68 per cent of Indians identifying or leaning toward the Democratic Party compared with 29 per cent who leaned Republican.

The Sangh Parivar's overseas outfit in the US has existed since the 1960s. Prime Ministers Vajpayee and Modi helped organise NRIs with facilities. First-generation Indian immigrants were highly educated, became skilled in the labour force, and affluent through hard work. According to ABC News, they were allowed into the US Indian Americans now have a median household income of nearly \$142,000, according to the

census. It is double the aver-

Haley and Ramaswamy wanted Trump to consider them as his running mates. They positioned themselves in a way that wouldn't rule out this possibility. Even if Nikki Haley fails to become the first woman Republican nominee, this election will mark yet another first for her as it will be the first election she has ever lost. Ramaswamy has a new political profile that will help him later.

Overall, the confidence of the three candidates is also the story of the rising Indian Diaspora. Whether they win or lose in 2024, they will make news. They will someday achieve their American dream.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views expressed are personal)

ETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Need to protect and promote Ayurveda



Ayurveda, the holistic, time-tested and affordable healthcare is a viable alternative to the western healthcare

yurveda, the age-old medicinal system of India, stands as one of the oldest and still-practised traditions, rooted in a solid foundation of philosophy and experimentation. The foundational concepts of Ayurveda can be traced back to the Vedic period in ancient India. The earliest texts containing knowledge related to health and healing practices are found in the Vedas, particularly the Rigveda, which contains hymns describing the benefits of certain herbs and plants for healing.

Over the years, modern medicine has hijacked the essence of our traditional systems. The basis of modern medicine in reality is traditional systems like Áyurveda. Most of the medicines that we use in allopathic systems are derived from the knowledge gathered from traditional systems. But when it comes to modern medicine, they use only the active principle or its chemical analogue making its targeted use and quick relief. It is a holistic approach to health and personalised medicine, representing a comprehensive medical system that encompasses physical, psy-



chological, philosophical, ethical, and spiritual well-being. Unfortunately, the majority of people shift to Ayurveda only when modern medicine fails or when it doesn't have any solutions to a particular disease. There are many reports of people regaining health and being cured in such instances. As per the World Health Organisation, approximately 70–80% of the global population depends on unconventional remedies, primarily sourced from herbs, for their healthcare needs. The growing interest in complementary and alternative medicine is largely attributed to the rising concerns over side effects associated with synthetic drugs, the absence of definitive treatments for numerous chronic ailments, the high expenses related to

resistance, and the emergence of new diseases, among other factors.

In recent times there has been an organised effort by the proponents of Ayurveda to include this system in a similar line to allopathy. In many multi-speciality hospitals ayurvedic treatments have become more costlier than allopathic systems. The emergence of Ayurveda as a part of tourism is destroying the quality and essence of this priced medical system. The effects of ayurvedic treatment cannot be availed in two or three days. It's based on your lifestyle and only if you manage your daily lifestyle systematically would be able to get the results. Booming Ayurvedic pharma companies are also destroying the essence of Ayurveda. The culture that made allopathic treatment unaffordable has prescribed in the texts.

crept slowly into our traditional system. There is stiff competition among the ayurvedic companies which often deviate from what is In recent times the world has started appreciating the contributions of Ayurveda and new medications, microbial the Indian knowledge system

towards healthcare and it's our duty and responsibility to provide quality healthcare to the whole of humanity. Stringent regulations should be formulated to check the quality of medicines sold in the market to prevent adulteration which is becoming ram-

pant in recent times. Since 2016, the government of India has been observing National Ayurveda Day annually on Dhanwantari (Dhanteras). Javanti Dhanvantari Jayanti was chosen as the occasion for commemorating Ayurveda Day, to promote this medical system on a national scale, recognising its potential to become a fundamental pillar in its eventual global expansion. This year, Ayurveda Day was observed on 10th November 2023 with the focal theme "Ayurveda for everyone on every day". By promoting Ayurveda we are not only promoting our age-old affordable medical system but also promoting living sustainably with nature.

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

REFINEMENT OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Sir — I am writing to express my concern about the recent political speeches, particularly those of our Prime Minister. While the importance of winning elections cannot be understated, the manner in which arguments are presented in public demands careful consideration.

In a recent campaign in Telangana, the Prime Minister asserted that other parties, such as Congress or BRS, cannot effectively care for the Schedule Tribes. Conversely, in Chandigarh, he praised the BJP for making women's lives easier. However, the nation is acutely aware of the grave atrocities against tribes and women in Manipur, where his party holds

The release of convicts involved in rape and gruesome murder in Gujarat on priority further raises concerns. Given the gravity of these issues, the disconnect between such speeches and the esteemed position held by our Prime Minister is evident.

As these matters are integral to the nation's prestige, I urge for a refinement in the presentations. It is crucial to address these issues with the sensitivity they deserve, considering the impact they have on our society.

A.G. Rajmohan | Anantapur

RENAISSANCE OF INDIAN CRICKET

Sir — In the dynamic world of cricket, fast bowlers have traditionally hunted in pairs, and India's recent World Cup success exemplifies this principle. The fiery combination of Mohd. Shami and Jasprit Bumrah, complemented by the relentless efforts of Mohd. Siraj played a pivotal role in securing early breakthroughs.

The Indian team, guided by strategic thinking, reshaped its lineup, sidelining even the number one Ashwin to accommodate an additional pace bowler and an extra batsman. This bold move paid off as Team India embarked on a remarkable

nine-match winning streak. KL Rahul's versatile contributions as a The UN resolution underscores the

Violation of firecracker ban in Delhi



he recent celebration of Diwali in Delhi witnessed a blatant disregard for the ban on firecrackers. Despite the Supreme Court's firm stance, areas like Shahpur Jat, Hauz Khas, and Defence Colony were marred by the

sounds of bursting firecrackers. The intensity of the festivities increased after 4 pm, with reports of non-compliance from various localities. The Defence Colony police station received complaints, but implementing

authorities failed to enforce the ban effective-

The Supreme Court's order, applicable nationwide, was expected to curb the hazardous impact of firecrackers on air quality. However, this breach calls into question the effectiveness of such measures. Children are now exposed to harmful pollutants in the name of celebration, as shopkeepers openly flout the ban, selling small firecrackers.

It remains to be seen what stance the Supreme Court will take in light of this blatant violation. As we reflect on the consequences of these actions, it is imperative that authorities take swift and stringent measures to ensure the enforcement of bans, safeguarding public health.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

wicketkeeper-batsman and vice-captain added to the team's glory. Spearheaded by Mohd. Siraj, the Indian bowling attack demonstrated its prowess, leaving the world's best batsmen struggling against the wobbling white ball.

The renaissance of Indian cricket is marked not only by individual brilliance but also by a cohesive team strategy. The decision to introduce a trump card bowler in the crucial semi-final further solidifies India's authority, symbolising a new era in Indian cricket.

C.K. Subramaniam | Mumbai

UN RESOLUTION ON PALESTINIAN

Sir — Recently, the United Nations convened to address the escalating conflict between Palestinians and Israel. India, standing with 145 nations, voted in favor of a resolution condemning Israel's settlement activi-

commitment to justice for the affected Palestinians, condemning any actions involving land confiscation, disruption of livelihoods, forced civilian transfer, and annexation of land.

This collective stance reflects the global community's dedication to resolving the matter peacefully. However, seven countries, including Canada, Hungary, Israel, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, and the United States, voted against the resolution, perpetuating support for Israel's actions. Eighteen nations abstained, highlighting the complexity of the issue.

India's active participation in this international discourse is commendable, and it is crucial that we continue to play a significant role in resolving this conflict for the sake of lasting peace in the region. Md Mofidul Islam | Howrah

Send your feedback to:

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FIRST COLUMN

Perils of religio-cultural one-upmanship



JS RAJPUT

India needs to speak in one single voice and expedite its role as the nation striving hard to bring hostilities to an end in Gaza and ushering peace in West Asia

RADIANCE AND

HAPPINESS WITHIN

Diwali is celebration of victory of light over darkness, awareness over ignorance

RAVI VALLURI

uring our several visits to Chandigarh in my childhood, I remember Mr PH Vaishnav, a close family friend and then a serving IAS officer, would always mention that the best Diwali celebrations in the country were at the Golden Temple, Amritsar.

With childlike enthusiasm, he used to describe how the temple was lit in a captivating manner, fireworks illuminated the sky, while simultaneously mellifluous and soulful singing by the granthis reverberated through

Let us pause and recall the iconic lyrics by Simon and Garfunkel:

Hello darkness, my old friend I have come to talk with you again Because a vision softly creeping

Left its seeds while I was sleeping

And the vision that was planted in my brain remains,

within the sound of silence.

The message and import of this haunting song, with indelible lyrics is the trajectory from darkness to light, from cacophony to symphony. As per the Ramayana, Dipawali or Diwali is celebrated to mark Lord Rama's triumphant return to Ayodhya after vanquishing the ten-headed hydra monster Ravana. The ten heads of the rakshasa are symbolic of the antipathetic elements in our minds, such as lust, anger, attachment, greed, pride, jealousy, selfishness, injustice, cruelty, and ego. Though an ardent Shiv-bhakta, Ravana could not overcome these ill feelings and emotions. Rama, on the other hand, stands for the light and radiance within us. Indians celebrate Holi, Dusshera and Dipawali with tremendous fervour and gaiety. Unfortunately, there is the unholy spectre of carousing during the festivals rather than celebrating them with solemnity and propri-



ety. Drunkenness, playing of cards, hooliganism, and committing acts of disrepute tend to sully the purity and significance of these festivals. These mar the majesty of the occasion.

Dipawali is another name for happiness. There are certain fundamental and cardinal principles to ensure joy. Every moment that humans spend on the planet needs to be joyful and spread a big smile. Sage Patanjali has expounded on certain tenets to remain happy which include Ahimsa, Satyam, Astheya, Brahmacharya and Aparigraha. Thus, the festival of Diwali is meant to radiate happiness.

This is a Zen-like state of maintaining poise.

In such a monk-like state, humans transcend trivia and are in a state of bliss, with illumined hearts. And an emblazoned and embellished heart spreads the true sparkles of Diwali.

Sage Patanjali further elaborates on some pointers of inner development. These include such (maintenance of cleanliness), santosha (being contented, irrespective of situation and events - not to be subsumed by events), tapas (or deep penance), swadhyaya (observing the mind and feeling how it operates, how it responds to different situations) and finally Aishwarya pranidhana (surrender to the Divine will)

Diwali is an occasion to celebrate the victory of light over darkness, awareness over ignorance, an occasion to celebrate life and let happiness. peace and joy into our lives and of those around us - so go the oftrepeated lines. We say this to each other with great fervour. But let us ponder and think, do we mean and practice it? Perhaps in a corner, a Zen Master may be crouching and murmuring, "Is it so?"

By practising the cardinal principles as elucidated by Sage Patanjali in entirety and completeness, seekers, the devout and commoners can maintain equanimity. And equanimity is another name for ecstasy and contentment within us. This inner contentment is reflected in the radiating lights of Diwali, verily a true celebration of the festival of lights.

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

he Hamas attack on Israel on | October 7, 2023, shocked every conscious human being with the severity of the cruelty that was inflicted upon innocent children, women, the elderly and all those who had gathered there on a festive day to celebrate. Retaliation was inevitable, and it was launched with full ferocity and

It continues even after a month, with supporters of both sides lining up in their camps to augment the war efforts of their preferred side! Religion has entered it in a big way, as it does in most of the instances of war and violence. Western powers are visiting Israel regularly, and the Organisation of Islamic countries has come together to support Hamas! Is this a truly civilised world? If not, what is the use of all the progress made in science, technology and ICT?

Will it ever be possible for humanity to be realistic and pragmatic, and come together that its survival depends upon the acceptance of equality of all human beings and equality of all religions? There is no other way out. Non-acceptance of equality is a sure prescription for the elimination of humans from the planet Earth.

How have we reached such a state of affairs where animal instincts overshadow all that human civilization could be proud of? It deserves a serious -and factbased – analysis by the top-level influencers, policymakers and decision-makers. A cursory peep into the circumstances could remind one of the human instincts that make Every conscious and alert citizen invariably proud of various aspects of his heritage, culture and the contributions of his race to the evolution of civilization. An Indian claim to great strides in the field of surgery, space vehicles, and astronomy in ancient times may be immediately countered by the Chinese and ridiculed by the Westerners.

There may be someone from another culture to claim ownership of the discovery of zero. It applies to all such claims of the superiority of one's religion, extending to the sole ownership of Truth! It could be well understood that people would like to see their clan grow, adherents from other religions joining them would be very welcome. Practically in every existing civilization and culture, there are forceful claims and beliefs concerning the origin of man, and the growth of knowledge and wisdom in the civil society as it exists today. Each one has its claims on the great contribution made by their people, religion and community for the first time in exploring the secrets of nature. Such claims are often duly supported by reference to their Holy books and scriptures.

Devout adherents of Sanatan Dharma, mostly identified as Hindus are confident that Vedas consist of all the knowledge that humanity and scientists would take ages to explore in future. Their task would be much easier if instead of striving hard in the laboratories and libraries, people learn Sanskrit, and study Vedas, Puranas and Upanishads with respect and faith! On the religious front, Hindus are unique in the sense that they give full liberty to the individual to follow his chosen path, they are not confined to the way given in any one of the books of his choice of 'rever-

Even those who do not follow any of the



CONVERSIONS CONSIDERED MANDATED THEIR ADHERENTS TO LAUNCH **SUSTAINED** CAMPAIGNS AND **CRUSADES TO EXPAND THEIR** RELIGIONS

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion and religious amity; views are personal)

tence of God, could be part of library of the great Nalanda Hindu society. Sanatan Dharma permits every person to worship one God, many gods or no god, he could remain a Sanatani based upon his conduct of life and living. How one conducts his personal religious life is one's own choice. In the same household, there could be the devotees of Durga, Krishna, Ram, Shiv or Vishnu! The multiplicity creates no issues. So long as one has acquired the samskaras as part of social and cultural moors, one is welcome as a Hindu, irrespective of his adherence to the oa of his choice.

Adherents of Islam are equally; if not more; convinced by their religious interpreters that the world needs to study and decipher only the single text, the Quran - and if comprehended properly, that would suffice to lead a magnificent life on the planet Earth and also ensure the mercy of Allah and the bounties of the afterlife, which have been duly listed. It was this conviction - amongst the ignorant and unaware - of all knowledge being contained in the single holy book that led to the burning of libraries in Egypt/Alexandria and Nalanda in India.

No doubt, devout Muslims also read more books, write great books, and receive appreciation for their contributions. Strange are the ways of democracy and politics of the day! Near Nalanda, there is a railway station named after Bakhtiyar Khilji who burnt the

University of Yore which had a global reputation as the seat of knowledge, learning and the creation of new knowledge. The invader Bakhtiyar Khilji destroyed the monastery, killed the monks and burnt the library. It is said that this library had nine million books and ten thousand students were studying there. Taxila University had also suffered

a similar fate. Christianity has its Bible and Judaism its Talmud. These two and Islam are convinced that their way - contained in these treatises they adore- provides the only true path to every human being, and each one who is not within the pale of their religion, must come and join it if he wants to be saved from the wrath of Hell! Conversion of those outside their faith is considered a desirable, even divine task that could bring in great rewards.

The principle of equality of all human beings does not apply in this context. After all, the missionaries came to India to "salvage the souls of the savages"!

History has detailed descriptions of how conversions considered divinely mandated their adherents to launch sustained campaigns and crusades to expand their religions. These expansions and conversions were not always peaceful and through persuasive methods, convinced the other person about the superiority of the preacher's

Aurangzeb is only one of the examples from the authenticated history of how conversions were achieved in India, and what happened to Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and Banda Bahadur! One wonders whether any other nation could have acquired a prolonged, torturous and tragic experience as India

Will Durant and Ariel Durant who together authored Eleven-Volume History of Civilization, wrote in 1930: "The British conquest of India was the invasion and destruction of a high civilization by a trading company (the British East India company) utterly without scruple or principal, careless of art and greedy of gain, over-running with fire and sword a country temporarily disordered and helpless, bribing and murdering, annexing and stealing, and beginning that career of illegal and 'legal' plunder which has now (1930) gone on ruthlessly for one-hundred and seventy-three years." This has been quoted by Shashi Tharoor in his widely read book: "An Era of Darkness". Despite such a past, and every effort made for around two hundred years by the British to fan communal tension, Indians could live together, even after the partition of 1947. India needs to speak in one single voice, endorse the stand of the Prime minister, and expedite its role as the only nation equipped enough in leadership to bring peace to Israel and Gaza.

Meeting the challenges of pharmaceutical companies

Providing a suitable moisture-free environment free from unwanted microorganisms is essential for making pharmacy products of international standards

≺he Indian pharmaceutical industry is growing at an exponential rate. Observing a massive evolution in the past three years, majorly fast-tracked under pressure projected by COVID-19, at present it is valued at \$50 billion, as per the report by InvestIndia. Supplying pharmaceuticals to more than 200 countries, India has risen to the prominence of being recognised as the 'pharmacy of the world.' Where the industry is emerging as a leading pharmaceutical producer across the world, the market is becoming highly competitive owing to the perennially growing population. Furthermore, in the pursuit of serving a large number of people, at present India enjoys a presence of



(The writer is the CEO, of

Bry-Air, views are person-

more than 3000 pharma companies with a robust network of over 10,500 manufacturing facilities. Therefore, it can be said that the industry is thriving at a phenomenal pace. Moreover, with the country being positioned as the third-largest producer of pharmaceutical products by volume and 14th-largest by value, it is further committed to improving the healthcare infrastructure and providing universal health coverage. In the process, it seeks to strengthen its foothold in the international market and at the same time penetrate deeper into the market.

Given the progressive aspirations, there is an incessant need for the industry to produce superior-quality products meeting the highest ence of moisture in the sur-

industry standards, conforming to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) specifications. This requires the industry to reinvent continuously and upgrade the manufacturing standards invariably to garner a resilient pharmaceutical infrastructure that produces the highest-quality products to meet the surging demand projected domestically as well as internationally. To scale the production and

offering of the pharmaceutical sector, the manufacturers must be aware of the looming threats plaguing the industry Here, it has been observed that moisture is a major deterrent, posing a serious threat to the pharmaceutical industry. Even the slight pres-



roundings is capable of deteriorating the quality of the products. It comes with the ability to trigger biochemical reactions by initiating organic corrosion. Providing a suitable environment for the germination of unwanted microorganisms can severely interfere with the accuracy and potency of products. Looking at the moisture menace more closely, it has been seen that the materials com-

ing into contact with humid-

ity resist the various grinding and pulverising operations by becoming resilient. With the materials clinging to the grinding machine, they defy conveying from one source to another. In addition to this, humidity increases the chances of lumping and caking of powder at the time of compression. Consequently, this results in the failure of entire tablet processing and also gives rise to the rough and translucent

coating of tablets. All these factors can together lead to the revocation of products from the market and severely impede the growth of the pharmaceutical industry. Therefore, to curtail the damaging effect of moisture, it is necessary to ensure moisture-free air at every stage of the pharmaceutical process. Hence, gauging the destruc-

tive impact of moisture, it is a prerequisite that the industry invariably focuses on maintaining air quality throughout the processing, manufacturing, storage, research, testing, and packaging of pharmaceutical products to keep humidity in check.

To achieve quality air during the various pharmaceutical processes, the industry must deploy dehumidification solutions. Installing desiccant dehumidifiers that are well supported by advanced technology, comes in handy in maintaining a constant relative humidity (RH) an uninterrupted supply of throughout the production, processing, storage, and packaging of the products. It comes with the ability to achieve RH as low as 1% to ensure the superior quality of the products throughout their shelf life.

Consequently, with the country strengthening its foothold in the international market, manufacturers are adopting dehumidification solutions with agility.

The process of achieving stringent environmental conditions within the manufacturing space helps in the production of the highest-quality pharmaceutical products. As India is recognised as the 'pharmacy of the world,' advanced dehumidifiers offer a roadmap to not just preserve the title but also expand the offerings of the country.

Who's running for president? A rundown of 2024 candidates

AP WASHINGTON

Tim Scott has dropped out of the race for the Republican primary nom-

The South Carolina senator was well-funded but struggled to gain traction in national or early-state polls. He told Fox News late Sunday that he would not endorse another GOP can-

Here's a look at the candidates still competing for the Republican and Democratic nominations, as well as the third-party contenders:

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY FIELD DONALD TRUMP: president The former

announced his third campaign for the White House on November 15, 2022, at his Mara-Lago resort, forcing the party to again decide whether to embrace a candidate whose refusal to accept defeat in 2020 sparked the US Capitol attack and still dominates his speech-

The GOP front-runner remains hugely popular in the Republican Party, despite making history as the first president to be impeached twice and inciting the Capitol insurrection on January 6, 2021. Referring to himself as America's "most prolife president", Trump's three nominations of conservative judges to the Supreme Court paved the way for the reversal of Roe v. Wade, which had legalised abortion nationwide for nearly 50 years. Sweeping criminal

justice reforms he signed into law in 2019 eased mandatory minimum sentences and gave judges more discretion in sen-

In March, Trump became the first former US president to be criminally charged, facing 34 felony counts of falsifying business of the bush ness records as part of a hush money scheme. Since then, he has been charged with 57 more felonies in three other criminal cases, accused of mishandling and unlawfully retaining classified documents and trying to illegally overturn the results of the 2020 election.

RON DESANTIS: The Florida governor officially launched his 2024 presidential campaign on May 24 in a glitch-marred Twitter announcement.

Heralding his state as a place 'where woke goes to die", DeSantis has framed his campaign around a desire to bring the conservative policies he championed in Florida to the national stage. He has made a name for himself battling with Disney over the entertainment giant's opposition to a bill dubbed by critics as the "Don't Say Gay" law, which bans instruction or classroom discussion of LGBTQ issues in Florida public schools for all grades. Under his governorship, the state has also banned abortions after six weeks of pregnancy and blocked public colleges from

diversity programs. NIKKI HALEY: The former United Nations ambassador and

using federal or state funding on

South Carolina governor became the first major GOP challenger to Trump when she kicked off her campaign on February 15 in Charleston. She is the only woman in the GOP

The former Trump Cabinet official once said she wouldn't challenge her former boss for the White House in 2024. But she changed her mind, citing the country's economic troubles and the need for "generational change," a nod to the 77-year-old

Trump's age.

VIVEK RAMASWAMY: The wealthy biotech entrepreneur and author of "Woke, Inc." kicked off his presidential campaign on February 21 with a video and op-ed.

The son of Indian immigrants, he has gained stature in conservative circles for his criticism of the environmental, social and corporate governance movement that aims to promote socially responsible investing. He has largely self-funded his cam-

paign so far. CHRIS CHRISTIE: The former two-term New Jersey governor went after Trump when announcing his presidential campaign on June 6 in New Hampshire, calling the former president a "lonely, self-consumed, self-serving mirror hog" and arguing that he's the only one who can stop him.

Christie, a 2016 presidential candidate and former Trump adviser, has said that others may be afraid to challenge the former president, but he has no



One, he deserves it. And two,

it's the way to win." **ASA HUTCHINSON:** The for-

mer two-term Arkansas gover-

nor launched his presidential

campaign on April 26 in

Bentonville, pledging to "bring

out the best of America" and to

reform federal law enforcement

He announced his campaign

shortly after Trump was indict-

ed by a grand jury in New York

and has called for the former

president to drop out of the race.

saying, "The office is more

important than any individual

DOUG BURGUM: The two-

term North Dakota governor

announced his candidacy on

A former computer software

entrepreneur, he is known to few

outside his home state but por-

such qualms.



FIELD JOE BIDEN: President Joe Biden formally announced his reelection campaign on April 25 in a video, asking voters for time to "finish this job". Biden, the oldest president in

America history, would be 86 at the end of a second term, and his age has prompted some of his critics to question whether he can serve effectively. A notable swath of Democratic voters has indicated they would prefer he not run, though he is expected to easily win the Democratic nomination. Biden, who has vowed to

"restore the soul of America", plans to run on his record. He spent his first two years as president combating the coronavirus pandemic and pushing through major bills such as the bipartisan infrastructure pack-

age and legislation to promote high-tech manufacturing and climate measures.

MARIANNE WILLIAMSON: Self-help author Marianne Williamson entered the Democratic primary on March 4 in Washington, calling for "a vision of justice and love that is so powerful that it will override the forces of hatred and injustice

and fear". During her unsuccessful 2020 presidential campaign, she prooosed the creation of a Department of Peace and argued the federal government should pay large financial reparations to Black Americans as atonement for centuries of slavery and dis-

crimination.

DEAN PHILLIPS: The Minnesota congressman is the first elected Democrat to challenge Biden for the nomination. After months of calling for a primary challenger, Phillips entered the race himself on October 27

with a speech outside New Hampshire's statehouse.

While Phillips has been effusive in his praise for Biden, the 54year-old also says Democrats need younger voices to avoid a nightmare scenario where Trump wins another election

Phillips is one of the wealthiest members of Congress and heir to his stepfather's Phillips Distilling Company empire, which holds major vodka and schnapps brands. He once served as that company's president but also ran the gelato maker Talenti.

His grandmother was the late Pauline Phillips, better known as the advice columnist "Dear

INDEPENDENT ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.: The bestselling author and environmental lawyer announced on October 9 that he was ending his Democratic presidential bid and instead launching an independent run.

A nephew of President John F. Kennedy and son of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, he initially launched a long-shot bid to challenge Biden for the Democratic nomination on April 19 in Boston. He said in announcing his party switch that he intended to be a spoiler can-didate for both Biden and Trump.

Kennedy has emerged as one of the leading voices of the antivaccine movement, with public health experts and even members of his own family describing his work as misleading and dangerous. He has also been linked to far-right figures in recent years.

JILL STEIN: The environmental activist, whose 2016 thirdparty presidential bid was blamed by Democrats for helping Trump win the White House, says she is making

another run for the nation's highest office. Stein announced Nov. 9 that she will again run under the Green Party banner. "I'm running for president to offer that choice for the people outside of the failed two-party system," she said.

She ran against Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016 as a Green Party candidate and received about 1 per cent of

Some Democrats said her candidacy siphoned votes away from Clinton, particularly in swing states like Wisconsin.

CORNEL WEST: The progres

sive activist and scholar announced on October 5 that he was ending his bid for the presidency under the Green Party banner and was instead running as an independent.

West wrote on X that he was running as an independent to "end the iron grip of the ruling class and ensure true democracy!" He added, "We need to break the grip of the duopoly and give power to the people." He initially announced in June that he would be running as a member of The People's Party before soon switching to the Green Party.

Nikki will launch \$10 mn ad campaign to try to overtake Ron in GOP primary

focusing on his efforts to over-

turn his 2020 general election

defeat in Georgia and another

on felony charges for working to

overturn the results of the 2020

election in the run-up to the

violent January 6, 2021 riot by

his supporters at the US Capitol.

In US politics, fundraising and

advertising strategy can often be

didate's policies or personality.

But money raised and spent by

campaigns only tell part of the

booked USD 7.5 million in ads

through Iowa's January 15 cau-

cuses, dropped out of the race

late Sunday. Scott had struggled

to register in polls nationally and

October polls found him trail-

ing far behind Trump and Haley, his fellow South

Haley will run her advertising

through Iowa's January 15 cau-cuses and New Hampshire's

primary to follow. As of now, the

DeSantis campaign is spending

Haley's campaign declined to say whether the ads would attack DeSantis or Trump

directly. But campaign manag-

er Betsy Ankney called out

DeSantis' campaign, which after

winning the endorsement of

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds argued

that Haley and others in the

GOP field could only be "spoil-

"Nikki Haley's momentum and

path to victory are clear," Ankney said. "The same can't be

said for Ron DeSantis, who,

even with a decent showing in

Iowa, can't afford a cup of cof-

Carolinian.

only in Iowa.

story in the 2024 election. South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, whose allied super PAC had



AP ■ NEW YORK

Nikki Haley's presidential campaign will reserve USD 10 million in television, radio and digital advertising across Iowa and New Hampshire beginning in the first week of December, a massive investment designed to give the former United Nations ambas-Gov. Ron DeSantis at a critical moment in the GOP nomination fight.

Details of the advertising plans, which represent the Haley cam-paign's first official advertising reservation, were obtained by The Associated Press ahead of a public announcement expected on Monday

Haley's planned investment, as of now, is more than five times larger than DeSantis' current advertising reserves for the same time period, according to the media tracking firm AdImpact. Haley's move comes as she fights to emerge as the clear alternative to former President Donald Trump to represent the GOP against President Joe Biden next fall. DeSantis stands as Haley's strongest competition for her party's second-place slot, although the Florida governor's campaign has shown signs of financial strain following a

Trump remains the overwhelming front-runner in the GOP primary. Rival campaigns are betting that if they can emerge as the main alternative to Trump that they can consolidate enough support to mount a strong challenge against him or replace him if he falters.
Trump faces four criminal

tumultuous summer.

New Hampshire and is a mere tourist in South Carolina."

DeSantis' campaign reported just USD 5 million available to spend in the primary at the end of September, although spokesman Andrew Romeo said DeSantis raised millions more last month, including USD 1 million since last week's GOP presidential debate.

The DeSantis campaign, which has gone through two rounds of layoffs already, continues to look to an allied super PAC to help build out campaign infrastructure and supplement advertising spending.
Haley's campaign has also

leaned on an allied super PAC to keep pace with DeSantis' allies in recent months. The rival super PACs have largely kept pace with each other.

As of Sunday, Haley's super PAC nad reserved nearl million in advertising from Monday through January compared to almost USD 4 million pared to almost USD 4 minion reserved by DeSantis' super PAC, according to AdImpact. DeSantis' opponents flagged another shift in spending as a reserved size of financial stress potential sign of financial stress. The pro-DeSantis Never Back Down moved late last week to shift roughly USD 700,000 in advertising initially set to run over the next two weeks into January instead.

Kristin Davison, who leads Never Back Down, said no advertising dollars were "cut." Instead, she said they were 'optimised and placed to complement (the) campaign and get anuary started".

Future advertising reserves don't require payment until just before the ads run, while the bill for this month's ads were about to come due. In short, the maneuver could have been a way to save money in the short term, although Davison described the decision as standard operating procedure.

Davison expressed optimism about the direction of the DeSantis campaign, pointing to Reynolds' endorsement last week, which was "not only a huge endorsement and validator for Gov. DeSantis, but also fee at the Red Arrow diner in a real setback for Nikki Haley".

AP WASHINGTON

June 7 in Fargo.

Surrounded by dozens of Democratic donors at a glass art gallery space in Chicago last week, President Joe Biden urged them to look beyond negative poll numbers and feel assured their donations were not being wasted.

Then Biden joked to the crowd: "I could still screw up."

The attendees at his campaign fundraiser laughed. Yet many Democrats are fearful there is a serious disconnect between the popularity of Biden's agenda and the man himself, as the president's approval ratings remain stubbornly low and voters continue to register concerns about his age.

Some of those worries were tempered by the results of Tuesday's election, when Democrats romped to victory in Kentucky, Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Inside the White House, the Democrats' big night was a bright spot in an otherwise dim week as it grapples with the response to two wars and tries to minimise the president's flagging poll numbers. Just 38 per cent of adults approve of Biden's job performance, according to a November Associated Press-NORC poll.

But few outsiders are confident that the off-year wins will necessarily lead to success next year.

Biden sees hopeful signs for his reelection in Democrats' 2023 wins



Nowhere is that disconnect more apparent than Ohio, where a Democratbacked measure to establish a constitutional right to abortion prevailed by 13 per cent last Tuesdav.

While it was once the nation's premier swing state, Ohio was carried easily by Donald Trump in the last two elections. And Ohio Democrats don't expect "This ain't the yellow brick road to the al", she said, if they think he's in a strong

back against Republican overreach, said Nina Turner, an Ohio-based progressive leader who served as Sen. Bernie Sanders' national campaign cochair in 2020. Turner warned that Biden is losing sup

port among young voters, especially from communities of colour.

position heading into 2024. "The people in the bubble - I call them the brunch bunch - can continue to spin this. They do that at their own peril," she said. "What is happening on the streets is a lot different.

Former Rep. John Yarmuth, D-Ky., said the idea that Tuesday's victories would translate into electoral successes for Biden next year was "wishful thinking". He said he's worried that Biden is faring far worse than a generic Democrat would against Trump, although major Democrats have so far declined to challenge Biden.

"I think I'd be stupid not to be somewhat concerned," Yarmuth said. Noting Biden's increasingly aggressive posture against his predecessor, Yarmuth added: "I think that's an indication that he realizes that he's got to knock Trump down, not just tout his own record."

Still, Biden's team argues that Tuesday's results only validated the broad popularity of issues that will be core to the president's reelection campaign, such as abortion rights, democracy and legislative accomplishments including Biden's nearly two-year-old infrastructure law.

We've heard the press and pundits count Joe Biden out time and time again, but we know that he always proves them wrong," Julie Chavez Rodriguez, Biden's

Trump Jr returning to stand as defence looks to undercut New York civil fraud claims

AP ■ NEW YORK

 $F^{\text{oiled in their longshot bid}}_{\text{for an early verdict, Donald}}$ Trump's lawyers will start calling witnesses of their own Monday in the New York civil fraud trial that threatens the former president's real estate empire.

First up: Donald Trump Jr., who'll be returning to the witness stand two weeks after state lawyers quizzed him during a major stretch of the trial that also featured testimony from his father and siblings Eric and Ivanka Trump.

Trump's oldest son, a Trump Organization executive vice president, originally testified on November 1 and 2. He said he never worked on the annual financial statements at the heart of New York Attorney General Letitia James' lawsuit. He said he relied on the company's longtime finance chief and outside accounts to verify their



James alleges Donald Trump, his company and executives including Eric and Donald Jr. Exaggerated his wealth by billions of dollars on financial statements given to banks, insurers and others. The documents were used to secure loans and make deals. She is seeking more than USD 300 million in what she says were ill-gotten gains and a ban on defendants doing business in New York.

Before the trial, Judge Arthur Engoron ruled that the defendants committed fraud by inflating his net worth and the value of assets on his financial statements. He imposed a punishment that could strip Trump of marquee properties like Trump Tower, though an appeals court is allowing him to remain in control for now. The Trumps have denied wrongdoing. Their lawyers

contend that the state failed to meet "any legal standard" to prove allegations of conspira-cy, insurance fraud and falsifying business records. The state rested its case last Wednesday after six weeks of testimony from more than two dozen witnesses. Among them: company insiders, accountants, bank officials and Trump's fixer-turned-foe Michael Cohen. The trial is proceeding after Engoron rebuffed the defense's request last week to end it early through what's known as a directed verdict. Engoron did not rule on the request, but indicated the trial would move

ahead as scheduled. Trump lawyer Christopher Kise, seeking a verdict clearing Trump and other defendants, argued last Thursday that the state's case involved only "successful and profitable loan transactions" and that "there is no victim. There is no complainant.

Shooting at Texas flea market killed child and wounded 4 others

AP PEARLAND (US)

Two children and three other people were shot at a Texas flea market on Sunday evening and one child later died at a hospital, police said.

Officers responded to a shots of shots fired at Cole's Flea Market in the Pearland area at 5:34 pm, the Pearland Police Department posted on X, formally known as Twitter. The victims were transported to hospitals.

The shooting happened after an argument between two people who did not know each other, Officer Chad Rogers said in an evening news conference. The two people exchanged gunfire inside the market, police said. One suspect was still at large, police said. They didn't immediately give details on the second

Military training efforts for Ukraine hit major milestones

AP ■ A FRENCH ARMY BASE

 $B_{\text{and rat-a-tat-tat of gunfire}}^{\text{attle cries pierce the smoke}}$ as Ukrainian soldiers fight through and take enemy trenches and dugouts that hide gruesome, bloody remains. "Grenade!" one screams in

Ukrainian. Another yells: "Let's go, let's go, let's go, let's go!" This time, no lives or limbs were lost. Because this time, the rounds fired were blanks and the "enemy" troops were, in

fact, French soldiers whose

intention was not to kill the helping it hold out and its odds Ukrainians but instead to help shape them into better, more lethal warriors.

But soon, the war games these troops played in the mud in France will become all too real, when the Ukrainians return home and are sent to the front lines against Russia's forces. As the Russian invasion grinds into a second winter and casualties - already estimated in the hundreds of thousands - con-

tinue to mount on both sides,

combat training programs pro-

vided by Ukraine's allies are

of eventual victory. By contin-uing to prepare Ukrainian troops for battle even as the Israel-Hamas war diverts glob-al attention, Ukraine's backers also are making concrete their promises to stick with it for the long haul.

France is on course to have trained 7,000 Ukrainians this year - some in Poland, others at French bases - as part of a European Union military assistance mission for Ukraine that launched a year ago this week. The French army granted The



Associated Press access to a training base in rural France last week to observe the latest class of Ukrainian infantrymen being put through its paces at the tail end of a four-week course.

The EU mission's initial goal was to train 15,000 soldiers, but it has far exceeded that target and now expects to hit 35,000 by the end of this year. All but three of the EU's 27 member countries, plus non-member Norway, have provided training courses or instructors, the EU

Commission says. The United States has trained

about 18,000, mostly in Germany, with an additional 1,000 in the pipeline, the Pentagon says. In Britain, 30,000 have learned soldiering in the past 17

months, a training programme the UK government says is unprecedented since World As well as basic training with

weapons, battlefield first aid and other skills, instructors are also imparting specialized military know-how, ranging from clearing mines and launching waterborne attacks aboard small boats to equipment repair, offi-cer training and even help for Ukrainian military chaplains. With their return to Ukraine just days away, the grimness of the future that awaits the trainees at the French base was perceptible in the men's determined, unsmiling looks. Civilians not long ago, they now carried themselves like soldiers. They addressed each other with nicknames. There was liberal swearing as the men caught their breaths after storming trenches with fake grenades and blank rounds.

World shares mostly higher ahead of Biden, Xi meeting

rorld shares were Monday ahead of the release of economic data in the US, China and Japan, and a meeting this week between US President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Germany's DAX rose 0.4% to

 $15{,}287.0\overset{.}{5}$ and the CAC 40 in Paris advanced 0.4% to 7,072.32. Britain's FTSE 100 gained 0.4% to 7,386.42. The future for the S&P 500 lost 0.3% and that for the Dow Jones Industrial Average edged 0.2% lower.

Biden and Xi are due to meet on Wednesday on the sidelines of a Pacific Rim summit in California for the first face-toface encounter in a year between the leaders of the world's two biggest economies.

a relationship that is being defined by differences over export controls, tensions over Taiwan, the wars in the Middle East and Europe, and other points of friction.

Investors also are focusing on readings of US consumer prices and retail sales due Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively. Japan will report its economic growth figures on Wednesday and China will give a monthly update on factory output and other indicators. On Monday, the Hang Seng in Hong Kong surged 1.4% to 17,440.73, while the Shanghai Composite index rose 0.3% to 3,046.53.

Alibaba Group Holding and JD.Com reported a pickup in sales for this year's Singles' Day shopping festival as they grapple with a stop-start eco-

Both are looking to bring a nomic recovery in China and greater measure of stability to a brutal price war. But neither a brutal price war. But neither company disclosed exact revenue figures

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.1% to 32,585.11. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 0.4% to 6,948.80. In South Korea, the Kospi was 0.2% lower at 2,403.76.

Investors also are focusing on readings of US consumer prices and retail sales due Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively. Japan will report its economic growth figures on Wednesday and China will give a monthly update on factory output and other indicators. On Friday, Wall Street rose sharply to add to an already strong November, which is on track to be one of the market's best months of the year. Expectations fell for an interest rate hike by the US Federal Reserve in December,



despite a report showing consumer inflation expectations on

The S&P 500 jumped 1.6% and Nasdaq jumped 2%

the Dow gained 1.2%. The

wants to keep such expectations low because they otherwise could lead to a vicious cycle that keeps inflation high. High interest rates and bond yields hurt prices for stocks and other investments, while slowing the economy broadly and raising the pressure on the financial system in hopes of getting inflation under control. On Thursday, a jump in Treasury yields knocked stocks lower to break an eight-day winning streak for the S&P 500, one of its longest in the last two decades. That came after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell dashed some of the hopes building among traders that the Fed may finally be done hiking its main interest But by late Friday, traders were

betting on only a 9.1% chance

interest rate at its next meeting in December, according to data from CME Group. That's down from 14.6% a day earlier.

Oil prices fell further, extending three weeks of losses as worries over the potential impact on supplies due to the Israel-Hamas war eased and crude shipments from Russia and the United States rose.

Early Monday, a barrel of benchmark US crude for delivery in December lost 73 cents to \$76.44 in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose \$1.43 on Friday to settle at \$77.17.

Brent crude, the international standard, was down 80 cents at \$80.63 per barrel. On Friday it added \$1.42 to \$81.43 per barrel. Both still lost nearly 4% last week on worries about supplies outstripping demand.

Tea, nickel on agenda as Biden hosts Indonesian president

AP WASHINGTON

 $P^{\text{resident Joe Biden will host Indonesian}}_{\text{President Joko Widodo at the White House}}$ on Monday, one day before the US leader leaves for San Francisco to attend a summit of Asian

The two presidents will share an afternoon tea and meet with top advisers, according to senior administration officials who insisted on anonymity to preview the schedule.

They will also talk about ways to expand the trade of critical minerals like nickel, which can be used to produce electric vehicle batteries. Indonesia is the world's largest producer of nickel

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said they "will explore opportunities to enhance cooperation on the clean energy transition, advance economic prosperity, bolster regional peace and stability, and reinforce our people-to-

Biden's meeting with Widodo comes shortly before he sits down with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit

Indonesia is the world's third-largest democracy after India and the United States — and a key player in Southeast Asia. The U.S. Has been working to strengthen relationships in the region in hopes of deterring China's influence, and Vice President Kamala Harris attended a summit there



However, events in the Middle East are expected to intrude on the agenda.

Widodo will be arriving in the US after making a previous stop in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for a summit of Muslim leaders. While there, he joined in calls for a ceasefire and denounced the Israeli bombardment and invasion of Gaza, which began after Hamas attacked on October 7.

Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim country, and a senior administration official said 'their views and their engagement are critical" on the war between Israel and Hamas. The official said Biden would seek to have Widodo "play a larger role" in the Middle East, although it was unclear exactly what that would entail

China on alert for COVID relapse

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese experts have sounded an alert about the relapse of COVID-19 infections during the current winter season and asked elderly and vulnerable populations to get vaccinated. The Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Chinese CDC) shows that a total of 209 new severe COVID-19 cases and 24 deaths caused by COVID-19 were reported across the country in October, with the prevalent strains all being XBB variants, official media reported on Monday.

China's top respiratory disease expert Zhong Nanshan warned of a small COVID-19 spike in the winter and reminded the elderly and vulnerable populations to get vaccinated as soon as possible, state-run Global Times reported.

The virus is undergoing mutations, while the general popula-tion's ability to fight off the disease is declining because their antibody levels are lowering as time passes, Lu Hongzhou, head of the Third People's Hospital of



According to Lu, there may be a rise in COVID-19 cases during the winter seasons. Also, autumn and winter are known for high influenza rates, so people should also be cautious of potential co-infections, according to Lu.

While it is still necessary to continue implementing prevention and control measures in the winter season, there is no need to be overly concerned about it, said

The coronavirus which first emerged in Wuhan towards the massive pandemic in which millions of people died all over the world while it affected the health of millions more. China steadfastly denied the allegations that the virus that

shook the world was leaked from a bio-lab in Wuhan. While the world grappled with the fast-emerging variants of

coronavirus, China disconnected itself from the rest of the world by banning or restricting flights from abroad. At home, China resorted to

periodic shutdowns of various cities including Shanghai which severely affected its economy. As a result, the world's secondlargest still remained in slowdown mode despite various efforts by the government to revive it.

As the winter approached, apart from the risk of COVID-19 infection, there has been a high incidence of mycoplasma pneumoniae pneumonia (MPP) and influenza in recent weeks, the CDC said and cautioned about mixed infection of multiple respiratory pathogens until next spring, the Global Times report

Dozens of migrants missing after boat capsizes off Yemen, say officials



AP SANAA

Amigrant boat capsized off the coast of war-torn Yemen, leaving dozens of people, mostly from the Horn of Africa, missing, Yemeni officials said Monday

Khalid al-Subeihi, an official with the Yemeni coast guard in the coastal city of Mocha, said the boat with 75 migrants on board capsized Sunday.

He told The Associated Press that 26 people survived but at least 49 others remain missing. Another coast guard official, Lt. Co. Olwan al-Qameri, said the

search was still underway Monday. Citing an unnamed coast guard official, Yemen's staterun SABA news agency reported that the boat capsized due to strong winds and that all those on board — including women and children — fell into the water. The shipwreck was the latest sea disaster involving African migrants seeking a better life in oil-rich Gulf countries. Thousands of people each year seek to make the perilous voyage from Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia to Yemen and on to richer Gulf countries as they flee poverty

Cipher case: Pak's caretaker Govt approves jail trial of Imran, his aide

Dakistan's caretaker governthe jail trial of former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in a case against them for allegedly leaking state secrets and violating the laws of the coun-

Both Khan, 71, and Qureshi, 67, are currently detained in the Adiala jail on judicial remand. The case is based on alleged violation of the Official Secrets Act while dealing with a communication by the embassy of the country in Washington in March 2022 and it was launched in August this year by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

The summary for the jail trial of Khan and Qureshi in the Adiala jail due to security concerns was moved by the Ministry of Law and the cabinet gave its assent to it.

The ministry stated in the summary that it had issued a no-objection certificate (NOC)

for the jail trial on August 29 which was requested by the Interior Ministry and Judge is heading the special court hearing the case. The approval by the court

comes as the Islamabad High Court (IHC) is set to hear on November 14 the intra-court appeal filed by Khan against the

The attorney general, who is leading the government, will present arguments in the court in favour of jail trial.

Khan's pleas against the jail trial were rejected by the IHC's single bench on October 16, which stated that there was no apparent malice behind conducting Khan's jail trial in the cipher case. Khan had challenged the verdict by filing an

intra-court appeal. Both Khan and Qureshi have been indicted and their formal trial began last month with the recording of statements by the witnesses in the special court which has been hearing the case in the Adiala Jail of Rawalpindi due to security reasons.



Khan has been in the Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi after he was shifted there on September 26 from the District Jail Attock where he was taken after arrest on August 5 following conviction in the Toshakhana case. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

chairman was arrested in August after the cipher case was filed against him.

The purported cipher (secret diplomatic cable) contained an account of a meeting between US State Department officials, including Assistant

The United States and South Korea on Monday updated

a bilateral security agreement

with the aim of more effective-ly countering North Korea's

evolving nuclear and missile

The move followed high-level

military talks in Seoul, where the

allies also discussed enhancing

three-way defense exercises with

Japan and improving informa-

tion-sharing on North Korean

US Defence Secretary Lloyd

missile launches.

Secretary of State for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu, and Khan last year.

Khan, who served as prime minister of Pakistan from August 2018 to April 2022, is accused of misusing the contents of the cipher to build a narrative that his government was ousted due to a conspiracy hatched by the US, a charge denied by Washington.

Khan and Qureshi have pleaded not guilty to the charges. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on September 30 presented the charge sheet against Khan and Qureshi who signed its copies. The FIA invoked in the charge sheet sections 5 and 9 of the Official Secrets Act which may lead to a death sentence, or two to 14

Khan was ousted through a vote of no-confidence in April 2022. More than 150 cases have been registered against Khan since his ouster from

years' imprisonment if con-

victed.

Nepal Govt bans Tiktok

The Nepal government on Monday decided to ban the Chinese-owned social network platform Tiktok, citing its negative effects on social harmony. According to government Communication and Information Technology, Rekha Sharma, Monday's Cabinet meeting decided to prohibit TikTok's use. The decision to ban Tiktok will be implemented through the Ministry of Communication and IT, she said.

The Nepal government decided to ban Tiktok due to its negative effects on social harmony, The Kathmandu Post newspaper

reported. A Cabinet meeting on Thursday made it mandatory for social media sites such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok and YouTube, among others, to open their liaison offices in Nepal. Although freedom of expression is a basic right, a large section of society has criticised TikTok for encouraging a tendency of hate speech, the government said. In the past four years, 1,647 cases of cybercrime have been reported on the video-sharing app, the report said. The Cyber Bureau of the Nepal

US, South Korea sharpen deterrence plans



Police, Ministry of Home Affairs, and representatives of TikTok discussed the issue earlier last week. Monday's decision is expected to be enforced following the completion of technical preparations, it said. Sharma clarified the decision to

shut down Tiktok will be implemented promptly by setting a specific deadline. However, Nepali Congress Gen-

eral Secretary Gagan Thapa expressed reservations about the decision.

'The government's decision to ban Tiktok is wrong; the government should regulate the social media site," ruling party leader Thapa said on X

The government's decision should be rectified as it violates freedom of expression and individual freedom," he pointed out. The decision comes as another setback for the Chinese networking platform, which has come under scrutiny in various countries, including India, the US, the European Union and the UK, where the governments have banned the application from its network over security concerns.

Germany's support for Ukraine to be 'massively expanded' next year

AP ■ BERLIN

Termany's aid for Ukraine **U**will be "massively expanded" next year, the foreign minister said on Monday as Kyiv heads into its second winter since Russia launched its fullscale invasion

Germany has become one of Ukraine's top military suppliers since the war started in February 2022, sending material that includes tanks, armoured personnel carriers, air defence systems and Patriot missile systems. Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said as she arrived on Monday at a meeting with European Union counterparts that, even as Europe grapples with the war between Israel and Hamas, it's still important to "face the geopolitical challenge



She said that will include helping Ukraine through the coming winter months and "our support will be massively expanded for next year".

Over the weekend, the Bild am Sonntag newspaper reported that Chancellor Olaf Scholz's governing coalition wants to increase Germany's military aid for 2024 from the 4 billion

euros initially planned to 8 billion euros (USD 8.5 billion). It said parliament's budget committee will need to sign off on the plan later this week.

Officials haven't confirmed that. But, asked about the report in an interview on Sunday with ARD television, Defense Minister Boris Pistorius rejected the suggestion that it's due to fears the JS could reduce its support.

Pistorius said that, based on this year's experiences, the idea was to avoid having to seek more funding if the money available is used up quickly.
"Right now, as Ukraine has to continue its fight and at the same

Austin was in Seoul for annual security talks with South Korean military officials, including Defence Minister Shin Won-sik which were focused on boosting nuclear deterrence against North Korea. They also talked about time part of public attention worldwide is directed more how the allies could coordinate toward Israel, this is a strong sigover broader geopolitical issues, including Russia's war on nal to Ukraine that we won't leave it in the lurch," he said. Ukraine and China's regional

threats.

assertiveness, Austin said. Tensions between the Koreas are at their highest point in years as the pace of both North Korea's weapons tests and South Korea's combined military exercises with the United States have

intensified in a cycle of tit-for-

During their Security Consultative Meeting, Austin and Shin signed a new version of their countries' Tailored Deterrence Strategy agreement, which was revised for the first time in a decade to address the growing threat of the North's

military nuclear programme. Shin said the new document spells out that the United States would mobilise its full range of military capabilities, including nuclear ones, to defend the South in the event of a North Korean nuclear attack.

provide a template for the allies

to strategise how South Korea

sile defence capabilities," Austin He also said the document will said at a news conference, refer-

ventional capabilities but didn't elaborate further. Our deterrence commitment to the ROK remains ironclad that includes a full range of our nuclear, conventional and mis-

ring to South Korea's formal

name, the Republic of Korea.

could assist US nuclear operations in such events with its con-

The United States and the government of conservative South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol have also been strengthening their trilateral security cooperation with Japan, which has included joint military exercises and tightened defense planning, in response to North Korea's intensifying weapons development and verbal threats of nuclear conflict.

Arriving in South Korea over the weekend, Austin earlier met Shin during a three-way meeting with Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara, who participated in the talks through online video. They agreed to start as planned

a real-time information sharing arrangement on North Korean missiles launches in December They also agreed to set up multiyear plans in coming weeks to enhance their trilateral military exercises, South Korea's Defence Ministry said.

Austin also on Sunday met Yoon, who expressed satisfaction over the increased consultations with Washington over nuclear deterrence plans and the more frequent deployment of advanced US military assets to the Korean Peninsula in past months, which he described as crucial for keeping the North's nuclear and missile threats in

Battles force Palestinians out of hospitals in Gaza

Leaving patients, babies and medics stranded

AP ■ DEIR AL-BALAH (GAZA STRIP)

Battles around hospitals have forced thousands of Palestinians to flee from some of the last shelters in northern Gaza while stranding critically wounded patients, including newborns, and their caregivers with dwindling supplies and no electricity, health

officials said Monday. The Israeli military has urged Palestinians to flee south on foot through what it calls safe corridors. But its purported drive to separate civilians from Hamas militants has come at a heavy cost, with more than two thirds of the territory's population of 2.3 million having already fled their homes.

As Israeli troops encircled Gaza's Shifa Hospital over the week-end, thousands fled, while hundreds of patients and displaced people remained, according to officials. World Health Organisation Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebrevesus said Shifa "is not functioning as

a hospital anymore". Another hospital in Gaza City, Al-Quds, was forced to shut down Sunday because it ran out of fuel. The Palestinian Red Crescent, which operates the facility, said Israeli forces are stationed nearby and that preparations are being made to evacuate some 6,000 patients, medics and displaced people. Both sides have seized on the

plight of hospitals, particularly Shifa's, as a symbol of the larg-er war, now in its sixth week. The fighting was triggered by Hamas' unprecedented Oct 7 surprise attack into Israel, and Israel's response has brought unseen levels of death and destruction to Gaza.

For Palestinians, Shifa evokes the suffering of civilians. Thousands of people displaced by airstrikes that have destroyed entire city blocks have sought shelter in its darkened corridors. Doctors running low on supplies perform surgery there on war-wounded patients, including children, without anesthesia. One medic shared a photo showing nine premature babies in a shared crib.

Israel says Hamas shields itself among civilians and the hospital, Gaza's largest, is a prime example of that, claiming that the militants have a command centre in and beneath the medical compound.

Israel has not provided photos or videos to back up the Shifa claims, though it has shared footage of militants operating in residential neighbourhoods and positioning rockets and weapons near schools and

Both Hamas and the hospital staff at Shifa deny the Israeli alle-

A UN health official said many displaced families and patients with moderate injuries fled the hospital over the weekend. The



official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to brief reporters, said most of the remaining patients could only be relocated with ambulances and other special procedures.

Mohammed Zaqout, the director of hospitals in Gaza, said those who remain include about 650 patients, 500 medical staff and around 2,500 displaced Palestinians sheltering inside hospital buildings. That's down from more than 20,000 people reported to be at the hospital on Saturday by the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza.

The ministry said 32 patients, including three babies, have died since the hospital's emer-

gency generator ran out of fuel on Saturday. It said 36 babies, as well as other patients, are at risk of dying because there is no way to power life-saving medical equipment.

Medical Aid for Palestinians, a UK-based charity that has supported Shifa's neonatal intensive care unit, said transferring critically ill infants is complex.

With ambulances unable to reach the hospital...And no hospital with capacity to receive them, there is no indication of how this can be done safely." CEO Melanie Ward said. She said the only option was to pause the fighting and allow in

The military said it placed 300 people remain in the north,

More than 11,000 Palestinians, two-thirds of them women and minors, have been killed since the war began, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza, which does not differentiate between

liters (79 gallons) of fuel near the

hospital, but that Hamas mili-

reaching it. The Health Ministry

disputed that and said the fuel

would have provided less than

The US has pushed for tempo-

rary pauses that would allow for

wider distribution of badly

needed aid. Israel has only

agreed to daily windows during

which civilians can flee ground

combat in northern Gaza along

two main roads, while contin-

uing to strike what it says are

militant targets across the ter-

ritory, often killing women and

Even so, tens of thousands of

an hour of electricity.

civilian and militant deaths. About 2,700 people have been reported missing. Health officials, many of whom work out of Shifa, have not updated that toll since Friday

because of the difficulty of col-

battling Hamas. Saib Abu Hashish said he has

been trapped on the ground floor of his family home along with 27 others in Gaza City. They haven't left the house in

three days and are running out

of food and water. He said their

neighbours attempted to escape the area on Sunday, but Israeli

We want to leave but we can't

because of the bombing," he said

by phone. "If we survive the

bombing, we will die from

forces opened fire on them.

lecting information.
At least 1,200 people have died tants had prevented staff from on the Israeli side, mostly civilians killed in the initial Hamas attack. Palestinian militants are holding nearly 240 hostages seized in the raid, including men, women, children and older adults. The military says 44 soldiers have been killed in

> About 250,000 Israelis have evacuated from communities near Gaza, where Palestinian militants are still firing barrages of rockets, and along the northern border with Lebanon, where Israel and the Hezbollah militant group have repeatedly traded fire, including on Monday.

ground operations in Gaza.

EU nations condemn Hamas for use of hospitals, where Israeli ground forces are civilians as human shields

The 27 European Union nations have jointly condemned Hamas for what they described as the use of hospitals and civilians as "human shields" in the war against Israel.

EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell said on Monday that at the same time the bloc asked Israel "for maximum restraint and targeting in order to avoid human casualties"

At a meeting of the bloc's foreign affairs ministers, Borrell brandished a statement he issued on behalf of the 27 nations as a show of unity following weeks of often contrasting statements on how the group should address the Īsrael-Hamas war.

You know how difficult it has been the last times, after the vote in the United Nations, where countries were voted in different ways, to present a completely united approach," Borrell said. Only hours after EU leaders professed unity over the Israel-Hamas war on October 28, the member states were totally split in a vote on a General Assembly resolution calling for humanitarian truces in Gaza leading to a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hamas.

Now, though, the EU nations said in a statement they join "calls for immediate pauses in hostilities and the establishment of humanitarian corridors, including through increased capacity at border crossings and through a dedicated maritime route, so that humanitarian aid can safely reach the population of Gaza" And they reiterated their "call on Hamas for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. It is crucial that the International Committee of

to the hostages' It added that "the EU condemns the use of hospitals and civilians as human shields by Hamas".

the Red Cross is granted access

The nations stopped short of calling for a cease-fire. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said she understood "the impetus for a

cease-fire? But she said those who seek one must answer questions "for example, how can the demand for a cease-fire, acutely, and now in this terrible situation guarantee that Israel's security is assured? What happens with the 200 hostages, and who negotiates it in a situation where negotiations barely seem possible?"

Biden's early certitude on Israel gives way to complexities, casualties of brutal war

In the early days and hours after the horrific Hamas attack on Israeli civilians on October 7, President Joe Biden spoke with stark declarations and unqualified support for the longtime US

Now, a month on, that unam-

biguous backing has given way to the complexities and haunting casualties of the war, and the Biden administration is imploring Israel to rein in some of its tactics to ease civilian suffering in Gaza As condemnation of the conflict

has grown around the world, stoking anti-Israel sentiment, the president is also confronting the limits of the US ability to direct the outcome - not only about the war, but what comes after it.

"There's no going back to the stathe 6th," Biden said three weeks after the attack. But even if Israel is successful in crippling or eradicating Hamas, there will also need to be a shift in Washington, where successive US administrations have sought to manage the Middle East conflict and where the political will has been lacking to devise ways

And yet the path forward is uncertain, at best. "It's entirely unclear if there is a morning after," said Shibley Telhami, the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland. He noted this could be "an extended period of violence at a different scale for many, many months or years to come".

"But if there is something possible, they can't just put a plan on the table," he added. "They have to take new American positions of their own, that are transformative, that are different, that are like something we have not

Telhami said after his staunch support for Israel, the president would need to take equally dramatic steps to secure buy-in from Palestinians to bring about a political resolution to the constarting with Israeli settlements in the West Bank that Palestinians view as infringing on their future state. In recent weeks, US officials have held internal discussions and talks with allies on post-Hamas governance in Gaza, and resurrected talk of working toward a two state solution, with, as Biden expressed Sunday to Qatar's

emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, a "future Palestinian state where Israelis and Palestinians can live side by side with equal measures of stability and dignity".

Yet there has been little progress on how to get there, and some in the Biden administration have grown increasingly worried that the mounting death toll in Gaza will make that aim even more difficult. US Secretary of State Antony

Blinken, who last week appeared to criticise Israel for not doing enough to minimize harm to civilians among whom Hamas has sought shelter, has called for a return to unified Palestinian governance over the West Bank and Gaza under the beleaguered Palestinian Authority.

The internationally recognised group lost control over Gaza to Hamas in 2007, and is viewed ulace for perceived cooperation with Israel.

Jake Sullivan, Biden's national security adviser, on Sunday went further, laying out a vision of what the US sees as a path forward, but one that still has no buy-in from key players in the

In an interview on CBS' "Face



"the basic principles of the way That path, he said, included "no reoccupation of Gaza, no forcible displacement of the Palestinian people. Gaza can never be used as a base for terrorism in the future and Gaza's territory should not be reduced". The Palestinian Authority has openly dismissed that notion. "We are not going to go to Gaza

Prime Minister Mohammad Within the Democratic Party,

"The Palestinian Authority is saying it doesn't want to take on the task that the Biden administration is pushing unless it gets some kind of real commitment to a major diplomatic initiative leading to a two-state outcome," said Nathan Brown, professor of political science and international affairs at George

cord. Nearly half of Democrats disapprove of how President Joe Biden is handling the Israel-Hamas conflict, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research - showing a deep divide within his party over

the war. In Congress, so far there is no

consensus about Biden's proposal to pass an aid package that includes assistance to Israel, Ukraine and Taiwan, and additional money to address issues at the southern border of the US. There are also emerging signs of division between the US and Israeli positions on the war's endgame, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisting that Israel will retain security control over Gaza for the long term, a stance the White House has rejected, and ruling out alternatives like an international monitoring force.

"The only force right now that can guarantee that Hamas, that terrorism is not - does not reappear and take over Gaza, again. is the Israeli military," Netanyahu told NBC's "Meet the Press." "So overall, military responsibility will have to be in Israel."

And in an interview with CNN's appeared to rule out returning Gaza to the Palestinian Authority, saying whatever group takes over must "demilitarise" and "de-radicalise Gaza". "There has to be a reconstructed civilian authority," he said of the Palestinian Authority. "There has to be something else." More than 1,200 Israelis, most-

Hamas fighters launched a surprise attack on Israeli border communities, in the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. Nearly 240 - including children and the elderly - remain captive in Gaza, Israeli officials say. Israel's war to "destroy" Hamas in Gaza has killed over 11,000,

ly civilians, were killed when

the Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza says, though it doesn't differentiate between civilians and fighters. The US believes thousands of women and children are among the dead. Until Hamas attack, Biden's

administration had largely relegated the region on the back burner, as it focused first on a pivot to Asia then on responding to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Now, Biden faces a challenge that has splintered his political support at home and the unity of US allies abroad. Israel has the military ability to take out Hamas," said Senate Intelligence committee chairman Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., on "Fox News Sunday". "But this is also a battle about

hearts and minds -- hearts and minds in terms of maintaining support for Israel in this country, in the world and in the

80 people freed from Australian migrant centres since High Court outlawed indefinite detention

AP ■ CANBERRA (AUSTRALIA)

Eighty people, including convicted criminals considered dangerous, have been released from Australian migrant detention centres since the High Court ruled last week that their indefinite detention was unconstitutional, the immigration minister said on Monday.

A member of Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya Muslim freedom minority won Wednesday when the court outlawed his indefinite detention. Australia has been unable to find any country willing to resettle

AP MOGADISHU (SOMALIA)

of Somalia, authorities have said.

the capital Mogadishu on Sunday.

the man, identified only as NZYQ, because he had been convicted of raping a 10-year-old boy, and authorities consider him a danger to the Australian community.

The court overturned a 2004 High Court precedent set in the case of a Palestinian man, Ahmed Al-Kateb, that found stateless people could be held indefinitely in detention.

Immigration Minister Andrew Giles said NZYO is one of 80 people who had been detained indefinitely and have been freed since Wednesday's ruling.
"It is important to note that the



High Court hasn't yet provided reasons for its decision, so the full ramifications of the decision won't be able to be determined, Giles told Australian Broad

casting Corp. "We have been required, though, to release people almost immediately in order to abide by the decision," he added.

All 80 were released with appropriate visa conditions determined by factors including an individual's criminal record Giles said.

'Community safety has been our number one priority in anticipation of the decision and since it's been handed down," he said Solicitor-General Stephen Donaghue told the court last week that 92 people in detention were in similar circumstances to NZYQ in that no other country would accept them.

Myanmar's military government faced a fresh

son for the Arakan Army, told The Associated Press that two military security outposts in Rathedaung were seized by his group and more than 20 police officers from a station in another township, Kyauktaw, had laid down their weapons. "Some officers of Myanmar's army have been arrested," Khaing Thukha said by phone. Local media outlets reported fighting between the Arakan Army and the military in

The reports said the army blocked all roads in the affect-

state's capital of Sittwe were ordered not to go outside after

The Arakan Army is the welltrained and well-armed military wing of the Rakhine ethnic minority movement seeking autonomy from the central government. Rakhine is also known by its older name of Arakan.

It's the site of a brutal army counterinsurgency operation in 2017 that drove about 740,000 minority Rohingya Muslims to seek safety across the border in Bangladesh. The Arakan Army, along with

the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army — calling themselves the Three Brotherhood Alliance launched a coordinated offensive on Oct. 27 in northern Shan state in northeastern Myanmar along the border with China.

The alliance has claimed widespread victories and the military government has acknowledged losing control of three towns, one of which is a major border crossing for trade with China

The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army claimed to have seized another town, Kunlong, on Sunday. Myanmar's ruling military

council declared martial law in eight townships near the Chinese border, the state-controlled Global New Light of Myanmar reported Monday. The offensive in the northern part of Shan state was already seen as a significant challenge for the army, which has struggled to contain a nationwide uprising by the members of Peoples' Defense Force.

organisation was formed after the army seized power from Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government in February 2021. It also set up loose alliances with several of the ethnic armed groups.

"If combat persists, it will open a significant new front for the regime, which is already overstretched with fighting, including on its eastern border with China," Richard Horsey, the senior adviser on Myanmar for the Crisis Group think tank, said in an emailed state-

ident, Myint Swe, said at a meeting last week of the state National Defense and Security Council that the country is in critical condition and could split up if the military does not effectively manage the problems in Shan state, the Global New Light of Myanmar report-

Police fatally shoot teen during traffic stop in Bismarck

AP BISMARCK

🗗 year-old early on Sunday during a traffic stop in a mall parking lot in Bismarck, North Dakota, while investigating the teen for a reported shooting. Police responded about 12:15 am Sunday to gunfire in the area, according to a news release. Officers determined a shooting occurred near a hotel. Police subsequently began investigating 17-year-old Nicholas Bruington, of Bismarck.

Dolice shot and killed a 17-

About 1:50 am, officers stopped a vehicle in which Bruington was a passenger, near the Scheels sporting goods store in the Kirkwood Mall parking lot. Police said Bruington "had a firearm and did not follow commands?

It wasn't immediately clear whether Bruington pointed the gun at police. None of the officers were injured.

Three officers shot at Bruington. Officers performed life-saving procedures until Bruington was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation is investigating the shooting, per the police department's protocol. The three officers are on administrative leave, pending the probe. The news release did not identify them.

civilian infrastructure notably in the Gedo region of southern Somalia, he said. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, which has given USD 25 million to help mitigate the impact of flooding, warned in a statement Thursday of "a flood event of a magnitude

 $\Gamma_{\text{killed}}^{\text{loods}}$ caused by torrential rainfall have killed at least 31 people in various parts

Since October, floods have displaced near-

ly half a million people and disrupted the

lives of over 1.2 million people, Minister of

Information Daud Aweis told reporters in

They have also caused extensive damage to



Floods kill at least 31 in Somalia; UN warns of

flood event likely to happen once in 100 years

significant anticipated humanitarian

"While all possible preparatory measures are being pursued, a flood of this magnitude can only be mitigated and not prevented," OCHA said, recommending "early warning and early action" to save lives as "large-scale and further destruction of property remain likely. The lives of some 1.6 million people in

displacement, increased humanitarian needs

Somalia could be disrupted by floods during the rainy season that lasts until December, with 1.5 million hectares of farmland potentially being destroyed, it said. Mogadishu has been ravaged by downpours that, at times, swept away vulnerable people, including children and the elderly, and disrupted transportation. Floods are also affecting neighboring Kenya,

where the death toll stood at 15 on Monday, according to the Kenya Red Cross. The port city of Mombasa and the northeastern counties of Mandera and Wajir are the worst

Myanmar army faces new challenge

AP BANGKOK

challenge Monday when one of the armed ethnic groups in an alliance that recently gained strategic territory in the country's northeast launched attacks in the western state of Rakhine. The Arakan Army launched surprise assaults on two outposts of the Border Guard Police, a paramilitary force, in Rakhine's Rathedaung township, according to independent online media and area residents. The attacks took place despite a yearlong cease-fire with Myanmar's military government. Khaing Thukha, a spokesper-

Minbya, Maungdaw, Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw townships.

The pro-democracy resistance

ment.

The army-installed acting pres-

Bhagat wins Para Badminton gold



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Para Asian Games gold medallist shuttler Pramod Bhagat continued run, bagging a gold medal in SL3 singles category at the justconcluded Hulic Daihatsu Japan Para Badminton International tournament in Tokyo

Bhagat on Sunday defeated compatriot Manoj Sarkar 21-16 21-19 in the title clash that lasted 38 minutes

In mixed doubles, Bhagat and

Jianyuan and Yang Qiu Xia 21-14 15-21 21-16, while Sukant Kadam lost to Malaysia's Mohd Amin Burhanuddin in the semifinals to secure a bronze medal in the singles SL4 catego-

India's Tarun secured a bronze in the same category after going down in the semifinal.

Nehal Gupta and Naveen Sivakumar also secured a gold medal for India in men's doubles SL3-SL4 category beating compatriots Deep Ranjan Manisha Ramdass went down to Chinese pair of Yang

Bisoyee and Manoj Sarkar 21-17 in the final.

Manisha Joshi secured a bronze medal in women's SL3 categorv, while Hardik Makkar and Ruthick Ragupathi bagged bronze in men's doubles SU5 division.

Thulasimathi Murugesan secured a silver in women's SU5 category and Manish Ramdass secured the bronze. Manasi Joshi and Thulasimathi Murugesan then teamed up to win a gold medal in women's doubles SL3-SU5 category, beating the Indonesian pair of Leani Ratri Oktila Khalimatus Sadiyah 21-16 21-11 in the final.

Guardiola vs Klopp again as Man City, Liverpool top Premier League

One of the Premier League's most enduring rivalries looks set to be revived as Manchester City and Liverpool lead the way once again.

Just one point separates the two teams at the top of the standings after first-place City was held to a thrilling 4-4 draw at Chelsea on Sunday.

Earlier in the day, Mohamed Salah scored twice in Liverpool's 3-0 win against Brentford, which briefly saw the Merseyside club move level on points with Pep Guardiola's defending champi-

It sets up a tantalizing clash between City and Liverpool on Nov. 25 after the international break. Last season's runner-up Arsenal

is also a point behind City and in third place on goal difference. Tottenham is fourth, two points off City, after back-to-back loss-

Liverpool's potential challenge comes after slipping out of contention last year as Jurgen Klopp embarked on a refresh of a squad that had won every major trophy from 2019-22.

A disappointing campaign saw the 19-time champions fail to qualify for the Champions



whether they would be able to half at Anfield. Diogo Jota added challenge City again as star players like Sadio Mane departa third. The win saw Liverpool move

Klopp's new-look team is answering all of those doubts, while Salah remains its talisman, with the Egypt international scoring a landmark 200th goal in English soccer against Brentford.

Salah put Liverpool on course to

left City in September, came back to haunt his former team by converting a penalty in the fifth minute of second-half stop-

Instead, Cole Palmer, who only

Erling Haaland had put City in front from the penalty spot, but Thiago Silva equalized and Rahaman Straking and Clark and Rahaman Straking and Rahaman R eem Sterling gave Chelsea the lead. Manuel Akanji evened the score again before halftime and Haaland made it 3-2 to City just after the break.

Nicolas Jackson pulled it back to 3-3 before Rodri and Palmer's goals. "It was a good advert and entertaining game for the Premier League and both teams wanted to win," Guardiola said. "I wouldn't have expected differently. Chelsea have a fantastic

team and players."

PRICELESS PALMER: City may come to regret letting Palmer go in the off-season. It wasn't as if the 21-year-old attacking midfielder hadn't shown his potential to the club

Palmer scored important goals against Arsenal in the Community Shield and Sevilla in the European Super Cup before City accepted a bid of around \$52 million from Chelsea. had overcome a major test at

he'd been at for 15 years after ris-

ing through its academy.

He has already established himself as an important part of Mauricio Pochettino's plans, scoring four goals in 11 games. And he showed impressive composure when waiting to take his spot kick deep into stoppage

time at Stamford Bridge. Against a goalkeeper he knows well in Ederson, Palmer fired with a power and precision into the left corner to send the home fans wild.

"His personality and character, he is a player that arrived in the last moment and he is showing great character and performance," Pochettino said.

"I thought before the game we needed to be careful to him to give time to improve and more experience, but he is improving every single game. I am happy for him and the team."

HAALAND vs. SALAH: Haaland and Salah scored two goals each on Sunday to continue their impressive runs this season. Haaland has 17 in all competi-

tions, while Salah has 12 and also reached the landmark of 200 in English soccer with his sec-ond-half header against Brentford.

Salah also became the first Liverpool player to score in each of its opening six league home games of a season.

Lewandowski leads Barcelona comeback against Alaves Atletico was coming off a 6-0

AP ■ MADRID

 $R^{
m obert\,Lewandowski\,came\,to}$ the rescue of Barcelona, scoring twice as the Catalan club rallied to beat Alaves and keep pace with Real Madrid and Girona in the Spanish The 2-1 home victory on

Sunday moved Barcelona back within two points of secondplace Madrid, which routed . Valencia 5-1 on Saturday. Barcelona is four points behind fellow Catalan club Girona, the surprise leader that came from behind to win 2-1 at Rayo Vallecano, also on Saturday.

Barcelona stayed two points in front of Atletico Madrid, which came from behind to defeat Villarreal 3-1 with a goal and an assist by Antoine Griezmann. It was the 15th straight league home win for Atletico, surpass-

row at the Vicente Calderon Stadium between May 2012 and February 2013.

Alaves took the lead in a breakaway one minute into the match in Montjuic after Barcelona midfielder Ilkay Gundogan lost possession near midfield, but Lewandowski helped the hosts rebound with a header in the 53th and a penalty kick in the

Lewandowski, who was sidelined recently with an injury, hadn't scored in six matches since getting a double in the 3-2 win against Celta Vigo in September. 'We played a bit better, but we

are not going through our best moment," Barcelona coach Xavi

"We came through in a match that became difficult. The international break will be good for

ing the run of 14 victories in a us so we can regroup. We will improve, I'm certain.

Barcelona was coming off a 1-0 loss at Shakhtar Donetsk in the group stage of the Champions League. Two rounds ago it lost 2-1 to Madrid at home in the first "clasico" of the season in the Spanish league. Barcelona then needed a stoppage-time goal to win at Real Sociedad last weekend. Barcelona extended its unbeaten run against Alaves in the league to 12 league games, with

Alaves beat last-place Almeria in the previous round to end a seven-game winless streak in the league.

10 wins and two draws.

Barcelona remained without injured midfielders Frenkie de Jong and Sergi Roberto, and Xavi also couldn't count on the suspended Gavi. Pedri, who was coming off an



injury, was back in the starting lineup after coming off the bench in the last two matches. Teenager Lamine Yamal also started after being on the bench in the last four matches.

above Arsenal and it was then

over to City to see if it could

open up a three-point lead

going into the international

break. And when Rodri scored

with a deflected shot in the 86th,

it looked like Guardiola's team

Before the match, Barcelona women's team player Aitana Bonmatí presented the Ballon d'Or trophy she won last month to fans.

ATLETICO RECORD

Atletico fell behind when Villarreal striker Gerard Moreno scored in the 20th, but the hosts rallied with goals by Axel Witsel in first-half stoppage time. Griezmann in the 80th and Samuel Lino in the

It was the seventh goal in six matches for Griezmann who, along with Álvaro Morata, is leading an attack that has scored 29 goals in 12 league rout of Celtic at home in the group stage of the Champions League. It is unbeaten in 12 games in all competitions, with 10 wins and two draws. Atletico won all of its six games at home this season, plus the last nine from last season to set the new record at club Metropolitano stadium.

"It's always a plus to play in front of these fans," Griezmann

'They always give us an extra boost."

The team coached by Diego Simeone, who last week had his contract extended until 2027, has a game in hand as a home match against Sevilla in September was suspended because of bad weather.

It was the seventh league loss for 14th-place Villarreal, which had sports director Miguel Ángel Tena in charge after coach José Rojo Martín, known as "Pacheta," was fired last week.

Villarreal lost striker Alexander Sorloth because of an injury in the first half. The Norway international sustained what appeared to be a hamstring problem. SEVILLE DERBY

Ivan Rakitic scored in the 79th

minute to give Sevilla a 1-1 draw with rival Real Betis in the Seville derby. Ayoze Pérez had put the visitors

ahead in the 72nd. Sevilla, sitting in 13th place, had its winless streak in the league extended to six matches, with five draws in its last five games. Manuel Pellegrini's Betis, in seventh place, had won five in a row in all competitions, including two straight in the

Spanish league.

'We are stronger and more prepared for 2026 World Cup qualifiers'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Talismanic India striker Sunil Chhetri believes his team is "strong" and "more prepared" than previous occasions to make it to the next round of the FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifiers as the players have had good game time under their belts this year. The 39-year-old Chhetri will lead India into Round 2 of the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 Joint Qualification campaign when they take on Kuwait in the opening away tie on Thursday. The stalwart said the fine performances against international sides at home had given the team a more settled look.

"I think it is just the morale of the team, or what has happened in the last 6-8 months. A lot of boys have taken their places in the team. And that is why we are probably more pre-pared," Chhetri told AIFF on Monday

"Also, the World Cup qualifiers are happening at a time when a lot of us have a decent amount of game time under our belts. All these things do matter."

India will play matches against Kuwait, Qatar and Afghanistan, and the captain said his players might have good or bad outings but the team will not be taken aback by the playing styles of

their opponents. "We played Kuwait twice a few

months back, so we have better knowledge of them. We have played Qatar at least thrice in the last three years, which again helps. And we always know Afghanistan. We have played

them enough.
"So I think whenever we play these teams, we might play good or bad, but we will not be surprised by what we are playing against. Barring the away tie in Kuwait, we are aware of the atmosphere for the away matches against Afghanistan and Qatar," said Chhetri.

Chhetri also added that India will rely more on teamwork than individual flair to give a tough fight to their rivals.

'I think we are at the right stage. This team probably is a strong side. It's a team that has played together for some time. And a lot of youngsters are there. Yes, we look good.

"Our team has always relied on hard work, team spirit, and being together. A lot of other teams have individual flair and other things. Probably, we are not that team. And I've got no qualms in accepting that. So that is why I said we are more prepared. We have to turn up on the pitch and perform well," he

Chhetri, though, said that to translate home success on foreign soil, hard work and tweaks in method would be an absolute PTI KUMAMOTO (JAPAN) India's No. 1 shuttler H S

Prannoy will make his muchanticipated return from a back injury, while Lakshya Sen will look to find his rhythm in the Japan Masters Super 500 tournament beginning here on

Prannoy had pulled out of the Denmark and French Open due to a back injury that troubled him during his historic bronze medal-winning performance at the Asian Games in Hangzhou last month.

The 31-year-old, his back heavily taped, had secure India's first medal in men's singles in 41 years at the Hangzhou show-

Returning to action after four World the Championships bronze medallist will like to take it "slowly"

as he will be up against unseeded Lee Cheuk Yui of Hong

"I am just taking it a little slowly, not rushing up on the injury side," Prannoy had told PTI before leaving for Japan. 'I would say it is pretty better than how it was during the Asian Games. I have started

training also. 'We also have to do the workload correctly. That is the biggest challenge, which I face as a player in the next few years." If Prannoy overcomes his opponents in the first two rounds, his first big challenge could be against second-seeded Anthony Sinisuka Ginting of Indonesia in the quarterfinals.

The tournament will also offer opportunities to Sen and Kidambi Srikanth to earn ranking points as the Olympic qualification period has already



begun on May 1 and will run until April 28 next year. The world's top-16 during the

period will make the cut for While world No. 8 Prannoy

finds himself safely inside the Olympic qualification bracket, Sen (No. 17) and Srikanth (No. 23) will look to collect more ranking points to be in the safe zone before the Paris cut-off

The 2022 Commonwealth Games gold medallist Sen has slipped following his triumph in the Canada Open in July. He was eliminated in the first round of his last four tournaments, which included giving a walkover to his opponent at the Hong Kong Open Super 500. Sen would look to quickly get his act together as the Olympic qualification route is tough. He will be up against third seed and local favourite Kodai Naraoka. That Sen defeated the world No. 5 Japanese in

their last exchange at the

Indonesia Masters in January

may boost his sagging morale.

Alker holds on to win PGA Tour

Also, Srikanth will have to produce some good results to earn ranking points in the race for Olympic qualification.

Srikanth will begin his campaign against a qualifier. Priyanshu Rajawat is the fourth Indian in the fray in the men's singles and he is pitted against Lin Chun-Yi of Chinese Taipei. Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu is seeded eighth and is the only Indian in the fray in women's singles.

She will be up against unseeded Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark. Sindhu has a 6-1 record against the world No. 18 Danish shut-

India's ace doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have been given the top billing and will begin their campaign against Chinese-Taipei's Elu Ching Yao and Yang Po Han.

went too far and rolled down a

slight bank at the back. He chipped that to just inside 3 feet and holed the par putt to finish

"I made it exciting here on 18,"

Alker said, "but that wasn't the

Stricker, whose six victories this

year included three majors, had

to withdraw at the start of the

week because his father was hos

pitalized in Wisconsin. He still

at 18-under 266.

Israel loses to Kosovo in Euro 2024 qualifying game

AP ■ PRISTINA (KOSOVO)

srael's chances of reaching the European Championship finals went down after its 1-0 loss to Kosovo in their delayed qualifying game. It was the first soccer match for Israel since the

Oct. 7 attack by Hamas and the ongoing war in Gaza. It had originally been scheduled for Oct. 15 but was postponed. Kosovo fans whistled Israeli players when they had the ball but the game passed off peacefully in

Pristina on Sunday. Milot Rashica scored the only goal in the 41st minute. He controlled the ball in the area and under pressure managed a strong shot which Israel goalkeeper Omri Glazer couldn't stop. Glazer had a busy night, including denying Vedat

Murigi twice in the second half

Israel's first good opportunity came in the 34th with a close-range header from Eran Zahavi. Goalkeeper Arijanet Muric saved a shot from Israel's Oscar Gloukh nine minutes from the end. Israel went down to 10 men in the fifth minute of second-half stoppage time after Roy Revivo was sent off for a second yellow card. Fourth-place Kosovo has 10 points in Group I, one point behind third-place Israel.



which has played one game more, and four points behind Switzerland. The top two teams automatically qualify for Euro 2024 in Germany.

'We are more disappointed because we cannot give some happiness or (a) smile for our people at home," Israel coach Alon Hazan said after the

Champions finale, \$1 million payoff AP PHOENIX (US) Steven Alker had to get up-and-down for par on the last

three holes for a 1-under 70 that allowed him to hang on and win the Charles Schwab Cup Championship and a payoff of just over \$1 million.

Alker won the Schwab Cup a year ago. This time he did the next best thing.

Steve Stricker clinched the season points list before the postseason began. By winning at Phoenix Country Club on Sunday, Alker finished second in the Schwab Cup for a \$500,000 bonus. The 52-year-old from New Zealande won \$528,000 for the tournament, his seventh title on the PGA Tour Champions.

Alker, who started the final round with a four-shot lead, made it a lot harder than he needed.

time by laying up, and all he Els, who opened with five birdies needed was a par. But then his wedge to the 18th in eight holes to get in the mix,



was one shot behind on the par-5 18th when his 5-iron leaked just enough to the right to bounce off the side of the hill and into the water. He had to scramble for a par and a 65. Ames, a four-time winner this year, birdied the 18th for a 65.

They were still one shot behind Alker, who missed the green on the 16th and 17th and managed to save par. Going to the par-5 closing hole, he chose to lay up from what otherwise would have been a 5-iron. He figured he could make birdie 75% of the

claimed the \$1 million bonus with a year so dominant he didn't play a single Schwab Cup playoff event. Alker won in late April but then

didn't win again until the last tournament of the year. "It's another win," Alker said. 'To beat these guys ... It's hard

to win out here Els finished third in the Schwab

Cup and earned a \$300,000 bonus, followed by Padraig Harrington in fourth (\$200,000) and Bernhard Langer getting \$100,000 for finishing fifth.



ICC MEN'S

CRICKET WORLDCUP INDIA 2023

INDIA WILL BE NERVOUS FACING NZ IN SEMIFINAL, SAYS TAYLOR

ndia will be nervous facing New Zealand in the World Cup, reckons Ross Taylor, drawing parallels from the campaigns of both teams in the 2019 edition.

New Zealand had stopped India's dominant run four years ago when they beat the Virat Kohli-led side in the rain-hit semifinal at Manchester.

Like 2019, India go into the semifinals as table toppers. New Zealand, who started the tournament well, finished fourth in the league stage with five wins in nine games.

"As New Zealand prepare to take on India in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 semifinals, it is impossible not to look back at the parallels with 2019," Taylor, who was part of that semifinal in Manchester, told ICC. "Four years ago, India went into the semi-final as the form side in the tournament, while we were more focused on ensuring our net run-rate would keep Pakistan out of reach for the final spot in the top four.

"This time around, India are even bigger favourites, at home and having played so well during the group stage. But when we have nothing to lose, New Zealand teams can be danger

"If there is a team that India will be nervous facing, it will be this New Zealand side," said the one of the most prolific batters from New Zealand

However, New Zealand's task will be herculean.

"We're up against it, of course, but that was also the case in 2019. That was a two-day oneday game! (due to rain). It was



a strange situation for me, I was not out overnight. That is nervewracking enough in Test cricket, let alone a one-dayer and a World Cup semi-final," he recalled. The game will be played at the Wankhede Stadium, usu-

ally a high-scoring venue. Taylor said if New Zealand can strike early, it will put tremendous pressure on the Indian middle-order.

The toss is important but if New Zealand can start well with bat and ball, that will give them a lot of confidence to stay in the fight.

The first ten overs in both innings are crucial. When India are batting, you want to get them two or three down in the first ten overs to put them under pressure. They rely heavily on an excellent top three.

'There is Shubman Gill, the number one player in the world, and then Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. We need to try to make inroads and put the middle order under pressure.

"Then when India are bowling, it is similar. You want to score runs but it is also vital we keep wickets in hand against weapons like Jasprit Bu Mohammed Siraj Bumrah, and Mohammed Shami.

"When they get on a roll, they can be a lethal force, and the spinners can really pile on the pressure. If you keep wickets in have expected it to be Rachin but I have been really impressed, not hand, that is when it becomes a bit easier, rather than having to only by the runs he has scored but also the way he has gone chase the game," said Taylor. Rachin Ravindra has been the about it, his tempo and calmstand out batter for New

Zealand, amassing 565 runs in

his first World Cup including

three hundreds. He holds key for

"It will be a big day for Rachin

Ravindra. When you have a guy

who is named after a combina-

tion of Rahul Dravid and Sachin

Tendulkar, it is special to play

India in India in a World Cup

"We needed someone to score

heavily in the tournament. I am

semi-final.

New Zealand, said Taylor.

"He is just going out there and batting like he did as a little kid. He has not put any pressure on himself and I hope he continues to do that. He has a big part to play in the semi-final and in the future for New Zealand.

"It is funny to think that if Michael Bracewell had made it to the World Cup, Rachin probably would not have made it. Luck has probably played a part, but we all need that," he



We will lean on experience of senior players to tackle India's threat, says Conway

PTI ■ MUMBAI

New Zealand will lean on the experience of senior players to tackle the "threat" posed by a rampant India in the World Cup semifinal here on Wednesday, says opening batter Devon

New Zealand, who finished fourth in the points table after the 45-match league round, have a dominant record against India in the knockout stage of ICC events.

The Blackcaps beat them in the semifinal clash of the 2019 edition and in the final of the World Test Championship in 2021.

'We all know how good India are. They are carrying a lot of momentum (and) they have a strong squad," Conway shared his thoughts in a video shared by New Zealand Cricket (NZC).

"But we are looking forward to that challenge. It is exciting for us to play against the host nation in the semifinal. We know they are going to be a threat, but we are looking forward to that challenge," he added.

'We can acknowledge this is another special occasion for us. We are fortunate enough to have a lot of experience in our camp - guys who have been in these situations before. We can lean on those guys and it is very exciting as I can say," the opening batter added.

New Zealand have lost four out of their last five games but the Kiwis are focused on making it to the final.

"It is one of our goals to be in the World Cup final. It is nice to be one step closer to that goal, everyone is very excited. We've been playing some good cricket. For us, it's about continuing to do what we do. The rest will take care of itself," he added. Conway's form will be in focus

since the left-handed batter is yet to make a fifty following his fireworks in the opening game where he scored an unbeaten 152 against England.

He said, "It has been very exciting. With it being my first ODI World Cup, there have been quite a lot of challenges in a different format. I have certainly thoroughly enjoyed my time here with the guys. We have played some really good cricket. It is exciting to be in this position."

The young Rachin Ravindra is No 3 in the list of highest rungetters in the World Cup with 565 runs in nine matches at 70.62 including three centuries and two fifties

Tucker, Illingworth to officiate in India-NZ semifinal



Rod Tucker and Richard Illingworth will be the on-field umpires in the first World Cup semifinal between India and New Zealand while Nitin Menon and Richard Kettleborough will officiate in the second lastfour stage match between Australia and South Africa. The first semifinal will be played in Mumbai on November 15 and second in Kolkata on

November 16. Illingworth was also an onfield umpire in the 2019 World Cup semifinal between India and New Zealand which the Kiwis won by 18 runs in a weather-affected match spread over two davs at Old Trafford, while Tucker was the third umpire.

Tucker will stand in his 100th

ODI during the India vs New Zealand clash. Tucker, who stood in his first ODI in January 2009, is set to be joined for his landmark match by third umpire Joel Wilson, fourth umpire Adrian Holdstock and match referee Andy Pycroft. Kettleborough has also reached a century of ODIs during this World Cup and will add to his tally when he oversees the second semi-final between

Kolkata. Kettleborough's milestone arrived when the Netherlands played Sri Lanka on October 21. and this will be the third consecutive World Cup in which he would have overseen a semi-

Australia and South Africa in

PTI MUMBAI

 $F^{\text{ormer India cricketer Gau-}}_{\text{tam Gambhir is in awe of}}$ Rohit Sharma's captaincy qualities, saying that a good leader is judged by the amount of security he provides his teammates, and the right-hander has done that over the years

Rohit has led Mumbai Indians to a record five IPL titles. Under his captaincy MI also won the now-defunct Champions League Twenty20 competition in 2013. Rohit has been phenomenal with the bat and leadership

Gambhir lauds Rohit's captaincy

as India remained unbeaten in the league stage, winning nine matches on the trot to storm into the semifinal, where they will play New Zealand on Wednes-

There is nothing which has changed from 2019 to 2023. There were so many changes that happened in 2019 as compared to the least amount of changes that has happened in 2023," Gambhir told Star Sports. cantain and lead



you security, which makes the dressing room secure, not only for himself but for the other 14 players as well. And Rohit Sharma has done that.

'That's why he has won five IPL trophies. That's where his winning ratio when he started playing all those international games has been fabulous. If you go by the stats and the trophies, he ticks all the boxes. But the most important thing is he has made dressing room." Former Australia skipper Aaron Finch likes Rohit's aggressive

The thought process behind Rohit is he's trying to get the team off to a quick start. You see, the wicket tends to get slower as the tournament has gone on. So, that initial powerplay to put pressure on the opposition is really crucial.

approach in the powerplay.

"I think what that's done is it's changed the bowler's mindset before the game has even started, knowing that Rohit is going to come really hard at them," he

Sehwag, Edulji, Aravinda de Silva in ICC Hall of Fame

 $F^{ormer\ captain\ Diana\ Edulji}_{on\ Monday\ became\ the\ first}$ Indian woman cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, joining World Cup-winning Indian and Sri Lankan duo of Virender Sehwag and Aravinda de Silva.

The trio were the latest recipients of the prestigious honour for their stellar achievements during their playing career.

A trailblazer in women's cricket, Edulji made just as big an impact on the field during her playing days when captain of Îndia as she did as an administrator after her playing career.

"It indeed is a great honour to be the first Indian Women Cricketer to be inducted and join a galaxy of cricketers, male and female from across the world," the 67-year-old said in an ICC release.

She played 54 matches for India across three decades (between 1976 and 1993) and made her mark as a slow left-arm orthodox spinner taking more than 100 wickets.

Edulji played 20 Tests, scoring 404 runs, and taking 63 wickets at an average of 25.77. From 34 ODIs, she scored 211

runs, and bagged 46 wickets at an average of 16.84.

But, it is perhaps off the field that Edulji has had an even greater impact, having played a major role as a trailblazer for India's women's cricketers for many decades.

In her role as administrator with Western Railways, Edulji worked hard to increase employment opportunities for talented

Western and Indian Railways. One of the most destructive batters of the modern era, Sehwag donned India colours between 1999 and 2013. Sehwag scored a total of 23 Test

centuries during his illustrious career - the fifth most by an India men's player. His highest score of 319 against

South Africa in Chennai in 2008 the best of any Indian player ever. He accumulated 8,586 runs

from 104 Tests at an average of 49.34. He also took 40 wickets during his Test career which spanned from 2001-2013. But it wasn't just against the redball that Sehwag thrived, with

the dynamic right-hander just as effective against the white-ball with an equally imposing record at ODI level. The batter from Delhi, now 45, totalled 8,273 runs for India in

50-over cricket at an average of 35.05 and his 219 against the West Indies in Indore in 2011 remains the third-highest score achieved by a male cricketer in ODI.

He also has 96 wickets in his kitty from the 251 ODIs he played between 1999 and 2013. Sehwag also played a pivotal role in helping India claim their second World Cup title in 2011, with his 380 runs for the tournament, the seventh-best for any player during the tournament. In the 19 T20 Internationals he played, Sehwag scored 394 runs at an average of 21.88.

"I would like to thank the ICC and the jury for inducting me with this honour," Sehwag said. "I feel extremely grateful for having spent a great part of my life doing what I loved most, 'hitting the cricket ball," he said.

Cricket in Olympic: Sports bodies to talk with IOC

Babar arrives in Lahore, to meet PCB chief this week

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam arrived in Lahore on Monday following the failed World Cup campaign, with the word going around that he will not voluntarily step down and wait for the the Pakistan Cricket Board to take a call. Babar, who was received by his

family members at the Lahore International Airport, looked downcast as he came out of the building surrounded by security personnel. The insider word is that Babar will meet PCB chief Zaka Ashraf

his all-format captaincy after the meeting. Pakistan, the 1992 champions, failed to make it to the semifinals after an unimpressive run where they lost five of the nine

this week and will take a call on

league matches. Babar was first made the whiteball captain in late 2019 and, in 2021, he also took over as the Test skipper. He has led Pakistan in two Asia Cups, two T20 World Cups and the ongoing ODI World Cup without winning any title.

The team's dismal performance in India has divided the cricket fraternity in the country on whether Babar should be retained as captain or other options should be considered. Prominent among those supporting him are PCB's former chairman, Ramiz Raja, and former all-rounder Shahid Afridi, who had initially said pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi was ready



Even as the debate rages on social media and various other platforms on whether Babar should be replaced or not, PCB chief Zaka Ashraf has said that he will consult some former

players in the coming days before deciding the future course of action. Pakistan have two tough tours coming up against Australia and New Zealand in December-

January. Pakistan batter Shan Masood, wicketkeeper-batter Sarfaraz Ahmed and Shaheen Shah Afridi are being seen as possible

captaincy candidates. With the team scheduled to leave for Australia in early December, the PCB has two weeks to decide on the future line of action.

Olympic sports bodies want urgent talks with the IOC about the risk of cuts in their revenue shares and medal events at the 2028 Los Angeles Games because cricket and other newcomers were added to the program. The International Olympic

Committee last month approved cricket, baseball/softball, flag football, lacrosse and squash for 2028. It kept boxing, modern pentathlon and weightlifting - three sports whose status had been in doubt. The umbrella group of current Summer Games sports, known by the acronym ASOIF, said Monday that the decision to increase to a record 36 sports "has raised several questions" among its members, who collectively shared USD 540 million of IOC-allocated money at each of the past two Olympics.

Most Olympic sports got

between USD 13 million and USD 17.3 million from the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Games in 2021. For some, that was about half their total income over four years.

Adding four team sports in 2028 is also set to break the IOC's preferred limit of 10,500 athletes at a Summer Games and likely will put pressure on the core Olympic sports to cut their quotas of athletes or even medal events. The IOC has set a target of early 2025 to confirm final

ASOIF's ruling council agreed Monday "to raise these urgent matters with the IOC leadership" after meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The council includes the presidents of World Athletics, the International Gymnastics Federation and World Aquatics - the top-tier Olympic sports. Track and field got USD 38.5 million after the Tokyo Games, while gymnastics and swimming each got about USD 31.4 million of the IOC's total revenue from broadcasters and

broadcast deal in India by at least USD 100 million. Key issues for Olympic sports as the games keep expanding are "revenue share, athlete quotas,

sponsors of USD 7.6 billion from 2017-21. Adding cricket is

expected to raise the IOC's

Olympic qualification systems and games optimization," ASOIF president Francesco Ricci Bitti said. Optimization is the current Olympic buzzword for trimming costs and services to help organizers control spending. These are the issues that huge-

ly impact (international federation) operations and have farreaching effects on the entire Olympic Movement," Ricci Bitti said in a statement.

The IOC did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the ASOIF request. The Olympic body is set to confirm revenue-sharing funds from the 2024 Paris Olympics after the event.

Australian third division club cricketer takes six wickets in six balls

PTI ■ GOLD COAST

areth Morgan, a third divi-Gsion club cricketer from Australia, has pulled off a rare feat of taking six wickets in six balls to help his side win a local match here.

Morgan, captain of Mudgeeraba Nerang & Districts Cricket Club, claimed a sextuple-wicket maiden in a dramatic four-run win

over Surfers Paradise CC in the Gold Coast's Premier League Division 3 competition here on Saturday.

Surfers Paradise were chasing 178 and were 174 for 4, heading into the last over of the 40-over match.

But Morgan turned the match on its head as he got a wicket from each off his six deliveries to bowl out Surfers Paradise for

174. Five batsmen were out for

golden ducks. The first four dismissals were all caught, while the final two were bowled, according to abc.Net.Au Morgan, a local council worker, ended with figures of 7/16 off seven overs. He had earlier taken the wicket of Surfers Paradise opener Jake Garland before his 'six-in-six' feat. Morgan had also top-scored

for Mudgeeraba with a rapid 39. According to ABC, the most wickets taken in an over of professional cricket is five, claimed by New Zealand's Neil Wagner for Otago against Wellington in 2011, Bangladeshi Al-Amin Hossain for the UCB-BCB XI against Abhani Limited in 2013 and India's Abhimanyu Mithun for Karnataka against Haryana in 2019.

female cricketers in India, and helped shape the sports policy of

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