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# Free grain to poor for five more years

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet, on Wednesday, decided to extend the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to provide 5 kilograms of free food grains per month to 81.35 crore poor people for another five years, which would cost the exchequer ₹11.80 lakh crore. The Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also approved the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan, which focuses on 11 critical interventions for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Additionally, the Cabinet approved a central scheme to provide drones to 15,000 progressive women Self Help Groups (SHGs) with an outlay of ₹1,261 crore for two years beginning in 2024-25. The Cabinet also cleared the Terms of Reference of the 16th Finance Commission to suggest the ratio for the devolution of taxes between the Centre and States. Additionally, it will review financing for disaster management initiatives for five years beginning April 1, 2026. Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told the media, "Keeping in view the welfare of the beneficiaries and to strengthen food security in terms of accessibility, afford-



ability, and availability of food grains for the targeted population, and to maintain uniformity across the States, the decision has been taken to continue providing food grains free of cost under the PMGKAY for five years." The scheme was last extended until December 31, 2023. The PMGKAY was introduced in 2020 as a pandemic relief measure, providing 5 kg of free food grains per beneficiary per month, in addition to the 5 kg of subsidised food grain under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). In December 2022, as the PMGKAY came to an end after multiple extensions, it was subsumed under the NFSA, providing ration for free for one year. Under the NFSA, two categories are covering up to 75 per cent of the rural population and 50 per cent of the urban population — Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and priority households. AAY households, comprising the poorest of the poor, are entitled to receive 35

kg of food grains per family per month, while priority households receive 5 kg per person per month. Termed as a historic decision, the Government has stated that the extension of free grain distribution under the PMGKAY for the next five years reflects the long-term commitment and vision of the government in addressing national food and nutrition security. This move is expected to help mitigate any financial hardship faced by the affected strata of society in a sustainable manner and ensure a long-term pricing strategy with zero cost to the beneficiaries. This, according to a statement, is vital for the effective penetration of the Public Distribution System. For example, the economic cost of 35 kg of rice for an Antyodaya family is ₹1,371, while the cost of 35 kg of wheat is ₹946. These costs are being borne by the Central Government. As a result, the monthly savings of ration cardholders are significant due to the provision of free food grains, it added. Free grains will be distributed through a network of over 5 lakh fair price shops under a common logo. Beneficiaries can obtain their entitled grains from any fair price shop in the country under the One Nation One Ration Card initiative.

# Global applause for Uttarkashi Rescuers Rat hole miners make India proud

PTI ■ LONDON

Human labour triumphing over machinery. This is how the world media described the climax of an incredible and perilous weeks-long rescue operation for 41 construction workers trapped in a collapsed mountain tunnel in Uttarakhand. As rescuers in India on Tuesday evening successfully pulled out all the workers after their 17-day ordeal, the global media provided live coverage of the dramatic rescue operations. "In the end it was a triumph of human labour over machinery as the specialist rat-hole mining experts managed to manually break through the final 12 metres of rubble, using only hand drills and pulleys," The Guardian newspaper wrote. The workers were pulled out through an escape pipe after the last stretch of rubble had been manually drilled by a specialist team of "rat-hole mining" experts who had been flown in to help after the mechanical drill broke down. The dramatic scenes of the first men emerging on stretchers from the entrance of the Silkyara-Barkot tunnel came after more than 400 hours, during which the rescue operation hit multiple obstacles, delays and false promises of imminent rescue, the British newspaper said in a detailed report. "Outside the tunnel, there have been celebrations at the news of the first man coming out of the



(L-R, top row) The 12-member team of 'rat-hole' miners from Rockwell Enterprises Wakeel Hassan (leader), Monu Kumar, Feroze Qureshi, Nasir Khan, Jatin, Devender Kumar, (L-R, bottom row) Munna Qureshi, Irshad Ansari, Rashid Ansari, Naseem Malik, Ankur and Saurabh who successfully rescued the 41 trapped workers from the under-construction Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel in Uttarkashi on Tuesday

PTI

tunnel," the BBC reported while providing regular updates on the rescue operation. They were freed after a mammoth rescue operation that overcame many obstacles, it said. "This happy conclusion came after a day filled with anticipation, as authorities announced that there had been a breakthrough in the rescue operations," the British public broadcaster said. Military engineers and miners drill 'rat hole' through debris to complete a painstaking extrac-

tion mission, said London-based daily 'The Telegraph' in its lead story. A portion of the tunnel collapsed on November 12, blocking the exit for the workers who were inside. Food, medicines and other essentials were sent to them through a six-inch pipe pushed through the rubble of the collapsed portion. So-called rat miners were brought in on Monday to drill through the rocks, gravel and metal obstacles by hand from inside a narrow evacuation pipe that pushed through the

debris after machinery failed, France 24 reported. The New York Times in its report said initial drilling efforts were hampered by additional falling debris. And by Day 13, the rescue effort appeared in disarray as an American-made auger machine broke down with less than 20 metres to go in the drilling. As workers tried to extricate it, officials initiated backup plans, including one in which workers began drilling vertically from the mountain-top. New machines were flown in

from different parts of the country. But, in the end, the rescue effort — which also involved international tunnelling experts — found success in manual drilling by "rat hole miners" in the final stretch of the path that had been mostly cleared by the auger machine. The rescue operation faced hiccups even in its final hours, threatening to derail the growing confidence of family members who waited in anticipation of their relatives being pulled to safety, it said.

## SC upholds Centre call on Delhi CS tenure extension

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a major setback to the AAP Government, the Supreme Court on Wednesday permitted the Centre to extend the tenure of Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, a day before he was set to demit office on November 30, for six months, holding that the Union Government's decision did not violate law or the Constitution. A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra held, prima facie, the Centre has the power to appoint and extend the tenure of the Chief Secretary of the national capital territory of Delhi as the officer deals with the entire administration including police, public order and land, which fall beyond the legislative and executive powers of the Delhi Government. "We come to the conclusion that at this stage, bearing in mind the provisions of the judgment of this court in Constitution Bench 2 (2023 judgment on Centre-Delhi government services row) and the subsequent developments which have taken place resulting in the enactment of the amendment to the GNCTD Act 1991, the decision of the Union Government to extend the services of the incumbent



chief secretary for a period of six months cannot be construed to be violative of law or the constitutional distribution of powers between the Union and the government of the GNCTD," the bench said. The bid to extend the tenure of the present chief secretary is the latest bone of contention between the Arvind Kejriwal Government and Lieutenant Governor (LG) V K Saxena, who have been involved in a series of run-ins over various issues. Significantly, the current chief secretary, whose tenure will now be extended, is reportedly not on good terms with the Delhi Government owing to allegations against his son in a case related to acquisition of 19 acres by the National Highways Authority of India in 2018 for construction of the Dwarka Expressway. "It will be farfetched to postulate that the central government is divested of the power to appoint the chief secretary. We clarify that this is on the basis of a prima facie evaluation," the bench said.

## India to probe plot to kill Khalistani terrorist in US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday said it has constituted a high-level enquiry committee to probe allegations relating to a conspiracy to kill Sikh extremist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun on the US soil. Announcing this here, the External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India will take necessary follow-up action based on the findings of the committee. The Financial Times, citing unnamed sources, last week reported that US authorities thwarted a plot to assassinate Gurbatwant Singh Pannun, and issued a warning to the Indian Government over concerns it was involved in the plot. Bagchi said India constituted a high-level inquiry committee on November 18 to look into all the relevant aspects of the matter. Pannun, a Sikh extremist and known to be an American and Canadian citizen, is wanted by Indian probe agencies on various terror charges. "We have already said during the course of discussions with the US on bilateral security cooperation, the US side shared some inputs pertaining to nexus between organised criminals, gun runners, terrorists and oth-

ers," Bagchi said. "We had also indicated that India takes such inputs seriously since they impinge on our national security interests as well, and relevant departments were already examining the issue," he said. The Financial Times report came weeks after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made allegations of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in a Vancouver suburb in June. Following the report, Bagchi on November 22 said the US side shared some inputs pertaining to nexus between organised criminals, gun runners, terrorists and others. He said the inputs are a "cause of concern" for both countries and they decided to take necessary follow up action. The media report about the alleged plot to kill Pannun came about two months after Trudeau alleged in September that there was a potential link between Indian Government agents and the killing of another Khalistani leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was gunned down in the parking lot of a gurdwara in the town of Surrey in June. India strongly denied the charges, describing them as absurd.

## Midair marital feud diverts flight to Delhi

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A fight between a man and his wife midair compelled a Munich-Bangkok bound Lufthansa flight (LH772), which took off from Munich, to make an unscheduled landing at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport on Wednesday morning. Subsequently, the couple was de-boarded. According to sources, a German man and his Thai wife started fighting midair during the flight from Munich to Bangkok. Lufthansa first requested permission to land in Pakistan. When this was denied, the airline made an emergency stop in Delhi because of the unruly passengers. This is one of the very rare conditions where an interna-



tional flight had to be diverted not owing to some medical emergency or safety purpose but for a fight between a man and his wife that went too far. Sources said the wife had first complained about her husband's behaviour to the pilot, saying she was being "threatened" by him and sought intervention. Sources said the 53-year German passenger allegedly

"threw food, tried to burn a blanket using a lighter, shouted at his wife and did not follow the instructions issued by the crew" and hence the pilot diverted the flight. The man was later deboarded by Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel at IGI. The wife was travelling on a different PNR ticket and she desired to continue her journey to Bangkok, they said. The airline, as per the sources, is also coordinating with the German Embassy. "The man of German nationality was offloaded at Delhi and handed over to airport security. He has since apologised," they added. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is now mulling whether to consider the apology and allow the man to return to Germany, or hand

him over to law enforcement agencies in India. "The reason for the fight between husband and wife is not known, but the flight had to be diverted due to the fight between husband and wife," sources said. Lufthansa, in a statement, said the flight was diverted to Delhi due to an unruly passenger on board. A similar incident had taken place on October 6 aboard an Air India flight. A man was arrested for allegedly using abusive language and passing lewd comments towards the crew members, the Delhi Police had confirmed. A crew member working in the economy class cabin said that the accused started passing lewd comments and abusing others.

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

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



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# It rains in Bhopal, similar weather to prevail in Dec first week

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Heavy rainfall was witnessed in the evening on Wednesday in the state capital, another western disturbance would reach North India on November 30 due to this effect with the start of December month rainfall would occur in the state. Rainfall started once again in Bhopal on Wednesday evening. Earlier in the morning fog was witnessed and which remained till 11 in the morning. It was cloudy in the afternoon. It started raining in the evening. The day temperature in the capital reached 20.2 degrees. Usually the day temperature dips to this level in December-January, but this time the temperature fell in the last week of November itself and in the past 13 years it was the coldest November. However, due

to humidity the night temperature has not dropped much. The weather remained abrupt in Madhya Pradesh for the fourth consecutive day on Wednesday. In the morning there was dense fog in many districts including Indore, Bhopal, Sagar, Gwalior, Jabalpur. Visibility was also low. Rain started in Bhopal after 5 pm. Light rain also occurred in Umaria and Malajkhand of Balaghat district. It remained cloudy throughout the day in most cities. There was a dense fog in the capital on Tuesday morning. Visibility 1200 meters from 5:30 to 9:30 in the morning. It was done. The day temperature was recorded at 25.7 degree celsius. It increased by 4.8 degree celsius as compared to Monday. Despite this it remained 2 degree celsius less than normal. The increasing fog in North

India has started affecting traffic. Indigo's Delhi-Bhopal, Udaipur-Bhopal, Prayagraj-Bhopal flights arrived in Bhopal late by three and a quarter hours, while the Raipur-Bhopal flight arrived late by an hour. Railways also started Kalka-Sai Nagar Shirdi Express. Canceled till 2nd December. Cold conditions have increased in many states, snowfall possible in Kashmir. It has rained in Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, UP and Maharashtra, due to which the cold has increased. Hail fell in some areas of eastern Rajasthan. There is a possibility of snowfall in Jammu-Kashmir and Uttarakhand for the next three days. Indore was the coldest city in the state on Wednesday. The day temperature here reached 22.3 degrees Celsius. There was a drop of 1.7 degree celsius in a

single day. There was a difference of 5.9 degree between day and night temperature in Indore. The temperature here was recorded at 16.4 degree celsius at night. The mercury was recorded at 22.9 degree celsius in Shajapur. There was a drop of 2 degree celsius in Bhopal and the temperature reached 23.7 degree celsius. The temperature was 23 degree celsius in Ujjain, 23.8 degree celsius in Dhar, 23.6 degree celsius in Raissen, 23.2 degree celsius in Ratlam. Senior meteorologist said that a new western disturbance will be active in the state from tonight. Due to this, the rainy season is expected to start again. It will rain the most in the Indore-Ujjain division. On November 30, rain with lightning is expected in other districts including Dewas, Sehore, Shajapur, Dhar, Indore, Ujjain,

Rajgarh, Bhopal. The weather will remain changed in the state on December 1 also. The Meteorological Department has issued an alert of light to moderate rain in 12 districts including Bhopal, Jabalpur, Chhindwara in the next few hours. According to the Meteorological Department, light rain may occur at isolated places in Chhindwara, Narsinghpur, Bhopal, Bhimbetka of Raissen and Sanchi, Vidisha, North Betul, Sehore, Sagar, Damoh, Jabalpur, Umaria and Balaghat. Moderate rain with lightning is likely to continue in Pachmarhi in Narmadapuram district. Meteorologists said that there is a possibility of lightning during the activity of the system, hence an advisory has been issued. People should not stand under trees during thunderstorms.



Author and philanthropist Padma Bhushan Sudha Murty visits the State Tribal Museum in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

## 12 kg silver idol of Lord Parshvanath stolen

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 12 kg silver idol of Lord Parshvanath was stolen from the Digambar Jain temple of Sukhi Sevaniya in Bhopal, in the night of Tuesday thieves entered the temple by breaking 5 locks. They also took away 50 silver crowns (Chhatrs) and a box full of silver idols. The Ashtadhatu idol of Lord Adinath was also stolen. The total value of the stolen goods is around Rs 16 lakh. Digambar Jain Temple is in Ahimsa Sthali Colony of Sukhi Sewania. This colony is close to the railway station. On Wednesday morning, the police and FSL team went to the temple and investigated. The thieves have been revealed in the CCTV footage. Police have registered an FIR on the com-

plaint of temple general secretary Mukesh Jain. This is the second incident of theft in Digambar Jain temple in Bhopal in 3 days. Earlier on Sunday night, miscreants had stolen the idol of Lord Parshvanath by breaking the lock of the sanctum sanctorum of Panch Balayati Digambar Jain temple in Neelbad. This idol of Ashtadhatu is about 7 inches high and weighs 8 kg. Mukesh Jain told that the campus of Ahimsa Sthali Colony is completely covered. The thieves cut the mesh on the boundary wall after this, 5 locks on the main gate of the temple were broken. CCTV footage showed that they entered the temple at 2.28 am. A silver idol weighing 12 kg, an Ashtadhatu idol of Lord Adinath, 50 silver umbrellas and 8 auras

were stolen. Also took a locker. Many silver idols were kept in it. The thieves also tried to break away the safe full of cash. After failing, they came out of the temple at 2.44 am and ran away. Three thieves had entered the temple while two of their accomplices are believed to be standing outside to keep watch. Police also suspect that an outside gang may be involved in the incident. At present the construction work of the temple is going on, hence the deity was consecrated in a nearby room for the darshan of the devotees. Police estimate that there were more than one miscreants and they had come by car. This is because in the CCTV footage, a car is seen stopping at a short distance from the temple at night.

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Jagran Lakecity University held its Eighth Convocation ceremony on Wednesday at their campus in Bhopal. The ceremony included the conferment of an Honorary Doctorate upon Padma Bhushan and Padma Shree, Sudha Murty, Author, Philanthropist, Chairperson Murty Trust and upon Padma Shree Piyush Pandey, Chairman of Global Creative & Executive Chairman, Ogilvy India and iconic global creative leader. The University awarded 612 UG and PG degrees and 10 PhD degrees while students' outstanding efforts and exceptional achievements were recognized with 9 Gold Medals and 26 Rank Certificates.



Sudha Murty during her keynote address said, today I call on you, Class of 2023, to use this opportunity to embark on a glorious phase of your professional journey. I call on you to serve. It doesn't matter how you serve - what matters is that you choose to serve. When you serve, you start to view

every problem as an opportunity. When you serve, you connect with the world. Piyush Pandey in his address said when you receive your degrees, you won't just be getting a piece of paper with your name on it; you will have earned membership within a pantheon of graduates who've

used what they've learned to make the world a better place. He appreciated the role played by Jagran Lakecity University in bringing about a qualitative change in media education in central India. Hari Mohan Gupta, Chancellor, JLU speaking on the occasion said "Convocation is a very special time for our students and their families. It is the culmination of all their hard work and dedication throughout years of study and marks a powerful milestone. These ceremonies, and especially the honoured guests were conferred with Honorary Doctorate and showered their blessings, reflect the best of our vision, commitment and excellence that distinguish our graduates as alumni of Jagran Lakecity University."

## Engg student ends life

**Bhopal:** A 19-year-old second year engineering student of private college committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at his house in IBT colony in Bilkharia. Anurag Suryavanshi was student of second year B.Tech from LNCT College, Raissen Road who committed suicide by hanging on Tuesday evening. The father has blamed a relative for his son's suicide. The relative has also implicated the student in a false case. He used to threaten to implicate the deceased in other cases also. Police have not found any suicide note from the spot. Sahdev Suryavanshi, father of the deceased, said that son Anurag Suryavanshi was his younger son. Both the sons live in a rented room in IBT Colony of Bilkharia. Elder son Abhishek is studying MCA from Suryavanshi Oriental College. The younger son was studying B.Tech second year from LNCT College.

Our relative Nikhil alias Karan keeps troubling us regarding this. Makes efforts to stop the construction work of the house. We had many disputes with him regarding this matter. He has connections with many influential people. Both sons Anurag and Abhishek had come home on Diwali. Here Nikhil misbehaved with his elder son Abhishek one day. When he protested, they beat him and even tore his clothes. After this we reached the local police station. The police kept us sitting there for about three hours. After this the action was started. A case of assault was registered against Nikhil. Earlier, pressure was being put on us to withdraw, when we did not agree then FIR was registered. Later it came to light that a case has been registered against us under the same sections under which the police have registered a case on our complaint. The accused used his influence to file a counter case.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer Anupam Rajan inspects the site where counting of votes will take place for state assembly elections on Dec 3, in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

## Cricket commentator Sushil Doshi interacts with SBI staff

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Padmashree Sushil Doshi, a prominent figure in Hindi cricket commentary renowned for his unique style that has captivated millions of cricket enthusiasts across the country for decades. Doshi in a special interaction with the staff members of the State Bank of India's Local Head Office in Bhopal. During interaction, Binod Kumar Mishra, the Deputy Managing Director of SBI Bhopal Circle, praised Doshi for his remarkable work in bringing the nuances and excitement of cricket to millions of Indians through the language closest to their hearts. Mishra appreciated the quality of Doshi's magical voice and applauded his significant efforts. Doshi, with his enchanting voice, mesmerized the Bank employees even today. In his address, he emphasized the importance of dreaming with open eyes for the bank employees. He shared life experiences of famous players like Virat Kohli, Sunil Gavaskar, Chetan Chauhan, and Kapil Dev, highlighting the stories of their struggles



and underlining the three keys to success: commitment, unity and dedication. Furthermore, Doshi discussed how to build a team and develop leadership skills by drawing inspiration from the lives of renowned players, sports managers, and captains. The event witnessed the presence of senior officials from the State Bank, including Neeraj Prasad, Kundan Jyoti, Ajitabh Parashar, Deputy General Managers & Circle Development Officers Deepak Kumar Jha, among others. Doshi, akin to the 'Sanjay of Mahabharata,' with his 'honest voice,' left a profound impact on all listeners, effectively conveying the intricacies of the country's most beloved sport to the masses.

## Hearing, speech impaired girl raped in govt hostel of Damoh

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

An eight-year-old child with hearing and speech challenges was raped allegedly by the watchman of a government girl's hostel, where she was living, in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh district. The incident took place on Tuesday at the facility for girls with hearing and speech challenges, they said. City Superintendent of Police Abhishek Tiwari said that the accused, identified as Om Prakash Tiwari, had been working as the watchman of the hostel for the past five years. He was arrested after the alleged crime came to light, said the police official. A case has been registered against the accused under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act for rape. Further investigation is underway, he added.

## Female security guard of JP hospital terminated after harassment at work

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Female security guard of JP Hospital was terminated after she refused advances by the accused who works as supervisor; Habibganj police have not taken her case while the Civil Surgeon has not heard the complaint. A case of misbehavior with a female security guard of JP Hospital and her expulsion from the job for not obeying the demands of the accused has come to light. The incident is a month old. The victim has been contacting the authorities for a month, but no action has been taken. The allegations have been leveled against Shailendra Tiwari, supervisor of the company handling the security of JP Hospital. The victim told that she has been working as a guard in a security agency for about six years. Last month, when the company changed, new supervisor Shailendra Tiwari joined in. On October 31 he asked me to go for tea and when I did not go with them despite repeated requests, I was

**The victim has been contacting the authorities for a month, but no action has been taken**

fired from the job. I had also gone to the police outpost and Habibganj police station but no action was taken. A written complaint was made to the Civil Surgeon on November 8 and have contacted them several times but no action has been taken. The investigation of the case is ongoing. The victim said, I had received a call from the hospital on Tuesday. When I reached, Shailendra said that he will hire me back, but the complaint has to be withdrawn. Not only this, it will have to be written in the apology that the complaint was made in anger and all the allegations were false and when the victim said that she would not give an apology they refused for any action or hearing her pleas at all.



Participants in a training session on stress management organised at Rabindranath Tagore University (RNTU) in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

## PIMR hosts Techno-Management symposium

PNS ■ INDORE

The Prestige Institute of Management & Research (PIMR) in Indore hosted the preliminary round of a crucial component of the renowned Techno-Management Symposium, Kshitij. The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Khargapur organizes the annual KAS-CADE event. During KAS-

CADE, students participated in several competitions, including the Math Olympiad, Source Code, Anadigix (Electronic Circuits), and Enigma (Quaint Finance Event). Anadigix provided a dynamic platform for participants to exhibit their skills in the intricate field of electronic circuits. Participants faced the challenge of racing against time, competing to craft the most sophisticated circuit and estab-

lish their dominance over silicon. The Math Olympiad put participants' mathematical acumen to the test. They competed against peers from all corners of the country, solving challenging multiple-choice questions (MCQs). The Source Code competition aimed to identify the best coder, but with a unique twist. Participants were required to predict issue statements using common sense.



# Three-tier security at counting centres

STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

A three-tier security will be in place when the votes polled in the Chhattisgarh Assembly elections are counted on December 3 at all 90 constituencies.

Security arrangements were also beefed up at the Government Engineering College at Sejbahar in Raipur ahead of the vote count.

The counting of the votes polled on November 7 and 17 will take place in all 33 district headquarters.

Chhattisgarh recorded a voter turnout of 78 percent in the first phase of balloting for



20 seats in the Naxalite-affected regions.

The turnout was 75.88 percent in the second and final phase in 70 seats across 22 districts.

Kurud seat witnessed 90 percent voting. Raipur (North) saw 55.59 percent polling.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel's Patan constituency witnessed 84.27 percent voting, up from 81.17 five years back. Above 80 percent polling was witnessed in rural and semi-urban areas.

A total of 958 candidates - 827 men, 130 women and one transgender person -- were in the fray.

# Bhupesh meets Sonia ahead of election results



STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR/NEW DELHI

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday met Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, four days ahead of the

counting of votes in the state.

The meeting in New Delhi between the two leaders lasted for over 30 minutes during which they discussed the just ended Assembly elections in Chhattisgarh, where the Congress is eyeing a second consecutive term, according to

**The meeting in New Delhi between the two leaders lasted for over 30 minutes during which they discussed the just ended Assembly elections**

party sources. The sources said Baghel apprised Gandhi about the voting in the state. They also discussed the most likely election results expected on December 3.

# Parents of IPS officer killed in road accident

STAFF REPORTER ■  
DURG

Three family members of an IPS officer posted in Ladakh were killed when a truck hit their car in Durg district in Chhattisgarh, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place near Khedamara village on Tuesday night when P. Venkataratnam (65), P. Santhi (60) and an 85-year-old woman were returning to Bhlai from Berla village, Durg Senior Superintendent of Police Ram Gopal Garg said.

Venkataratnam and Santhi were parents while the elderly woman was the maternal grandmother of IPS officer P.D. Nitya, who is posted as the



Superintendent of Police in Leh in Ladakh. The truck driver was arrested.

# Expecting higher price, C'garh farmers halt selling paddy

STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

Anticipating higher paddy price when a new government is formed in Chhattisgarh, farmers have stopped selling their paddy crops in the state.

Although no political party has said whether it will provide the promised higher price from the current crop season, the farmers have decided to wait for the electoral outcome on December 3.

The paddy procurement at MSP began in the state on November 1. Between

November 1 and 28, about 13.21 lakh tonnes of paddy were purchased from 3,17,223 farmers, which is less than the quantity procured in the last Kharif season in the state.

In the previous Kharif season (2022-23), 5.42 lakh farmers sold 19.3 lakh tonnes of paddy from November 1 to 29. The state has set a target to buy 130 lakh tonnes of paddy during the current Kharif marketing season and set up 2,739 procurement centres.

The procurement drive will continue till January 31. Around 26.87 lakh farmers have registered to sell their



produce this time. The Congress government had been buying paddy at MSP fixed by the Centre, which is

about Rs 2,200 for this season, and giving an input subsidy of Rs 9,000 per acre to paddy growers.

It had hiked the limit of purchase from 15 quintals per acre to 20 quintals per acre for the ongoing Kharif season.

The Congress has promised that farmers will get Rs 3,200 per quintal for paddy if it retains power in the state.

The BJP said that if it formed a government, it will launch a 'Krishi Unnati Scheme' under which 21 quintals of paddy per acre will be procured at Rs 3,100 per quintal.



Indian Cricket players on Wednesday evening reached Chhattisgarh's Raipur airport to participate in the T-20 international match to be played on December 1 against Australia. India is leading the five-match series with 2-1 presently and Indian team is expected to seal the series with a victory in Raipur.

# Four held for black marketing T-20 cricket match tickets



STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Police on Wednesday arrested four persons for black marketing tickets of the India-Australia T-20 cricket match to be played here on Friday (December 1).

Raipur Additional Superintendent of Police (Urban) Lakan Patle said all the four were residents of Raipur.

A total of 13 tickets were seized from them.

# Now 'Suvidha' for police verification



STAFF REPORTER ■  
KHAIRAGARH

Chhattisgarh Police on Wednesday started a facility for police verification titled 'Suvidha' to make the process easy to residents of

Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai district.

Superintendent of Police Ankita Sharma said people will be able to apply for police verification certificate via e-mail at sp-kgg@cg.gov.in -- and they will get it in 10 days.

For further details, people can call 97707 27463, 62689 18480 and 82249 49487, Sharma added.

# Why India lags in organ donation

SIANS ■

Societal reservations, lack of awareness and infrastructure are the major roadblocks for active organ donations in India, according to health experts on Wednesday.

India faces the lowest organ donation rate worldwide, with a mere 0.1 per cent of the population donating their organs after death in stark contrast to 70-80 per cent in Western countries.

"Currently there is a huge gap between patients who need organs and the actual organs available for transplantation. The waiting list for kidneys and liver can go up to several years. The heart and lung recipients are completely dependent on cadaveric organ donation programme, hence it is imperative that we as a country pledge for this cause," Rahul Pandit, Chair, Critical Care, Sir H N Reliance Foundation Hospital, Mumbai, told SIANS.

Traditionally two concepts have been practiced in India, live related donation and cadaveric organ donation, he explained.

Live related donation involves removing a healthy organ usually from recipients near relatives as described in the organ donation Act and transplanting it in the recipient. However, this practice is only limited to kidney and liver in solid organ transplantation.

Cadaveric organ donation is organ donation after brain stem death. This is possible in patients who have an irreversible neurological condition, who are on a ventilator in ICU with no brain function.

This process, if the family consents then almost 8-9 organs -- cornea, heart, lungs, 2 kidneys, liver, pancreatic islets cells, uterus, both hands, skin, bone and muscle tendons -- can be donated, the doctor said.

"While there has been a slight improvement in harvesting organs from



deceased donors, with an increase in the average number of transplants per donor, it remains insufficient. For example, out of 12,387 harvested organs in 2021,

only slightly over 14 per cent were from deceased donors," Yasir Rizvi, Associate Director & Senior Consultant - Nephrology at Dharamshila Narayana Superspecialty

Hospital, told SIANS. Rajesh Aggarwal, Chief and Sr. Consultant - Kidney Transplant & Dialysis Department at Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute,

explained that "myths surrounding brain death contribute to considerable organ wastage, with India losing around 2 lakh kidneys and other vital organs

annually".

Properly harvesting even 5-10 per cent of all brain deaths for organ donation could render the need for living donors obsolete. The issue is particularly pronounced in heart transplants, with challenges like cost and expertise availability in different cities exacerbating the problem.

"India faces a critical challenge with a dismal organ donation rate of 0.86 per million people, necessitating a drastic improvement. Despite a notable post-Covid resurgence in transplant activities, achieving over 15,000 transplants in 2022 with a 27 per cent annual increase, societal reservations remain a significant obstacle. The country grapples with a demand-supply gap in organ donation and transplants due to a lack of awareness and deep-rooted superstitions," Aggarwal told SIANS.

Rizvi also noted limited awareness and infrastructure as a significant challenge in organ donation in India.

Despite some progress, there exists a substantial gap between organ demand and supply, with only 0.1 per cent of the population donating their organs after death, he said.

"The situation demands urgent action, given the organ shortage crisis in the country. Public awareness campaigns are crucial to enhance organ donation rates, and collaboration between the medical fraternity and policymakers is necessary to streamline donation processes.

"Establishing transparent organ registries and strengthening deceased organ donation infrastructure are pivotal steps for India to advance in organ donation and transplantation," he said.

To boost organ donation practices, the health experts called for a comprehensive approach. Education campaigns can debunk myths and emphasise the impact of donations on saving lives, they said.



# 1,500 km of train route gets Kavach

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Wednesday said the indigenously-developed automatic train protection system 'Kavach' has been fully installed on 1,500 km of train route and a significant progress has been made to increase its coverage. "We started our journey with the Kavach system in 2016 and till 2020, its pilot work, testing, modification and version enhancement were done. It was in the beginning of 2022, its production and installation started on a large scale," Vaishnaw said during an inter-action with media. "Today, we have installed the system on 1,500-km route and a significant progress has been made (for its installation) on another 3,000-km route on the Mumbai-Howrah and the Delhi-Howrah route," he said.

'Kavach' is an automatic train protection system for enhancing safety of running trains. It has been developed indigenously by the Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) in association with three Indian vendors. 'Kavach' not only helps loco pilots to avoid signal passing at danger and over-speeding but also helps in train running during inclement weather such as dense fog, leading to enhanced safety and efficiency of train operations. Some features of the system are controlling speed of trains by automatic application of brakes in case loco pilot fails to apply the brakes and repeating line-side signal in cab which is very useful for higher speeds. Vaishnaw said that with continuous efforts, the railways has made a significant capacity enhancement to install 'Kavach' on 1,500-km route every year. Elaborating about the system,



he said that it is not a device which can be installed in locomotives only. Instead, according to him, it is a complete system which has multiple components to install at stations, locomotives, tracks and along

the routes in the form of towers and radio equipment. "We floated the tender for 3,000 km installation in December 2022 and the progress report is very encouraging. Radio survey and radio

design, which is the most critical part of the system, is 98 per cent complete. Station Kavach installation is 33 per cent complete, 58 per cent of tower installation along the track has been done," the minister said.

He added that the Kavach next generation, which is a 4G- and 5G-based system, has also been developed and in December 2023 or January 2024, the railways will float a tender for its installation on 3,000 km tracks. "In May-June 2024, we will float another tender for 6,000 km of installation of Kavach," Vaishnaw said. The minister added that as his focus is capacity enhancement, he has set a target of achieving 2,500 km of 'Kavach' installation in 2024-25 from the present capacity of 1,500 km. "In the year 2025-26, we will take the capacity to 5,000 km per year. With this rapid progress of Kavach, we will cover the entire network within a short period of time. For Kavach installation, the Golden Quadrilateral-Golden Diagonal (GQGD) route has got top priority followed by high-density and high-utilisation network areas," he added.



## Modi to interact with beneficiaries of Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with beneficiaries of the 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' on Thursday via video conferencing, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said here on Wednesday. Prime Minister Modi will also launch Pradhan Mantri Mahila Kisan Drone Kendra, it said. The Kendra will provide drones to women Self Help Groups (SHGs) so that this technology can be used by them for livelihood assistance, the statement said. The Yatra is being undertaken across the country with an aim to attain saturation of flagship schemes of the government by ensuring that the benefits of these schemes reach all targeted beneficiaries in a time bound manner, a statement issued by the PMO said. Modi will interact with beneficiaries of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra on November 30 at 11 am via video conferencing, it said. It has been the constant endeavour of the prime minister to ensure women led development, the statement said. In yet another step in this direction, Prime Minister Modi will launch Pradhan Mantri Mahila Kisan Drone Kendra, it said. The Kendra

will provide drones to women Self Help Groups (SHGs) so that this technology can be used by them for livelihood assistance, the statement said. It said 15,000 drones will be provided to women SHGs in the course of the next three years. Women will also be provided necessary training to fly and use drones. The initiative will encourage the use of technology in agriculture, the statement said. Making healthcare affordable and easily accessible has been the cornerstone of the prime minister's vision for a healthy India. One of the major initiatives in this direction has been the establishment of Jan Aushadhi Kendra to make medicines available at affordable prices. During the programme, the prime minister will dedicate the landmark 10,000th Jan Aushadhi Kendra at AIIMS, Deogarh. Further, the prime minister will also launch a programme to increase the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras in the country from 10,000 to 25,000. Both these initiatives of providing drones to women SHGs and increasing the number of Jan Aushadhi Kendras were announced by the prime minister during his Independence Day speech. The programme marks the fulfilment of these promises, the statement said.

## Illuminating lives of drug addicts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In keeping with its efforts to curb drug menace in the country, the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment under the Union Social Justice and Empowerment has signed a pact with Ramchandra Mission under Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) to reach out the maximum people in the society. Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar said that the collaboration with the Ramchandra Mission will go a long way to illuminate the lives of individuals and restrict them from

moving towards the path of addiction and help in making a mentally, emotionally and physically strong society. He also talked about various initiatives undertaken through the NMBA that have helped make this Abhiyaan a mass movement. Kamlesh D Patel (Daaji), President, Ramchandra Mission stressed on the importance of a conducive familial and social environment that would help prevent as well as overcome substance use. Through their 5000 centers and 16+ crore people connected with the Ramchandra Mission, Daaji affirmed the participation in the NMBA contributing

towards a Nasha Mukti Bharat. As per report of comprehensive National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India conducted by the Ministry through National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC), AIIMS, New Delhi, Alcohol is the most common psychoactive substance used by Indians followed by Cannabis and Opioids. Till now through the various activities undertaken on-ground, under the NMBA, 10,72+ crore people have reached out so far while 8,000 master volunteers have been selected and trained to lead the activities in the NMBA districts.

## Create culture of quality: Rajnath to makers of military hardware

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday called upon the Indian defence manufacturers to create a culture of quality in defence production, terming it as a prerequisite to compete in the international market. Addressing the plenary session of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Quality Conclave on the theme 'Quality Odyssey for self-reliance in defence products', he stated that only quality products create global demand, and it will help in realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of making India a global manufacturing hub and a net defence exporter. Rajnath pointed out that those countries, which manufacture quality products, export their equipment to countries across the globe. He added that due to the good quality, the prices of



these platforms are quite high; but it should be kept in mind that importing countries are ready to pay even the highest prices for state-of-the-art products. Stressing that top-quality products bring credibility to the domestic defence industry, the defence minister said manufacturing such equipment within the country will generate increased global demand and bolster India's reputation in the international market. He also underscored the importance of cost control while manufacturing quality defence products. "Cost control should be given utmost importance; however it

should not be at the expense of quality. We have to be globally cost-competitive, but it has to be done by remaining in the top-quality segment. We must move forward with this idea," said Rajnath. He underscored the need to manufacture high-quality military systems which are effective, reliable and safe and can enable the Armed Forces to accomplish the missions successfully. Speaking on the occasion, DRDO chief Samir V Kamat reaffirmed the organisation's commitment towards delivering quality systems. He requested all stakeholders to have firm resolve and synergise towards self-reliance in high-quality indigenous military systems. The conclave provided an opportunity for stakeholders to network with experts to create an ecosystem in the country for producing high-quality indigenous systems, and implementation of standards, policies and global best practices.

## Ship Sajag arrives at Muscat for 3-day visit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ship Sajag, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, arrived at Port Sultan Qaboos, Muscat, Oman, on Wednesday for a three-day visit as part of the overseas deployment of ICG ships to West Asia, Coast Guard officials said here. The primary objectives of the visit are to strengthen long-standing diplomatic ties, enhance maritime cooperation, and promote interoperability with the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard (ROP CG) and other maritime agencies, they said. The itinerary includes professional interactions such as onboard training and lectures on Visit, Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) and Maritime Search

and Rescue (M-SAR), cross-deck visits, joint yoga sessions, planning conferences, and table-top exercises for Marine Pollution Response (MPR). Activities during the port call involve courtesy calls by the Commanding Officer on various dignitaries and government officials of Oman, including the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard. Oman and India have historically maintained warm and friendly bilateral relations, sharing common values and diverse cultures. Regular interactions between ICG and ROPCG occur through annually conducted High-Level Meetings (HLM) and ICG ship visits, guided by the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The overseas deployment of

ICG ships aligns with the organization's plan to foster bilateral relationships and strengthen international cooperation with Foreign Friendly Countries (FFCs). During this West Asia deployment, the ship is also scheduled to make port calls in Ad Dammam, Saudi Arabia, and Mina Rashid, UAE. This visit plays a crucial role in strengthening bilateral relationships with key maritime agencies, including the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard (ROPCG), Saudi Border Guards and Naval Forces, and UAE Coast Guards. These relationships, developed over the years, aim to ensure the safety, security, and cleanliness of the seas in the region while addressing contemporary maritime issues.



## Contribute to Armed Forces Flag Day Fund, corporate sector told

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday appealed to the corporate sector to contribute generously to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF) and ensure the well-being of the brave soldiers who spend their lives safeguarding the sovereignty and integrity of the country. He made this appeal here while addressing the corporate heads during the AFFDF Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Conclave organised by the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, Ministry of Defence. Expressing gratitude to the retired and serving Armed Forces personnel for their unmatched valour and sacrifice, Rajnath asserted that it is the collective responsibility of the entire nation to ensure the welfare of the soldiers and their families. He stated that the soldiers fulfill their duties in difficult circumstances and deal with challenges with courage and promptness. The defence minister described the heads of businesses, industries and the corporate sector as wealth creators who contribute to the economy and ensure prosperity



and security of the nation. He urged the corporate sector to share the created wealth or profit with other people in the society, especially the Armed Forces personnel, beyond their tax paying obligations. He emphasised that voluntary contributions hold more importance than compulsory obligations. "When the tax money reaches the soldiers, it is like a legal obligation. But, it is not the same with voluntary contributions. A soldier will feel attached to even ₹5 given as voluntary contribution more than ₹100 given as tax," he said. On the occasion, Rajnath also

felicitated the prominent CSR contributors to the AFFDF, including State Bank of India, ICICI Bank Limited, Indus Towers Limited, General Insurance Corporation, BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited, ECGC Limited, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, LIC Golden Jubilee Foundation, Container Corporation of India Limited and Security Printing & Minting Corporation of India Limited. A number of initiatives have been taken by the government for the welfare of the ex-servicemen. Recently, Medical Treatment Grant for the veterans/dependents was increased to ₹50,000 from Rs 30,000, Vocational Training Grant for Widows was enhanced to ₹50,000 from ₹20,000 and Serious Diseases Grant was raised to ₹1.50 lakh from 1.25 lakh, which is a continuous process. During the Financial Year 2022-23, a grant of approximately ₹250 crore was distributed to more than 99,000 beneficiaries. Apart from this, institutional grants have also been given to Paraplegic Rehabilitation Centre, Kirkee and Mohali, Cheshire Home, Dehradun, Lucknow and Delhi and 36 War Memorial Hostels across the country.

## ITBP chief given charge of CRPF also

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Director General (DG) Anish Dayal Singh has been given the "additional charge" of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) after the retirement of incumbent S L Thaosen on November 30, an official order said Wednesday. A Union Home Ministry order said Singh, an IPS officer of 1988-batch from Manipur cadre, will hold the CRPF DG charge "till the appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders, whichever is earlier." Thaosen, also from the 1988-batch of the IPS from Madhya Pradesh cadre, was appointed as CRPF chief in October last year. Singh was appointed the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) DG at the same time. The CRPF is the country's largest central armed police force (CAPF) with about 3.25 lakh personnel and it is deployed for rendering a variety of duties in the internal security domain of the country, including conducting anti-Naxal operations.

## Boosting pollination to improve crop yield

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Planting flowers such as marigold and red gram beside food crops on farms in India has been found to attract bees and consequently boosts pollination and improves crop yield and quality, researchers have said. The first Indian study of its kind undertaken in the Kannivadi region of South India's Tamil Nadu in 24 moringa orchards is published in the Journal of Applied Ecology and was carried out by ecologists from the University of Reading, UK, and the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, India. The scientists worked with smallholder farmers and helped them plant red gram and marigold besides the Moringa crop. Moringa crop is a nutrient-rich "superfood" and its essential pollinators are bees. The research team increased the abundance and diversity of flower-visiting insects, ultimately improving pollination and boosting crop yield. Dr Deepa Senapathi, of the University of Reading, said: "Planting wildflowers on agricultural land is a tried and tested method seen in many arable fields and orchards in the UK and across Europe. This farming technique is known to boost insect pollinator



numbers. "We worked with farmers in South India to design the best co-flowering crops and boost the numbers of native bees and other insect pollinators visiting the moringa orchards." They helped them plant red gram and marigold flowers in 12 orchards while the other 12 had no co-flowering crops planted in them. Flower visitor numbers and diversity were 50% and 33% higher in sites with red gram and marigold flowers compared to those without. Sites with higher numbers of flower visiting insects also showed better quality of crops, with bigger moringa pods. The sites with red gram and marigold flowers which had previously suffered from a lack of pollination saw higher yields. Numbers of harvestable moringa fruits increased by 30% in the

orchards with co-flowering crops, compared to those without. "Greater yields and higher quality fruit will translate to a healthier and better food supply for smallholder communities. The farming communities can also use the red gram as a protein source in their diets and receive extra income from selling the marigold flowers." The study was produced as part of the TROPICAL project, led by the University of Reading team using UKRI funding from the Global Challenges Research Fund to investigate how research evidence from the UK could be used in tropical landscapes where pollinator dependent crops are grown. India has many crops of high economic and nutritional value, such as mango and moringa, where there is potential to significantly increase and improve crop pollination services. Intensive farming practices, using large amounts of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, and loss of natural habitats have negatively impacted biodiversity in India, including native bees and other pollinators, said the researchers. Since smallholder farmers in the tropics, whose crops depend on native pollinators, are particularly vulnerable to these impacts, the study results show how farmers can boost yields while also managing their lands in a more sustainable manner.

## Technology solution for Geospatial domain

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India will soon have a Centre of Excellence to foster the Geospatial Innovation & Research and to cater to emerging technology solution requirements of the Geospatial domain in the country. A tripartite MoU was signed in this regard between National Geospatial Programme- DST, National Institute of Geo-informatics Science & Technology (NIGST), Survey of India, and IIT Tirupati Navishk'r I-Hub Foundation on Wednesday to establish this Centre of Excellence-a Pilot. The Geospatial Innovation & Research Centre of Excellence (CoE) as a pilot aims to cater for the emerging technology solution requirements of the Geospatial domain in

the country. The Centre would support and encourage innovative geospatial technology-based start-ups, industries, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) that have an application and impact in the core sectors of the economy. Professor Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, DST highlighted that this is perhaps the first step in the direction of implementing some aspects of the National Geospatial Policy. "After liberalising the Geospatial Guidelines and bringing in the Policy, we are in the process of reforming the Survey of India. There is a plan to set up a geospatial data exchange. Incubators will also be set up to work both on developing the geospatial technology as well as support startups that can focus on applications," he added. Professor Karandikar pointed out



that geospatial data science is an emerging interdisciplinary field which includes geospatial engineering, computer science and information technology. He also added that setting up focused incubators and carrying out capacity building through dedicated CoE will

translate to implementation of the recommendations of the geospatial data policy. "Using data science and AI model, this whole concept of World Wide Web (WWW) may change in next 10 years and may centre around the geospatial platform, through which we can get both contextual and location-based information by combining AI and machine learning in linear fashion for future searches," Prof Karandikar said. Dr KN Satyanarayana, Director, IIT Tirupathi, briefed about the Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) developed under NM-ICPS and said that the TIH has four major activities — technology development, capacity building, creating startup ecosystem and international cooperation, focusing on these new areas.



# Action initiated to attach Atiq’s two ‘benami’ properties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Action has been initiated to attach two benami properties of slain mafia Atiq Ahmed. Reports have been sent to the high-level officials. Both the assets will be attached under the Gangsters Act as soon as the Police Commissioner gets permission. The police came to know about the possession of Atiq on half of the Bengal Hotel in Shahganj a few months ago.

It is learnt Atiq had ‘captured’ it on the strength of bullying and documents related to this property were collected. In Minhajpur area itself 200 square yards land of Atiq was detected. Investigation of documents revealed that this land was bought by Atiq in the name of his wife Shaista Parveen. Police teams were engaged in preparing a report to attach both. Now this report has been prepared and it has been sent to high officials. Sources revealed that it has been said in the report that both the above properties were acquired by crime and in such a situation it will be appropriate to attach it under Section 14 (1) of the Gangsters Act. Now on the basis of this report, the Police Commissioner will take

a decision after observation of the court documents etc.

The police team, which is trying to find out the benami property of the mafia, has also gathered information about a house in Delhi. This house is located in Batla House in Delhi. The mafia bought a flat in Sector-36, Noida. It is priced in crores. The flat in Mahanagar Colony in Lucknow in which Atiq’s son Asad lived with his companions has been identified. Police sources said that these three properties are also planned to be attached under the Gangsters Act. The police is preparing the report for this.

**UMESH PAL MURDER CASE:** Even after nine months of the sensational Dhoomanganj shootout case, Prayagraj Commissionerate cops are yet to arrest six key accused, including slain gangster Atiq Ahmed’s wife Shaista Parveen, despite announcing hefty cumulative cash reward of Rs 15.50 lakh. On February 24, lawyer Umesh Pal, a prime witness in 2005 BSP MLA Raju Pal murder case, along with two of his police gunners, were killed outside his residence in Sulemsarai area under the limits of Dhoomanganj police station. Although police claimed to have gunned down four of

the key accused allegedly involved in the shootout including Asad, son of Atiq Ahmed, Gulam (shooter), Usman alias Vijay (shooter) and Arbaaz in separate encounters, cops are yet to ascertain the whereabouts of six more wanted persons including Sabir, Guddu Muslim, Arman, Shaista Parveen, Jainav and Ayesha Noori. While Guddu Muslim, Arman and Sabir are carrying Rs 5 lakh cash reward each on their heads, Shaista Parveen is also carrying Rs 50,000 on her head.

There is no cash reward on the heads of Jainav (wife of slain Khalid Azeem) and Ayesha Noori (sister of Ashraf). Police records claimed that two of the key accused -- Arbaaz of Kaushambi and Vijay Chaudhary alias Usman of Kaudhiyara, each carrying Rs 50,000 cash reward, were killed in separate encounters on February 27 and March 6 respectively. Moreover, a team of Special Task Force (STF) of UP police also gunned down Asad (son of Atiq Ahmed) and Gulam both carrying Rs 5 lakh cash reward on their heads, in an encounter in Jhansi in April 13.

On April 15, a group of

three assailants killed gangster Atiq Ahmed and Khalid Azeem alias Ashraf inside the Colvin hospital campus under Shahganj police station.

However, despite a series of raids and target oriented operations, cops failed to gather information about current whereabouts of three key shooters, including Guddu Muslim, Sabir and Arman, since the sensational shootout. Undoubtedly, cops have not only denied the economic empire of slain gangster but also managed to tighten the noose around gang’s key operatives and sympathisers.

Recently, cops arrested a key associate of slain gangster Atiq Ahmed, named as Mohd Nafees alias Nafees Biryani, a resident of Khuldabad in an encounter near Anapur on Prayagraj – Lucknow highway and claimed to have received vital clues about gang’s modus operandi after Atiq’s elimination. A senior cop preferring anonymity said “Apart from STF, special constituted police teams are closing in on absconders and would be soon scripting success stories. Cops have some vital information to act upon. Separate police teams have been assigned separate tasks in this regard”.

# Mahakumbh: Construction of inner ring road to start soon

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The construction of an inner ring road, one of the important projects of Mahakumbh 2025, will start within the next seven days. For which work has been started at the construction site and other types of activities have been started. The mapping from Sahson to Mirzapur Road has also been completed. On the basis of this, 95 per cent land acquisition work was also completed.

The work of the first phase of this 65 km project is to be completed before Mahakumbh. In which 30 km long inner ring road will be constructed in three parts. Preparations have also been started for the bridge on Ganges river to be built from Karchana to Phulpur.

In the first phase of inner ring road, the project will start from Lavayan Kala village in Naini. The first phase of the project is divided into three parts by the National Highway Authority (NHAI). The tender process has been completed for

the old Grand Trunk Road and the tender process for the 7.50 km long inner ring road in the subsequent part. As many as 29 companies took part in the tender for this project. For the first phase of the project, 195 hectares of land of 4,000 farmers of 45 villages of the district has been acquired. Compensation has been issued for ownership of land, buildings, gardens, wells of farmers affected in the project.

This ring road will be taken forward by taking Mahuari, Lavine Kala on Old GT Road

from Rewa Road to Mahuari, Lavine Kala and will be connected to NH-2 near Sahson. Preparations have been made to start the work of Ring Road in the first week of December without delay. The construction of the bridge of the Ganga will also be started.

Project Director, National Highways Authority, Prayagraj Pankaj Mishra, said there is a plan to start the construction work of Naini Lavayan Kala and Old GT Road from inner ring road for which almost all preparations have been made.

# Conference on protected cultivation of horticultural crops

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A two-day international conference on protected cultivation of horticultural crops, post-harvest handling and digital agriculture started at Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology And Sciences (SHUATS) on Wednesday. It is being organised by the Department of Horticulture, Naini Agricultural Institute, SHUATS.

Giving this information organising secretary Dr Devi Singh said the chief guest was Dean of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu Dr Kishor Chandra Dahal who inaugurated it at the university auditorium on Wednesday followed by an opening prayer led by Director (Research) Dr Alok Milton Lall. SHUATS Pro-V-C (PMD) Prof (Dr) Antony J Raj was the guest of honour. Faculty Dean Prof (Dr) Gautam Ghosh welcomed the chief guest. Director (Extension) Prof Arif A Broadway shared the extension activities of the university. Dean NAI Dr Biswarup Mehra gave a brief sketch

about the international conference. Joint Registrar and convener Dr C John Wesley briefed the delegates about the importance of protected cultivation of horticultural crops.

Chief guest Dr Kishor Chandra Dahal shared standardised production technologies under protected cultivation including use of drip irrigation, fertigation and super absorbents for improving water and nutrient use efficiency. On the first day of the technical session various issues regarding critical review of the status with respect of designing of infrastructure like greenhouse, net houses, shade net, nursery, drip-irrigation system for protected cultivation in different agro-climatic locations etc were discussed.

The vote of thanks was proposed given by HoD Dr Vijay Bahadur Rajwade. Various national and international delegates along with SHUATS faculty members and research scholars attended the workshop.

**KIDNEY TRANSPLANT:** After Lucknow now preparations are being made for kidney transplant here

also. This facility will soon start at Swaroop Rani Nehru (SRN) Hospital of Moti Lal Nehru Medical College (MLNMC). Till now for kidney transplant, patients had to go to SGPGI, Ram Manohar Lohia Institute and King George’s Medical University of Lucknow or other big cities, but now within a month, kidney transplant facility will be available here.

Experts from the team constituted by the government have reached SRN Hospital to find out whether the resources required for kidney transplant are available or not.

Complete preparations have been made for this in its superspecialty building. The team from Lucknow and Delhi is gathering information on each point.

Dr Dilip Chaurasia, Chairman of the Urology department of MLNMC while talking to journalists said that patients from here as well as many other districts come to SRN Hospital for treatment but they have to be referred to Lucknow etc. Now having this facility here will provide relief to them.

Dr Arvind Gupta, Chairman of the Nephrology department said a large number of kidney transplant patients come to this hospital, but due to lack of this facility here the patients face a lot of inconvenience.

Efforts were being made for this for 20 years. Now the green signal is about to be received from the government.

Before giving green signal for kidney transplant at SRN Hospital, the government is getting its investigation done by a four-member team. A four-member team including Professor Suresh Kumar of the Surgery department of KGMU, Lucknow, reached here on Tuesday.

Prof Suresh Kumar said he has inspected the blood bank, OT, wards etc. in this hospital. They will report this to the government.

Urologist Dr Shirish Mishra of SRN Hospital said serious patients come to this hospital and are referred from nearby districts. With the introduction of kidney transplant system, the patient will get the benefit at minimal cost.

Vishwakarma, is a resident of Semri Sarayamrej. He is conductor in e-bus. After the video of Lareb surfaced, the angle of religion came in the attack on the conductor. The investigation was started by the ATS. It was learnt that Lareb used to listen to the arguments of Pakistani Maulana Khadim Hussain Rizvi in his mobile. This was revealed by YouTube’s search history. ATS CO Vipin Rai questioned Lareb in the hospital. According to sources, the accused Lareb Hashmi said that he is influenced by Pakistani Maulana Khadim Hussain Rizvi. Maulana is the founder of Tehreek-e-Labbek..

# CAS praises efforts of air warriors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Chief of the Air Staff, Indian Air Force (IAF) presided over the Central Air Command (CAC) commanders’ conference on Tuesday. All the commanders of the stations under CAC AoR, including Command Staff, attended it.

In his address to Commanders, the CAS praised the efforts of all the air warriors for the successful conduct of the Air Force Day parade at Prayagraj along with the air display at Sangam and Bhopal. The CAS highlighted the lessons learnt from Russia-Ukraine war and recent military operations carried out by Israel and the need for high state of readiness in the current volatile geo-strategic environment. He emphasised upon commanders to sharpen their focus on self-reliance and indigenisation towards the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. He stressed on realistic training and constant updating of knowledge as the focus area for



the training of Agniveer Vayu.

Later, the CAS presented trophies in various categories to the stations of CAC AoR. The CAS appreciated the level of operational preparedness and HADR operations undertaken in CAC AoR in the recent past and added that a well trained air warrior who is technologically sound and able to adapt to technological disruptions,

would serve as a force multiplier.

The Chief of the Air Staff interacted with all personnel involved in the conference. The CAS complimented all during his address for their response and immense efforts in undertaking the mandated tasks.

Meanwhile, Neeta Chaudhari President AFFWA

attended the Board of Management meeting and was apprised by Dr Suneeta Kapoor President AFFWA (R) about various welfare measures undertaken by AFFWA (R) in CAC AoR.

Neeta Chaudhari also interacted and addressed all Sanginis and appreciated the welfare activities undertaken by the AFFWA(R).

# 12-day Shilp Mela from tomorrow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The 12-day Rashtriya Shilp Mela (National Crafts Fair) is going to start here from December 1. It will be organised till December 12.

Indian crafts, handmade products among others will be put on display in the Shilp

Mela. Artists from all over the country will also brighten it up with their melodious voice and music every evening. Centre Director Prof Suresh Sharma said handicrafts have been invited from every corner of the country, in which about 151 stalls of traditional crafts and cuisine of India will be set up.

It will also have food stalls of every major state.

The folk artistes of various states will display their art on the stage and there will also be a gathering of local handicrafts. The shobha yatra will be taken out at 1 pm on December 1. Along with entertainment, visitors will also be able to enjoy

food. The Rashtriya Shilp Mela will also have the confluence of fragrance of dishes of different provinces of the country.

The cultural programmes will be held on the Muktakashi stage of Shilphat every evening. Padmashri Malini Awasthi will sing on December 1.

# Transgenders teach traffic rules to commuters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The kinnars of Kinnar Akhara took to the road with the traffic police to enforce traffic rules here on Wednesday. The transgenders taught traffic rules to the passersby. Under the leadership of senior member of Uttar Pradesh Kinnar Welfare Board, Mahamandaleshwar Swami Kaushalyanand Giri (Tina Maa), a large number of transgenders also took out an awareness rally. Bike riders going without helmets were given roses and asked to wear helmets. Helmets were provided to 251 people.

Mahamandaleshwar Swami Kaushalyanand Giri said today more deaths are occurring in the country due to road accidents than due to diseases.

The most worrying situation that more youths are dying in road accidents therefore we all should follow all traffic



rules so that we remain safe and our family members do not face any problem.

The two-wheeler drivers must wear helmets and car drivers seat belts. One should avoid overtaking while driving because most of the acci-

dents occur due to overtaking and drivers falling asleep.

Traffic inspector Pawan Kumar Pandey also made people aware about traffic. Additional Commissioner Police Traffic Sitaram and TI Manoj Singh also expressed

their views. A large number of people, including Shri Mahant Sanjananand Giri of Kinnar Akhara, Naina, Shobha, Chhaya, Palak, Neha, Sana, Rani, Sangeeta, Chavanni, Devi, Saloni, Narmada, Srishti, Sushma were present.

# Security arrangements in banks inspected

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan while inspecting the security arrangements in banks on Tuesday said special training will be given to the staff of cash van as well as bank guards regarding safety issues. During the inspection the SP took the bankers to task who failed to make security arrangements as per the direction given by him during previous inspection. He gave tips to the security staff for better security. He added that he was planning to train the security staff to counter the threats of current crime situation. During the inspection station house officers (SHOs) of Katra Kotwali and City Kotwali the police force were also present.

**CAR CATCHES FIRE:** Panic prevailed on Tuesday evening when a car caught fire on Shastri bridge under Chilil police station. As a result the entire traffic came to a halt and with the help of people Chilil Station Officer (SO) Reeta Yadav tried to extinguish the fire but to no avail. The driver somehow managed to save himself and left the car in a burning condition which ultimately reduced to ashes. On information the Katra Kotwali police reached the spot and assisted the Chilil police in traffic control. After the hard labour of cops normal traffic could be restored.

**MAHOTSAV:** Chairman Zila Panchayat Raju Kanaujia on Tuesday while addressing



Chairman Zila Panchayat Raju Kanaujia addressing the Shri Anna Mahotsav on Tuesday

the Shree Anna Mahotsav at Piparadaand organised under the aegis of Agriculture department as the chief guest said millet is not just an edible grain it is a nutritious full of elements capable of keeping human life free from various diseases. He said the government is committed to doubling the income of farmers and the policies are made in their interest. He said promotion of millet is one of the ways to minimise the expenditure of farmers. He appealed to farmers to give priority to millet and use organic fertiliser in the larger interest of the health of the people. If the production cost is minimised without affecting the production of the grain it will increase the income of farmers, he added. The chief guest visited the stall of agri products. On the occasion he honoured some

farmers who had got the success in farming through innovative farming. Deputy Director (Agriculture) Vikesh Patel threw light on government schemes which were useful for farmers. He exhorted the farmers to get benefits of schemes. Referring the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra he said it is the right time to get benefits of schemes.

**MEETING:** Chief Development Officer (CDO) Srilaxmi VS while holding the meeting of the officials related to five aspirational blocks of the district at the Collectorate on Tuesday issued directions to withhold the salary of five CDPOs and issued show cause notice to a medical officer for laxity in work. Halia, Patehra, City, Pahadi and Rajgarh have been selected as aspirational blocks in which 75 points had

been fixed on which work is to be done. The points include the matters related to health, nutrition, education, skill development, water resources, financial adjustment etc. In the meeting CDPOs were taken to task for tardy progress in completion of new Anganwadi buildings. The DDO was asked to submit the proposal to fill up the vacancy of ASHAs so far and start the process for new appointments. The DDO was asked for withholding the salary of CDPOs for laxity and issue show cause notices to the medical officer imcharges for slow progress in works. The medical officer incharge Halia was directed to identify cent per cent TB patients and their verification.

**CLASH:** One person was injured in firing during a group clash under Kachhawaan police station on Wednesday. A ‘barat’ of Baraini village was returning when a vehicle collided with a tractor in Kevtabeer village adjacent to Baraini under Kachhawaan police station. On information about the clash in which a bullet hit Awadhesh of Kevtabeer village in his arm during the firing by one of the ‘baratis’ the police reached the spot and brought the situation under control. Additional Superintendent of Police Niteshwar Singh told said the injured was given primary treatment and Satish Singh along with one other person have been taken into custody on the complaint of the other party. As a precautionary measure force had been deployed.

# Plantation drive organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A plantation drive was organised by 111 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) Kumamon at Prayagraj on Tuesday to promote nature conservation and raise awareness about environment.

A total of 180 saplings were planted by children along with Army personnel. The entire exercise emphasises that even small efforts count and collective action can make a substantial difference in creating a healthier and more sustainable environment.

**ATTACK CASE:** Bus conductor Harikesh Vishwakarma does not even recognise Lareb Hashmi, the accused who

**A total of 180 saplings were planted by children along with Army personnel.**

allegedly attacked the former with a chopper on November 24. He does not know who Lareb Hashmi is. He told this to intelligence agencies during interrogation. The medical report of Harikesh Vishwakarma states that he has a total of 38 stitches, 18 are in the throat, 15 in the hand and five in the chest. He is undergoing treatment at Swaroop Rani Nehru (SRN) Hospital and is being told out of danger. Principal of SRN Hospital Dr SP Singh

said the medical report of Harikesh Vishwakarma has arrived and now his condition is improving and is out of danger. He has been shifted from ICU to the general ward. A panel of three doctors is treating him. According to police sources, Harikesh Vishwakarma has been under high security. B.Tech student Lareb had allegedly attacked bus conductor Harikesh Vishwakarma on November 24 at 9 am. Harikesh, son of Ram Shiromani







FIRST COLUMN

THE ANCIENT ART OF MUDRAS

Yogic hand gestures channel energy and help connect to higher spiritual realms



SWAMI CHARANASHRIT

Mudras, a Sanskrit word that translates to "gesture," are ancient hand positions that have been practised for thousands of years in various cultures, particularly in the realms of yoga, meditation, and traditional dance. These symbolic gestures are believed to channel energy within the body and connect the practitioner to higher spiritual realms. The philosophy behind mudras lies in the idea that different parts of the hands represent different elements and energies, and by bringing them together in specific ways, one can harmonise and channel these energies for various purposes.

**Major Mudras and Their Significance:**

**Anjali Mudra (Prayer Gesture):**  
How to perform: Bring the palms of your hands together in front of your chest, fingers pointing upward.  
Anjali Mudra is a gesture of reverence and gratitude. It is commonly used as a greeting and is often performed at the beginning and end of yoga classes. This mudra symbolises the connection between the individual self and the universal consciousness.

**Gyan Mudra (Knowledge Gesture):**  
How to perform: Touch the tip of the thumb and the index finger, forming a circle, while keeping the other fingers extended.  
Gyan Mudra is associated with knowledge, wisdom, and concentration. It is believed to enhance memory and improve concentration during meditation. This mudra is commonly used in various meditation practices to quiet the mind and promote inner peace.

**Chin Mudra (Consciousness Gesture):**  
How to perform: Touch the tip of the thumb and the index finger, forming a circle, and let the other three fingers remain extended.  
Chin Mudra is a gesture of consciousness and is often used during meditation.

**Prana Mudra (Life Force Gesture):**  
How to perform: Join the tips of the ring finger and the little finger to the tip of the thumb, while keeping the other fingers extended.  
Prana Mudra is believed to increase the vital life force energy within the body. It is associated with improving vitality, reducing fatigue, and boosting the immune system.

**Apana Mudra (Digestive Gesture):**  
How to perform: Touch the tips of the thumb, middle finger, and ring finger together, while keeping the index finger and little finger extended.  
Apana Mudra is said to balance the Apana Vayu, one of the five vital forces in the body related to elimination and downward movement. This mudra is believed to support digestive health, assist in detoxification, and promote a sense of groundedness.

**Huni Mudra (Seal of Patience):**  
How to perform: Join the tip of the middle finger with the tip of the thumb, while keeping the other fingers extended.  
Shuni Mudra is associated with patience, discernment, and discipline. It is believed to help cultivate a sense of patience and focus. Practising this mudra is thought to bring balance to the air element within the body and mind, promoting a calm and reflective state. Shuni Mudra is often used to enhance one's ability to make wise decisions.

Incorporating mudras into your meditation or yoga routine can provide a deeper dimension to your spiritual journey, promoting physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Mudras are powerful tools that bridge the physical and spiritual aspects of our being. Incorporating these symbolic hand gestures into your daily life or meditation practise can deepen your connection with yourself and the universe. As with any ancient practice, it's essential to approach mudras with respect and an open mind, allowing yourself to explore their potential benefits on a personal level.

*(The writer is a spiritual guide, views are personal)*

# India's G20 Presidency: Towards a better future



NARENDRA MODI

Today marks 365 days since India assumed the G20 Presidency. Let us reflect, recommit, and rejuvenate the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'



As we undertook the responsibility of G20 Presidency last year, the global landscape grappled with multifaceted challenges: recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, looming climate threats, financial instability, and debt distress in developing nations, all amid declining multilateralism. In the midst of conflicts and competition, development cooperation suffered, impeding progress. Assuming the G20 Chair, India sought to offer the world an alternative to status quo, a shift from a GDP-centric to human-centric progress. India aimed to remind the world of what unites us, rather than what divides us. Finally, the global conversation had to evolve - the interests of the few had to give way to the aspirations of the many. This required a fundamental reform of multilateralism as we knew it. Inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive—these four words defined our approach as G20 president, and the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration (NDLD), unanimously adopted by all G20 members, is testimony to our commitment to deliver on these principles. Inclusivity has been at the heart of our presidency. The inclusion of the African Union (AU) as a permanent member of the G20 integrated 55 African nations into the forum, expanding it to encompass 80% of the global population. This proactive stance has fostered a more comprehensive dialogue on global challenges and opportunities. The first-of-its-kind 'Voice of the Global South Summit', convened by India in two editions, heralded a new dawn of multilateralism. India mainstreamed the Global South's concerns in international discourse and has ushered in an era where developing countries take their rightful place in shaping the global narrative. Inclusivity also infused India's domestic

INDIA'S G20 PRESIDENCY USHERED IN A DAWN OF NEW MULTILATERALISM; A BEGINNING OF A NEW WORLD ORDER

approach to G20, making it a People's Presidency that befits that world's largest democracy. Through "Jan Bhagidari" (people's participation) events, G20 reached 1.4 billion citizens, involving all states and Union Territories (UTs) as partners. And on substantive elements, India ensured that international attention was directed to broader developmental aims, aligning with G20's mandate. At the critical midpoint of the 2030 Agenda, India delivered the G20 2023 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), taking a cross-cutting, action-oriented approach to interconnected issues, including health, education, gender equality and environmental sustainability. A key area driving this progress is robust Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). Here, India was decisive in its recommendations, having witnessed the revolutionary impact of digital innovations like Aadhaar, UPI, and Digilocker first-hand. Through G20, we successfully completed the Digital Public Infrastructure Repository, a significant stride in global technological collaboration. This repository, featuring over 50 DPIs from 16 countries, will help the Global South build, adopt, and scale DPI to unlock the power of inclusive growth. For our One Earth, we introduced ambitious and inclusive aims to create urgent, lasting, and equitable change. The Declaration's 'Green Development Pact' addresses the challenges of choosing between combating hunger and

protecting the planet, by outlining a comprehensive roadmap where employment and ecosystems are complimentary, consumption is climate conscious, and production is planet-friendly. In tandem, the G20 Declaration calls for an ambitious tripling of global renewable energy capacity by 2030. Coupled with the establishment of the Global Biofuels Alliance and a concerted push for Green Hydrogen, the G20's ambitions to build a cleaner, greener world is undeniable. This has always been India's ethos, and through Lifestyles for Sustainable Development (LIFE), the world can benefit from our age-old sustainable traditions. Further, the Declaration underscores our commitment to climate justice and equity, urging substantial financial and technological support from the Global North. For the first time, there was a recognition of the quantum jump needed in the magnitude of development financing, moving from billions to trillions of dollars. G20 acknowledged that developing countries require \$5.9 trillion to fulfil their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2030. Given the monumental resources required, G20 emphasised the importance of better, larger, and more effective Multilateral Development Banks. Concurrently, India is taking a leading role in UN reforms, especially in the restructuring of principal organs like the UN Security Council, that will ensure a more equitable global order. Gender equality took centre stage in the Declaration, culminating in

the formation of a dedicated Working Group on the Empowerment of Women next year. India's Women's Reservation Bill 2023, reserving one-third of India's Parliament and state legislative assembly seats for women epitomizes our commitment to women-led development. The New Delhi Declaration embodies a renewed spirit of collaboration across these key priorities, focusing on policy coherence, reliable trade, and ambitious climate action. It is a matter of pride that during our Presidency, G20 achieved 87 outcomes and 118 adopted documents, a marked rise from the past. During our G20 Presidency, India led deliberations on geopolitical issues and their impact on economic growth and development. Terrorism and the senseless killing of civilians is unacceptable, and we must address it with a policy of zero-tolerance. We must embody humanitarianism over hostility and reiterate that this is not an era of war. I am delighted that during our Presidency India achieved the extraordinary: it revitalised multilateralism, amplified the voice of the Global South, championed development, and fought for the empowerment of women, everywhere. As we hand over the G20 Presidency to Brazil, we do so with the conviction that our collective steps for people, planet, peace, and prosperity, will resonate for years to come.

*(This is an exclusive writeup by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi)*

# Cultivating a unique economic identity in the border areas

Mangnad is not merely a supplier of milk and vegetables; it's a testament to how a community can carve its niche, even in challenging landscapes

In India's diverse landscapes, every village contributes a distinctive thread to the larger narrative of our country. Nestled approximately 6 km from the Poonch district in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Mangnad stands out as a border village that is slowly etching its identity in the realms of agriculture and animal husbandry. Over the years, Mangnad has earned a reputation for its unique approach to animal husbandry. It's a village where livestock is not just a part of the scenery; it's a way of life. Yet, it's not a place where dependence solely rests on animal husbandry. Even government employees here take a keen interest in



BHARATI DEVI

both animal husbandry and agriculture. Consequently, Mangnad not only meets the local demand but also supplies milk and vegetables to the broader Poonch region. Every morning, vehicles laden with litres of milk make their way to the city, with city-dwellers acknowledging the village as a vital source for their daily dairy needs. This tradition has been sustained for years, but in the last 8-10 years, Mangnad has also emerged as a significant player in vegetable production, adding another layer to its unique identity. Today, the village engages in diverse occupations, from private businesses to government employment, but one common thread binds them



all—cultivating vegetables. Observing the burgeoning interest in agriculture, the local agriculture department has stepped in to support the villagers. This collective effort has equipped the village with essential resources, including

small tractors, quality seeds, agricultural camps, and water tanks, transforming Mangnad into a beacon of self-sufficiency. Considering the hilly terrain of Jammu and Kashmir, this transformation is a testament to the resilience and determination

of its people. Mangnad is not merely a supplier of milk and vegetables; it's a testament to how a community can carve its niche, even in challenging landscapes. The villagers have not only embraced agriculture but have also diversified into vegetable production, a feat worth celebrating. 54-year-old Murti Devi, a resident of the village, shares that their approach to vegetable cultivation has evolved. Initially, they planted a single type of vegetable for six months and then another for the next six months. However, with experience, they have streamlined their efforts, categorising vegetables into four distinct seasons. They now synchronise their

planting with the weather, ensuring a continuous supply of diverse vegetables throughout the year. Sushil Kumar, 40, asserts that apart from vegetable production, they have no other business. With some patches of land, they ventured into vegetable farming, selling produce worth lakhs every season. This entrepreneurial spirit extends to several farmers in the village, illustrating how Mangnad has become an agricultural powerhouse. Harish Kumar, 29, emphasises the enduring interest in animal husbandry among the villagers. While some are dedicated to daily milk supplies to the city, others have expanded their focus to vegetable cultivation. The

villagers are not just cultivating vegetables; they are champions of organic farming, ensuring not only flavorful produce but also contributing to the nutritional well-being of consumers. This border village's success story is not just about agriculture; it's about community resilience, innovation, and a collaborative effort with the agriculture department. The department's support, including providing specialised sheets for transforming cow dung into fertilizer, has not only improved lives but has also bestowed a distinctive identity upon Mangnad.

*(The writer is Charkha's volunteer trainer from Poonch, J&K. Views are personal. Charkha Features)*



# Mediators look to extend truce in Gaza on its final day

AP ■ RAFAH (GAZA STRIP)

International mediators worked on Wednesday to extend the truce in Gaza, hoping the territory's Hamas rulers will keep freeing hostages in return for the release of Palestinian prisoners and further respite from Israel's air and ground offensive. It will otherwise expire within a day. Israel has welcomed the release of dozens of hostages in recent days and says it will maintain the truce if Hamas keeps freeing captives. But its other major goal — the annihilation of the armed group that has ruled Gaza for 16 years — could be slipping out of reach.

Weeks of heavy aerial bombardment and a ground invasion have demolished vast swathes of northern Gaza and killed thousands of Palestinians. But it seems to have had little effect on Hamas' rule, evidenced by its ability to conduct complex negotiations, enforce the cease-fire among other armed groups, and orchestrate the smooth release of hostages.

Hamas' leader in Gaza, Yehya Sinwar, and other commanders have likely relocated to the south, along with hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians who have packed into overflowing shelters.

An Israeli ground invasion of the south could eventually ferret out Hamas' leaders and demolish the rest of its militant infrastructure, including kilometres of tunnels, but at a cost in Palestinian lives and destruction that the United States, Israel's main ally, seems unwilling to bear.

The Biden administration has told Israel that if it resumes the offensive it must operate

with far greater precision, especially in the south. That approach is unlikely to bring Hamas to its knees any time soon, and international pressure for a lasting cease-fire is already mounting.

"How far both sides will be prepared to go in trading hostages and prisoners for the pause is about to be tested, but the pressures and incentives for both to stick with it are at the moment stronger than the incentives to go back to war," Martin Indyk, a former US ambassador to Israel, wrote on X.

## DIPLOMACY RAMPS UP

CIA director William Burns and David Barnea, who heads Israel's Mossad spy agency, were in Qatar on Tuesday to discuss extending the cease-fire and releasing more hostages. Qatar has played a key role in mediating with Hamas, hosted the talks, which also included Egyptian mediators.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was set to visit the region this week, and was also expected to push for a longer truce.

A joint statement from foreign ministers of the G7 group of wealthy democracies, which includes close allies of Israel, called for the "further extension of the pause" and for "protecting civilians and compliance with international law."

The war began with Hamas' October 7 attack into southern Israel, in which it killed over 1,200 people, mostly civilians. The militants dragged some 240 people back into Gaza, including babies, children, women, soldiers, older adults and Thai farm labourers. Israel responded with a devastating air campaign



Palestinians cook bread by their destroyed homes in Kuza'a Gaza Strip during the temporary ceasefire between Hamas and Israel on Wednesday.

AP/PTI

across Gaza and a ground invasion in the north. More than 13,300 Palestinians have been killed, roughly two-thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which does not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

Israel says 77 of its soldiers have been killed in the ground offensive, and it claims to have killed thousands of militants, without providing evidence.

The plight of the captives, and the lingering shock from the October 7 attack, has galvanised Israeli support for the war. But Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is also under intense pressure to bring the hostages home, and could

find it difficult to resume the offensive if there's a prospect for more releases.

Hamas is still believed to be holding around 150 hostages — enough to extend the cease-fire for another two weeks under the current arrangement of releasing 10 each day. But it is expected to drive a harder bargain for the release of Israeli soldiers, likely demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners convicted of deadly attacks.

## TWELVE MORE HOSTAGES FREED

In the latest swap, nine women and a teenager, as well as two Thai nationals, were freed on Tuesday and returned to Israel. The 17-year-old girl

could be seen walking alongside Hamas militants to a waiting Red Cross Jeep with her small, white-haired dog named Bella. Soon after, Israel released 30 Palestinian prisoners.

After being extended by one day, the truce is due to end after one more exchange on Wednesday night.

A total of 60 Israelis have been freed as part of the truce, most of whom appear physically well but shaken. Another 21 hostages — 19 Thais, one Filipino and one Russian-Israeli — have been released in separate negotiations since the truce began. Before the truce, Hamas released four hostages, and the Israeli army rescued one. Two other hostages were found dead in Gaza. The latest swap

brought to 180 the number of Palestinian women and teenagers freed from Israeli prisons.

Most have been teenagers accused of throwing stones and firebombs during confrontations with Israeli forces.

Several were women convicted by Israeli military courts of attempting deadly attacks. Palestinians have celebrated the release of people they see as having resisted Israel's decades-long military occupation of lands they want for a future state.

## TENSE CALM IN GAZA

The cease-fire has brought calm to Gaza and increased deliveries of humanitarian aid, allowing people to stock up on food, water and fuel after weeks of severe shortages. Some have been able to sift through the rubble of their homes and bury relatives, but Israel has barred people from returning to the north.

On Tuesday, Israel and Hamas blamed each other for a brief exchange of fire in northern Gaza, but it did not appear to endanger the truce. Palestinian militants have halted rocket fire into Israel, as has Lebanon's Hezbollah, which had repeatedly traded fire with Israeli forces along the northern border since the start of the war. Israel's bombardment and ground offensive have displaced more than 1.8 million people inside Gaza, nearly 80 per cent of the territory's population, and most have sought refuge in the south, according to the UN. The cease-fire has allowed increased aid delivered by 160 to 200 trucks a day into Gaza, but that is less than half what Gaza was importing before the fighting, even as needs have soared.

## Blinken heads again to Middle East

**Brussels:** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken says the Biden administration would like to see a new extension of the cease-fire agreement in Israel's war with Hamas after the current one expires to secure the release of additional hostages held by the militant group and to ramp up humanitarian aid deliveries to Gaza.

As he prepared to make his third visit to the Middle East since the war began with Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks in Israel, Blinken said Wednesday that in addition to discussing short-term logistical and operational planning, the Biden administration believes it is imperative to discuss ideas about the future governance of Gaza if Israel achieves its stated goal of eradicating Hamas.

Israel and Arab nations have resisted such discussions about future governance, with Israeli officials concentrating on the war and Arab leaders insisting the immediate priority must be ending the fighting that has killed thousands of Palestinian civilians.

The extension of the current deal expires later Wednesday.

"Looking at the next couple of days, we'll be focused on doing what we can to extend the pause so we can continue to get more hostages out and more humanitarian assistance in," Blinken told reporters in Brussels, where he was attending a NATO foreign ministers meeting. "And we'll discuss with Israel how it can achieve its objective of ensuring that the terrorist attacks of Oct. 7 never happen again, while sustaining and increasing human-

itarian assistance and minimizing further suffering of Palestinian civilians."

He added before leaving Brussels for Israel and the West Bank: "Everyone's focused on the day of, on what's happening in Gaza right now, but we also need to be focused at the same time — and we are in conversations with many other countries — on what I call the day after' and the day after the day after: I mean, what happens in Gaza once the campaign is over?"

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made clear that Israeli forces will eventually restart military operations after the conclusion of the current, temporary cease-fire that has allowed for an exchange of hostages taken by Hamas for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

US President Joe Biden has said he would like to see the pause continue for as long as feasible. Biden and Blinken have also stressed the importance of planning for post-conflict Gaza as well as the need to resume negotiations for the eventual creation of an independent Palestinian state. Netanyahu is opposed to a Palestinian state and has said he is the only Israeli leader who can prevent one from being formed.

"We believe that that is the only path to enduring peace, to enduring security, to the preservation of Israel as a strong secure, democratic Jewish state and Palestinians having their legitimate aspirations for a state and self determination," Blinken said. **AP**

# US military aircraft with 6 aboard crashes off southern Japan

AP ■ TOKYO

A crew member who was recovered from the ocean after a US military Osprey aircraft carrying six people crashed on Wednesday off southern Japan has been pronounced dead, coast guard officials said. The cause of the crash and the status of the five others on board were not immediately known, coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said. Initial reports said the aircraft was carrying eight people, but the US military later revised the number to six, he said. The coast guard received an emergency call from a fishing boat near the crash site off Yakushima, an island south of

Kagoshima on the southern main island of Kyushu, he said.

Coast guard aircraft and patrol boats found one person, who was later pronounced dead at a nearby hospital, and gray-colored debris believed to be from the aircraft, Ogawa said. The victim was only identified as a male. They were found about 1 kilometer (0.6 mile) off the eastern coast of Yakushima. An empty inflatable life raft was also found in the area.

The Osprey is a hybrid aircraft that takes off and lands like a helicopter, but during flight can rotate its propellers forward and cruise much faster like an airplane.

Versions of the aircraft are flown by the US Marine Corps,

Navy and Air Force.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said the Osprey disappeared from radar at midafternoon, a few minutes before the coast guard received the emergency call.

The aircraft requested an emergency landing at the Yakushima airport about five minutes before it was lost from radar, NHK public television and other media reported.

NHK quoted a Yakushima resident as saying he saw the aircraft turned upside down, with fire coming from one of its engines, and then an explosion before it fell to the sea.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he planned to seek a further explanation from

the US military, but declined to say whether he would seek a temporary suspension of Osprey operations in Japan.

Ospreys have had a number of accidents in the past, including in Japan, where they are deployed at both US and Japanese military bases.

In Okinawa, where about half of the 50,000 American troops in Japan are based, Gov. Denny Tamaki told reporters Wednesday that he will ask the US military to suspend all Osprey flights in Japan.

Ogawa said the aircraft had departed from the US Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Yamaguchi prefecture and crashed on its way to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa.

# COP28 leader denies report that UAE wanted to seek oil deals in summit

AP ■ DUBAI

The Emirati president-designate for the upcoming United Nations COP28 climate talks forcefully denied Wednesday a report alleging his nation planned to use the summit to strike oil and gas deals, a day before the summit was due to begin.

Sultan al-Jaber, who also leads the massive state-run Abu Dhabi National Oil Co., called the allegations from a BBC report "an attempt to undermine the work of the COP28 presidency" before the talks begin Thursday. The report cited what it described as "leaked briefing documents" the broadcaster said showed the Emirates planned to discuss fossil fuel deals with 15 nations. "These allegations are false, not true, incorrect and not

accurate," al-Jaber told a small group of journalists gathered for a news conference that also was aired live. "I promise you never ever did I see these talking points that they refer to or that I ever even used such talking points in my discussions."

He added: "So please for once, respect who we are, respect what we have achieved over the years and respect the fact that we have been clear open and clean and honest and transparent on how we want to conduct this COP process."

The BBC did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Adnan Amin, the conference's chief executive and a top lieutenant of al-Jaber, said he wasn't concerned about the possible fallout of the report and said he believed Emirati officials

were determined to make progress toward limiting climate change.

"I think they're focused on delivering a transformational COP. ... They're focused on creating a platform for everybody to have the ability to discuss ambitious climate action," Amin, a veteran U.N. official and longtime proponent of renewable energy, told The Associated Press after hosting a pre-conference meeting with delegation chiefs. Immediately after al-Jaber's remarks, a faked news release sent to The Associated Press described al-Jaber as having agreed to resign as CEO of ADNOC. COP28 organizers with the UAE delegation later confirmed it was false and al-Jaber would continue in his role.

## Trump embraces Jan 6 rioters

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump has embraced the rioters who attacked the US Capitol on January 6, 2021 as patriots, vowed to pardon a large portion of them if he wins a second term and even collaborated on a song with a group of jailed defendants.

In his election interference case in Washington, his lawyers are taking a different tack. Despite losing a bid to strike from the indictment references to that day's violence, defence attorneys have made clear their strategy involves distancing the former president from the horde of rioters, whom they describe as "independent actors at the Capitol." At the same time, special counsel Jack Smith's team has

signalled it will make the case that Trump is responsible for the chaos that unfolded, and point to Trump's continued support of the January 6 defendants to help establish his criminal intent. The competing arguments highlight the extent to which the riot serves as an inescapable backdrop in a landmark trial set to begin on March 4 in a courthouse just blocks away from the Capitol. It also reflects a point of separation between Trump and his legal team in the case accusing the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination of conspiring to overturn his 2020 election loss. While Trump's glorification of January 6 defendants may boost him politically as he vies to retake the White House in 2024, his lawyers'

approach lays bare a concern that arguments linking him to the rioters could harm him in front of a jury. Though Trump is not charged with inciting the riot, any success he hopes to have at trial may turn in part on his defence team's ability to neutralise, or at least minimise, the ghoulish images of the violence that prosecutors cite as a natural extension of the former president's repeated lies about a stolen election.

Much may depend as well on the evidence permitted by US District Judge Tanya Chutkan. Trump's lawyers have signalled they will try to block prosecutors from presenting at trial evidence related to the actions of the rioters, who sent lawmakers running into hiding.

# ‘US work visa renewal programme launch in December, Indians to benefit most’

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a move that will benefit a significantly large number of Indian technology professionals, the US is set to begin a pilot programme for domestic renewal of certain categories of H-1B visas in December.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and

China. The pilot programme which will be limited to 20,000 participants initially comes months after the White House announced the plan during the state visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June.

In an interview with PTI, Julie Stuft, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Visa Services, said, "In India, the demand (for US visas) is still very high. The wait time of six, eight and 12 months is not what we need and (it is) not indicative of how we view India."

We want to make sure that Indian travellers can get appointments as quickly as possible. One way we are doing that

is through the domestic visa renewal programme, which is focused very much on India. We are piloting that," she said.

Over a period of three months, beginning in December, the State Department will be issuing 20,000 visas to foreign nationals who are already inside the country. "We will do 20,000 in the first group. The vast majority of those will be Indian nationals living in the US and we will expand as it goes on."

"Because Indians are the largest skilled group of workers in the United States, we hope that India will benefit quite a bit from this programme and it will

prevent people from having to travel back to India or anywhere for a visa appointment to get their visa renewed. It will allow our missions in India to concentrate on new applicants," Stuft said. While the State Department has been working on launching such a programme on a pilot basis for quite some time now, it was formally announced during Modi's visit.

The plan, which was mentioned in the joint statement and announced by Modi during his address to the Indian diaspora at the Ronald Reagan Centre, has been cheered and welcomed by the Indian community in the US.

# Ailing Pope Francis says, he's not well

AP ■ VATICAN CITY



ed the printed speech to the aide.

But Francis did speak at the end of the audience, voicing his contentment over the truce in fighting between Israel and Hamas, and saying he hopes it continues "so that all the hostages are released and access necessary to permit humanitarian aid" to reach Gaza is provided. "They lack bread, water,

the people are suffering," Francis said. On Tuesday, the Vatican announced that doctors had asked the pope, who has a lung inflammation causing breathing problems, to skip a three-day trip to a UN climate conference, known as COP28, in Dubai.

The trip would have begun on Friday and have seen the pontiff return to Rome on Sunday. The Holy See's announcement of the cancelled trip also said that his medical condition had improved, but noted that the pope had the flu and "inflammation of the respiratory airways."

The pontiff, who has made caring for the environment a priority of his papacy, wants in some way to participate in the discussions in the United Arab

Emirates, according to the Holy See. It was unclear if Francis might read his address to the climate conference by videoconference or take part in some other form.

The Vatican said the pope had acquiesced to the doctors' request "with great regret."

Toward the end of Wednesday's audience, circus performers came on stage to entertain the pope with an acrobatic act. Francis looked amused as he watched the performers, including acrobats and a juggler.

He posed with the group for a photo. "I want to say thanks for this moment of joy," Francis said, adding that the circus expresses the human dimension of "simple joy," and asking the audience to applaud.

# Jetliner, without fossil fuel, makes trans-Atlantic crossing

AP ■ LONDON

The first commercial airliner to cross the Atlantic on a purely high-fat, low-emissions fuel flew on Tuesday from London to New York in a step toward achieving what supporters called "jet zero."

The Virgin Atlantic Boeing 787 flight was powered without using fossil fuels, relying on so-called sustainable aviation fuel made up largely of tallow and other waste fats. "The world will always assume something can be done, until you do it," said Virgin founder Richard Branson, who was aboard the flight with others including corporate and government officials, engineers and journalists. The UK Transport Department, which provided 1



million pounds (USD 1.27 million) to plan and operate the flight, called the test a "huge step towards jet zero" to make air travel more environmentally friendly, though large hurdles remain in making the fuel widely available.

While governments have

long talked about decarbonizing air travel, the transition has been moving at the pace of a dirigible.

Sustainable aviation fuel, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions by about 70 per cent, is the best near-term way for the international aviation

industry to achieve its net zero target by 2050, the US Energy Department said, though it called the goal aspirational.

The US Government Accountability Office said that while domestic production of the fuel had jumped from about 2 million gallons in 2016 to 15.8 million gallons in 2022, it accounted for less than 0.1 per cent of the jet fuel used by major US airlines. It was also a drop in the bucket compared to the goal of producing 1 billion gallons a year set in 2018 by the Federal Aviation Administration. The White House, meanwhile, set a goal two years ago to produce 3 billion gallons of sustainable aviation fuel per year by 2030 and 100 per cent of domestic commercial jet fuel by 2050.

## Nepal first country in South Asia to register same-sex marriage officially

**Kathmandu (PTI):** Five months after the Supreme Court legalised it, Nepal on Wednesday formally registered the first case of same-sex marriage, making it the first South Asian country to do so.

Trans-woman Maya Gurung, 35 and Surendra Pandey, 27, a gay, got legally married and their marriage was registered at Dordi Rural Municipality of Lamjung district in Western Nepal, according to Sanjib Gurung (Pinky), president of Blue Diamond Society, an organization working for the rights and welfare of the sexual minorities in Nepal.

Way back in 2007, Nepal's Supreme Court had allowed same-sex marriage. Even the Constitution of Nepal, adopted in 2015, explicitly states that there can be no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

On June 27, 2023, the Supreme Court issued an interim order to legalise same-sex marriage in Nepal in a writ petition filed by multiple people, including Gurung. But despite the historic order to temporarily register same-sex marriage, Kathmandu District Court four months ago rejected the move citing a lack of necessary laws.

Surendra Pandey and Maya's marriage application was rejected at that time.

"It's a great pleasure to learn about this, it is a great achievement for us, the third gender community of Nepal," Pinky told PTI. "This is the first case not only in Nepal but also in the whole of South Asia, and we welcome the decision."



# Imran not to contest for PTI chairman’s post

## Nominates close aide to lead party

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan will not contest the organisational polls of his party and has instead nominated his close aide Gohar Khan for the post of Pakis-tan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman to lead the party in the upcoming general elections, a top leader said on Wednesday.

Barrister Ali Zafar said that Chairman Imran Khan would not be contesting intra-party polls scheduled for December 2 due to his legal problems, hence Barrister Gohar Khan had been nominated for the slot of the party chairmanship in a temporary arrangement. Imran Khan had been convicted in the Toshakhana case.

His statement comes a day after confusion erupted with-in Imran Khan’s party after it dismissed a statement by one of its own senior leaders, who claimed that the jailed leader would not contest for the chairman’s post in the upcoming intra-party polls.

“Imran Khan was, is and will continue to be the chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf... I will carry out my responsibility till Khan returns,” said Gohar Khan, a member of PTI chairman’s legal team.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is set to conduct intra-party elections within the 20-day time frame set by the election commission to retain the ‘bat’ as its electoral symbol, ahead of general elections scheduled to be held on February 8.The party was asked by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) last week to hold polls within 20 days or it would be deprived of its election symbol of cricket bat. Zafar said that the party discussed the issue of election with Imran Khan who said that he did not want to give the ECP any “excuse” for not giv-



ing the party the bat symbol in the upcoming general elections.

“The public is with us. We will win the elections when they happen. I want to take part in the general election. Intra-party polls hold no meaning for me. I want the Toshakhana case to be decided as soon as possible. When it is decided, I will contest intra-party polls as chairman,” Zafar quoted Imran Khan as saying. The ex-premier also directed the party to hold intra-party polls while making it clear that he would not contest intra-party polls until the Toshakhana case was decided.

“With his (Gohar Khan) nomination, you will realise that this is not a minus-one formula, that this is not a coup. He is Imran Khan sahib’s own nominee and is appropriate for the temporary arrangement we are doing,” Zafar said. He also said that the new chairman would be a “caretaker chairman” and work on a temporary basis until Khan was re-elected as head of the party after his acquittal. He further said that PTI and Imran Khan were synonymous.

“PTI is Imran Khan and Imran Khan is PTI. PTI is nothing without Imran Khan. It doesn’t matter if you’re the chairman on paper. The leader, and the continuous leader, is Imran Khan sahib,” he added. Khan has been in jail since Aug 5 when he was arrested

after a conviction in the Toshakhana case. He was also disqualified by the ECP in the same case for failing to disclose the proceeds from the sale of gifts he got from the state repository.

The party’s Core Committee on Monday gave formal approval to hold the intra-party polls within the time frame of 20 days given by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). If the party does not follow the orders, it will lose its bat symbol.

Khan, being a former iconic international cricketer, is considered synonymous with the (cricket) bat.

This will be a huge development for the party as the country moves towards general elections, set to take place in February.

Meanwhile, Sessions court judge Muhammad Mureed Abbas on Wednesday rejected Imran Khan’s request for acquittal in the intimidation of a female judge case.

The former prime minister was booked under terrorism charges in August 2022 at Margalla police station in the federal capital for his remarks at a rally in F9 Park where he warned Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry and police high-ups of dire consequences for their “biased” attitude towards his party. However, after personally visiting Judge Zeba at an Islamabad lower court to apologise last year, Imran Khan had submitted an affidavit to the Islamabad High Court, assuring that he would not repeat actions that would hurt the dignity of the judiciary.

The IHC, after disagreements between Justice Babar Sattar and Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, quashed the terrorism charges against him and the case was transferred from an anti-terrorism court to a sessions court in December 2022.

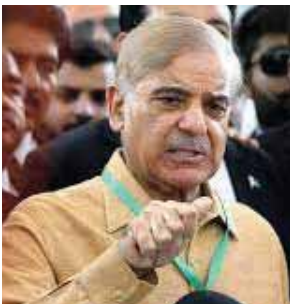
# May 9 violence was an attempt to topple Army Chief : Ex-Pak PM

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan’s former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Wednesday that the unprecedented violence, including the attacks on key military installations, following ex-premier Imran Khan’s arrest in May was an attempt to topple Army Chief Gen Asim Munir. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party President made the remarks while addressing reporters after his appearance in the accountability court here in a corruption case.

Taking an indirect dig at the 71-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party chief Khan, who is in jail in the cipher case, for trying to topple the incumbent army chief through a planned conspiracy on May 9, Sharif said the facilitators of the unprecedented attacks are the “state enemies”.

“On May 9, an attempt was made to topple the army chief. No one...be it (a) democracy or



dictatorship tolerates treason. Thereby, the action is being taken against the May 9 culprits,” Sharif, 72, said.

Sharif further said no concession should be given to the facilitators of May 9 as they were “state enemies”.

Thousands of PTI supporters stormed military and government installations across the country following Khan’s arrest in an alleged corruption case in early May this year. Subsequently, police arrested over 10,000 party leaders and workers, who have been languishing in jail since then.

The military also took

action against more than a dozen high-ranking officers for being part of the conspiracy to oust Gen Munir.

“Three officers, including a lieutenant-general, have been removed from their jobs. Strict disciplinary proceedings against officers, including three major generals and seven brigadiers, have been completed in connection with the May 9 incidents,” the military had said earlier. The PML-N party has declared Khan the mastermind of the attacks on military installations and demanded that the “PTI leadership involved in this crime should not be allowed to contest upcoming general elections on February 8, 2024.”

General elections in cash-strapped Pakistan general elections are scheduled to be held on February 8. The military establishment has already carved out two parties — Istehkham-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) and PTI-Parliamentarian — from the PTI. It is also not allowing Khan’s party to partic-

ipate in any political activity. In a fresh round of action against the PTI party, police in Punjab alone arrested over 500 of its workers in connection with attacks on state buildings.

The PTI Core Committee has strongly condemned the state’s coercive tactics and reprisal actions against the party workers and leaders that continued even after the announcement of the poll date.

“The nation will not accept rigged polls held in such an uneven electoral field and with state interference,” it said. Khan is currently detained at the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi in the cipher case in which he is accused of making public the content of a diplomatic cable from Pakistan’s embassy in Washington in March, 2022. The former-cricketer-turned-politician was ousted through a vote of no-confidence in April 2022. More than 150 cases have been registered against him since his ouster from power.

# Pak court acquits Nawaz Sharif in Avenfield case

**Islamabad (PTI):** In a major relief to Nawaz Sharif ahead of elections, a top Pakistani court on Wednesday acquitted the former prime minister in the Avenfield corruption case while his acquittal in another case was maintained after an appeal by the anti-graft body challenging it was withdrawn.

A two-member Islamabad High Court bench comprising Chief Justice Ameer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb announced the verdict after hearing the appeal filed by Sharif against his conviction in the Avenfield corruption case in which he was sentenced to 10 years in jail in 2018.

In the same year, the 73-year-old Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo was acquitted by a trial court in the Flagship corruption case but the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), the anti-corruption watchdog, had challenged his acquittal in the IHC.

# Xi goes on inspection tour of Shanghai

PTI ■ BEIJING/SHANGHAI

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday inspected key commercial establishments in Shanghai, home to some of the biggest foreign firms, as he attempted to shore up business confidence in China amid dwindling inflow of foreign investment and the movement of supply chains out of the country.

This is his first visit to Shanghai since the city was hit hard by COVID-19 leading to the harsh two-month-long lockdown in 2022 during which its 25 million population was confined to their dwellings under Xi’s ‘zero COVID’ policy. He visited the gleaming eastern Chinese city last in 2021. Xi, 70, in the last two days, inspected the Shanghai Futures Exchange, an exhibition on Shanghai’s sci-tech innovations, and a government-subsidised

rental housing community, learning about the city’s efforts in strengthening its competitiveness as an international financial centre, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. His visit was aimed at building the city into an international sci-tech innovation centre, and constructing government-subsidised rental housing projects, it said.

Shanghai is the home for top foreign firms like Tesla, General Motors, Walt Disney and the 10-year-old Shanghai Free-Trade Zone (FTZ), a testing ground for China’s economic reforms.

Since, 2021, the world’s second-largest economy has been hit hard by recurring and prolonged lockdowns of various cities which exacerbated China’s economic woes, denting the business confidence including its once-booming property sector. Xi’s first visit came close on his successful visit to the US this

month where he had a “strategic and historic” summit with US President Joe Biden during which the two leaders agreed to tone down their harsh policies and rhetoric against each other.

While their summit sparked speculation of a subtle shift in US-China power dynamics, Xi in his address to the APEC CEO summit in San Francisco pledged to tear down foreign investment barriers and promised to invite foreign capital with “heart-warming” measures.

“We will strive to tear down the barriers to the flow of innovation factors, deepen reform of the digital economy, and promote free and orderly flow of data in compliance with the law,” he said in his speech aimed at raising sagging business confidence in China leading to shifting of supply chains.

Ahead of his inspections in

Shanghai, Xi ordered greater protection for international firms’ rights and intellectual property in a bid to address concerns of foreign companies over crackdowns and raids on multinationals and favourable treatment for domestic competitors.

On Tuesday official media quoted him telling a high-powered political bureau of the ruling Communist Party of China that id China must ensure “comprehensive, open and transparent” legal treatment of foreign entities.

The country’s legal system should “strengthen protection of intellectual property rights,” he said, as well as “safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of foreign enterprises,” China must “create a market-oriented, legal and international first-class business environment,” Xi said.

“It is important to raise the awareness of legal compliance,

including guiding Chinese citizens and enterprises to abide by local laws and regulations and customs when going abroad, and that they should apply laws and rules to safeguard their legitimate rights and interests” official media quoted Xi as saying.

Observers say China’s current economic woes were largely attributed to Xi’s emphasis more on security issues denting business confidence.

“In the past five years, however, security concerns have taken top priority,” Post columnist Wang Xiangwei said.

Last year, in his keynote speech at the 20th Communist Party national congress, Xi spoke of pursuing development as the government’s central task but devoted far more time to national security and social stability, Wang wrote in his column in the Post on Monday.

# Russian court extends detention of Wall Street Journal reporter

AP ■ MOSCOW

A court in Moscow has extended the detention of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, arrested on espionage charges, until January 30, Russian news agencies reported. The hearing took place behind closed doors on Tuesday because authorities say details of the criminal case against the American journalist are classified.

Gershkovich, 32, was detained in March while on a reporting trip to the Russian city of Yekaterinburg, about 2,000 kilometres (1,200 miles) east of Moscow. Russia’s Federal Security Service alleged that the reporter, “acting on the instructions of the American side, collected information constituting a state secret about the activities of one of the enterprises of the Russian military-industrial complex”.

Gershkovich and the Journal deny the allegations, and the US government has declared him to be wrongfully detained. Russian authorities haven’t detailed any evidence to support the espionage charges. Gershkovich is the first American reporter to be charged with espionage in Russia since 1986, when Nicholas Daniloff, a Moscow correspondent for US News and World Report, was arrested by the KGB. He is being held at Moscow’s Lefortovo prison, notorious for its harsh conditions.

Analysts have pointed out that Moscow may be using jailed Americans as bargaining chips after US-Russian tensions soared when Russia sent troops into Ukraine. At least 20 US citizens arrested in Russia in recent years — including WNBA star Brittney Griner — have been exchanged for Russians jailed in the US.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has said it will consider a swap for Gershkovich only after a verdict in his trial. In Russia, espionage trials can last for more than a year.



From third left, Latvia’s Foreign Minister Krisjanis Karins, United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg pose during a meeting of the NATO Ukraine Council in NATO foreign ministers session at NATO headquarters in Brussels on Wednesday. NATO foreign ministers conclude a two-day meeting on Wednesday, in which they discussed Ukraine, tensions in the Western Balkans and preparations for NATO’s 75th anniversary next year. AP/PTI

# ‘At least 40 civilians killed by al-Qaida-linked rebels’

**Abuja (AP):** At least 40 civilians were killed last weekend by al-Qaida-linked rebels trying to take control of a besieged town in Burkina Faso’s hard-hit northern region, the United Nations’ rights office said, calling the attack a war crime. In one of the largest clashes in recent years in the West African nation under threat from fighters linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group, a large number of fighters tried to take control of Djibo near Mali’s border.

The town, located 210 kilometres (130 miles) from the capital, Ouagadougou, has been under blockade by rebels for more than a year, often struggling to provide essential services. The militants in the latest attack, which happened on Sunday, also wounded 42 people and set fire to three camps for internally displaced people, U.N. Human Rights Office spokesperson Seif Magango said in a statement on Tuesday that blamed the attack on JNIM, an umbrella coalition of armed groups aligned with al-Qaida. “Deliberately targeting civilians

or individuals not taking direct part in hostilities constitutes a war crime,” the U.N. department said, citing reports from its workers on the ground. The Associated Press couldn’t reach witnesses or survivors in the area, which has frequent internet cuts and where the military government is known to crack down on civil society.

State-run RTB Television ran images — which The Associated Press couldn’t verify — that showed large groups of people riding motorcycles as they appeared to flee aerial bombardment. “Attacks on civilians are inexcusable and must stop, and those responsible must be held to account following thorough, impartial and independent investigations by the authorities,” the UN statement added. Around half of Burkina Faso’s territory remains outside of government control. The landlocked country has been ravaged by jihadi attacks. Fighters have killed thousands and displaced more than 2 million people, further threatening the stability of the country that had two coups last year.

# Kuwait’s ruling emir, 86, facing health issues stable now

**Dubai (AP):** The ruling emir of oil-rich Kuwait was hospitalised on Wednesday “due to an emergency health problem” but later reported to be in stable condition, renewing the longstanding concerns over his health since he became ruler in 2020. The report by the state-run KUNA news agency did not elaborate on the problem faced by 86-year-old Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah. However, Sheikh Nawaf has handed over power several times during his rule to his deputy while facing medical checks and other issues. Given Sheikh Nawaf’s age, the emergency renews concerns about his health. State-run news previously reported that he travelled to the United States for unspecified medical checks in March 2021.

The health of Kuwait’s leaders remains a sensitive matter in the tiny Mideast nation bordering Iraq and Saudi Arabia which has seen internal power struggles behind palace doors.

# NZ leader plans to ban cellphone use in schools

**Wellington (AP):** New Zealand’s new prime minister plans to ban cellphone use in schools and repeal tobacco controls in the ambitious agenda he released on Wednesday for his first 100 days in office.

Christopher Luxon outlined 49 actions he said his conservative government intended to take over the next three months. The first new law he planned to pass would narrow the central bank’s mandate to focus purely on keeping inflation in check, he said. That would change the Reserve Bank’s current dual focus on low inflation and high employment.

Many of the actions in the 100-day plan involve repealing initiatives from the previous liberal government, which had been in office for six years. The new efforts include a plan to double renewable energy production.

Luxon said many of the measures were aimed at improving the economy. Many of the plans are proving contentious, including the

one to repeal tobacco restrictions approved last year by the previous government. Those included requirements for low nicotine levels in cigarettes, fewer retailers and a lifetime ban for youth.

Luxon’s government has said that ending the tobacco restrictions — which were not due to take effect until next year — would bring in more tax dollars, although Luxon said Wednesday it wasn’t a case of trading health for money.

“We are sticking with the status quo,” Luxon said. “We are going to continue to drive smoking rates down across New Zealand under our government.”

Critics say the plan is a setback for public health and a win for the tobacco industry.

Two education initiatives — one requiring schools to teach an hour of reading, writing and math each day, and another banning cellphone use — reflect a sentiment among some voters that schools have strayed from their primary mission.

# Myanmar, China conduct naval drills together

AP ■ BANGKOK

Myanmar and China are conducting naval drills together as the military government in the Southeast Asian nation loses ground in its north-east border region to a coalition of militias that also has strong ties to Beijing.

State-run Myanmar Alinn newspaper said Wednesday that three Chinese vessels were anchored in Yangon, Myanmar’s largest city, and that officials from both nations met Tuesday to discuss the maritime security exercises.

The Chinese vessels — the destroyer Zibo, frigate Jing Zhou and supply ship Qian Dao Hu — carry about 700 sailors and arrived at the Myanmar port Monday. The report didn’t give more details on the drills. Myanmar’s military seized power

from an elected government in 2021 and since has been in armed conflict with pro-democracy forces and ethnic militias.

The visit of the Chinese vessels comes during an upsurge in violence on Myanmar’s border with China by the Three Brotherhood Alliance, a group of militias that launched a coordinated offensive against the ruling military on Oct. 27.

China is Myanmar’s biggest trading partner and maintains good relations with the ruling generals. The groups in the alliance also have good relations with China and have vowed to protect foreign investments such as Chinese-backed projects in territory they control. The alliance has claimed widespread victories including four border crossings in the northern part of Shan state, and the military gov-

ernment acknowledged soon after fighting began that it had lost three towns. The alliance’s offensive has energized the nationwide armed struggle to overthrow the military regime that was installed after the army seized power, and fighting has spread to many parts of the country.

On Wednesday, the resistance forces in the northwestern Chin state seized a small town in Matupi township bordering India, according to Salai Danny, a spokesperson of the Chinland Defense Force-Zotung militia group. Beijing has called for a cease-fire and has said the warring parties should try and resolve their differences through dialogue. It has not, however, used its influence with the militia groups to pressure them to put an end to the fighting.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that my client Devender Sharma is in process to purchase the Freehold Industrial Back side portion of Plot no. 10/3 area measuring 200 sq. yds. in Block-6 out of total area measuring 438 sq. yds. Situated at Industrial area Lawrence Road Delhi (aviation loan from Primal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd.) from Anil Kumar Gupta, who inherited the same vide Will dated 08.05.2011 executed by Sh. Prem Chand (Decd. no. 2138) read with MCD Mutation dated 21.03.2013 All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kaur Gupta (Advocate)  
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower  
Sec-4, Vasant Vihar, GZ., U.P., Mob. 9810085351

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mrs. Jyoti P. Seth W/o. Mr. P.V. Seth, the owner of ONE FLAT AT GROUND FLOOR, UP TO EXTENT OF CEILING LEVEL, MEASURING AREA 40 SQ. YARDS, A PART OF PROPERTY No. 3/102, OUT OF KHARSA No. 24, SITUATED IN THE ASAOI OF LAJITA PARK, LAXMI NAGAR, IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE: SHAKARPUR KHAS, ILLAQA: SHAHDARA, DELHI-110092, vide Registered General Power of Attorney Dated 24.07.1998 Sr. No. 44273 No. 04, Document No. 44273 Executed By Mrs. Kiran Sharma W/o. Mr. Prilam Sharma, General Power of Attorney dated 24.07.1998 Sr. No. 44273 All Persons are hereby informed that MR. VIKAS KUMAR SINGH & MRS. NIKKI KUMARI mortgaging the said property with SBI India Credit Company Limited (Formerly Fullerton India Credit Company Limited) General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interest/in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the date of the present.

Mrs. Prashant Lala, Advocate  
SS Associates (Law Firm)  
FF 18, Lotus Pond Plaza, Vaidhyanagar, Indraprastha, Ghazabad 201014  
E-mail: ssgsassociates@gmail.com, Ph: 7814172794, 9130082337

**Baba Farid University of Health Sciences**  
Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203  
Ph.01639-256232, 256236

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

E-tenders are invited for the procurement of following items/services upto 21.12.2023

- 1) External painting including preparation of concrete surface (North face) of GGS Hospital, Faridkot
- 2) Special Repair of Outer face of Academic Block (Center of Excellence) Building of BFUHS, Faridkot
- 3) Replacement of Fallen puff sheets and false ceiling of Auditorium of SINPMIS, Badal
- 4) Construction of waiting shed for patients in open area between OPD Block & X-Ray Block at GGS Medical Hospital, Faridkot
- 5) Up gradation of cooling of AC system of Lecture Theater No.3 (by providing 22 ton ductable AC with plenium) of GGS Medical College, Faridkot
- 6) Operation & Maintenance (O & M) of 22 KLD Capacity E.T.P installed at Nursing College & Civil Hospital at Jalandhar for two years
- 7) Repair & overhauling of 12 person (Magne ECE) lift with AMC of 4 years after one year guarantee period installed at GGS Medical College, Faridkot.

E-tenders are invited for the procurement of following items upto 27.12.2023

- 1) Supply and installation of Green Laser Machine
- 2) Procurement of Leadfree Coat Aprons with attached Thyroid Shield for GGS Medical Hospital, Faridkot
- 3) Procurement of 4 K/UHD LED smart 85/98", Projector and IT equipments
- 4) Procurement of 4 K/UHD LED smart 85/98", Projector and IT equipments
- 5) Procurement of UTM Firewall
- 6) Procurement of Compatible Cartridges
- 6) Supply of Printer, Scanner and MFP
- 7) Disposal of E-Waste (Electronic Waste)
- 8) Hiring Agency to provide Services to conduct Computer Based Tests (CBT)

Terms and conditions can be downloaded from <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. The tenders will be accepted in E-Tender mode only. Bidder can also download tender notification and document from the University website i.e. [www.bfuhs.ac.in](http://www.bfuhs.ac.in)

**Registrar**

00/12/148/2023/30148 Dated CHD :- 11/29/2023

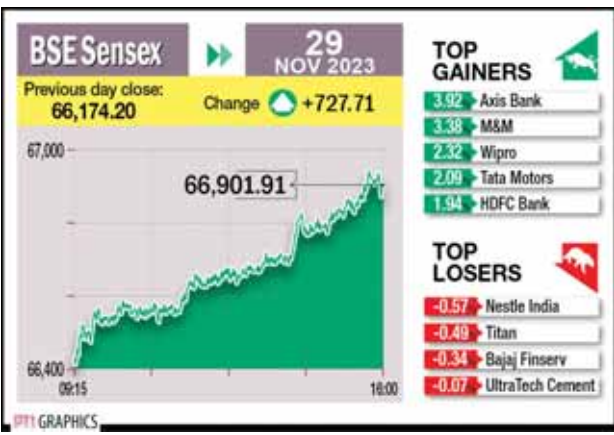


# Sensex jumps 727 pts on foreign fund inflows

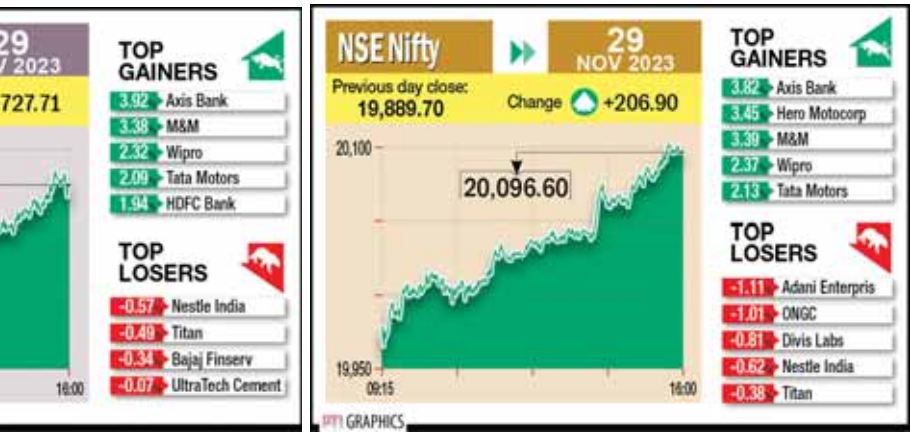
## Mcap of BSE listed firms hits \$4-trn milestone

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rallied 727 points and Nifty closed above the 20,000 mark on Wednesday driven by buying in heavyweight HDFC Bank, Axis Bank ICICI and TCS on expectations of more foreign fund inflows. In a remarkable day for Indian equities, the combined market valuation of all listed companies on the BSE reached the USD 4-trillion milestone for the first time on Wednesday. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 727.71 points or 1.10 per cent to settle at 66,901.91 with 26 of its components ending in the green and four in the red. The index started the day on a positive note and later zoomed 772.08 points or



1.16 per cent to a high of 66,946.28. The broader Nifty climbed 206.90 points or 1.04 per cent to reclaim the 20,000- mark after a gap of over two months. It ended at 20,096.60. Among the Sensex firms, Axis Bank rose the most by 3.92 per cent. Mahindra & Mahindra surged by 3.38 per cent, Wipro by 2.32 per cent, Tata Motors by 2.09 per cent, HDFC Bank by 1.94 per cent and Tech Mahindra by 1.51 per cent.



ICICI Bank, JSW Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, HCL Technologies and Bharti Airtel were also among major gainers. Nestle, Titan, Bajaj Finserv and UltraTech Cement were the laggards. The combined market valuation of all listed companies on BSE reached the USD 4-trillion milestone, mirroring an optimistic trend in equities. It took just 2.5 years to hit the USD 4-trillion landmark after

the market capitalisation of BSE listed companies touched the USD 3-trillion mark on May 24, 2021. "The market saw incredible upward momentum today, Nifty surpassing the 20,000 mark, driven by strong listing gains of ongoing IPOs and dovish statements from US Fed officials, intensifying expectations for early rate cuts. This was demonstrated by the rise in mid & small caps and drop in US bond yields

and dollar index. "Ease in yield is attracting foreign funds to emerging markets," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.78 per cent and the smallcap index climbed 0.40 per cent. Among the indices, bankex jumped 1.67 per cent, auto rallied 1.57 per cent, IT (1.33 per cent), financial services (1.28 per cent), teck (1.20 per cent),

oil & gas (0.99 per cent) and capital goods (0.89 per cent). Consumer durables and realty were the laggards. Raising hopes of more foreign fund inflows, market reports stated that the US-based Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board has announced plans to transition to a new MSCI Index which could lead to more than USD 3 billion of inflows into Indian equities. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. European markets were trading mostly with gains. The US markets ended marginally up on Tuesday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 783.82 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.54 per cent to USD 82.12 a barrel. The BSE benchmark climbed 204.16 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 66,174.20 on Tuesday. The Nifty gained 95 points or 0.48 per cent to 19,889.70.

## Second quarter GDP numbers likely to be good: Eco Affairs Secy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian economy is showing momentum and the growth rate in the second quarter (July-September) is likely to be good, Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said on Wednesday. The GDP numbers for the second quarter are scheduled to be released on Thursday. The economy grew at 7.8 per cent in the first quarter (April-June) of the current financial year. "India economy showed good momentum in the second quarter. The second quarter numbers should be good," Seth told reporters on the sidelines of a national workshop on 'Leveraging private finance for urban infrastructure developments -- Learnings from G20 Infrastructure Working Group'. He further said that the fiscal deficit target of 5.9 per cent for the current financial year was feasible despite additional



outgo towards food subsidy. "We are confident of meeting fiscal deficit target this year despite the government raising food subsidy for the next five years," Seth said. The Budget 2023-24 proposes to bring down the fiscal deficit to 5.9 per cent of the GDP from 6.4 per cent in the previous financial year. The government proposes to further bring down the fiscal deficit to less than 4.5 per cent of the GDP by 2025-26.

## Birla Sun Life collects ₹800 cr from transport & logistics fund NFO



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd on Wednesday said it has collected nearly Rs 800 crore through its transport and logistics scheme during the new fund offering (NFO) period. The asset management company mobilised the amount from its thematic fund -- Aditya Birla Sun Life Transport and Logistics Fund -- during the NFO period from October 27 to November 10. The fund reopened for subscription on November 21. The open-ended equity oriented thematic fund received a huge response from 53,777 investors and has garnered a total of Rs 798.89 crore, the company said in a statement. "This fund is a unique offering that captures the growth potential of the transportation and

logistics sector, which is a key driver of the Indian economy. The fund aims to provide long-term capital appreciation by investing in companies that are well-positioned to benefit from the structural changes and emerging trends in the sector," A Balasubramanian, Managing Director and CEO at Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC, said. The company said that the transportation and logistics theme is vibrant and fast-growing and the theme has robust growth drivers on both the demand and supply side. The transportation theme includes sectors such as automobiles and auto ancillary, while the logistics theme includes sectors like ports, warehousing/supply chain, e-commerce and allied sectors. These sectors common to both themes would be shipping, railways, infrastructure and airlines.

## UltraTech Cement acquires cement grinding assets of Burnpur Cement for ₹169.79 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aditya Birla group firm UltraTech Cement Ltd on Wednesday said it has acquired the cement grinding assets of Burnpur Cement Ltd in Jharkhand for Rs 169.79 crore. The company has acquired

0.54 mtpa cement grinding assets of Burnpur Cement Ltd, located at Patratu in Jharkhand, UltraTech Cement said in a regulatory filing. "The acquisition has been carried out at a consideration of Rs 169.79 crore in terms of the provisions of the Securitisation and



Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002," it added. This investment marks the company's entry in Jharkhand, the filing said, adding the company's capacity in India

now stands at 133 mtpa. Last year state-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) had put up for sale the account of loss-making Burnpur Cement and invited bids from Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) to recover loans outstanding of over Rs 50 crore.

## Hiranandani says no IPO plans in 2024

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Hiranandani Group does not have any plans for an Initial Public Offering in 2024, and may look at hitting the capital markets in 2025, a top company official said on Wednesday. Niranjana Hiranandani, the Founder and Managing Director of the city-based group, said internal accruals are sufficient to take care of business requirements at present and all projects being undertaken do not require any funding support. "I have no plans at present... (there is) no need for capital today. But let us see. I haven't decided anything in that direction, but never (say) no. Not (in) 2024, may be 2025," Hiranandani told PTI, replying to a specific query on the company's IPO plans. A slew of its peers from the city, including Rustumjee and Lodha Group (MacroTech Developers), have listed over the last few years. The group announced an expansion into the consul-

tancy services space on Wednesday, wherein it will offer a slew of services, including liasoning, design and marketing, which spread out over the entire lifespan of a realty project, to clients. Hiranandani said the idea is to offer the services on an "a la carte" basis, wherein the client can choose the kind of help the entity needs. The group will charge 12-20 per cent of the cost as its fees, depending on the complexity of work it does, he said. The newly launched service christened 'Eleva' will work across new developments, brownfield expansions, slum rehabilitation and building redevelopment, Hiranandani said, adding that 85 per cent of the people working in the vertical will be its existing staff, while the rest will be junior-level staff who will be hired. He exuded confidence of breaking even in the new business in a year. He said poor execution of projects in Mumbai is a real issue, and pointed out that over 500 projects are stuck



due to some shortcoming or the other. The group will be selective in the project it chooses to work with, Hiranandani said, adding that it will not work

with large-scale projects like the Adani Group's Dharavi project and restrict itself to smaller projects. He said Dharavi accounts for only 10 per cent of the slums

in the city, while the 90 per cent will continue to exist even if the Adani-led projects fructify. It is possible to do away with all the slum structures in the city in 5-6 years, Hiranandani said, adding that he is preparing a plan on the same, which will be submitted to the PM under the aegis of an industry lobby grouping. Asked about his son Darshan virtually admitting to bribing lawmaker Mohua Moitra to ask Parliamentary questions, Hiranandani refused to comment. Hiranandani said interest rate cut and a new version of Prime Minister's Awas Yojana, which does away with the Rs 45 lakh ceiling for a property to classify as affordable, can help prop-up sagging sales of affordable housing. Hiranandani said in his career spanning over four decades, he has never seen a decline in sales of low-cost housing. However, he added that mid-range, premium, and luxury segments have seen impressive growth in the recent past.

## India, S Korea in Asia Pacific to see heightened real estate investment activities: Colliers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India and South Korea in the Asia Pacific region are expected to witness heightened investment activities across various real estate asset classes as global investors look to tap the growth potential in these two key markets, according to Colliers India. Real estate consultant Colliers released its 2024 Global Investor Outlook on Wednesday along with Asia Pacific highlights. The consultant expects "high activity in more growth-oriented destinations such as India and South Korea, given the return of investor confidence and the opportunities they offer." The report highlighted that India is expected to remain one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, led by private consumption and capital formation. Institutional investment in real estate soared 27 per cent year-on-year in the first nine months of 2023, with a noticeable surge in deals targeting industrial and residential, both sectors closely connected to the country's robust growth trajectory. Institutional investors are specifically capitalising on India's data centre growth story, sparked by the stable Govt clears Terms of Reference of



16th Finance Commission New Delhi, Nov 29 (PTI) The government has cleared the Terms of Reference of the 16th Finance Commission to suggest the ratio for devolution of taxes between the Centre and states and also review financing disaster management initiatives, for five years beginning April 1, 2026. The commission would submit its report for the five-year period (2026-27 to 2030-31) to the President by October 31, 2025, an official statement said. Besides tax devolution and states' revenue augmentation

measures, the commission would review the present arrangements for financing disaster management initiatives with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. "The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the Terms of Reference for the Sixteenth Finance Commission. The 16th Finance Commission's recommendations, upon acceptance by the government, would cover a period of five years commencing April 1, 2026," the statement said.

## REL board has no power to reject open offer, says Burman family

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Burman family, which is blocked in a battle with the management of Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL) for takeover of the company said that the board of the NBFC does not have the "power or authority" to reject their open offer to pick up controlling stake. "It only has the power to recommend the Open Offer to the shareholders," the Burman family spokesperson said in a statement. It is a separate matter, that the shareholders have already seen the governance lapses in REL and whether the directors can be said to be discharging their duties correctly, it said, adding, it is for the shareholders to decide whether to tender the shares in the open offer, or stay invested. "In fact, the board issued a press release dated September 25, 2023 welcoming our investment in REL. The Open Offer price is calculated as per the formula provided in the SEBI Takeover Regulations. As per this formula, the calculation comes to around Rs 221," it said. The open offer price of Rs 235, is at a premium to that price. "Keeping the overall share-

holder interest in mind, we will move towards closing the transaction expeditiously working with all the regulators. Given our credentials, an overwhelming majority of the shareholders are supportive of the proposed transaction and we remain confident that under our guidance, REL's performance would see significant uptrends," it said. The statement comes after Hamid Ahmed, an independent director at Religare Enterprises and CEO of Hamdard Laboratories, has criticised the timing of the Burman family's open offer to acquire more shares in the financial services company. Ahmed emphasised that the board has unanimously rejected the offer, citing its inferior merits and a proposal to replace both board members and management. Entities controlled by the Burman family -- promoters of FMCG major Dabur -- have written to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) and stock exchanges that REL Chairperson Rashmi Saluja sold a portion of her personal holdings in Religare Enterprises Ltd a day after meeting a representative of the Burmans on September 20.

## Govt clears terms of reference of 16th Finance Commission

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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## Malabar Gold launches 335th global store

New Delhi: Malabar Gold & Diamonds has made history as the first Indian jewellery retailer to open in Canada with their new store in Mississauga, at Heartland Town Centre within the Greater Toronto Area. With this, the brand marks its extensive brand presence, with 335 stores spread across the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman,

KSA, Bahrain, Singapore, Malaysia, the USA, the UK, Canada, and India. "The opening of our first store in Canada brings me immense pride and joy, marking a significant milestone for us as the first Indian international jewellery brand to begin operations in Canada," said Malabar Group Chairman MP Ahammed.

## BUSINESS BRIEF

**NFL LEADS AGRI DRONE DEMONSTRATIONS DURING VIKSIT BHARAT YATRA**  
Punjab: NFL is undertaking number of agriculture drone demonstrations of Nano and Water Soluble Fertilizers in Punjab for farmers during the ongoing Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra. Recently, Secretary (Fertilizers) Rajat Kumar Mishra participated in one of the Drone Demonstrations of Nano Urea Spray on crops in Village Manakpur Kallar in presence of CMD NFL, U Saravanan.

**ECOZEN HELPS FARMERS WITH SMART SOLAR PUMP CONTROLLERS**  
Haryana: Farmers in Haryana now getting India's first 4G-enabled smart solar-powered pump controller, known as the Ecotron, available through Ecozen Solutions under PM KUSUM Yojana with a 75 per cent subsidy. A key player in cleantech, Ecozen specialises in developing climate-smart technology solutions that help farmers improve in farm yield, reduce waste and increase farm earnings.



# Hooda, Kiran win at Syed Modi International

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

India's Kidambi Srikanth bowed out with a straight-game loss in the opening round but young Unnati Hooda shocked compatriot Aakarshi Kashyap to make it to the second round of the Syed Modi International badminton tournament here on Wednesday. Former world no. 1 Srikanth, a 2021 World championships silver medallist, lost 21-23 8-21 to Korea's Chia Hao Lee, continuing his dismal run in international circuit this season. The 16-year-old Unnati, who is touted as one of the finest talents in women's singles, rallied her way to a stunning 15-21 21-19 21-18 win over Kashyap in a 77-minute Round of 32 clash of the BWF Super 300 tournament. The young shuttler from Rohtak will next face Japan's former world champion Nozomi Okuhara, who prevailed 18-21 21-17 21-10 over another Indian Malvika Bansod in another match. Anupama Upadhyaya, Ashmita Chaliha also progressed in the women's singles.



While Anupama defeated Amalie Schulz of Denmark 14-21 21-15 21-9, Ashmita got rid of Polina Buhrova of Ukraine 21-15 21-15 in another match. In men's singles, Orleans Masters winner Priyanshu Rajawat, Denmark Masters winner Kiran George and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran entered the second round with fine victories in men's singles competition. Priyanshu beat Kazhakistan's Dmitriy Panarin 21-17 21-19, while Kiran saw off Chirag Sen -- Lakshya sen's brother -- 21-16 14-21 21-13 and Sathish got past Chinese Taipei's Huang Yu Kai. Priyanshu will face Sathish in an all-Indian clash, while Kiran meets Chia. Sameer Verma, however, went down fighting 9-21 21-17 17-21 to Wang Tzu Wei of Chinese Taipei. In doubles, Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto notched up a 21-8 21-9 win over compatriot Samridhi Singh and Sonali Singh in the first round. They will face another all-Indian pair -- Rutaparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda -- in the round of 16.

# Tiger gets motivation from Nadal

PTI ■ NASSAU (BAHAMAS)

Golf great Tiger Woods is making a much-awaited comeback with the Hero World Challenge this week and he is both curious and excited to see how his ageing and injury battered body could tackle the task.

The 15-time major winner will be teeing off for the first time since withdrawing from the Masters after the first two rounds in April. The American had a subtalar fusion surgery on his right ankle two weeks after his withdrawal to deal with the arthritis caused by injuries suffered in a major car accident in 2021. The 47-year-old, who has been playing professional golf for more than 25 years, still loves to compete and has arrived at Albany with an aim to win the tournament he hosts. "I love competing. I love playing. I miss being out here with the guys ... And the overall banter," Woods said at the media interaction while sitting alongside Hero MotoCorp executive chairman Pawan Munjal. "What drives me is that I love to compete. There will come a point in time, I haven't come around to it fully yet, where I won't be able to win again ... When it comes, I will walk away," he said. When asked if he can win again, Woods said: "absolutely." Woods has chosen this tournament as his comeback event for the third time, considering it acts as a springboard for the following PGA Tour season. He is targeting competing in one tournament a month. On walking the course over four days, Woods sounded confident



of lasting the distance. "I'm not concerned at all about walking it. As I said, I don't have any of the ankle pain that I had with the hardware that's been placed in my foot, that's all gone." "The other parts of my body, my knee hurts, my back. The forces go somewhere else. It's just like when I had my back fused, the forces have to go somewhere. "So, it's up the chain. As I said, I'm just as curious as all of you with what's going to happen. I have not done this in a while," said the sporting royalty. Woods was also expectedly asked about the proposed merger between PGA Tour and Saudi-backed Liv Golf, the framework for which was announced in June. As a new member on the PGA Tour Policy Board, Woods' opinion on the subject is of even more significance. He is frustrated at the slowness of the process but was optimistic that the December 31 deadline could be met. "I'm pleased at the process and how it's evolved. I am also frustrated by some of the slowness and the governance change that we want to have happen. "And December 31st is coming up very quickly, so there's the timetable there that we would like to implement some of these changes that have not taken place.

# Ganemat, Anantjeet win maiden national titles

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ganemat Sekhon and Anantjeet Singh Naruka, arguably India's number one women's and men's skeet shooters at present, added another feather to their cap by winning maiden individual senior

national titles here on Wednesday. Competing at the 66th National Shooting Championship Competitions for shotgun shooters, Punjab's Ganemat and Rajasthan's Anantjeet took contrasting paths towards the same result. Ganemat shot a below-par 116 in

qualification and had to come through a five-way shoot-off for four final qualifying places, before shooting down 56 targets to win the 60-shot final. Qualifiers leader Zahra Deesawala was second with 55 hits while Sanjana Sood was third with 44.

In men's skeet, Anantjeet shot at a different level, registering a pillar to post victory. He topped the qualifiers with a 123 out of 125. The next best in the field was 121. In the six-man final, he gunned down 58 out of 60 targets to leave silver-winning Munek Battula well

behind on 55. Bhavtegh Gill won bronze hitting 45 out of the first 50 targets. Earlier this year, Ganemat won two medals including a gold and silver in ISSF World Cups while Anantjeet won an Asian Games silver in men's skeet at Hangzhou.

# VAR official removed from Champions League game

AP ■ GENEVA

A video review official has been removed from his Champions League game on Wednesday, one day after having a key role in a disputed decision to award Paris Saint-Germain a stoppage-time penalty for handball against Newcastle which contradicted UEFA's own advice to referees. The VAR specialist from Poland, Tomasz Kwiatkowski, is no longer listed to work at the Real Sociedad-Salzburg game and has been replaced by a German match official. In Paris on Tuesday, Kylian Mbappé scored in the eighth minute of stoppage time to salvage a 1-1 draw after a ball struck Newcastle defender Tino Livramento in the chest and then deflected off his arm, and a penalty was awarded by Polish referee Szymon Marciniak following a VAR review. Marciniak refereed the Champions League final last season and the 2022 World Cup final with Kwiatkowski in his team. Marciniak initially allowed play to continue Tuesday but awarded the penalty after he was advised by his video assistant to review the incident on the pitch-side monitor. However, a UEFA panel of storied coaches and former players said in April that "no handball offense should be called on a player if the ball is previously deflect-

ed from his own body, and, in particular, when the ball does not go towards the goal." The advice to be given to match officials this season was detailed by the panel, chaired by UEFA Chief of Football Zvonimir Boban, in an April 25 statement headlined "UEFA Football Board urges more clarity on handball rule." "The handball rule, for example, will always be disputed, but we can make it more consistent and aligned with the game's true nature," Boban, the former Croatia and AC Milan great, said in April. UEFA declined to comment Wednesday, in line with a policy not to discuss field of play decisions. The current laws of the game allow for handballs to be penalized even if the contact was not intentional and after a deflection if a defender's arm is judged to be in an unnatural position. "But his hand is not in an unnatural position," Newcastle manager Eddie Howe said after the game, "(his hands) are down by his side, but he is in a running motion." The cross from Ousmane Dembélé that struck Livramento was also going backward - and not towards goal. The penalty decision in the PSG game directly affected the standings in the tightly fought Group F, as it kept PSG two points clear of Newcastle in the second qualifying place for the round of 16 behind group leader Borussia Dortmund.

AP ■ ROME

On a night of unconvincing performances from Paris Saint-Germain and AC Milan, Pep Guardiola walked off smiling following a comeback victory for Manchester City in the Champions League. Phil Foden inspired a second-half comeback as City beat Leipzig 3-2 on Tuesday to take first place in Group G and extend its perfect record to five wins in five matches. It's the seventh straight season that City has won its group. The defending champions trailed 2-0 at halftime but Foden scored one goal and helped to create two more to turn the match around and Guardiola had a smirk on his face when he shook hands with Leipzig counterpart Marco Rose after the final whistle. "We had to be relaxed as possible and we reacted really well," Guardiola said. "We are first in the group and I am very satisfied for the reaction at the end. The team runs and fights and has spirit." Kylian Mbappé's penalty deep into stoppage time salvaged a point for PSG in a 1-1 draw with an injury-depleted but tenacious Newcastle team. In the tight Group F, Borussia Dortmund advanced with a 3-1 victory at Milan, a semifinalist last season. Barcelona, Atletico Madrid and Lazio also advanced. Portuguese duo João Félix and João Cancelo each scored as Barcelona defeated Porto 2-1 to return to the knockout phase after consecutive group-stage eliminations. It will be the first time since Lionel Messi left the club that Barcelona will be playing in the round of 16.

**GROUP E**   
Ciro Immobile scored twice in the final 10 minutes and Lazio beat Celtic 2-0. Atletico then defeated Feyenoord 3-1 with the help of two own-goals to seal its spot in the next round and also send Lazio through. Atletico leads with 11 points, followed by Lazio (10), Feyenoord (6) and Celtic (1). In the final group matches on Dec. 13, Lazio visits Atletico in a match that will determine which club wins the group.

**GROUP F**   
In Paris, Alexander Isak scored on a rebound for Newcastle early on after PSG goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma



pushed away a shot to Isak's feet for an easy finish. PSG wasted chance after chance and Newcastle seemed on course to pull off another unlikely win to follow the 4-1 victory over the same opposition last month. That was until Ousmane Dembélé flicked the ball up in the fifth minute of stoppage time and it bounced off Tino Livramento's chest and onto his arm. Referee Szymon Marciniak gave a penalty after watching the incident on video review and Mbappé blasted the spot-kick past goalkeeper Nick Pope. At the San Siro, Marco Reus gave Dortmund an early lead from the spot after Olivier Giroud had a penalty of his own saved for Milan. Although Samuel Chukwueze leveled at the end of the first half, goals from Jamie Bynoe-Gittens and substitute Karim Adeyemi gave the visitors the win they needed to book their spot in the last 16. Dortmund leads with 10 points, followed by PSG (7), Newcastle (5) and Milan (5). PSG, Newcastle and Milan are all still in contention and Dortmund is still fighting to win the group ahead of the last round with Dortmund hosting PSG and Newcastle hosting Milan.

**GROUP G**   
In Manchester - where both teams had already advanced - Foden set up Erling Haaland for a goal in the 54th and equalized in the 70th. He then played a part in the buildup for substitute Julian Alvarez's winner in the 87th as City preserved an unbeaten home record in the Champions League that dates back to 2018. Loïs Openda scored for Leipzig in the 13th and 33rd, but City responded like champions after the break, with Foden at the heart of the comeback.

# Manish overcomes top seed Orlov

PTI ■ KALABURAGI (KARNATAKA)

Manish Sureshkumar scripted the first upset victory of the ITF Kalaburagi Open when he ousted the top seed Vladyslav Orlov in the first round of the USD 25,000 prize money event, here on Wednesday. The 24-year-old played amazing shots to take the first set 6-3 and was leading 2-0 before his Ukrainian rival threw in the towel citing a shoulder injury, which seemed more out of frustration than being in pain. Qualifier Rishi Reddy become the second player from Karnataka to enter the last 16 stage as he battled fatigue

and won against Parth Aggarwal 6-4, 7-5. Meanwhile, the seeded players sailed into the pre-quarterfinals without breaking much sweat. The fourth seeded Siddharth Rawat - the highest ranked Indian left in the fray - overcame Taisei Ichikawa from Japan 6-3, 6-4 while fifth seed Ramkumar Ramanathan, who is just back from lifting the ITF 25K title in Mumbai for his second win in as many months, blanked qualifier Ajay Malik 6-0, 6-0 in just 40 minutes. Sixth seed Rishab Aggarwal faced some resistance from wild card entrant Jagmeet Singh before overcoming 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

ONLINE E AUCTION SALE OF ASSET



PHOENIX ARC PRIVATE LIMITED  
REGD. OFFICE: DANI CORPORATE PARK, 5TH FLOOR, 158, C.S.T. ROAD, KALINA, SANTACRUZ (E), MUMBAI - 400098. TEL: 022- 6849 2450, FAX: 022- 6741 2313. CIN: U67190MH2007PTC168303  
EMAIL: INFO@PHOENIXARC.CO.IN WEBSITE: WWW.PHOENIXARC.CO.IN

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 UNDER RULE 8(5) READ WITH PROVISIO TO RULE 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE BORROWER (S) AND GUARANTOR (S) WHOSE DETAILS ARE GIVEN IN BELOW MENTIONED TABLE THAT THE BELOW DESCRIBED IMMOVABLE PROPERTY MORTGAGED/CHARGED TO THE SECURED CREDITOR, THE POSSESSION OF WHICH HAS BEEN TAKEN BY THE AUTHORIZED OFFICER OF POONAWALA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (PHFL) ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2022, PURSUANT TO ASSIGNMENT OF DEBTBY POONAWALA HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED (PHFL) IN FAVOUR OF PHOENIX ARC PRIVATE LIMITED (PHOENIX) VIDE AN ASSIGNMENT AGREEMENT DATED 20.09.2022, WILL BE SOLD ON "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" AND "WHATEVER THERE IS" FOR REALIZATION OF COMPANY DUES.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY WITH KNOWN ENCUMBRANCE, IF ANY: ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY SITUATED AT MAJJA - MATHPURAINA, P.H.NO. 105/61, R.N.M. RAIPUR, TEHSIL & DIST. RAIPUR (C.G.), BEARING OLD KHASRANO, (PART-OF) 174/1, NEW KHASRANO, 174/36, ADMEASURING 0.013 HECTARE=1440 SQ. FT. BOUNDARY DETAILS EAST-LAND OF ADHYAN BUILDERS THROUGH HITRAMAL & ORS, KHASRANO 528/45 WEST-ROAD (REMAINING LAND OF SELLER) KHASRANO NO. 174/1 NORTH-LAND OF JYOTI JAIN, KHASRANO 175/36 SOUTH-LAND OF SHAIL PAND & ORS, KHASRANO, 179/6

BORROWER'S & GUARANTOR'S NAME & ADDRESS	1. DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION, 2. LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF EMD, 3. DATE & TIME OF THE PROPERTY INSPECTION	1. RESERVE PRICE 2. EMD OF THE PROPERTY 3. BID INCREMENT
1. MOHAMMAD IRSHAD MOHAMMAD ANSAR KRISHNA NAGAR RAHMAT KIRANA STORES KE SAHANE, RAIPUR - 492001	1) E-AUCTION DATE: 15.12.2023 BETWEEN 12:00 PM TO 1:00 PM AND WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSION OF 5 MINUTES.	RESERVE PRICE RS. 22,29,120/- (RUPEES TWENTY TWO LAKH TWENTY NINE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED TWENTY ONLY) EMD
2. MOHAMMAD IRSHAD MOHAMMAD ANSAR MOUJJA - MATHPURENA P.H. NO. 105/61, 36, RNM RAIPUR 1, RAIPUR PIN 492001	2) LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD WITH KYC IS 14.12.2023 UP TO 5:00 P.M. (IST)	RS. 2,22,912/- (RUPEES TWO LAKH TWENTY TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED TWELVE ONLY) BID INCREMENT RS. 10,000/- (RUPEES TEN THOUSAND ONLY) & IN SUCH MULTIPLES.
3. MOHAMMAD TAUFI MOHAMMAD ANSAR KRISHNA NAGAR, RAHMAT KIRANA STORES KE SAMNE, RAIPUR - 492001	3) DATE OF INSPECTION: 08.12.2023 BETWEEN 11:00 A.M TO 4:00 P.M. (IST)	

THE EARNEST MONEY HAS TO BE DEPOSITED BY WAY OF DD IN FAVOUR OF "PHOENIX TRUST-FY23-10", PAYABLE AT MUMBAI OR NEFT/RTGS IN THE CURRENT ACCOUNT: 0446262338; KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LIMITED, BRANCH: KALINA, MUMBAI, IFSC CODE: KKBK0000631. THE BORROWER'S ATTENTION IS INVITED TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUB SECTION 8 OF SECTION 13, OF THE ACT, IN RESPECT OF THE TIME AVAILABLE, TO REDREEM THE SECURED ASSET.

PUBLIC IN GENERAL AND BORROWERS IN PARTICULAR PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT IF IN CASE AUCTION SCHEDULED HEREIN FAILS FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER THEN SECURED CREDITOR MAY ENFORCE SECURITY INTEREST BY WAY OF SALE THROUGH PRIVATE TREATY.

IN CASE OF ANY CLARIFICATION/REQUIREMENT REGARDING ASSETS UNDER SALE, BIDDER MAY CONTACT MR. RAVI RATHORE (+91 9893302580)

FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE SALE, PLEASE REFER TO THE LINK <https://www.phoenixarc.co.in?p=4584> PROVIDED IN PHOENIX ARC PRIVATE LIMITED'S WEBSITE I.E. [WWW.PHOENIXARC.CO.IN](http://WWW.PHOENIXARC.CO.IN) AND/OR ON [HTTPS://BANKAUCTIONS.CO](https://BANKAUCTIONS.CO).

PLACE: RAIPUR DATE: 30.11.2023 AUTHORIZED OFFICER PHOENIX ARC PRIVATE LIMITED (ACTING AS A TRUSTEE OF PHOENIX TRUST FY23-10)



Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051

Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059  
Branch Address: 1st floor, Indira Tower, A-26, Zone II, Main Road Vyapar Vihar Bilaspur (C.G.) - 495001

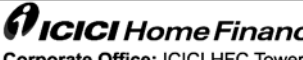
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ("ICICI HFC") and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Anita Singh Thakur (Borrower), Rajendra Singh Thakur (Co-Borrower), House No. 15 Shivpur Marg, Mungeli Near Shivaji Ward Manager Mungeli Chhattisgarh- 495334. LHBSR00001398333	Na Mouja Mungeli Property Situated at Part of Survey No. 917/38, P. H. No. 59/29, Thakkarbapa Ward No. 12, Mouza- Mungeli, Tehsil and Dist. Mungeli Mungeli 917/38 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001. Bounded By- North: House of Mr Hirendra Jeet Ji, South: Land of Ram Kumar Khandey, East: Land of Mr Dhruv Ji, West: Road.	14-11-2023 Rs. 5,89,112/-	03/11/2023
2.	Anita Singh Thakur (Borrower), Rajendra Singh Thakur (Co-Borrower), Houuse No. 15 Shuvpur Marg Kr 1 Mungeli Mungeli Chhattisgarh- 495334. LHBSR00001398334	Na Mouja Mungeli Property Situated at Part of Survey No. 917/38, P.H. No. 59/29, Thakkarbapa Ward No. 12, Mouza- Mungeli, Tehsil and Dist. Mungeli Mungeli 917/38 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001. Bounded By- North: House of Mr Hirendra Jeet Ji, south: Land of Ram Kumar Khandey, East: Land of Mr Dhruv Ji, West: Road.	14-11-2023 Rs. 97,602.13/-	03/11/2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : November 30, 2023  
Place: Bilaspur

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited



Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051

Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059  
Branch Office: 1st floor, Indira Tower, A-26, Zone II, Main Road Vyapar Vihar Bilaspur (C.G.) 495001

Whereas

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Rakesh Vaishnav (Borrower), Saroj Vaishnav (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001378300.	Na Muouja Lormi PH. No. 23 Survey No. 322/24 Rnm Lormi Tehsil Lormi District Mungeli CG Lormi 322/24, Survey No 163/8 Lormi 163/8 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001 (ref Lan No. LHBSR00001378300). Bounded By- North: 15 Feet Wide Road By Seller, South: CC Road, East: Remaining Land of Seller, East: Property of Mr Moti Singh Rajput. Date of Symbolic Possession-24-Nov-23	14-08-2023 Rs. 76,226/-	Bilaspur-B
2.	Rakesh Vaishnav (Borrower), Saroj Vaishnav (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001378301.	Na Muouja Lormi PH No. 23 Survey No. 322/24 Rnm Lormi Tehsil Lormi District Mungeli CG Lormi 322/24, Survey No 163/8 Lormi 163/8 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001 (ref Lan No. LHBSR00001378301). Bounded By- North: 15 Feet Wide Road By Seller, South: Cc Road, East: Remaining Land of Seller, West: Property of Mr Moti Singh Rajput. Date of Symbolic Possession-24-Nov-23	14-08-2023 Rs. 6,38,651/-	Bilaspur-B
3.	Rakesh Vaishnav (Borrower), Saroj Vaishnav (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001378302.	Na Muouja Lormi PH No. 23 Survey No. 322/24 RNM Lormi Tehsil Lormi District Mungeli CG Lormi 322/24, Survey No 163/8 Lormi 163/8 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001 (ref Lan No. LHBSR00001378302). Bounded By- North: 15 Feet Wide Road By Seller, South: CC Road, East: Remaining Land of Seller, West: Property of Mr Moti Singh Rajput. Date of Symbolic Possession-24-Nov-23	14-08-2023 Rs. 10,06,498/-	Bilaspur-B
4.	Rakesh Vaishnav (Borrower), Saroj Vaishnav (Co-Borrower), LHBSR00001452929.	Na Muouja Lormi Ph No. 23 Survey No 322/24 RNM Lormi Tehsil Lormi District Mungeli CG Lormi 322/24, Survey No 163/8 Bilaspur Chhattisgarh- 495001 (ref Lan No. LHBSR00001452929). Bounded By- North: 15 Feet Wide Road By Seller, South: CC Road, east: Remaining Land of Seller, West: Property of Mr Moti Singh Rajput. Date of Symbolic Possession- 24-Nov-23	14-08-2023 Rs. 7,50,693/-	Bilaspur-B

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

Date : November 30, 2023  
Place: Lormi

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited



# India Women’s A pip England Women’s A by 3 runs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India Women’s A staged a late inspirational comeback to pip England Women’s A side by a mere three runs in the first T20 game of their three-match series here on Wednesday. Chasing 135 for win, England looked in complete control riding on a brilliant 70-run stand for the fourth wicket between vice-captain Hollie Armitage (52) and wicket-keeper-batter Seren Smale (31), but India fought back with a cluster of wickets to clinch a narrow win. Kashvee Gautam (2/23) struck twice to dismiss Smale and Issy Wong (2) in the 18th over to open the door back for the Indians, who pulled off a thrilling win at the Wankhede Stadium. With 13 needed off the final over, Shreyanka Patil (2/26) gave away five extras (wide) on the first ball but India prevailed eventually by three runs. India Women’s A were guilty of not putting up enough runs on the board and making plenty of mistakes in the field.



Armitage, who top-scored in the game with 52 off 41 balls (3x4s, 1x6s), made the most of a lifeline as Disha Kasat spilled a regulation catch at cover off Prakashika Naik (1/28). Another opportunity to break the stand was missed in the 14th over when Indian ‘keeper Uma Chetry did not collect the ball to break the stumps, anticipating a direct hit. The two England batters unleashed powerful hits while constantly pressuring the Indian fielders with brisk running between the wickets. Patil got India A their first breakthrough when she cleaned up Grace Scrivens (7) in the second over. Mannat Kashyap (1/21) got rid of Mady Villiers (20; 17 balls, 4x4s) and Naik removed Freya Kemp (1) in the eighth over. Earlier, after electing to bat, India made 134/7 in 20 overs. Kasat batted well to make 25 from 32 balls, hitting three fours. On a slow deck, India Women’s A could not really push on with their scoring rate, with England

seamers doing well. Skipper Charlie Dean was the pick among the bowlers with 4-0-19-2 while Kemp finished with figures of 4-0-30-2. Wong (1/13), Lauren Filer (1/34) and Kirstie Gordon (1/26) chipped in with a wicket each. Player of the match Patil admitted India made errors in the field. “It is a big platform for all of us. It happens, (but) how we come back is what matters,” Patil told the media after the match. Patil said India were confident that the bowlers would pull it off. “I would say maybe (India were) 10-15 runs short but then we were looking (at a total) around 130-140 because the wicket was slightly slower and we knew our bowlers could get the job done,” she said. Brief scores: India Women’s A 134/7 in 20 overs (Vrinda Dinesh 22, Disha Kasat 25, Gnanananda Divya 22; Charlie Dean 2/19) beat England Women’s A 131/8 in 20 overs (Hollie Armitage 52, Seren Smale 31; Kashvee Gautam 2/23, Shreyanka Patil 2/26) by 3 runs.

## Shane is Paarl Royals head coach for SA20



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

SA20 franchise Paarl Royals on Wednesday announced the appointment of former New Zealand pacer Shane Bond as the new head coach for the 2024 season of the South African league. Bond replaces former South African all-rounder JP Duminy in the position, with the latter currently serving the national team. Bond, a former New Zealand fast bowling sensation, brings an impressive array of credentials and passion for the game. His illustrious career, both as a player and a coach across New Zealand’s national team and multiple T20 franchises, has earned him the reputation of making the best players even better. His tactical acumen, knowledge of the game and his ability to inspire and nurture emerging talent have been widely recognized in the cricketing community which have also reflected in the Kiwi pacer helping the Mumbai Indians franchise lift four titles in nine seasons in the IPL. He was recently also roped in by Paarl Royals’ sister franchise, Rajasthan Royals,

in the dual role of assistant coach and fast bowling coach for the IPL. Royals’ Director of Cricket, Kumar Sangakkara, welcomed the 48-year-old for his debut season in the SA20. “Apart from being a fierce competitor during his playing days, Shane (Bond) has also excelled in his various coaching roles across teams and leagues, and we are delighted to have him lead the coaching team at Paarl Royals. “The inaugural season provided us with a lot of learnings after our semi-final finish, and we believe that his experience, commitment and vision align well with our goals for the upcoming season,” Sangakkara said. Bond shared his thoughts on the opportunity, saying, “It is a new challenge for me personally to be heading to the SA20, but what gives me the belief is the strong squad we have been able to assemble for the upcoming season. “We have so much experience and immense potential in our ranks, which makes me excited to join the group in January and work towards achieving our target of lifting the trophy.”

## Playing under great leaders will help me: Gill

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

India opener Shubman Gill feels the experience of playing under “great leaders” in the India setup will help him a lot when he leads Gujarat Titans in the upcoming season of the IPL. Gill has played under the likes of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma and played a vital role in India reaching the World Cup final at home recently. Gill was recently announced skipper of 2022 IPL champions Gujarat Titans after their captain for two seasons, Hardik Pandya, was traded back to five-time winners Mumbai Indians. It will be Gill’s maiden outing as captain of an IPL side, having begun his journey in the competition in 2018 with Kolkata Knight Riders before heading to GT in 2022. “We all know captainship comes with a lot of things, and

commitment is one of them. Discipline is one of them. Hard work is one of them. Loyalty is one of them,” said Gill in a video posted by the franchise on social media. “And, because, I think I’ve played under great leaders and I’ve learned a lot from them, I think those learnings that I have had from their experience playing under them is gonna help me a lot in this IPL.” Gill added that there was no dearth of experienced players in Gujarat Titans, and he would get to learn a lot from leaders such as New Zealand’s Kane Williamson and Afghanistan’s Rashid Khan. “We have great leaders in our team, be it Kane (Williamson) or be it Rashid (Khan) or be it (Mohammed) Shami, or even David (Miller), or even Wriddhi (Saha). So, I think it’s gonna be great. “And obviously, there are



gonna be a lot of learnings along the way, which would be my experience as a captain. And I see a lot of people mak-

ing great memories,” he added. As far as playing the leadership role is concerned, Gill

was the India U-19 vice-captain during the 2018 World Cup. He was also named skipper of India Blue during the 2019-20 Duleep Trophy, the India C captain in the Deodhar Trophy the same season, and the India-A leader during the New Zealand tour later in 2019. However, Gill feels it will take him some time for the feeling of being made GT skipper to sink in. “I think it’s gonna take, like, probably till the time we don’t play the first match. It’s not gonna quite sink in. It’s a great feeling. “I was about seven or eight years old when IPL started happening. Obviously, it’s a dream for any kid who wants to be a cricketer and wants to play the IPL to be able to captain a team. Then, to be able to be that kind of binding factor in this team, it feels amazing,” he concluded.

## Sreesanth, Binny to play in American Premier League

PTI ■ HOUSTON

Former India pacer S Sreesanth and all-rounder Stuart Binny are set to take part in the second edition of American Premier League (APL) T20 scheduled in Houston from December 19 to 31. Both Sreesanth and Binny

have retired from active cricket in India and hence are allowed to play in overseas franchise leagues. All the matches will be played at the Moosa Cricket Stadium in Houston, Texas and the league had been sanctioned by the ICC, in May this year and the USA Cricket board has roped in 40 international

cricketers across seven teams. The seven teams include Americans, Indians, Paks, Windees, Bengalees, Aussies and English. Sreesanth and Binny will be part of the Premium Indians team. The 40-year-old Sreesanth, who announced his retirement from all forms of



domestic cricket in India last year, said, “I am honoured to be picked by the Premium Indians. I am still very new to franchisee cricket eco-system outside of India so really excited about it. “It would be a great experience to play in front of the American crowd in a new territory for the first time.”

## BCCI extends Dravid’s contract But tenure yet to be decided, Laxman to remain at NCA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI on Wednesday extended the contract of Indian cricket team head coach Rahul Dravid in order to maintain continuity following the senior side’s stupendous performance in the ODI World Cup where it won 10 games in a row before losing the final. However, there was no mention of how long his new tenure would be in the press release issued by the BCCI. “The Board of Control for Cricket in India announces the extension of contracts for head coach Rahul Dravid and the support staff of Team India (senior men),” the sport’s apex body said in a statement. “The BCCI engaged in produc-

tive discussions with Dravid after the term of his contract ended following the recently-concluded World Cup and unanimously agreed to further the tenure,” it added. BCCI secretary Jay Shah said that Dravid will have “full backing” of the board, moving forward in his endeavour to win the ICC Trophy, which is missing from the cabinet for the last decade. “Having won 10 consecutive games before the final, our World Cup campaign was nothing short of extraordinary, and the head coach (Dravid) deserves appreciation for setting up the right platform for the team to flourish. “The head coach has our full backing, and we will provide



him with all the support needed for sustained success at the international level,” the BCCI secretary said in a statement. “The last two years with Team India have been thoroughly memorable. Together, we have witnessed the highs and lows, and throughout this journey, the support and camaraderie with-

in the group have been phenomenal,” Dravid said. The PTI had on Tuesday reported that Dravid’s contract would be renewed with the BCCI looking for continuity in the set-up helmed by the legendary cricketer over the last two years. Dravid had replaced Ravi Shastri after the T20 World Cup in 2021, getting appointed for a two-year term which ended with the ODI World Cup. Under Dravid, India also finished as runners-up in the last World Test Championship, losing to Australia in the final. Along with the 50-year-old Dravid, his support staff comprising batting coach Vikram Rathour, bowling coach Paras Mhambrey and fielding coach T Dilip have also got an extension.

It is expected that his stint would be at least till the T20 World Cup in the West Indies and the USA in June-July next year. The PTI had reported that Dravid had been offered an extension and asked to helm the affairs in South Africa as they work on the modalities. While VVS Laxman, the NCA head, who has often filled in for Dravid when the latter was taking short breaks, is believed to have informed the brass that he is more comfortable working with pathways teams such as India A and India U-19, apart from being actively involved in cricketing matters with regards to the new NCA set-up in Bengaluru. “The Board also appreciates

VVS Laxman for his exemplary roles as Head of NCA and as the stand-in Head Coach. Similar to their legendary on-field partnerships, Dravid and Laxman have worked closely in driving Indian Cricket forward,” the BCCI’s release makes it clear that both for the time being will continue in their respective roles. BCCI president Roger Binny, who has been a bridge between the board and the head coach, also welcomed the decision. “The performances of the Indian Team are a testament to his strategic guidance. I am delighted that he accepted the offer to remain the head coach, and it speaks of the mutual respect and shared vision between him and the BCCI.”

## With so much dew even 14 runs per over would have been chased: Gaikwad

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

The dew laden condition was the primary reason for Indian bowling attack’s poor show in the third T20 International, where the home team failed to defend an imposing total of 222, vice-captain and opener Rituraj Gaikwad said after the defeat. Indian bowlers leaked 80 runs in the last 5 overs while defending 222 as Glenn Maxwell’s 48-ball-104 not out, included 23 runs off the final over from Prasidh Krishna, who was smashed for four boundaries and a six. For the record, Krishna’s 0/68

in 4 overs is the worst T20I figure by any Indian bowler. “I don’t think so it’s a concern because it’s almost like you are bowling with a wet ball. And it’s really tough on them,” Gaikwad told reporters during the post-match press conference. “In these kinds of conditions, 12 runs per over or even 13 or 14 runs per over is gettable, even while we are chasing. In the first game, how easily we managed to chase 210,” he cited an example. “So I think, I don’t think so definitely there’s not a concern at all. It’s just that the conditions are slightly

tougher for them, and we have to accept and move on.” Gaikwad said Maxwell’s brutal innings and heavy dew proved to be home team’s undoing. Making his 100th T20I appearance, Maxwell slammed an unbeaten 104 off just 48 balls as Australia massed 45 runs in the last two overs to seal a last-ball thriller to make it 1-2 in the five-match series. “I think even Maxi batted really well. To win from a situation where they needed 100 from seven and a half hours and then 50 from 3 overs, I think it was critical



innings for him,” Gaikwad said. “And I think from our side, our bowlers tried executing whatever they had in their control. Also, there was a lot of dew around so ball was slipping a lot. So I think it was tough for the bowlers as well. “Even though we scored 230, in the last game, it was still in between we felt the game might go till the last over, but this kind of dew it is these totals are bound to happen and bound to chase.” On way to a 57-ball 123, the 26-year-old Gaikwad scored his first fifty in 32 balls before

completing the hundred in just 52 balls to set up a more than par-score for India. “Initially, I felt pitch was slightly tacky, ball was stopping a little bit and there was some movement in the air and off the pitch as well. So first, I felt 2-3 overs, the wicket was like that, and we lost two wickets (Yashasvi Jaiswal and Ishan Kishan) in a span of one over. So it was important that we stitched a partnership. And then after 7-8 overs, I think the wicket got slightly better.” India will Australia in the fourth T20I on Friday at Raipur.