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GANDHIAN APPROACH
TO WORLD PEACE

WORLD 8
GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AVERTED
AS BIDEN SIGNS FUNDING

MONEY 10
GST MOP-UP RISES
IN SEPTEMBER

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KANISHKA TO CANADA

EAM Jaishankar eases ties with US amid row

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The India US relationship is at an all-time high and the two nations have moved to a position where they see each other as very desirable, optimal and comfortable partners, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said, stressing that like the Chandrayaan, bilateral ties will go to the moon and maybe even beyond.

Jaishankar made the remarks while addressing several hundred Indian-Americans who had gathered at the India House from various parts

of the US to attend the ‘Celebrating Colours of Friendship’ event organised by the Embassy of India here on Saturday.


“There is one clear message today that our relationship is at an all-time high. But as they say in America, you ain’t seen anything yet. So, we are going to take this relationship to a different level, to a different place,” he said at the largest-ever gathering of Indian-Americans at the India House.

“In this changing world, I would say today that India and the US have moved to a position where we see

each other as very desirable, optimal and comfortable partners with whom it’s a natural instinct today to pick up the phone or if you meet someone and have a natural conversation,” he said.

Jaishankar said the success of the G20 could not have happened without the support of the US.

“As the host, when things go well, the host always gets the credit. It’s reasonable. But, the G20 could not have come together if all the members of the G20 did not work for its success,” he said.



“The contribution, the support and the understanding that we got from the US to make a successful G20, I think that is something I would certainly like to recognise in public in Washington DC,” Jaishankar said amidst applause from Indian-Americans.

“So, it may have been our success in a literal way, but I think it was the G20 (nations) success. To me, it was also a success of the India US partnership...please keep giving this partnership the support it needs, the support it deserves



and the support it expects. And I can promise you that this relationship, like the Chandrayaan, will go to the moon, maybe even beyond,” he said. Jaishankar said the human bond between the two countries makes the bilateral relationship unique.

“Countries do business with each other. Countries do politics with each other. They have military ties, they do exercises, and they have cultural exchanges. But when two countries have that deep human bonding, that’s a completely different ballgame.

That is today the defining characteristic of our relationship,” he said.

He said the people remember Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to the US in 1985, Manmohan Singh’s visit in 2005 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s several visits.

“But I have to say that this one (PM Modi’s recent state visit) was different, it was different in optics, and if you ask me what has changed, I would say India and the US earlier used to deal with each other and now they work with each other,” he said.



2 October

Nation pays tribute to

Gandhi ji


and

Shastri ji

on their Birth Anniversary

Mahatma Gandhi ji's thoughts have inspired the entire world. Bapu's speciality was to connect with people and make them connected with him. In the same way, Lal Bahadur Shastri ji will always be remembered for his tough leadership at a very crucial time of our history.

- Narendra Modi

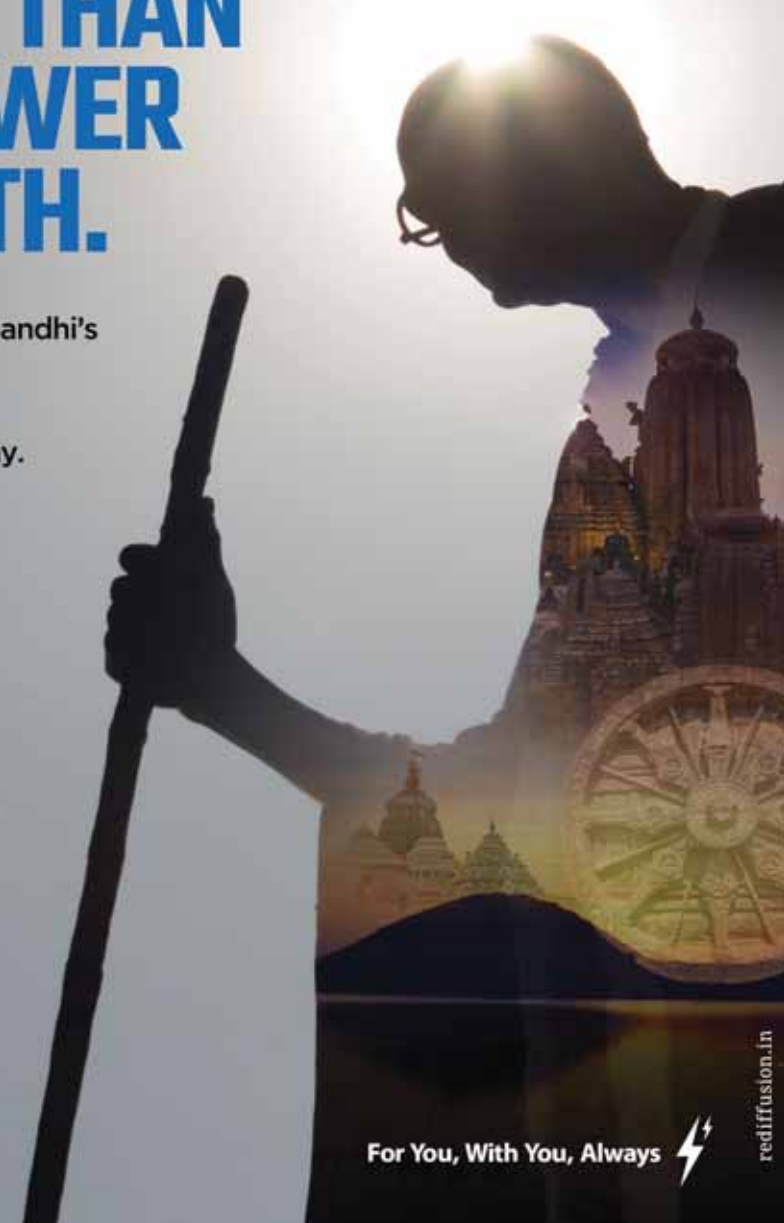


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Raj Bhavan Petrol pump blast in 2020 CP summoned up for appearance by NHRC

For lapses in submission of detailed replies

RAJESH BEHERA
■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recently issued conditional summons to the Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack, to appear in person before the Commission on October 25 for failure in submission of detailed replies on the petrol pump blast at Raj

Bhavan in 2020. The detailed action plan on the emergency preparedness of the capital city of Bhubaneswar is also still awaited.

The NHRC passed the order recently, acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy. The NHRC has been adjudicating the matter since 2020 and received a number of replies in this regard. However, legal action, compensation to the bereaved families and medical treatment of the injured, lack of Government initiative

to resolve the issue of fire, medical and traffic emergency to meet unprecedented incidents have not been mentioned in detail in the replies submitted by the State authorities.

Seeking adequate steps by the State, Tripathy sought for intervention of the NHRC to ensure justice to the victims and preventive action with fire, health, traffic and other emergency situations. Earlier, the NHRC passed a series of orders to different authorities, including the Chief Secretary

and the Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar.

The NHRC in its order stated that due to a deadly explosion at a petrol pump, a man lost his life, one is missing and several others were injured. The explosion happened due to leakage and as a result of negligence of the officials. Further, the Government authorities were inefficient in handling the situation after the crisis. The commission also pointed to the lack of facilities in hospitals for treatment of burn and blast victims.

State's gross GST collection up 13% in Sept

Revenue collected stood at Rs 4,249 cr

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha has recorded a growth of 13 per cent in gross GST collection in the month of September 2023 in comparison to September 2022.

According to official sources, the State has collected GST revenue of Rs 4,249 crore during last month while it had collected Rs 3,765 crore GST during the same month of 2022.

Notably, the State Government had recorded a growth rate of 13.50 per cent in gross GST collection (OGST+IGST+SGST+Cess) during the month of August 2023 in comparison to August 2022.

The State has recorded a collection of Rs 4,408.27 crore during August 2023 against collection of Rs 3,883.90 crore over corresponding period of August 2022 with a growth rate of 13.50 per cent.

At national level, the gross GST revenue collected in the

month of September, 2023 is Rs 1,62,712 crore out of which CGST is Rs 29,818 crore, SGST is Rs 37,657 crore, IGST is Rs 83,623 crore (including Rs 41,145 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 11,613 crore (including Rs 881 crore collected on import of goods).

The Government has settled Rs 33,736 crore to CGST and Rs 27,578 crore to SGST from IGST. The total revenue of Centre and the States in the month of September, 2023 after regular settlement is Rs 63,555 crore

for CGST and Rs 65,235 crore for the SGST.

The revenues for the month of September, 2023 are 10 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. During the month, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 14% higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

It is for the fourth time that the gross GST collection has crossed Rs 1.60 lakh crore mark in FY 2023-24.

Power outage at SCB Hosp for long hours

Patients undergo harrowing experiences

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Amid tall claims of the Odisha Government regarding transformation of the SCB Medical College Hospital here, power outage at the healthcare facility for hours caused severe inconvenience for patients on Saturday and Sunday.

As per reports, darkness due to lack of electricity supply forced doctors to administer injections to several patients using mobile phone torch light.

Though power was later supplied with diesel generator (DG), ceiling fans didn't function in many wards, leading to harrowing experience for patients and their attendants.

Furthermore, supply of water to various wards was affected due to absence of power in the pump house.

The issue emerged in Anatomy Department, morgue, Dermatology Department, Medicine Department, Spinal Injury Centre and Laundry Plant of the hospital from 7 am onwards.

Allegedly, ACs were not working properly in operation theatres and ICUs of the hospital.

Making the situation worse, around 50 contractors engaged in electricity-related work of the hospital had on Saturday resorted to strike over delay in payment of bills, for which power restoration couldn't be carried out immediately.

Following assurance by the Works Department regarding fulfilment of their demands, the agitators withdrew the strike in the afternoon, after which restoration work was carried out in some departments.

The disruption in power supply took place due to cable-related issues, reports said.

CM urges for care for senior citizens

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Sunday called upon people to take care of older persons for their peaceful and dignified life.

Patnaik in a message on the occasion of International Day for Older Persons said older persons have experience and solutions while others have to learn more from them.

He described the senior citizens as valuable assets of the society and said the blessings of senior citizens are precious.

The CM highlighted various welfare schemes for the older persons and said his government has added additional 4 lakh beneficiaries

in Madhu Babu Pension Yojana.

Facilities such as old age homes, geriatric wards and physiotherapy centres in hospitals have been made available for senior citizens, he said.

Minister, Department of Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) Ashok Chandra Panda attending the programme described older persons as the guardians of the society.

Capital Hospital, UNFPA and Sight Savers India organised a health checkup camp, an eye camp and an awareness campaign on the occasion.

'300 new paediatric cancer patients in city AIIMS every yr'

Walkathon, doctor-patient/parent interaction held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Through a multidisciplinary approach, the Department of Medical Oncology/Hematology at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, has been rendering holistic, quality and affordable care to the children with cancer. This is the only Governmental institution providing specialized cancer care to children by trained faculty in this part of the country, said AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Dr Ashutosh Biswas during a special event organised in the institute on Saturday to increase awareness



on childhood cancer.

"We cater not only to the State of Odisha, but also paediatric patients from the nearby States like West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are availing treatment facilities here. The department has registered more than 1,200 children with cancer and currently treats around 250-300 new patients per year," added Dr Biswas.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar is

going to start hematopoietic stem cell transplantation in the Medical Oncology/Hematology Department for the needy children. The outcome in pediatric cancers has changed from seemingly incurable diseases to survival exceeding 80-90% in the last 50 years, said Additional Professor Department of Medical Oncology/Hematology AIIMS Bhubaneswar Dr Sonali

Mohapatra.

In the current era, more than 75-80% of childhood cancer patients can be cured completely, with survival exceeding 90% in certain cancers like acute lymphoblastic leukemia (blood cancer), lymphomas and renal tumours, informed Dr Mohapatra.

To increase awareness on various aspects of childhood cancer, the department today organised series of programmes like walkathon, patient/parent and doctor interaction.

It may be noted here that September is observed as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month worldwide, and the Golden Ribbon is the dedicated logo associated with it.

Incumbent office-bearers reappointed at UCCIL meet

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd (UCCIL) was held here on September 29.

President Dr Brahma Mishra took a confirmation of the house on reappointment of all the incumbent eight office bearers/directors and three additional directors of the Chamber which was passed and approved by the General Body members through voice vote. They will continue to assume their seats till the next AGM.

The office bearers are Dr Brahmananda Mishra (President), Tarini Prasad Mohanty (vice president Industry) Swapna Kumar Swain, (vice president Commerce), Dr Sanjeev Mahapatra (vice president



General), Ashok Kumar Sharda (honorary secretary), Giridhari Lal Sharma (honorary joint secretary), Narayan Kumar (honorary treasurer), Akshay Khandelwal (honorary joint treasurer), Dr Tapan Kumar Chand, (additional director), Shashi Sekhar Mohanty, (additional director) and Mahendra Kumar Gupta, (additional director).

He also placed the detailed activities and events that took place in the Chamber in the

last one year.

Secretary of UCCIL Sharda presented the Annual Report for FY 2022-23 which was adopted and approved.

Treasurer Narayan Kumar placed the Audited Statement of Accounts for FY 2022-23 before the house and it was unanimously approved. He also presented and got approved in the House the appointment of M/s H Naik & Co, Chartered Accountants of Cuttack as auditor of the chamber.

Former presidents of the Chamber Ramesh Mahapatra and Trijib Chandra Hota addressed the AGM throwing light on the development of the chamber through time, both placing full faith on the current Board of Directors and on their modus operandi of the functioning.

The House was subsequently left open for all the members to place their views and concerns before the chair.

Senior members like JK Rath, Gyana Bhusan Mohanty, Rabindra Senapati and Biswadev Dash also placed their suggestions before the House and reiterated their faith in the present scenario of work and future scope of activities of the chamber.

Vote of thanks was proposed by vice president Mohanty.

Scrub typhus claims one more life in Bargarh

PNS ■ BARGARH

With more scrub typhus cases being reported across Odisha, the deadly virus claimed one more life in Bargarh on Sunday taking the toll to seven in the district.

A 48-year-old patient from the Sohela locality in Bargarh district died of scrub typhus while undergoing treatment at a private hospital, informed Bargarh District Public Health Officer (DPHO) Sadhu Charan Dash.

Meanwhile, a Central team of experts is on visit to Odisha for assessment in view of the rise in scrub typhus cases in the State, especially in the western region.

On Saturday, the six-

member Central team visited the scrub typhus-hit Sundargarh district to take stock of the situation. On Sunday, the team examined the alarming situation in Bargarh district.

The Central team is scheduled to visit other districts of western Odisha for analysis in detail.

Sources said that the team of experts discussed the issue with district health department in Bargarh. The members are scheduled to visit different areas of the district and inspect the laboratory of the District Headquarters Hospital.

Out of 1,775 samples in Bargarh, 89 were found positive for scrub typhus in the district so far.

Dhenkanal OSAP Commandant held by Vig

Cashe seized

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Sunil Kumar Behera, Commandant, OSAP 1st Battalion, Dhenkanal, was arrested and forwarded to court on Sunday after seizure of ill-gotten cash from his possession. He was under the Vigilance scanner for some time.

On receipt of reliable information regarding collection of huge cash by Behera, on Saturday a Vigilance team had intercepted him near Madhusudan Setu (CDA, Sector-11), while he was coming from Dhenkanal to his residence at Cuttack by his office Bolero vehicle. During interception, a sum of Rs 1,31,535 was recovered from Behera, which he could not account for satisfactorily. The

entire cash was seized.

Soon after the interception, simultaneous searches were conducted at his Government residential quarter at Dhenkanal, residential quarter at Cantonment Road, Cuttack, newly-constructed house at Jharapada, Bhubaneswar, and parental house located at Shreekheta Nagar, Puri. Further cash Rs 8,70,000 was recovered during house search at his residential quarter at Cantonment Road, Cuttack. The total cash recovery was Rs 10,01,535, which he could not account for satisfactorily.

In this connection, a case was registered against Behera.

The investigation was on. Details of immovable and movable assets including investments and deposits etc. are being investigated into.

CONTEMPORARIES

Dawning of the era of new ADR regime

On September 23, the Prime Minister while inaugurating the International Lawyers' Conference highlighted the relevance of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and said, "With the increasing complexity of commercial transactions, ADR has gained currency all over the world." He further said, "In order to systematise the informal tradition of dispute resolution in India, the Government of India has enacted a Mediation Act."

However, we are not alien to ADR as since ancient time, 'Panchayats' have proven as a credible and commonly-resorted apparatus for dispute resolution through mediation, what we call now as part of ADR. And therefore, it is obvious that any discussion in the context of Indian legal system shall be incomplete without mentioning



S JYOTIRANJANA

and discussing about ADR. It includes various mechanisms that enable parties in dispute for amicable resolution of their differences without approaching courts.

The significance of ADR in India is huge considering the clog in judiciary and the consequent delays in court proceedings and painful cost

of litigation. So far, arbitration and conciliation of disputes under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (A&C Act) had taken centre stage, but recently mediation of disputes is gradually finding its way into the system with enhanced prominence.

In the Parliament's Monsoon Session, we have enacted the Mediation Act, 2023. The Indian legal system is pro-ADR; and in the event of presence of components of settlement in a case which parties are likely to accept, our system is designed to auto-persuade judiciary to refer the disputing parties to different ADR procedures which include mediation.

The Act will definitely prove to be a boon given the already conducive atmosphere for mediation. The Act obligates parties, notwithstanding a prior mediation agreement, to take steps for

settlement of their disputes through pre-litigation mediation. The Act provides an ecosystem to facilitate/ catalyse the process. It, therefore, has paved way for courts to maintain a panel of mediators.

This will have a cascading positive impact on the Indian legal system like reducing the number of frivolous petitions, the confidentiality in mediation would ensure zero publicity and therefore lead to mitigation of the probability of souring of the relationship between the parties as normally happens in a dispute fought in public glare. And the Act has come up with lot of safeguards against any deliberate dillydallying by a recalcitrant defendant. First, all mediations to be conducted by empanelled mediators with proven expertise, impartiality and unimpeachable credential. Secondly, the 'mediation proceeding', subject to request for

extension by the parties shall be completed within 180 days from the parties' first appearance. However, this Act doesn't intend to keep the judiciary completely out of the loop; it rather provides for exigencies whereupon a party may seek urgent interim reliefs from a court irrespective of commencement or otherwise of mediation.

The Act has both emphasised and prioritised expertise and efficiency and at the same time has seized the pre-litigation mediation from being used as an ammunition. It underscores the objective of lesser dispute and greater business.

The Act marks the beginning of a new era when mediation and commercial arbitration will prevail and be resorted to alike. Both legislations are homologous in many ways like mandate confidentiality, enforcing uncompromisable timelines for the

conduct of proceedings; courts are made to refer the parties to mediation or arbitration, mechanism for the appointment of a mediator or arbitrator and provision for the termination of their mandate, enforceability of a mediated settlement agreement and an arbitral award. The other similarities include the A & C Act and have placed priority on institutional arbitration and the Mediation Act has paved way for institutional mediation through mediation service providers. Mediation and commercial arbitration, although under the reformed legal regime, are statutorily required to be adhered to at different stages but appear to be complementary and supplementary to each other.

The legislative intent behind the approach towards settlement of commercial disputes inches towards

lesser litigation, more resolution and increased commerce in an amicable atmosphere as opposed to being hostile, through mediation or commercial arbitration. And courts have been reduced to being the last resort under exceptional circumstances and this will go a long way in unclogging the courts, ushering in a new regime of hassle-free business and making India the world capital of commercial dispute resolution, furthering the G20 slogan of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

(The writer is an Advocate, Orissa High Court, Additional Central Government Standing Counsel, CAT, Cuttack Bench, Consulting Editor-Legal Affairs and Public Policy, The Pioneer, Bhubaneswar and a Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Law and Media Studies, School of Mass Communication, KIIT University. Views are personal)

Well-Marked Low Pressure Area

Very heavy rains to lash several districts today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Due to a Well-Marked Low-Pressure Area over North-west Bay of Bengal with associated cyclonic circulation, heavy to very heavy rainfall (7 to 20cm) is very likely to occur in seven districts of Odisha during next 24 hours.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Regional Centre here on Sunday issued an Orange Warning for the next two days and a Yellow Warning for two days thereafter.

In its midday bulletin, the IMD said, “The Well-Marked Low-Pressure Area over south-east Jharkhand and adjoining areas of Gangetic West Bengal & north Odisha moved northwestwards and lay centered at 0830 hours IST of today, the 1st October, 2023 over western parts of Gangetic West Bengal and adjoining Jharkhand. It is likely to move further northwestwards slowly during next 24 hours.”

Light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places over the

districts of north Odisha and at many places over south Odisha.

The highest maximum temperature of 34.5oC was recorded at Jharsuguda and the lowest minimum temperature of 21.0oC was recorded at Phulbani in the plains of Odisha.

Orange Warning (Be Prepared): Heavy to very heavy rainfall (7 to 20cm) is very likely to occur in the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Angul, Dhenkanal and Cuttack.

Yellow Warning (Be Updated): Heavy rainfall (7 to 11cm) is very likely to occur in the districts of Bargarh, Sambalpur, Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Khordha, Puri and Ganjam.

Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur in the districts of Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Puri,

Khordha, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Subarnapur, Balangir, Boudh, Kandhamal and Kalahandi.

For Monday (valid from 0830 hrs IST of 02.10.2023 to 0830 hrs IST of 03.10.2023): Orange Warning (Be Prepared): Heavy to very heavy rainfall (7 to 20cm) is very likely to occur in the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Deogarh, Keonjhar and Sambalpur.

Yellow Warning (Be Updated): Heavy rainfall (7 to

11cm) is very likely to occur in the districts of Bargarh, Subarnapur, Balangir, Angul, Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Baleswar and Kendrapada.

Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur in the districts of Baleswar, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balangir, Subarnapur, Boudh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Nayagarh and Khordha.

Ganjam's Manaswini wins gold in Windsurfing

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Adventure surfing and sailing queen Manswani Maharana, the only girl from Odisha, once again brought glory to the State by winning a gold medal in the recently concluded National Senior Windsurfing Championship held in Mumbai from September 21 to 26.



Joint Secretary Rakendra Jena from Odisha State Department of Sports and Youth Services encouraged Manaswini, the daughter of Bhaskar and Pramila Maharana of Panibandha village under Malad GP of Ganjam Block. She developed and skilled herself under training from international scubba diver Sabir Bux.

Manaswani came into the limelight by creating her own unique identity in 2014-15 and winning a gold medal in national level competition and bronze medal in 2016-17. In

2018, she participated in 'Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat' competition and too won a gold.

In 2022, she was qualified for the Windsurfing in Asian Games by participating in the All India Boat Sailing Championship at Hawley Beach, Goa. Later, in 2022, she won the gold medal in the Asian Games Championship in Indian Naval Watermanship Training held at Collab Port, Mumbai and ranked number one in the Indian RSXS category.

Crime trajectory

197 murders in 3 yrs, 11 this month in Ganjam

PNS ■ CHHATRAPUR

Crime rate in Ganjam is not in control as per data shown in last three years. Loot, theft and other crimes are increasing on daily basis. Two murder cases have taken place in last 24 hours alone over past enmity.

The police have arrested two persons such as Jitu Pradhan and Deepak Khatua in the murder case of Sunil Nahak of Aska area in Danapur village under Kodala police limits. Similarly, one Sanjay Pallai of Bariguda was arrested for the murder of Anil Mohanty under Dharakot PS.

So far, 11 murders have taken place in Ganjam district in this month. As reported, three murder cases under Sherahada Police Station, one case each in Ganjam, Kabisurjyanagar, Kotinada, Patapur, Rambha, Sorada, Kodala and Dharakot Police Stations have occurred in this month.

197 murders have been registered in last three years in the district. 77 cases in 2021, 57 cases in 2022 and 63 cases this year have been registered. Most of the murder cases are due to past enmity and many accused in these cases are habitual criminals, said police.

‘Love Mother Earth, village, State, nation’

BJP holds Pandit Dindayal B-Day as 'Antodaya Diwas'

AJIT PANDA ■ NUAPADA

Pandit Dindayal Upadhyaya's 106th birthday was celebrated as the Antodaya Diwas at Khariar by BJP's Khariar Assembly unit recently. A meeting of the party cadres was held on the occasion where Kalahandi MP Basant Panda attended as chief guest.

Former MLA Hitesh Bagartti, Atindra Malik, Pruthviraj Mahanty, Debdeb Singh Deo and Mohan Bhoi attended as the honourable guests. The speakers touched various aspects of Indian cul-



ture and tradition while throwing lights on life and ideas of Upadhyay.

"Pandit Deendayal as the co-founder of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and ideologue of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) had propounded the concept of 'Antodaya' which means the 'rise of the last person of the society' and to rid the nation of extreme

poverty. He is a revered icon of integral humanism and a guiding force for an alternative model of governance and politics," said the speakers.

MP Panda started his speech in a dialogical mode involving the cadres in the discussion. He asked the cadres about the significance of local festival Nuankhai and the answers given by the cadres led

to the conclusion that it is a festival of worshipping Mother Earth and the deity protecting from all evils.

"This is 'Mati Bhakti' which means loving the Earth that includes village, Panchayat, block, district, State and the nation. Beyond it, we have the concept of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' where we get the idea of 'Ekanta Manab Darshan', Ekata Bhaba and the efforts start to make all equal," said Panda. He also focused on various schemes and programmes of the Central Government and asked the cadres to reach out to people with all this information to convince them to stand in support of the BJP in the forthcoming elections.

Man held for attacking cop in K'pada

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

A man was arrested and forwarded to court for attacking and injuring a Sub Inspector of police here.

According to sources, Nikujna Pradhan, SI of Kudanagari police station, on September 29 had gone to Nagaripada village to conduct an inquiry in a family disturbance case. When he reached the spot, he came across one Prabodh Malik, allegedly creating a brawl by holding a sharp weapon. SI Pradhan asked him why he has been creating nuisance with his family members. All of a sudden, the accused misbehaved with him and assaulted him with an intention to kill him.

On being informed, the IIC Kudanagari police station rushed to the spot and managed to rescue Pradhan. Malik was booked under various sections of IPC and was forwarded to SDJM Court, Kendrapada where he was remanded in jail custody after his bail plea was rejected by court, informed IIC Purna Chandra Patayat.

Jeevika Samruddhi project Vedanta brings qualitative change in farmers' lives

3rd phase of scheme to cover 200 acres for profitable farming

JHARSUGUDA ■ BHUBANESWAR

In a remarkable turn of events, farmers in Jharsuguda district are witnessing a profound transformation in their lives, thanks to Vedanta Aluminium's 'Jeevika Samruddhi' project.

Not only has this project empowered the farming community, but it has also elevated the overall well-being of the region. The stories of 521 farmers, including the inspiring tales of Arjun Nayak and Naresh Patel, stand as vivid testimonials to the project's resounding success.

Now in its third phase, the 'Jeevika Samruddhi' project extends its nurturing embrace over more than 200 acres of cultivated land, where highly profitable agricultural practices are flourishing. This substantial expansion signifies a groundbreaking shift in the fortunes of



local farmers, translating into a considerable boost in their annual incomes and a notable improvement in their quality of life.

Agriculture Officer of Kolabira block Surendra Delki accentuated the project's unwavering commitment to climate-compatible agriculture, holistic soil and water conservation, dependable irrigation facilities, and comprehensive farmer training programmes. These facets are the linchpin of the project's enduring triumph and long-term sustainability.

Power of nonviolence in Gandhi's Khadi



BINAYA BHUSAN JENA

The world is celebrating the 154th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the 'Father of the Nation' in India, a symbol of nonviolence, peace, civil resistance and freedom. His words continue to resonate powerfully, especially in a world grappling with rising tensions, conflicts, and divisive ideologies. His life and teachings appear not only relevant but in fact a constant source of power to resolve conflict of any nature and scale through non-violence. The International Day of Non-Violence is a beacon, reminding the world about the power of non-violence to challenge oppressive systems, resolve conflicts, restore order and inspire change.

While fighting the British rule in India, Mahatma Gandhi astutely visualised the power of non-violent struggle through a tool that no one could imagine its strength in mobilizing every Indian. Symbolically, he picked khadi and spinning wheel into a deep non-violent tool of resistance that appealed every Indian. The image of Gandhi sitting by his spinning wheel is one of the most enduring symbols of his philoso-

phy and his vision for an independent India. It serves as a reminder of the importance of self-reliance, simplicity, and the strength of non-violent resistance.

British colonial policies had devastated India's once-thriving textile industry, making the country dependent on imported textiles from Britain. Much before Gandhi chose Khadi as a tool for non-violent resistance, the freedom fighters used clothing as a tool to fight the British. At the time of initial Swadeshi Movement, particularly during the Partition of Bengal in 1905, Indians engaged in boycotts and bonfires of foreign goods. Gandhi added a unique dimen-

sion by emphasizing positive, constructive action in addition to boycotts. Instead of just rejecting foreign goods, he advocated for proactive production of Indian goods, especially khadi to replace British clothing. This proactive approach was non-aggressive and non-violent, focusing on self-empowerment and symbolizing unified action against mass-production of foreign goods, particularly British-made textiles and clothing.

Gandhi saw the revival of hand spinning and hand weaving as a direct and non-violent means to challenge this economic subjugation. Gandhiji was not only promoting a sense of economic self-sufficiency among Indians but also making a clear political statement. Wearing khadi became a symbol of defiance against the British and a marker of one's commitment to the freedom struggle. Charkha (spinning wheel) was introduced as a household tool and symbol of non-violent resistance to British rule. The act of spinning became a daily ritual of resistance, a meditation, and a tangible way for every Indian, re-

gardless of their socio-economic background, to contribute to the independence movement. These two interdependent tools - khadi and charkha, broke the caste and class barriers and democratised participation of Indians in the freedom struggle. Regardless of one's economic status, caste, gender, or education, everyone could engage in the act of spinning, weaving or wearing khadi. One of the significant aspects of Gandhi's Swadeshi movement was its grassroots nature. The charkha and khadi became tools for mass mobilization. Villages across India took up spinning, making the peaceful and non-violent freedom struggle inclusive and widespread. Communities and villages once known for their traditional caste-based occupation also started spinning to show their solidarity with the freedom struggle. In instances like the Avdhan community or Khadi Ratna community of village Atta in Keonjhar district, traditionally known for making horoscope, birth-charts and predicting future, completely switched to spinning and weaving. They were so motivated that the en-

tire community in the village engaged in spinning and weaving to join Gandhi's clarion call of non-violent freedom struggle.

Khadi became a pan-Indian symbol of non-violent resistance, a unifying force and a step towards self-reliance and promoted a sense of shared national identity. It was emblematic of the non-violent resistance and sent a message to the international community about the power of passive resistance, non-violent action, self-reliance, peace, conflict resolution, environment-protection and also laid a solid foundation for a sustainable fashion movement. Khadi transcended regional, communal, and class differences. By wearing and promoting khadi, individuals from various parts of India, from different religions, and from all socioeconomic backgrounds could unite under a shared identity in the fight against foreign rule.

The strengthening of the Non-cooperation movement and the boycott of British goods, particularly textiles and clothing, had tangible impact on the British textiles industry.

The sales of British textiles sharply declined and khadi posed a direct challenge to the textiles industry of Manchester. His understanding of the importance of khadi, transformed Indian clothing from a mere utilitarian need into a powerful non-violent weapon against colonial rule. Today, the world can recall the power of khadi as a tool to fight the environmental violence caused by the fashion industry. The methods and practices of production in the global fashion industry has caused irreparable damage to the environment and many economies in the world. The violence caused to the society and environment in the form of mass production, mechanisation, fast fashion and use of unsustainable raw materials demands a Gandhian treatment by adopting khadi and handloom as a symbol of rejection and boycott of mass-produced textiles and clothing.

(Dr Jena is a Professor at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Bhubaneswar. He is known for his sustainable fashion initiative 'Farm to Fashion')

INBRIEF

MAN GETS 3-YR RI FOR MOLESTING MINOR IN B'SWAR

Baleswar: The Baleswar Special Judge POCSO on Saturday convicted a 50-year-old man on the charge of outraging the modesty of a minor girl and sentenced him to three years rigorous imprisonment. The court also directed him to pay a fine of Rs 1,000 and in default to undergo another year's jail term. The convict Bidya Singh of village Dingabali under Remuna police station was arrested in February 2021 after the mother of the victim alleged that her daughter was molested by the accused. The accused was tried under several sections of the IPC and 8 of POCSO Act. The court after examining 13 witnesses and 10 exhibits awarded the punishment, said Special Public Prosecutor Pranab Panda.

IIT BBS HOLDS SWACHHATA HI SEVA CAMPAIGN

Bhubaneswar: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised a cleanliness activity in line with the nationwide 'Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta' drive under the Swachhata Hi Seva Special Campaign 3.0 on Sunday. The institute conducted the cleanliness drive in and around Podapada Primary School, Jatni in its adopted village. Institute Director Prof Shreepad Karmalkar, Dean (Student Affairs) Dr Rajesh Roshan Dash and Registrar Bamadev Acharya participated in the drive.



IIT BBS HOLDS HINDI PAKHWADA

Bhubaneswar: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar has organised Hindi Fortnight (Hindi Pakhwada) to celebrate the importance of Hindi as Official Language of India (Raj Bhasha) and promote the use of the language among its members and the students of Kendriya Vidyalaya, IIT Bhubaneswar. The institute organised various programmes and competitions from September 14 to 29 to mark the occasion.



PPA CONDUCTS 'SWACHHTA HI SEVA' IN TOWNSHIP

Paradip: The Paradip Port Authority along with the Paradeep Municipality, Paradip Sakharata Samiti, school students and denizens of the township conducted an hour-long Shramdaan for cleanliness drive at the Bank Street and Creek side near Mausima temple. Chief guest PPA Chairman PL Haranadh flagged off a Swachhata Rath in the presence of municipality Chairman Basant Kumar Biswal. Haranadh said cleanliness is not just a transient allegiance but a way of life for realising a dream of clean and green society. The PPA CISF Unit conducted plogging activity at the Paradip beach.



BLOOD DONATION CAMP AT AM/NS INDIA PLANT

Paradip: The ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) organised a blood donation camp to mark the World Heart Day at its Paradeep Pellet Plant. With an active participation of employees of the company and workers of business associates, over 250 units of blood were collected.



CENTRAL UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES 'SWACHHATA HI SEVA'

Koraput: The Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput organised Swachhata Hi Seva in its campus at Sunabeda on Sunday. The programme was initiated as part of Swachhata Pakhwada-Swachhata Hi Seva for a massive cleanliness drive to a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary on October 2. CUO Vice-Chancellor Prof Chakradhar Tripathi conveyed the message for initiation of Swachhata Hi Seva programme in a great spirit.



203KG GANJA SEIZED; 7 ARRESTED IN KANDHAMAL

Phulbani: Acting on a tipoff, Gochapada police station IIC Pravat Kumar Behera with his team reached Kenduguda Ghati of Balandapada panchayat and seized 203 kg of ganja. Besides, police seized six bikes and arrested seven persons while they were waiting for transporting the contraband to Ghantapada of Boudh district. Police registered a case and forwarded the seven accused persons to court.



YOUTH TRANSFORMATION PROG IN RAYAGADA COLLEGE

Rayagada: The monthly Juba Sanskar Programme was organised at the Rayagada Autonomous College being presided over by Principal Dr Babilata Shroff, who stressed on the need of students abstaining from drug addiction. Coordinator of the programme Dr Saraswati Ray advised students to cultivate creative habits so that they are not lured by drugs. Resource person Lt Udaya Nayak talked about the negative impact of drugs in life. Snehajali Pandey proposed a vote of thanks.

JINDAL LAYS STONE FOR SHIV TEMPLE IN BARBIL

Joda/Barbil: Chairman of Jindal Steel & Power Naveen Jindal and chairperson of JSP Foundation Shailu Jindal laid foundation-stone for a magnificent Shiv temple, 'Devalaya', in the heart of Devbhoomi, Jindal Nagar, Barbil, on Friday. The occasion took place in the presence of Padmasri Tulsi Munda, JSP MD Bimlendra Jha, community leaders and villagers.



TPCODL'S 'BILL PAY AND WIN SCHEME' A SUCCESS

Bhubaneswar: The TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL) has announced the success of its 'Bill Pay and Win Scheme.' This innovative initiative encourages customers to clear their dues promptly and become zero-arrear consumers. It has tremendous participation from residents.



PARADIP COLLEGE STUDENTS SHINES IN ELOCUTION COMPETITION

Paradip: Shiba Prasad Mohanty, a student of Paradip College, secured the first position in a district-level elocution competition. Rashmita Mandal claimed the second position while Ankita Pattnaik secured the third spot. A ceremony was held at the Zilla Sanskriti Bhavan to celebrate the occasion. 'Dharitri' editor Tathagata Satpathy presented the awards to the successful students.

Modi leads nation in hour-long ‘shramdaan’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday pitched for blending fitness and well-being with cleanliness as he led a nationwide cleanliness drive in which thousands of people participated in an hour-long “shramdaan” across the country.

Besides Modi, several other BJP leaders, including Union Ministers, took up cleanliness programmes in different parts of the country.

Home Minister Amit Shah participated in Ahmedabad while BJP chief JP Nadda did so in Delhi. According to the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, more than 9.20 lakh sites across the country were adopted for the mega drive, named as “Swachhanjali” to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve

of his birth anniversary.

People from all walks of life, from politicians to students, wielded brooms and took part in the ‘Swachhata hi Seva’ campaign, in response to the Prime Minister’s appeal the cleanliness drive.

Wielding a broom, Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated in a cleanliness drive in Ahmedabad. BJP chief JP Nadda also took part in the drive in Delhi’s Jhandewalan area.

Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath participated in cleanliness drive ‘Swachhata Pakhwada’ in Sitapur. Taking part in the “shramdaan (voluntary labour)”, Union Power Minister RK Singh told reporters, “We (Centre) have taken a resolve to make the country clean. It is a big challenge but we will do it.”

Union Ministers and BJP



leaders across the country grabbed brooms and took part in the ‘Swachhata hi Seva’ campaign.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel participated in a cleanliness drive in Ahmedabad. BJP MP Dinesh Sharma, who also took part in a clean drive, said “swachhata (cleanliness)” has become the face of the country.

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, urging people to join the drive, said in a post on X, “Come, let’s create a new history! At 10 am today, let’s volunteer for an hour, paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi through cleanliness.” “Scan or visit local cleanliness programmes to join. Dream of a #GarbageFreeIndia Together, we’ll make it happen,” he said.

Indian Air Force chief Air

Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari took volunteered for a cleanliness activity in New Delhi. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi said it held cleanliness drives at 500 locations across the national capital.

Cricketers such as Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also appealed to the people to come together for “Ek Tareekh, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath” and join the largest citizen-led movement to strengthen the resolve towards cleanliness.

Among the States, Uttar Pradesh adopted more than a lakh sites for cleanliness drives while Maharashtra will conduct the programme in over 62,000 locations, including the beaches, religious places, schools, colleges and water bodies. In Telangana, temples of historical significance were cleaned during the drive.

Canada-based Lakhbir stepping up terror activities in Punjab: Intelligence

RAKESH K SINGH ■
NEW DELHI

Amid the renewed focus on the Khalistani terrorists and their expanding arc of terror syndicate following the Indo-Canada diplomatic row, intelligence reports have flagged the increasing footprint of Canada-based gangster-turned-terrorist Lakhbir Singh alias Landa who has been jacking up terror activities in Punjab via an additional operational base in Portugal.

Backed by the notorious Pakistani spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Landa has been engaged in gunrunning from Pakistan to Punjab.

Besides Canada, Portugal has emerged as a key operational base of Landa where a number of his cohorts are based and directing the terror operations against India.

Landa is the mastermind behind the RPG attack at the Intelligence Headquarters of Punjab police in Mohali on May 9, 2022 and at police station Sarhali Kalan in Tarn Taran on December 10, 2022.

“Lakhbir Singh alias Landa has been deploying his foreign based associates for retrieving and disposing off consignments consisting of firearms, explosives and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) smuggled from Pakistan in collaboration with Pak ISI, into Punjab and carrying terror activities through their local contacts,” reads a recent intelligence report.

The report further said, “It has been discerned that Portugal has emerged as an important operational base of Landa’s criminal network as some of his key associates have established themselves in Portugal from where they exercise control over the criminal syndicate.”

One of Landa’s foreign based associates, Parminder Singh alias Pattu has emerged as a key member of Landa’s criminal network, who is residing illegally on tourist visa in Portugal. Parminder Singh,



son of Tarlochan Singh, is a resident of Baghelewala village in Ferozepur district of Punjab.

“It came to notice that recently he (Parminder Singh alias Pattu) arranged one AK-47 assault rifle, one MP-5 sub-machine gun, hand grenades, pistols along with live cartridges for the use of criminal syndicate in Punjab through his contacts in Pakistan,” the report highlighted.

On Wednesday, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted multi-State searches following a similar intelligence input against another gangster and Landa’s associate Lawrence Bishnoi, a criminal mastermind with a notorious track record. Bishnoi has been linked to several high-profile crimes, including the murder of renowned Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala and for issuing threats against Bollywood actor Salman Khan.

Recent intelligence inputs warned of an alarming trend in Bishnoi’s illicit activities who has established a direct line of communication with Nasir Khan, an ISI operative.

“The connection suggests that Bishnoi and his gang might

be diversifying their criminal portfolio by procuring weapons with the help of Pakistan Intelligence Operatives (PIOs) and making use of these weapons for furthering gangster activities in the region,” reads the Intelligence report.

Bishnoi’s gang is notorious for involvement in extortion and killings but the recent revelation of links with Pakistan-based entities suggests a “strategic shift in the gang’s operational focus.”

“The gang’s involvement in arms smuggling represents a significant escalation in their criminal activities and poses a considerable risk to the nation’s security. The potential backing by Pak ISI operatives also indicates a concerning overlap between organized crimes and geopolitical adversaries, enhancing the threat profile of Bishnoi’s operations,” warned the report.

Rajnath takes part in cleanliness drive



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As part of ‘Swachhata Hi Sewa’ campaign, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday took part in a special cleanliness programme ‘Ek Taarikh, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath’, organised by Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) at its premises in Delhi Cantonment.

Rajnath led the shramdaan activities, which included a cleanliness drive, beautification of common area and a plantation drive.

The defence minister also interacted with the Safai Karmacharis and lauded their efforts in ensuring cleanliness in the premises. He motivated them to continue working with zeal and dedication and carry forward the mass social movement launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government to realise the dream of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi of a ‘Clean India’.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Financial Adviser (Defence Service) Rasika Chaube and CGDA S G Dastidar also participated in various cleanliness activities on the occasion.

Rajnath also interacted with the Principal Controllers and Controllers of Defence Accounts heading the offices of PCDA (Army) Jammu,

PCDA (Air Force) Dehradun, PCDA (Army) Jaipur, PCDA (Pensions) Prayagraj, CDA (Army) Meerut, CDA Guwahati, CDA Jabalpur, CDA (Regional Training Centre) Bengaluru and CDA Chennai and reviewed the implementation of the ‘Swachhta Hi Sewa’ campaign in their respective jurisdictions.

The ‘Swachhata Hi Sewa’ campaign, which began on September 15, 2023, will culminate on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 02. As part of the campaign, shramdaan activities are being undertaken through community participation as a prelude to the Swachh Bharat Diwas on Gandhi Jayanti.

Over 20,000 officers and staff of Defence Accounts Department across more than 1,100 offices and residential colonies across the country have been undertaking cleanliness activities including removal of garbage, weeding out of files and awareness campaigns on the importance of proper sanitation and hygiene.

Similar cleanliness drives have been launched at various other establishments of Ministry of Defence, Services and related organisations all over the country as part of the ‘Swachhata Hi Sewa’ campaign.

India needs stronger Armed forces, says Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday called for effective utilisation of financial resources as India needs stronger Armed forces with modern equipment to become a developed nation by 2047.

“If we wish to create a developed nation, we will need stronger armed forces with modern arms and equipment. Therefore, it is necessary to effectively utilise the financial resources available to us,” he said after launching several digital initiatives of the Defence Accounts Department (DAD) during its 276th annual day celebrations here. “There should be a fine balance between the demands of services and the allocation of available resources,” the minister added.

Describing the DAD as the “guardian of defence finance”, he emphasised the need to bolster the internal vigilance mechanism so that any suspicious activity can be detected and reviewed immediately.



This, he said, will not only help in dealing with the problem quickly but also increase the trust of the people in the department.

Rajnath also suggested to the DAD for the creation of an in-house standing committee that can research and study market forces and provide high-quality market intelligence to the field officers.

He appreciated the organisation for its efforts towards enhancing the country’s defence capabilities through a transparent and efficient financial

system.

Terming accounting as extremely important for an individual, organisation and the nation as a whole, he said, “Our wants are unlimited, but the available resources are limited.”

He commended the DAD for ensuring judicious use of resources while extracting optimum output.

The digital initiatives launched included an integrated defence finance dashboard for the Ministry of Defence -- SARANSH (Summary of Accounts, Budget and Expenditure

for Raksha Mantralaya) and BISWAS (Bill Information and Work Analysis System and e-Raksha Awaas).

While Rajnath lauded the DAD for coming out with numerous digital initiatives, he exhorted it to develop its professional capabilities to deal with the complexities arising out of the constantly-evolving times.

He urged it to collaborate with reputable institutions such as Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) to develop and adopt customised training modules, as per requirements.

The minister urged DAD officials to keep in mind two broad aspects while extending financial advice -- realistic assessment of the demand of the user agency and understanding of the product’s market.

He stressed the need to pay attention to the fact whether there is a need to buy a product or not and if a similar product of equal or greater effectiveness is available somewhere else in the market at a lower cost, according to the defence ministry.

This understanding will further increase the quality of financial advice, he said. To develop such an understanding, Rajnath suggested the creation of an in-house mechanism, a standing committee of experienced people who can research and study market forces and provide high-quality market intelligence to the field officers.

“Big banks and financial institutions develop in-house economic intelligence and research teams. On similar lines, the DAD needs to develop an in-house team for market research and intelligence,” he said.

The defence minister also recommended collaboration with industry associations and business schools for extensive study of market conditions. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Financial Advisor (Defence Services) Rasika Chaube, Controller General of Defence Accounts S G Dastidar and other senior officials of Ministry of Defence were present during the event.

Modi to visit Rajasthan, MP to launch development projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch multiple development projects in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh during his visit to the two poll-bound States on Monday.

The Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) said he will launch and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth about Rs 7,000 crore in Rajasthan and around Rs 19,260 crore in Madhya Pradesh. During his visit to Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, he will inaugurate the Mehana-Bathinda-Guraspur gas pipeline, built at a cost of Rs 4,500 crore in yet another step to promote a gas-based economy, it said.

Modi will also inaugurate Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited’s (HPCL) LPG plant in Abu Road. This plant will bottle and distribute 86 lakh cylinders per annum, resulting in net reduction in running trucks carrying the cylinders by around 0.75 million kilometres annually. This will help to cut down about 0.5 million tons of CO2 emission per annum, it said.



Among the other projects, he will throw open a four-lane road on NH-12 (new NH-52) on the Darah-Jhalawar-Teendhar section, which has been constructed at a cost of more than Rs 1,480 crore.

This will help ease the transportation of the produce of mines from Kota and Jhalawar districts, the statement said. Foundation stones for constructing and widening the railway overbridge from two lanes to four in Sawai Madhopur will also be laid. Modi will inaugurate several railway projects, tourism facilities and a permanent campus of the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Kota.

During his visit to Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, he will inaugurate the Delhi-Vadodara Expressway, which has been

developed at a cost of about Rs 11,895 crore. He will also lay the foundation stone for five different road projects worth over Rs 1,880 crore, the statement said. In line with his vision to ensure a pucca house for every family, the prime minister will initiate the ‘grih pravesh’ ceremony of over 2.2 lakh homes built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin, it said.

Modi will also inaugurate the houses constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban at a cost of about Rs 140 crore. As part of the Government’s focus on providing safe and adequate drinking water, Modi will lay the foundation stone of Jal Jeevan Mission projects worth over Rs 1,530 crore in Gwalior and Sheopor districts. These projects will together benefit more than 720 villages in the region.

He will also lay the foundation stone of nine health centres under the Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission and inaugurate and launch several other projects. Assembly polls in both Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are expected to be held in November-December.

Awareness programme on ‘menstrual health’ held



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Joining the Government’s initiative on menstrual hygiene to promote women’s health, ‘Menstrual Health- One more step towards women’s health’, the Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Cantonment here organised a menstrual health awareness programme ‘Mahawari mein Swachhta’ on Sunday.

A lecture cum demonstration was organised at Army Hospital (R&R) and senior officers and women from all walks of life, including adolescent girls participated in the event, army officials said.

The social taboos and myths associated with men-

struation, medical implications of good menstrual hygiene, and simple but effective ways to deal with menstrual issues were highlighted during the event.

The lack of proper menstrual hygiene can be the source of genital tract infections which can later lead to infertility.

It was also discussed how the ignorance about simple facts about menstrual hygiene can stall the overall growth of young girls, and become a hindrance to them getting a good education, and society as a whole needs to change its attitude about menstruation which is essentially a physiological process.

Afghan Embassy in Delhi announces shut down of operations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Afghanistan Embassy in New Delhi has announced that it is ceasing operations from October 1 citing a lack of support from the host government, failure to meet expectations in serving Afghanistan’s interests and reduction in personnel and resources.

Making this announcement late Sunday night, the Afghanistan embassy in a statement said it regrets announcing the decision to cease its operations, effective October 1, 2023.

“It is with profound sadness, regret, and disappointment that the Embassy of Afghanistan in New Delhi announces this decision to cease its operations,” the statement said.

The embassy said this decision, while deeply regrettable, was made after careful consideration, taking into account the historic ties and long-standing partnership between Afghanistan and India.

The embassy statement also listed key factors affecting its ability to continue the mis-



sion effectively and said that they were the primary reasons for the “unfortunate closure”.

The embassy cited a “lack of support from the host government”, alleging that it has experienced a notable absence of crucial support from the host government, which it said hindered its ability to carry out duties effectively.

The mission also cited “failure to meet expectations in serving Afghanistan’s interests” as one of the reasons. “We acknowledge our shortcomings in meeting the expectations and requirements necessary to serve the best interests of Afghanistan and its citizens due to the lack of diplomatic support in India and the absence of a legitimate functioning government in Kabul,” the mission said.

It also said due to unfore-

seen and unfortunate circumstances, there has been a significant reduction in both personnel and resources available to it, making it increasingly challenging to continue operations.

“The lack of timely and sufficient support from visa renewal for diplomats to other critical areas of cooperation led to an understandable frustration among our team and impeded our ability to carry out routine duties effectively,” the statement said.

Given these circumstances, “it is with deep regret that we have taken the difficult decision to close all operations of the mission with the exception of emergency consular services to Afghan citizens till the transfer of the custodial authority of the mission to the host country,” it said.

Hour-long cleanliness drive launched in BLW, BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under the nationwide cleanliness campaign, named 'One Date, One Hour, One Time for Cleanliness' the drive was launched ahead of the 154th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at various places in the city including Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Sunday. In BLW, under the leadership of General Manager (GM) Basudev Panda, the officers, employees and their families joined for a cleanliness mega campaign. The BLW set an example by doing mega shramdaan at 320 identified places in the entire BLW campus on the theme of 'Cleanliness is Service' on the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Under 'Cleanliness Fortnight' as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Railways, the campaign began at 10 am under the leadership of GM. Senior officers including Principal Chief Electrical Engineer SK Srivastava, Principal Chief Materials Manager Rajneesh Gupta, Principal Chief Medical Officer Dr Devesh Kumar, Chief Vigilance Officer Pramod Kumar Chaudhary, Chief Engineer VK Shukla, Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts Officer (TOT) Ajay Srivastava, Chief Mechanical Engineer (Service) Neeraj Jain, Chief



GM Basudev Panda and other officers offering shramdaan at BLW in Varanasi on Sunday.

Quality Assurance Manager Praveen Kumar, Chief Material Manager Tilok Kothari, Deputy Chief Personnel Officer, (Headquarters) Shyam Babu, Public Relations Officer Rajesh Kumar, members of Staff Council and others also offered their shramdaan in Surya Sarovar premises during hour-long drive.

The campaigns were also launched at Tagore Park and in the workshop areas. The students of BLW Inter College, Civil Defence, St John's Ambulance Brigade, members

of Bharat Scout Guide, members of different unions and others also participated in the cleanliness drive. The entire programme was conducted by Chief Safety Officer SB Patel.

In BHU, the campaign was launched at various placed. At Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSH), under the leadership of Medical Superintendent (MS) Prof KK Gupta, the doctors, officers, students and employees conducted a cleanliness campaign in the hospital premises. During this, Deputy Medical Superintendent Prof Ankur

Singh, Prof Amit Anand, Nursing Superintendent Prakash Sharma and others were present. At Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV), one the eve of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri, week-long 'Clean and Healthy India' campaign was launched. BHU Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh, Dean of Students Dr Anupam Kumar Nema, Joint Registrar (General Administration) Dr Nandlal and Principal Prof Rita Singh and many others were present.

Massive drive held at Assi Ghat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

On the call of the Prime Minister, under the joint aegis of 95 battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Srijan Samajik Vikas Nyas, Nagar Nigam, Ganga Task Force and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), a tribute was paid to the 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary at Assi Ghat here on Sunday.

In the presence of UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ravindra Jaiswal, the participants pledged to fulfill the dream of clean India and keep the country clean with their actions.

Mayor Ashok Tiwari, MLC Hansraj Vishwakarma, Padma Shri Dr Saroj Choramani and many other dignitaries were also present to offer their shramdaan.



UP Minister Ravindra Jaiswal, others offering shramdaan at Assi Ghat in Varanasi on Sunday.

The programme was presided over by Transport Commissioner (UP Govt) Chandar Bhushan Singh.

Chief of Srijan Nyas Anil Kumar Singh, brand ambassador of Ganga Haritima Abhiyan, played an important role in making the programme

successful. Commissioner of Police (CP) Mukta Ashok Jain, Chief Development Officer Himanshu Nagpal, Municipal Commissioner Shipu Giri, Nagar Swasthya Adhikar Dr NP Singh, Deputy Commandant Navneet Kumar, Assistant Commandant Vinod

Kumar Singh, Praveen Singh and personnel of 95 CRPF Battalion, members of Ganga Task force, NDRF officers and personnel, BJP leaders including Saurabh Singh Patel, volunteers of Srijan, students of Brahma Vidyalaya and others were also present.

MLA for maintaining environment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

MLA from Varanasi Cantonment Saurabh Srivastava and Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) Vineet Kumar Srivastava called upon the people, especially railway employees and passengers to maintain the environment. They were addressing a function organised at the second entry of Banaras railway station under the campaign 'One Date One Hour at 10' to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary. Extensive cleaning was done through collective shramdaan offered from 10 am to 11 am. On the occasion, the branch officers including the DRM have also taken pledge of cleanliness.



MLA Saurabh Srivastava addressing a function at Banaras station in Varanasi on Sunday.

was organised in the entire country on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti in which the PM has underlined the importance of cleanliness. The basic objectives of cleanliness cannot be achieved without the participation of every section of the society. That is why for the success of the cleanliness campaign, Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway along with the entire country participated in this countrywide campaign and contributed towards building a clean India.

Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (EnHM) Apoorva Swarnkar, Chief Medical Superintendent Dr RJ Chaudhuri, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W) Anubhav Pathak, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer Rajat Priya, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction) RN Singh, Senior Divisional Safety Officer Balendra Paul, Divisional Personnel Officer Vivek Sharma, Assistant Commercial Manager AK

Suman and other officers, station employees, voluntary organisations, children and teachers of Glenhill School, scouts and guides etc participated.

AWARENESS RALLY TAKEN OUT: On the eve of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti, a joint meeting of Central Communication Bureau and Press Information Office (PIB), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Varanasi and Yuvak Mangal Dal, Dhanpalpur and Hariyali Foundation was held on Sunday at Panchayat Bhawan located in Dhanpalpur of Arazilines development block area. The programme of shramdaan was held apart from goshi, cleanliness rally, quiz competition, and street drama during 'One Day, One Hour' campaign. During the programme, the cleanliness public awareness rally was flagged off by chief guest Prashant Kakkar, media communication officer PIB along with career guru Ravindra Sahay

and gram pradhan Kailash Maurya. This rally went around Dhanpalpur village and spread the message of cleanliness from house to house apart from creating awareness. It ended again at the venue of Panchayat Bhawan. During the programme, Disha Creation Varanasi made people aware about cleanliness through street plays and songs at various places in the village. Ten winners were given prizes by conducting a quiz by Regional Publicity Officer Dr Lajli. All the guests who came to the programme were honoured with mementos by Hariyali Foundation. At the end of the programme, the people present there took a pledge of cleanliness. It was conducted by Nand Kishore Rajbhar. The programme was also attended by Mahesh Maurya, Ram Singh Verma, OP Singh, Chhotelal Gautam, Tarakeshwar Singh, Sandeep, Ramashray, Ajay, Rahul, Ravi Singh, Pradeep Singh, Ashutosh Aditya, Shivkumar etc.

BJP leader praises PM for fulfilling dreams of Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Regional Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Dilip Singh Patel praised the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for fulfilling the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi by launching a nationwide cleanliness drive. He said that in 2014, when Modi became the PM, he himself started this cleanliness campaign from Kashi by sweeping the lane and ghat. "Today, this campaign has taken the form of a people's movement," he said, adding that recently, in the 105th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', the PM had called for cleanliness and shramdaan in public places under 'One Date, One Hour Together' on Sunday. Cleanliness and shramdaan was done at Amrit Sarovar in view to pay a true tribute to Babu. "Cleanliness is the basic mantra of a healthy and peaceful life," he said.

In the morning itself, while addressing the people Patel said that the people were seen to be conscious about cleanliness in every nook and corner of the country. "Today, brooms were seen in the hands of



Regional BJP chief DS Patel and others at statue of Sardar Patel in Varanasi on Sunday.

common people including dignitaries who offered shramdaan by cleaning public places in their respective areas. The campaign was launched at Aditya Sarovar in Aditya Nagar Nevada under Ravidas Mandal. In this cleanliness campaign and Shramdaan programme which started at 10 am, Patel and other BJP leaders swept the floor, picked up the garbage,

cleaned the silt on the stairs near the lake, made people aware about cleanliness and garlanded the statue of Sardar Patel.

In the cleanliness campaign, Surendra Patel, Suresh Singh, regional co-media in-charge Santosh Solapurkar, Madhukar Pandey, Abhishek Mishra, Mandal President Shatrughan Patel, corporator

Garima Singh, former corporator Vineet Singh, Anil Srivastava, Dinesh Kalra, Shailensh Pandey, Rakesh Mohan Dixit, Amarnath Singh Patel, Anil Singh, Arun Singh, Sita Gupta, Jitendra Patel, Vijay Verma, Ratneshwar Modanwal, Shashank Prajapati, Sheshmani Devi, Salgu Patel, Shyam Bhushan Sharma and others participated in the campaign.

CORE GM, others take part in 'shramdaan'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

On the call of Prime Minister, officers and employees under the leadership of General Manager of Central Organisation for Railway Electrification (CORE) Pramod Kumar took part in a 'shramdaan' related to cleanliness in the office premises and railway colonies. The cleanliness fortnight is being observed in the CORE from September 16 till October 2. To spread awareness about cleanliness among the employees of CORE, a large number of activities related to cleanliness have been carried out during Swachhta Pakhwada.

The swachhta pakhwada started on September 16 with the administration of cleanli-



ness oath by GM to the officers and employees of the CORE. Under the clean office campaign, extensive cleaning was

done in all departments and premises of the office on September 18 and 19. From September 20 to 22,

cleanliness campaign was conducted in all residential colonies under Swachh Residential Complex. Under the Swachh Neer Abhiyan, all water treatment and filtration plants, overhead tanks, water bodies and drinking water systems of the CORE complex were inspected from September 25 to 26.

Posters, standees and banners were put up at all major places of CORE to create awareness for overall cleanliness, ban on single-use plastic and encourage use of cloth bags and messages were also displayed through social media. The CORE has always been striving towards cleanliness and is making an important contribution in making the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan successful.

Mahakumbh 2025 to be grand in many ways

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

From expanding its size to enhancing facilities, the Mahakumbh 2025 would be grand in more than one aspect.

The size of the mega religious event will be expanded by around 800 hectares from 3,200 hectares of Kumbh 2019. It will have five more sectors (25) as compared to 20 in 2019 and spread towards Phaphamau side (Rasulabad) of Ganga and downstream of Sangam (Chhatnag). Moreover, to ease the movement of around 40 crore expected devotees and

tourists there will be 30 pontoon bridges over Ganga and Yamuna. Kumbh 2019 had 22 pontoon bridges and was visited by around 25 crore people.

All these issues were discussed during the 15th board meeting of the Prayagraj Mela Authority, chaired by divisional commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant, Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand.

"This time, 30 pontoon bridges will be built for easy movement of devotees and the mega religious event will be held in 25 sectors," said Anand. Also, a huge pandal with a

capacity to hold 10,000 people at one go will be set up.

Around 1.45 lakh toilets will be set up in the vast mela area and 10,000 sanitation workers deployed. There will be 25,000 dustbins, 800 cleaning gangs and an ICT based monitoring system would be put in place. All these proposals have been approved in principle by the Board and will be sent to the Apex Committee for approval. "Efforts to give the message of clean Mahakumbh will start from Magh Mela 2023-24 itself. After the mela, 100 FRP toilets will remain

here throughout the year so that filth does not spread and the mela area is kept clean", said Anand. The state government of Prayagraj has approved a budget of Rs 23.48 crore for the widening and construction of new roads leading to the Maha Kumbh-2025. The funds will be used for road widening and the construction of a link road and a new road to decongest the gathering of devotees. Additionally, funds have been allocated for the construction of three ghats. With the approval of funds, the work will be expedited.

Stress on adopting cleanliness

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A cleanliness drive was organised throughout the district on Sunday. At Deewan Ghat of Vindhachal MLA Ratnakar Mishra, Principal Secretary, Social Welfare and nodal officer, Dr Hari Om and DM Priyanka Niranjan led the drive in which the locals participated on a large

by police personnel. Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel and MLC Shyam Narain Singh 'Vineet Singh' conducted cleanliness drive near Patel Chauraha located at Bharuhna.

MEETING: District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan while presiding over the meeting of Udyog Bandhu at the Collectorate on Saturday



DIG RP Singh cleaning his office premises by doing 'shramdaan' (voluntary labour) along with police personnel

scale. In the premises of DIG office DIG RP Singh himself took the command himself along with PAC and police personnel. On the occasion he said it is the need of the hour that we adopt cleanliness in daily routine. At Police Lines Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan cleaned the premises. He was accompanied

directed the officials to dispose of cases related to Nivesh Mitra on priority and do the follow-up regularly. She reviewed the progress in solving the problems which had been brought up in the last meeting. Reviewing different schemes, including PMEGP, MYSY, ODOP, schemes related to brass industry the DM said

proper action should be taken by the departments and in case any application was rejected, proper reason should be told to the applicant. The LDM submitted the report regarding the target under different schemes, its achievements and the reason behind the pendency as well as rejection. The DM concluded the meeting with the direction to the officials that the problems of the entrepreneurs were to be taken seriously.

DRIVE: Under the direction of DM Priyanka Niranjan the team led by additional district magistrate (ADM/Finance & Revenue) Shiv Pratap Shukla challan of 51 vehicles has been done during the period from September 12 to 30. Giving details of the drive against tax evasion and overloading senior mines officer Shailendra Singh said revenue of Rs 43.50 lakh will be realised. He said under the drive 27 vehicles had been handed over to the police across the district and 24 vehicles challaned online.

11 COUPLES REUNITE: Under 'Project Milan' programme 11 couples reunited through the Family Counselling Centre (FCC) located at Police Lines on Sunday. The couples were living separately due to misunderstanding over trivial issues and the cases were brought to the police. The police had referred them to the FCC and after sep-

arate sittings the couple agreed to live together. The counsellors and staff wished them a successful life and a bright future. On the day incharge of the centre sub-inspector Shashi Tiwari, head constable Savitri Devi, constables Pinki Jaiswal and Sapna, counsellors Nirmala Rai and Dr Krishna Singh along with others were present during the counselling.

MAN DIES: One person found in an unconscious state near the treasury office died in a hospital on Saturday. The guard of the treasury informed the PRV 112 that about the person lying on the ground near the treasury office under the City Kotwali area. He was brought to the divisional hospital.

The police had recovered a used syringe near the place where the person was lying and a toxic substance from his pocket. According to the police it seemed that the man became unconsciousness due to the overdose of the drug which led to his death in the hospital. On information Station House Officer (SHO) City Kotwali Bal Mukund Mishra reached the spot. On the basis of the photograph the deceased was identified as Deepak Giri (29) of Vijaipura under Dehat Kotwali police station. The SHO said the cause of death can be said clearly only after the post-mortem.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Resilient

Taking on challenges from the West, India walks with confidence to strengthen ties with the US

Amid the diplomatic brouhaha following the killing of India-branded terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, India has embarked on a determined and nuanced offensive to present its side of the story on the global fora. During an interaction with Indian journalists in Washington DC, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar criticised Canada for "normalising" violence, threats and intimidation against our diplomats and missions. Tensions between India and Canada have escalated following Justin Trudeau's allegations of Indian involvement in the killing of Nijjar, a Khalistani extremist. Jaishankar highlighted ongoing issues with Canada's "permissiveness" toward terrorism and extremism, as well as the lack of response to extradition requests. He emphasised the need to address the larger issue, rejecting the idea that threats and intimidation should be justified as freedom of speech. The Minister, at an Indian community event in Washington DC, also highlighted the resilience and growth of the India-US relationship, emphasising



ing the need for continued collaboration between the countries. He underscored the unprecedented trajectory of the India-US partnership, describing it as "desirable, optimal and comfortable". Jaishankar expressed optimism regarding the future of bilateral ties, drawing a parallel to India's historic Chandrayaan mission. He praised the US for its "invaluable support" in ensuring the success of the G20 Summit. The Minister said he believed that the partnership would continue to soar, "possibly even beyond the moon".

Amid diplomatic discussions, he dismissed Trudeau's allegations of the Indian Government's involvement in Nijjar's murder as "inconsistent with India's policy". Jaishankar's stance sought to vindicate India's position on the matter. In a separate meeting with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, the two explored avenues for strengthening bilateral defence ties, including the co-production of defence items. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, a meeting of the Indian High Commissioner with the Indian community was disrupted by a few persons with anti-national credentials, bolstering Jaishankar's claim that hardline anti-India elements have taken roots in the West and they get all the leverage to carry out activities against India's interests in the name of freedom of speech. The West must realise that such elements are not fighting for anybody's rights or freedom, they have amassed ill-gotten wealth and wield significant power by claiming to fight for a "just cause" against India. But the fact is that their ideology is based on exclusion, intimidation and violence and that they have no support base in India. An ordinary Punjabi does not identify with them or subscribe to their views. The West must be wary of their presence and activities as these go against its own democratic principles. The Indian External Affairs Minister is doing the proper thing in taking up the cudgels to unmask these elements and show the world that they are just a bunch of desperadoes masquerading as freedom fighters.

PICTALK



A sand sculpture created by sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik on the 'Swachhta Pakhwada at Puri beach

Tourism as a green investment for the future

Green investments in the tourism sector are needed for sustainable economy that strikes a balance between growth growth and environmental protection

Tourism is intricately connected with aesthetics. Aesthetics in the context of tourism refers to the appreciation and experience of beauty, whether it's in natural landscapes, architectural marvels, cultural expressions, or artistic creations. It is the only sector where the public wants nature to be preserved, unlike other sectors where people support the destruction in the name of development.

Tourism is the pillar of our economy. In the year 2021, the travel and tourism sector in India made a substantial contribution of approximately 178 billion US dollars to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In the year 2017, the nation experienced the arrival of more than ten million international tourists, resulting in a substantial influx of foreign currency amounting to approximately 27.31 billion USD. The power of tourism is enormous. In many states tourism is the backbone of the rural economy generating employment opportunities for thousands. But many



times tourists act as a destructive force in polluting the environment. We can see plastic bottles and bags floating in the Dal Lake.

To promote global awareness of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political, and economic value World Tourism Day is celebrated on September 27th under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Each year, World Tourism Day is celebrated on a specific theme, chosen by the UNWTO, to highlight different aspects of the tourism industry. These themes often revolve around current global issues, trends, and challenges facing the tourism sector. The designated theme for the year 2023 is "Tourism and Green Investments". This emphasises

es the necessity for increased and more precise allocations of resources towards the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN.

When we mention green investment in tourism, we're talking about building and taking care of places that are friendly to the environment. This involves things like eco-friendly hotels and lodges, and using less polluting vehicles like electric or hybrid cars. Tourism and green investment are interconnected in several important ways. Green investment in the context of tourism refers to allocating financial resources towards sustainable and environmentally friendly practices within the tourism industry.

This can involve initiatives that aim to minimize negative environmental impacts, conserve natural resources, and promote sustainable development.

Tourism and biodiversity conservation are closely linked, and when managed responsibly, tourism can play a significant role in the protection and preservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. For this, we have to

take the local community into confidence. Usually, people in rural places want their place to develop like a metros. They forget that changing the geography will badly affect their economic prosperity. Engaging local communities in tourism activities can lead to a sense of ownership and stewardship over natural resources. When communities see direct benefits from conservation efforts, they are more likely to be supportive.

Ultimately, green investments in the tourism sector are necessary for the creation of a sustainable and resilient economy that strikes a balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and the well-being of local communities. It incentivises a change towards more environmentally conscious and socially responsible tourism practices that are beneficial to both the natural world and the sustainable growth of the tourism industry.

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



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

Green investments in the tourism sector are needed for sustainable economy that strikes a balance between growth growth and environmental protection

take the local community into confidence. Usually, people in rural places want their place to develop like a metros. They forget that changing the geography will badly affect their economic prosperity. Engaging local communities in tourism activities can lead to a sense of ownership and stewardship over natural resources. When communities see direct benefits from conservation efforts, they are more likely to be supportive.

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Gandhian approach to world peace

Mahatma's ideas of nonviolence act as lighthouse in the modern day world where storms of hatred and factionalism rage

In a world marked by conflict and division, the pursuit of global peace remains an enduring aspiration of humanity. It is a quest that has been championed by leaders, thinkers, and activists throughout history. One of the most prominent figures in this quest was Mahatma Gandhi, whose philosophy of nonviolence continues to inspire people around the globe. The concept of nonviolence stands as a beacon of hope and a path toward sustainable peace.

As the world commemorates the International Day of Nonviolence and celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on October 2, it is crucial to move beyond the celebration and understand it as a solemn commitment that global leaders must undertake (read acknowledge) for the betterment of humanity, which in future can offer a transformative vision that should guide us through the turbulent waters of our times.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, of Satyagraha (truth-force), emphasized the power of truth and love to transform societies and resolve conflicts. Gandhi's influence extended far beyond the borders of India, leaving an indelible mark on the global struggle for peace. Historian Eknath Easwaran captured Gandhi's significance when he wrote that "Gandhi's teachings on nonviolence and his fearless commitment to justice resonate not as relics of the past but as timeless lessons for a world still grappling with violence and injustice."

The universality of Nonviolence stems from the fundamental recognition of human dignity and the shared aspiration for peace. Drawing inspiration from diverse religious and philosophical traditions, Gandhi synthesised the principles of 'Ahimsa' (non-harm) and 'Satyagraha' (truth force) into a powerful tool for social and political change, demonstrating the efficacy of nonviolent resistance.

Gandhi's influence resonated globally, inspiring figures like Martin Luther King Jr., who championed Civil Rights in the United States. King's commitment to nonviolent resistance was deeply rooted in his Christian



faith and the teachings of Gandhi. In his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail," King wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," underscoring the interconnectedness of humanity and the necessity of nonviolent action in the face of injustice. He went on to state that "Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it."

Similarly, Nelson Mandela had unquestionable faith in the power of nonviolence. To him, "Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and the truth is the only lasting legacy we have. All other political systems have failed. Ours is the only approach that can guarantee world peace because it is the only approach that can guarantee that mankind will be relieved of the curse of war."

Further, Desmond Tutu's struggle against apartheid in South Africa showcased the transformative power of non-violence. Tutu emphasized that nonviolence was not just a tactic but a way of life. To him, "Forgiveness and reconciliation are not just ethereal, spiritual things. They have concrete, pragmatic applications." The International Day of Nonviolence observed on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, serves as a reminder

“THE UNIVERSALITY OF NONVIOLENCE STEMS FROM THE FUNDAMENTAL RECOGNITION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND THE SHARED ASPIRATION FOR PEACE

of the global significance of this philosophy. The United Nations, recognising the importance of nonviolence in resolving conflicts and promoting peace, has actively championed this day. The UN has recognised the intrinsic connection between peace and sustainable development in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a world grappling with complex geopolitical tensions, the efficacy of nonviolence as a strategy for conflict resolution cannot be overstated. Peace activist and granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, Ela Bhatt underscored this connection. She believes that "Without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable."

In recent years, nonviolent movements have emerged as powerful forces for change in various parts of the world. From Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her bus seat, to Malala Yousafzai, who stood up for girls' education in the face of violence, to 'The Arab Spring' in the Middle East, to 'The Umbrella Movement' in Hong Kong, and the global climate strikes led by Greta Thunberg are examples of how nonviolent resistance remains relevant in contemporary global struggles. The protests, fuelled by a desire for

democracy, social justice and environmental concerns for leaders to awake from their slumber, demonstrated that the collective power of non-violent action could challenge established norms and demand change.

The birthday of Mahatma Gandhi and the International Day of Nonviolence is a clarion call for action. In a world grappling with diverse challenges, the principles of non-violence offer not just a historical legacy but a roadmap for the future. As Mahatma Gandhi himself had declared, "Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind."

Without exaggeration, it can be said that education stands as a formidable tool for nurturing the values of nonviolence from an early age. Nelson Mandela's insight, from his "Long Walk to Freedom" that people must learn to hate but can also be taught to love, underscores the transformative potential of education. Curricula that incorporate teachings on conflict resolution, empathy, and understanding lay the foundation for a more peaceful and tolerant world.

(The writer is a programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TROUBLE OVER POETRY

Sir — Rashtriya Janata Dal MP, Manoj Jha, is under attack for the mere recitation of the poem, "Thakur ka Kuan," during the recently concluded special session of Parliament. Poet Om Prakash Valmiki laments, "Oven is made of mud, mud is from the pond, the pond belongs to the Thakur." Munshi Premchand's story by the same title was the inspiration for poet Valmiki. The main character in the story, Gangi, a lower caste, makes a vain attempt under the cover of darkness to fetch some 'clean' water from a Thakur's well for his ailing wife, Jokhu. Manoj Jha read the poem to capture the upper caste dominance over all aspects of life in a village. We read Thakur is a title used by feudal landlords in the past.

It is a fact that cruelty towards people belonging to lower castes is on the rise in new India. Social ostracism and discrimination based on caste refuse to disappear.

It was reported recently that in Kantasan village in Patan district of Gujarat, a ration shop owned by a Dalit faced a boycott from the Thakor community. In an inaugural function in a temple in Kannur district of Kerala, a priest refused to pass on the small lighted lamp to Kerala Minister for Temple Affairs, K Radhakrishnan, who belongs to the Scheduled Caste community, to light a bigger traditional lamp. RJD MP Professor Manoj Jha's recital of the poem in Parliament and the DMK Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin's caustic comment on the prevailing social injustice and inequality in Sanatana Dharma emerged from a multitude of such incidents in the country. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to dismantle the caste system "root and branch."

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

RBI EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR 2K NOTES

Sir — The recent decision by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to extend the deadline for the deposit and exchange of Rs 2,000 denomination banknotes until October 7, 2023, is a welcome move. This decision comes after the initial deadline of

‘Annadata’ Dr Swami Nathan is no more



The progress in agriculture should be measured not on the basis of agricultural income or growth, but on the basis of the increase in the income of the farmers. Dr Swami Nathan Commission maintained this opinion. In 1966, Nathan created a high-yielding wheat variety by hybridizing wheat seeds from Mexico with local wheat from Punjab. Similarly, the cultivation of improved varieties of rice, the staple food of India, was always striving for the economic upliftment

of poor farmers. Poverty disturbed by the failure of farmers' agriculture due to inadequate credit and the vagaries of nature, the commission headed by Dr. Swami Nathan, concerned with the suicide of farmers in debt, said that the progress in agriculture should be measured on the basis of farmers' income and not on the basis of agricultural income or growth. Dr. Swami Nathan aimed to achieve the objectives of food security, easy supply to agriculture, development of dryland farming, increase in profit by increasing agricultural productivity, reduction of imports, adjustment of prices of agricultural products to the global market, and preservation of the environment and ecosystem, among other things. His efforts were valuable. Dr. Swami Nathan was truly the "Annadata" of Indians.

Dattaprasad Shirodkar, | Mumbai

September 30 had passed, providing much-needed relief to citizens who may still possess these notes.

The RBI's decision to review the situation and extend the deadline demonstrates a considerate approach to the circumstances of the people. It recognizes that some individuals may still hold these notes, and it ensures that they have a fair opportunity to exchange or deposit them.

Furthermore, the clarification that banks will cease accepting Rs 2,000 banknotes for credit to accounts or exchange into other denomination banknotes from October 8 is essential information for the public.

The provision allowing people to approach the 19 RBI Issue offices to exchange the Rs 2,000 banknotes, up to a limit of Rs 20,000 at a time, is a practical solution for those who may have a significant amount of these notes. The option to send the banknotes through India Post for crediting respective bank accounts, subject to relevant regulations and due diligence, adds a convenient avenue for compliance.

The article's background on the introduction of the Rs 2,000 denomination cur-

rency note in 2016 and the cessation of its printing in 2018-19 provides valuable context for readers. It highlights the RBI's goal to ensure an adequate supply of currency in other denominations.

Maimul Safui | Howrah

HC STOPPED FROM HOLDING MEETING

Sir — High Commissioner, Vikram Doraiswami, was reported to have been stopped from entering a Gurdwara by Khalistani extremists in Glasgow. It is shocking and outrageous. It is an insult to us. Of late, the rising of anti-India forces on foreign soil is a matter of concern. Reports of desecration of temples in Canada, Australia, the USA, and the UK are on the rise. The breeding of terror on foreign soil is unacceptable. It needs to be condemned. Respective governments should not allow such unlawful activities on their soil. India should take up the matter at the highest political level.


Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

MAGIC OF MUDRA PRANAYAMA

The science of ‘mudras’ is intrinsically related to the esoteric knowledge of Yoga



RAVI VALLURI

The Yoga Sutras of Patañjali is a collection of sutras on the theory and practice of yoga as elucidated in his treatise. The sutras are known for their reference to Ashtanga or the eight elements of practice culminating in samadhi. The eight limbs are yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. Pranayama is the fourth principle of Ashtanga Yoga as delineated by Maharishi Patanjali. Pranayama should be coupled with mindful eating and breathing.

The yogic science of mudras

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says, “There is nothing as sacred as knowledge.” Knowledge can be acquired by the human mind through the 5Ds- dedication, determination, dynamism, devotion, and discipline and one H- Humility. The human mind can harness this potential only if it is in the present moment. By practising proper breathing techniques, like Sudarshan Kriya and Nadi Shodhan pranayama and through regular meditation the mind becomes alert to delve deep into knowledge. It is indeed efficacious to learn about mudras. The practice of mudras is not just in the domain of dancers, painters, and artists, even stock individuals who have nothing to do with the art world ought to learn about mudras.

The science of mudras, is intrinsically related to the esoteric knowledge of yoga and which can be further segregated into the five elements, the five life forces (or subtle forces of energy called the pranas) and the three doshas. The five elements are namely – Akash (ether or space), Vayu (air), Agni (fire), Jal (water) and Prithvi (earth), and the five life forces or pranas are prana, udana, samana, apana and vyana and the three doshas are vata, kapha and pitta. Humans unconsciously practice mudras. For instance, a young child begins learning to walk with his thumbs raised



which is called the Meru Dand mudra. An infant in a deep slumber, his index finger would involuntarily touch the thumb and the other three fingers are on the base of the palm (Chinmaya mudra). The universe in its auto-mode conjures these processes to take place. We are oblivious to the occurrence. Some other mudras which need to be practised are:

(a) Jnana mudra

This is performed to increase brain power, improve memory and for the removal of negative thoughts. Thereby one attains peace and bliss.

(b) Prithvi mudra

This helps in balancing the five sense organs, improves blood circulation and enhances our energy levels. Practising this mudra assists in increasing our alertness.

(c) Apana mudra

This facilitates an improved elimination process, revitalizing the digestive system, improving the gums and strengthening immunity.

(d) Prana mudra

This mudra addresses the problem of fatigue; it provides essential vitamins to the body besides increasing stamina and vigour. It also helps in maintaining the health of our eyes.

(e) Dhyana mudra

Essentially, this mudra helps in making us mindful and wakeful. Over a period, we attain peace of mind.

(f) Shunya Vayu mudra

The practice of this mudra helps in combating problems of flatulence and gastric ailments. The gut houses our solar plexus, which is also referred to as the second brain. We need to take adequate care of our abdomen as most human ailments arise from this part of the body. Thus, there is enormous merit and wisdom in the adage, that your health is in your hands.

(Ravi Valluri is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. and is a faculty of the Art of Living; views expressed are personal)

India’s space Odyssey: To Moon and beyond



UTTAM CHAKRABORTY

India has taken a formidable lead in Moon exploration, though it would be a while before Moon’s resources would be available for development purposes

India is riding high on the success of India’s Chandrayaan-3, which scripted a glorious history worldwide. It is not only a matter of national pride but has larger implications on varied dimensions. It has opened up further deliberations on technological capability, resource exploration, international collaboration, scientific contributions, space exploration and diplomacy, geopolitical landscape, global leadership and cooperation.

The success of Chandrayaan-3 has redefined the relationship between national prestige and technological capability. Successfully launching and operating a lunar mission showcases a country’s technological prowess and capabilities. It can boost national pride and reputation on a global stage, potentially influencing how other countries perceive and engage with that nation. International collaboration is now buzzing around. Lunar missions often involve collaboration with other countries and space agencies. The use of space missions, including lunar explorations, as a means of advancing diplomatic ties is referred to as space diplomacy. The development of international partnerships for space exploration can open up chances for discussions, disagreements, and alliances with other nations, potentially having more significant geopolitical repercussions. These partnerships can foster diplomatic ties and strengthen international relationships, leading to potential geopolitical advantages.

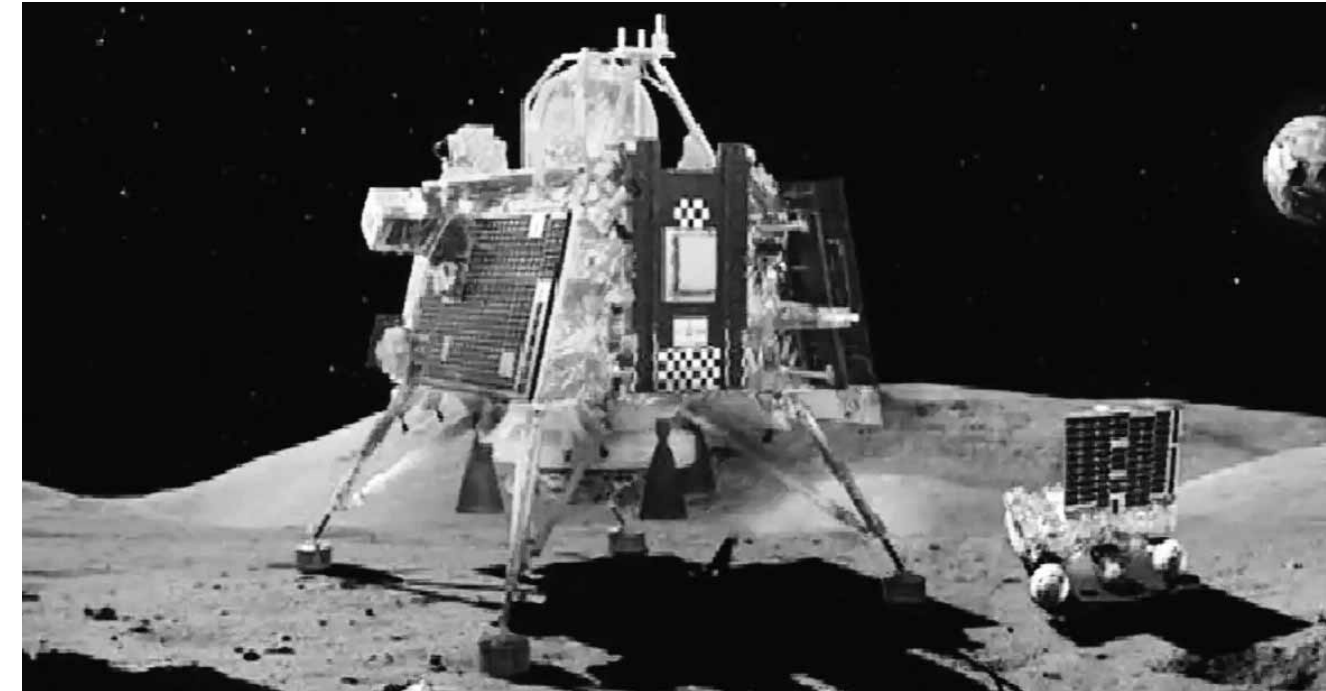
SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Without scientific contributions, India’s mission could not have been possible. Lunar missions contribute to scientific advancements by conducting experiments and collecting data about the Moon’s geology, atmosphere, and other characteristics. Sharing such data and findings can position a country as a leader in scientific research and innovation. Resource Exploration is another area that can be discounted in India’s journey in space. If future lunar missions, including Chandrayaan missions, discover valuable resources on the Moon, such as rare minerals or water ice, they could have significant economic implications.

SPACE VOYAGE & GEOPOLITICS

Control or access to these resources could influence a country’s geopolitical standing. The ability to conduct space missions, including lunar missions, can be used as a tool for diplomacy. It can open channels for negotiations, discussions, and partnerships with other nations interested in space exploration, which can have broader geopolitical implications. Furthermore, a long-running space race may pick up speed in response to the successful lunar mission, which follows Russia’s failure. India became the first nation to land a spacecraft on the south pole of the moon. As the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft successfully touched down on the lunar south pole last week, India became just the fourth nation to perform a soft landing on the moon. That area of the moon has not yet been visited by any other country. The trajectory of the Chandrayaan-3, which blasted off from southern India more than a month ago, has captured the attention of the Indian public and dominated headlines for days.

Soft Power Projection is something that India is going to capitalize on. Successfully



conducting ambitious space missions can enhance a country’s soft power – its ability to influence others through cultural, technological, and scientific achievements. The successful completion of ambitious space missions has the potential to increase a country’s soft power, which is defined as its ability to sway others through achievements in the arts, sciences, and technology. This phenomenon can help to shape how people view the country and have an effect on how well-known it is abroad. This can create a positive image of the country and influence how it is perceived by the international community.

Launching lunar missions requires the development of advanced technology, infrastructure, and skilled workforce. These developments can have a positive impact on the country’s overall technological capabilities and economic growth, indirectly affecting its geopolitical position. Precisely, this achievement will enhance the infrastructure and capability building. Now, global leadership and cooperation have come to the fore for further discussions. If a country like India successfully conducts lunar missions, it could position itself as a leader in space exploration, especially within the developing world. This leadership role can lead to collaborations and alliances, shaping geopolitical dynamics. A nation like India has the potential to become a leader in space exploration if its lunar missions are carried out successfully, especially among developing nations. This particular leadership position has the potential to promote alliances and partnerships.

A long-running space race may be accelerated by the Chandrayaan-3 mission, ushering in a new stage of great power competition. Russia and India, who are allies on Earth, have been vying to be the first nation to set foot on the lunar south pole; a Russian attempt was a failed one. The presence of water raises the

possibility that other nations could use the region of the lunar south pole as a base for further space exploration in the future. The United States established the Artemis Accords in 2020, which seek to foster space cooperation through shared rules and principles, possibly in anticipation of such competition. Several allies and partners, including India, joined. Russia and China have not. The way people on Earth view the moon—and beyond—could change as geopolitical competition in space is set to heat up.

MOON ECONOMY

Limiting climate change’s harmful effects and ensuring a transition to sustainable energy sources have become the two biggest problems the world community has been facing recently. The lack of critical minerals, which are crucial elements of the transition to renewable energy, as studies suggest, makes the transition less seamless than anticipated. Considering the moon economy’s importance and potential sources for these essential minerals is necessary in this context. Along with this, a country typically gains a tactical advantage from a space mission when operationalizing satellite communication, in addition to a variety of other benefits. This includes enabling and supplying consistent satellite data, which aids in forecasting many things, including the monsoon and can greatly aid defence forces in maintaining surveillance on other nations.

The moon is a rich source of raw materials, so it should be noted that this will be a geopolitical region where future conflict and cooperation may occur. It is necessary to take a comprehensive look at the essential minerals that have grown in significance recently. According to an ISRO study, the Moon, especially the South Pole, is currently home to enormous amounts of water. A significant amount of hydro-energy could be produced if this were to be investigated.

Similar to this, a report by Popular Science Magazine titled “The elements we might mine on the moon” suggests the presence of other critical minerals, including plutonium and helium 3, which can be used for the fusion of nuclear energy, as well as cobalt, lithium, titanium, and other critical minerals. In a similar vein, the Energy Information Administration, in its numerous reports, has made predictions of these vital minerals that can be sourced for the RE sector.

The countries that establish bases on the moon first will have the first-mover advantage to benefit from a variety of space projects and businesses on and around the Moon. The geopolitics of lunar colonialism are still unknown, but we do know that they will have an impact on world politics. In a few decades, India may be one of the few nations in charge of the largest portion of the moon economy. A PwC report states that the lunar economy encompasses all of the activities involved in the production, use, and exchange of lunar resources on the Moon’s surface, in lunar orbit, and on Earth.

The United States, Russia, China, Japan, and France are just a few of the nations that have congratulated India on Chandrayaan-3’s successful landing. These nations are all interested in space exploration and are probably closely observing India’s development.

These responses demonstrate the widespread acclaim and admiration that India has received for its performance on Chandrayaan-3. It is a significant accomplishment for India and evidence of its expanding space exploration capabilities.


Other nations may be inspired to pursue their space exploration programs as a result. Now, the moon is India’s ventured place. Let’s wait and watch on the world’s relations with India to shape up the journey in the space.

Growing need for awareness about mental health

Approximately every fifth person across the globe experiences mental health issues at some point during his lifespan

In 1992 the World Federation of Mental Health recognised the need to be more vocal about mental health issues as people with mental illness often suffer silently, fearing social stigma, lack of understanding and discrimination.

Approximately every fifth person across the globe experiences mental health issues at some point during their entire lifespan. While Depression and Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health conditions, suicide is one of the leading causes of premature and untimely deaths. It is a serious concern for mental health professionals for timely intervention. The spate of student suicides in Kota (Rajasthan) speaks volumes of the gravity of the situation and



RC JILOHA

(The writer is a retired professor of psychiatry from the University of Delhi and Jamia Hamdard, views are personal)

the urgent need to address the issue.

Mental health refers to overall mental well-being, a holistic concept that is also about physical and social well-being. Promotion of mental health through understanding, support, and access to mental health resources is crucial to de-stigmatizing mental illness and breaking down the negative attitudes and beliefs surrounding it.

Unfortunately, public health developments during recent years have adversely impacted the mental health of elderly and the children alike. It becomes important to make children understand that sound mental health is vital to their emotional development. It is evident from the studies that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, more children are reporting higher levels of anxiety and depression than ever before. That makes now the perfect time to break down the stigma connected with mental illness by openly discussing the issue.

The recent United Nations Human Rights Report highlights that people with mental health conditions and those with psychosocial disabilities experience disproportionately higher rates of poor physical health and reduced life expectancy. Discrimination, harmful stereotypes and stigma in the community, family, schools and the workplace prevent meaningful relationships, quality social interactions and the inclusive environments needed for the well-being of individuals with mental

illness. These issues hurt a person’s ability to cope with life situations.

There is a need to educate the public to create a society where everyone feels comfortable seeking help and support without prejudice and discrimination. It is the responsibility and obligation of the State and the global organizations to ensure access to mental health services, which can no longer be ignored. Access to better living conditions, security, food, shelter and housing are all human rights issues necessary for people’s mental health. Mental health is a universal right of all citizens of the world and consistent with the 1948 founding principles of the World Federation of Mental Health (WFMH).

Mental Health Day reaffirms every year the commitments made and the action taken. While last year’s World Mental Health Day theme was ‘Make mental health and well-being for all a global priority’, 2023’s theme is to celebrate the power of community kindness.

Mental Health Day 2023 is an opportunity for people and communities to renew their commitment to the theme ‘Mental health is a universal human right’ to improve knowledge, raise awareness and drive actions that promote and protect everyone’s mental health as a universal human right. Mental health must be placed in a human rights framework to re-cast the aspiration for sound mental health as a fundamental human right.

By doing so a better, more

accepting and supportive society can be created where the mentally ill stay included in the larger society with comfort and confidence. Active participation in the events that support World Mental Health Day such as walks, runs, workshops, or panel discussions helps create awareness and clarify misconceptions that often prevent people from seeking available help. Donations to the organization or charity that provides resources and support to those struggling with mental health issues must be made. Devoting and investing time and working voluntarily with the welfare organizations that support mental health can go a long way in creating awareness within a community. Money is needed to carry out these

activities for which funds can be raised by organizing one’s event or participating in a fund-raising challenge.

One also needs to self-educate about mental health and the various issues surrounding it through reading books, attending workshops, or simply having conversations with others or following some of the social media accounts that provide genuine information.

This year’s theme highlights a range of issues to involve a variety of stakeholders and global citizens to work together to ensure that a clear message is delivered and an effective campaign to support World Mental Health Day 2023 is carried out on 10th October, particularly when we celebrate WFMH’s 75th Anniversary year.

Govt shutdown averted as Biden signs funding

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The threat of a federal government shutdown suddenly lifted late Saturday as President Joe Biden signed a temporary funding bill to keep agencies open with little time to spare after Congress rushed to approve the bipartisan deal.

The package drops aid to Ukraine, a White House priority opposed by a growing number of GOP lawmakers, but increases federal disaster assistance by USD 16 billion, meeting Biden's full request. The bill funds government until Nov. 17. After chaotic days of turmoil in the House, Speaker Kevin McCarthy abruptly abandoned demands for steep spending cuts from his right flank and instead relied on Democrats to pass the bill, at risk to his own job. The Senate followed with final passage closing a whirlwind day at the Capitol.

"This is good news for the American people," Biden said in a statement.

He also said the United States "cannot under any circumstances allow American support for Ukraine to be interrupted" and expected McCarthy "will keep his commitment to the people of Ukraine and



secure passage of the support needed to help Ukraine at this critical moment."

It's been a sudden head-spinning turn of events in Congress ahead of the midnight funding deadline after grueling days in the House pushed the government to the brink of a disruptive federal shutdown.

The outcome ends, for now, the threat of a shutdown, but the reprieve may be short-lived. Congress will again need to fund the government in coming weeks risking a crisis as views are hardening, particularly among the right-flank lawmakers whose demands were ultimately swept aside this time in favor of a more bipartisan approach.

"We're going to do our job," McCarthy, R-Calif., said before

the House vote. "We're going to be adults in the room. And we're going to keep government open."

If no deal was in place before Sunday, federal workers would have faced furloughs, more than 2 million active-duty and reserve military troops would have had to work without pay and programs and services that Americans rely on from coast to coast would have begun to face shutdown disruptions.

"It has been a day full of twists and turns, but the American people can breathe a sigh of relief: There will be no government shutdown," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

The package funds government at current 2023 levels until mid-November, and also extends other provisions, including for the Federal Aviation Administration. The package was approved by the House 335-91, with most Republicans and almost all Democrats supporting. Senate passage came by an 88-9 vote.

But the loss of Ukraine aid was devastating for lawmakers of both parties vowing to support President Volodymyr Zelenskyy after his recent Washington visit. The Senate

bill included \$6 billion for Ukraine, and both chambers came to a standstill Saturday as lawmakers assessed their options.

"The American people deserve better," said House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York, warning in a lengthy floor speech that "extreme" Republicans were risking a shutdown. For the House package to be approved, McCarthy was forced to rely on Democrats because the speaker's hard-right flank has said it will oppose any short-term funding measure, denying him the votes needed from his slim majority. It's a move that is sure to intensify calls for his ouster.

After leaving the conservative holdouts behind, McCarthy is almost certain to be facing a motion to try to remove him from office, though it is not at all certain there would be enough votes to topple the speaker. Most Republicans voted for the package Saturday while 90 opposed.

"If somebody wants to remove me because I want to be the adult in the room, go ahead and try," McCarthy said of the threat to oust him. "But I think this country is too important."

The White House was tracking the developments on

Capitol Hill and aides were briefing the president, who was spending the weekend in Washington. Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell, who has championed Ukraine aid despite resistance from his own ranks, is expected to keep pursuing US support for Kyiv in the fight against Russia.

"I have agreed to keep fighting for more economic and security aid for Ukraine," McConnell, R-Ky., said before the vote.

Late at night, the Senate stalled when Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., held up the vote, seeking assurances Ukraine funds would be reconsidered. "I know important moments are like this, for the United States, to lead the rest of the world," Bennet said, noting his mother was born in Poland in 1938 and survived the Holocaust. "We can't fail." The House's quick pivot comes after the collapse Friday of McCarthy's earlier plan to pass a Republican-only bill with steep spending cuts up to 30% to most government agencies and strict border provisions that the White House and Democrats rejected as too extreme. A faction of 21 hard-right Republican holdouts opposed it. "Our options are

slipping away every minute," said one senior Republican, Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart of Florida. The federal government had been heading straight into a shutdown that posed grave uncertainty for federal workers in states all across America and the people who depend on them — from troops to border control agents to office workers, scientists and others.

Families that rely on Head Start for children, food benefits and countless other programs large and small were confronting potential interruptions or outright closures. At the airports, Transportation Security Administration officers and air traffic controllers had been expected to work without pay, but travelers could have faced delays in updating their U.S. passports or other travel documents. The White House has brushed aside McCarthy's overtures to meet with Biden after the speaker walked away from the debt deal they brokered earlier this year that set budget levels. Catering to his hard-right flank, McCarthy had made multiple concessions including returning to the spending limits the conservatives demanded back in January as part of the deal-making to help him become the House speaker.

Pak Army chief vows to eliminate terrorism

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's Army chief General Syed Asim Munir has vowed to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country through "unabated" military operations against militants following Friday's twin suicide attacks that have killed 65 people.

A total of 60 people were killed and more than 60 others were injured in a grisly suicide blast on Friday in Balochistan that targeted a procession to celebrate Prophet Muhammad's birthday near the Madina Masjid in Mastung, an official said.

In the second bomb attack that took place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Hangu, targeting a police station's mosque, five people were killed, and 12 others were injured as the mosque's roof collapsed in the explosion's impact, it said.

The Chief of Army Staff visited Quetta on Saturday where he was briefed on recent terrorist attacks, the Army's media wing said in a statement on Saturday night.

Munir said that the heretics who have nothing to do with Islam were carrying out such attacks with the "backing of state sponsors of terrorism".

"These terrorists and their facilitators, having no link with religion and ideology, are proxies of the enemies of Pakistan and its people," he said, without giving more details.

The Army chief added: "These forces of evil will continue to face the full might of the state and security forces backed by a resilient nation."

"Our operation against terrorists would continue unabated and the Armed Forces, Intelligence and Law Enforcement Agencies shall not rest till the menace of terrorism is rooted out from the country."

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack in Balochistan so far however, the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), responsible for some of the bloodiest attacks in Pakistan, denied its involvement.

Serbia's prez denies troop build-up near Kosovo

AP ■ BELGRADE (SERBIA)

Serbia's president on Sunday denied US and other reports of a military buildup along the border with Kosovo, complaining of a "campaign of lies" against his country in the wake of a shootout a week earlier that killed four people and fuelled tensions in the volatile Balkan region.

Both the United States and the European Union expressed concern earlier this week about what they said was an increased military deployment by Serbia's border with its former province, and they urged Belgrade to scale down its troop presence there.

Kosovo's government said on Saturday it was monitoring the movements of the Serbian military from "three different directions".

It urged Serbia to immediately pull back its troops and demilitarise the border area. "A campaign of lies ... has been launched against our Serbia," President Aleksandar Vucic responded in a video post on Instagram.



"They have lied a lot about the presence of our military forces In fact, they are bothered that Serbia has what they describe as sophisticated weapons." Tensions have soared following the violence in northern Kosovo last Sunday involving heavily armed Serb gunmen and Kosovo police officers.

The clash was one of the

worst since Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008 and prompted NATO to announce it would beef up a peacekeeping force stationed in the country.

Serbia has denied Kosovo's allegations that it trained the group of some 30 men who opened fire on police officers, leaving one dead, and then barricaded

themselves in an Orthodox Christian monastery in northern Kosovo. Three insurgents died in the hours-long shootout that ensued. Kosovo has also said it was investigating possible Russian involvement in the violence. Serbia is Russia's main ally in Europe, and there are fears in the West that Moscow could try to stir trouble in the Balkans to avert attention from the war in Ukraine.

John Kirby, spokesman for the White House National Security Council, said on Friday that US officials were monitoring a large deployment of Serbian troops along the border with Kosovo, describing it as an "unprecedented staging of advanced Serbian artillery, tanks and mechanized infantry units".

Vucic has several times over the past months raised the combat readiness level of Serbian troops on the border with Kosovo.

Serbia also has been reinforcing its troops with weapons and other equip-

ment mainly purchased from Russia and China.

"We will continue to invest in the defense of our country but Serbia wants peace," the president said on Sunday. "Everything they said they made up and lied, and they knew they were making up and lying." Last weekend's shootout near the village of Banjska followed months of tensions in Kosovo's north, where ethnic Serbs are a majority of the population and have demanded self-rule.

Dozens of soldiers from the NATO-led peacekeeping force known as KFOR were injured in May in a clash with ethnic Serbs protesting the Kosovo police presence in the area.

Fearing wider instability as the war rages in Ukraine, Washington and Brussels have sought to negotiate a normalisation of relations between Serbia and Kosovo, but the two sides have failed to implement a tentative agreement that was recently reached as part of an EU-mediated dialogue.

Azerbaijan issues arrest warrant against former separatist leader

AP ■ YEREVAN

Azerbaijan's prosecutor general issued an arrest warrant for ex-Nagorno-Karabakh leader Arayik Harutyunyan on Sunday as the first United Nations mission to visit the region in three decades arrived in the former breakaway state.

Harutyunyan led the breakaway region, which is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but was largely populated by ethnic Armenians, between May 2020 and last month, when the separatist government said it would dissolve itself by the end of the year after a three-decade bid for independence.

Azerbaijani police arrested one of Harutyunyan's former prime ministers, Ruben

Vardanyan, on Wednesday as he tried to cross into Armenia along with tens of thousands of others who have fled following Baku's 24-hour blitz last week to reclaim control of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Harutyunyan and the enclave's former military commander, Jalal Harutyunyan, are accused of firing missiles on Azerbaijan's third-largest city, Ganja, during a 44-day war in late 2020, local media reported.

The clash between the Azerbaijani military clash and Nagorno Karabakh forces led to the deployment of Russian peacekeepers in the region.

The arrest warrant announcement by Prosecutor General Kamran Aliyev reflects Azerbaijan's intention

to quickly and forcefully enforce its grip on the region following three decades of conflict with the separatist state.

While Baku has pledged to respect the rights of ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, many have fled due to fear of reprisals or losing the freedom to use their language and to practice their religion and cultural customs. In a briefing Sunday, Armenia's presidential press secretary, Nazeli Baghdasaryan, said that 100,483 people had already arrived in Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh, which had a population of about 120,000 before Azerbaijan's offensive.

Some people lined up for days to escape the region because the only route to

Armenia — a winding mountain road — became jammed with slow-moving vehicles.

A United Nations delegation arrived in Nagorno-Karabakh Sunday to monitor the situation. The mission is the organization's first to the region for three decades, due to the "very complicated and delicate geopolitical situation" there, UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told reporters Friday. Local officials dismissed the visit as a formality. Hunan Tadevosyan, spokesperson for Nagorno-Karabakh's emergency services, said the UN representatives had come too late and the number of civilians left in the regional capital of Stepanakert could be "counted on one hand."

Suicide bomber detonates device in Turkiye

AP ■ ANKARA

A suicide bomber detonated an explosive device in the heart of the Turkish capital, Ankara, on Sunday. A second assailant was killed in a shootout with police, the interior minister said.

The attack occurred hours before Parliament was set to reopen after its three-month summer recess with an address by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Two police officers were slightly injured during the attack near an entrance to the Ministry of Interior Affairs, minister Ali Yerlikaya said on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter. The assailants arrived at the scene inside a light commercial vehicle.

"Our heroic police officers, through their intuition, resisted the terrorists as soon as they got out of the vehicle," Yerlikaya later told reporters. "One of them blew himself up while the other one was shot in the head before he had a chance to blow himself up."

"Our fight against terrorism, their collaborators, the (drug) dealers, gangs and organized crime organisations will continue with more determination," he said. The minister did not say who was behind the attack and there was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Kurdish and far-left militant groups as well as the Islamic State group have carried out deadly attacks throughout the country in the past. Last year, a bomb blast in

a bustling pedestrian street in Istanbul left six people dead, including two children.

More than 80 others were wounded. Turkiye blamed the attack on the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, as well as Syrian Kurdish groups affiliated with it.

Security camera footage on Sunday showed a vehicle stopping in front of the ministry, with a man exiting it and rushing toward the entrance of the building before blowing himself up. A second man is seen following him.

Earlier, television footage showed bomb squads working near a vehicle in the area, which is located near the Turkish Grand National Assembly and other government buildings. A rocket launcher could be seen lying near the vehicle.

Turkish authorities later imposed a temporary blackout on images from the scene. Justice Minister Yilmaz Tunc said an investigation has been launched into the "terror attack."

"These attacks will in no way hinder Turkiye's fight against terrorism," he wrote on X. "Our fight against terrorism will continue with more determination."

Police cordoned off access to the city center and increased security measures, warning citizens that they would be conducting controlled explosions of suspicious packages. The two police officers were being treated in a hospital and were not in serious condition, Yerlikaya said.



Turkish security forces cordon off an area after an explosion in Ankara, Sunday. A suicide bomber detonated an explosive device in the heart of the Turkish capital, Ankara, on Sunday, hours before parliament was scheduled to reopen after a summer recess. A second assailant was killed in a shootout with police. AP/PTI

Scotland gurdwara condemns Khalistani extremists

PTI ■ LONDON

The gurdwara in Scotland, which was the scene of disruption by Khalistani extremists who blocked a planned visit of Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami, has strongly condemned the "disorderly behaviour" and said that the local police are investigating the matter.

In a statement issued on Saturday night, the Glasgow Gurdwara Guru Granth Sahib Sikh Sabha said the "unknown" and "unruly" individuals disturbed the peace at a place of worship and attempted to disrupt the personal visit of the envoy facilitated by a member of the Scottish Parliament.

It followed the High

Commission of India in London's statement that said the UK Foreign Office and Metropolitan Police have been upraised of the "disgraceful incident" after violent force was also used at the diplomat's car during the disruption on Friday afternoon.

"Certain unknown individuals from outside the Glasgow area attempted to disrupt the visit, following which the visiting party decided to leave the premises," the gurdwara statement noted. "After the departure of the visitors, these unruly individuals continued to disturb the gurdwara congregation. Police Scotland was in attendance thereafter and have taken cognisance of the matter. "Glasgow Gurdwara strongly condemns such dis-

orderly behaviour to disrupt the peaceful proceedings of a Sikh place of worship. The Gurdwara is open to people from all communities and backgrounds, and we welcome everyone openly as per our principles of faith," it said.

Earlier on Saturday, the Indian High Commission said that three people from areas outside Scotland disrupted the planned interaction to discuss community and consular issues.

One of the three radical elements attempted to "violently force open the HC's car door" and it was due to the quick reaction of one of the organisers, who physically intervened at the car door, that a "bigger incident was avoided".

Contemporary retelling of 'Mahabharata' premieres on London stage

PTI ■ LONDON

A new contemporary retelling of the 'Mahabharata' opens in London on Sunday, incorporating several Indian musical and dance art forms and bringing together a worldwide cast of characters.

The UK premiere of the musical extravaganza, which runs at the Barbican Theatre until next weekend, follows a critically acclaimed world premiere in Canada by Toronto-based Why Not Theatre and Indian-origin co-creators Miriam Fernandes and Ravi Jain.

The production is presented in two parts: Karma setting out the origin story of the rival Pandava and Kaurava

clans and Dharma capturing a great battle that destroys the planet leaving the survivors behind to rebuild.

"The two parts are bridged by a community meal, which is called 'Khana and Kahani'. So, if you do the whole experience it's a seven-hour journey; and we start all the way from Bheeshma's vow at the very beginning of the story and we go through to the war until Yudhishtir goes to heaven," said Fernandes. Why Not Theatre Co-Artistic Director who also plays the narrator in the production.

"We are a small strand among a great lineage of storytellers who have weaved this epic of the 'Mahabharata' over the ages. These stories have been passed from storyteller to



audience for thousands of years and span the earth, travelling in the memories and imaginations of the South Asian diaspora.

"Though first composed in an ancient time, the themes of greed, revenge, ecocide and privilege felt acutely relevant in our globalised world," she said. Almost 40 years since Peter

Brook's legendary international production of the great Sanskrit epic, Why Not Theatre's adaptation also explores the act of storytelling itself.

The staging evolves from ancient and intimate – a storyteller around a fire and classical Kathakali dance – to a

modern spectacle with projection, dynamic soundscapes and poetic stage design.

There is also a new opera for the most revered portion of the epic, the 'Bhagavad Gita', with a live onstage band creating the musical score featuring traditional instruments such as Lord Krishna's favourite flute.

"We spent a lot of time looking at how to contemporise this, especially as values have changed in such a big way, and culturally values clash. Canadian culture is very different from Indian culture," said Jain, Founder of Why Not Theatre and co-writer of the production.

"One of the ways that we addressed the issue was we really have been conscious about our casting, with women

playing some men roles. So, women find themselves in the story in a very different way than they are traditionally portrayed. The casting is really exciting," he said.

Jain, whose parents hail from Delhi, launched Why Not Theatre in 2007 with a show featuring his mother's not-very-successful attempts at arranging his marriage. Since then, the company has grown in its mission to tell diaspora stories and challenge the status quo.

"As a student in London, I watched the world masters dazzle audiences on the Barbican stage. Twenty years later it's a dream come true to share this complex work we're so proud of at this truly special venue," added Jain.

24 Pak beggars held

Lahore (PTI): Twenty-four alleged Pakistani beggars disguised as pilgrims were offloaded from Saudi Arabia-bound flights and arrested for trying to travel to the Gulf Kingdom to indulge in begging, according to a media report on Sunday.

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) late on Saturday night offloaded eight alleged beggars in the disguise of Umrah pilgrims from a Saudi Arabia-bound flight at the Multan airport, Dawn newspaper reported. This was the second incident in as many days at the Multan airport in Punjab province. Two days ago, the FIA offloaded 16 persons, including a child, 11 women and four men,

from a Saudi-bound flight at the Multan airport. They

were travelling on Umrah visas. The Umrah is an Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca that can be undertaken at any time of the year.

According to a statement issued by FIA immigration officer Tariq Mehmood after the second incident, it transpired during the immigration that the group was travelling to Saudi Arabia for the "purpose of begging".

"They said they would beg there and half of the begged amount would be handed over to the sub-agent," the FIA statement said, adding that statements of the group along with their passports were seized and the said passengers were sent to FIAs Anti Human Trafficking and Smuggling Wing in Multan for further legal action.

Populist ex-premier leads his party to victory

AP ■ PRAGUE

A populist former prime minister and his leftist party have won early parliamentary elections in Slovakia, staging a political comeback after campaigning on a pro-Russian and anti-American message, according to almost complete results.

Former Prime Minister Robert Fico and the leftist Smer, or Direction, party had 22.9 per cent of the votes, the Slovak Statistics Office said early Sunday after counting 99.98 per cent of the votes from some 6,000 polling stations.

Saturday's election was a test for the small eastern European country's support for neighboring Ukraine in its war with Russia, and the win by Fico could strain a fragile unity in the European Union and NATO. Fico, 59, has vowed to withdraw Slovakia's military support for Ukraine in Russia's war if his attempt to return to power succeeds.

The country of 5.5 million

people created in 1993 following the breakup of Czechoslovakia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine since Russia invaded last February, donating arms and opening the borders for refugees fleeing the war.

Slovakia has delivered to Ukraine its fleet of the Soviet-era MiG-29 fighter jets, the S-300 air defense system, helicopters, armoured vehicles and much-needed demining equipment. The current caretaker government is planning to send Ukraine artillery ammunition and to train Ukrainian service members in demining.

Winning approval for sending more arms to Ukraine is getting more difficult in many countries.

In the US Congress, a bill to avert a government shutdown in Washington, DC, excluded President Joe Biden's request to provide more security assistance to the war-torn nation.

In other countries, including Germany, France, and

SLOVAKIA ELECTIONS

Spain, populist parties skeptical of intervention in Ukraine also command significant support.

Many of these countries have national or regional elections coming up that could tip the balance of popular opinion away from Kyiv and toward Moscow. With no party winning a majority of seats in Slovakia, a coalition government will need to be formed.

The president traditionally asks an election's winner to try to form a government, so Fico is likely to become prime minister again. He served as prime minister in 2006-2010 and again in 2012-2018.

A liberal, pro-West newcomer, the Progressive Slovakia party, was second, with 18 per cent of the votes.

Its leader Michal Simecka, who is deputy president of the European Parliament, said his party respected the result. "But it's bad news for Slovakia," he

said. "And it would be even worse if Robert Fico manages to create a government."

He said he'd like try to form a governing coalition if Fico fails.

The left-wing Hlas (Voice) party, led by Fico's former deputy in Smer, Peter Pellegrini, came in third with 14.7 per cent.

Pellegrini parted ways with Fico after the scandal-tainted Smer lost the previous election in 2020, but their possible reunion would boost Fico's chances to form a government.

Pellegrini replaced Fico as prime minister after he was forced to resign after major anti-government street protests following the 2018 killing of journalist Jan Kuciak and his fiancée.

Pellegrini congratulated Fico on his victory but said that two former prime ministers in one government might not work well. "It's not ideal but

that doesn't mean such a coalition can't be created," he said.

Another potential coalition partner, the ultranationalist Slovak National Party, a clear pro-Russian group, received 5.6 per cent. Those three parties would have a parliamentary majority if they joined forces in a coalition government.

Fico opposes EU sanctions on Russia, questions whether Ukraine can force out the invading Russian troops and wants to block Ukraine from joining NATO.

He proposes that instead of sending arms to Kyiv, the EU and the US should use their influence to force Russia and Ukraine to strike a compromise peace deal. Fico's critics worry that his return to power could lead Slovakia to abandon its course in other ways, following the path of Hungary under Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and to a lesser extent of Poland under the Law and Justice party.

"It can't be ruled out that he will be looking for a partner

who uses similar rhetoric, and the partner will be Viktor Orbán," said Radoslav Stefancik, an analyst from the University of Economics in Bratislava. Orbán welcomed Fico's victory.

"Always good to work together with a patriot," he posted on X, the former Twitter. "Looking forward to it!"

Hungary has been sanctioned by the EU for alleged rule-of-law violations and corruption, while EU institutions say Poland has been on a slippery slope away from the EU's rule-of-law principles.

Fico has threatened to dismiss investigators from the National Criminal Agency and the special prosecutor who deals with the most serious crimes and corruption.

Hungary also has — uniquely among EU countries — maintained close relations with Moscow and argued against supplying arms to Ukraine or providing it with economic assistance.

2 terrorists, 1 cop killed in attack on patrolling post in Pak's Punjab

Lahore (PTI): Pakistan's security forces on Sunday claimed to have thwarted a terror attack on a police post in Punjab province, killing two most-wanted terrorists of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

One policeman also died in the attack on the Kundal patrolling post in Mianwali during the early hours of Sunday, Punjab police chief Usman Anwar said in a statement.

"Kundal Punjab Highway Patrolling Post, Mianwali (some 300kms from Lahore), in an operation assisted by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab, police successfully thwarted an attack by 12 to 15 terrorists last night at approximately 23:45 hours," he said.

During the operation, Head Constable Haroon lost his life. Multiple terrorists sustained injuries and following a

thorough area search conducted by CTD personnel, two bodies were found, said Anwar.

"The operation concluded at 07:45 hours Sunday and it resulted in the recovery of the bodies of two terrorists. One of the terrorists has been identified as Zubair Nawaz, brother of Arshad Nawaz, the chief of TTP Tipu Group of Lakkhi Marwat," Anwar said.

Zubair was on the most-wanted list in both Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces due to his involvement in the killings of police officers, Shia Muslims and extortion activities. The second terrorist, Muhammad Khan, was also on the most-wanted terrorist list, said Anwar. At least 59 people were killed in a suicide attack in Mastung, a town 60kms from the capital city of Quetta in Balochistan province on Friday.

British training of Ukrainian soldiers could move into Ukraine

London (AP): Britain's new defence secretary has suggested that British military training of Ukrainian soldiers, which currently takes place at UK bases, could move into western Ukraine. In an interview with the Sunday Telegraph, Grant Shapps said he was in discussions with the British army about "eventually getting the training brought closer and actually into Ukraine as well". Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was quick to rule out speculation of an imminent deployment of British soldiers to Ukraine. Shapps' suggestion was not for the "here and now," Sunak told reporters, but a possibility "for the long term."

"There are no British soldiers that will be sent to fight in the current conflict. That's not what's happening," Sunak said. Russian politicians immediately criticized the pro-

posal. Former President Dmitry Medvedev, who is deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council, claimed Shapps was actively pushing "towards a Third World War."

The British minister "will be turning his instructors into a legal target for our armed forces, knowing perfectly well that they'll be mercilessly destroyed — not as mercenaries, but as NATO specialists," Medvedev wrote on social media.

Since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine more than 19 months ago, Medvedev, a law school graduate, has emerged as one of the most hawkish Russian officials, regularly issuing blustery remarks that combine Latin mottos and legal expressions with four-letter words. Observers have interpreted Medvedev's rhetoric, which sounds

tougher than the statements of even old-time Kremlin hardliners, as an apparent attempt to curry favour with Putin.

Yan Gagin, advisor to the head of the Russian-occupied part of eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region, also dismissed Shapps' idea but without Medvedev's fiery warnings.

"Even if British instructors do organise training for Ukraine's armed forces inside Ukraine, it won't bring any results," Gagin told Russian state news agency RIA Novosti.

"Ukraine's failed counter-offensive has already shown the level of such training," he added. More than 23,500 recruits from Ukraine have received combat training at army bases across the UK since the start of 2022, receiving instruction on skills that include weapons handling and battlefield first aid.

Ukraine aid dropped from govt funding bill

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Congressional supporters of Ukraine say they won't give up after a bill to keep the federal government open excluded President Joe Biden's request to provide more security assistance to the war-torn nation. Still, many lawmakers acknowledge that winning approval for Ukraine assistance in Congress is growing more difficult as the war between Russia and Ukraine grinds on. Republican resistance to the aid has been gaining momentum in the halls of Congress.

Voting in the House this past week pointed to the potential trouble ahead. Nearly half of House Republicans voted to strip USD 300 million from a defence spending bill to train Ukrainian soldiers and purchase weapons.

The money later was approved separately, but opponents of Ukraine support celebrated their growing numbers. Then, on Saturday, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., omitted additional Ukraine aid from a measure to keep the government running until November 17. In doing so, he closed the door on a Senate package that would have funneled USD 6 billion to Ukraine, roughly a third of what has been requested by the White House.

Both the House and Senate overwhelmingly approved the stopgap measure, with members of both parties abandoning the increased aid for Ukraine in favour of avoiding a costly government shutdown. The latest actions in Congress signal a gradual shift in the unwavering support that the United States has so far pledged Ukraine in its fight against Russia, and it is one of the clearest examples yet of the Republican Party's movement toward a more isolationist stance. The exclusion of

Ukraine funding came little more than a week after lawmakers met in the Capitol with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who sought to assure lawmakers that his military was winning the war, but stressed that additional aid would be crucial for continuing the fight.

After that visit, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said that one sentence summed up Zelenskyy's message in his meeting with the Senate: "If we don't get the aid, we will lose the war," Schumer said.

Yet, McCarthy, pressured by his right flank, has gone from saying "no blank checks" for Ukraine, with the focus being on accountability, to describing the Senate's approach as putting "Ukraine in front of America."

He declined to say after the vote on government funding whether he would bring aid for Ukraine up for a House vote in

the coming weeks. "If there is a moment in time we need to have a discussion about that, we will have a discussion completely about that, but I think the administration has to make the case for what is victory," McCarthy said. Biden said in a statement after Congress averted a shutdown that "we cannot under any circumstances allow American support for Ukraine to be interrupted."

He called on McCarthy to "keep his commitment to the people of Ukraine" and push through "the support needed to help Ukraine at this critical moment."

In the Senate, both Schumer and Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky pledged to move quickly to try and pass the full White House request. But it was clear that goal will be increasingly difficult as more rank-and-file GOP senators have questioned the

aid or demanded that it be attached to immigration policy that would help secure the southern border — echoing similar demands in the House.

Florida Sen. Rick Scott, a Republican who voted for the spending bill after the Ukraine aid was stripped out, said that Congress needs to have "a conversation with the American public." He said he was optimistic after seeing the money taken out of the bill.

"In my state, people want to be helpful to Ukraine, but they also want to be helpful to Americans," Scott said. "And so they want to really understand how this money has been spent." Democrats said they were disappointed by the lack of Ukraine funding, but expressed determination that they would get the aid to the war-torn country. "We will not stop fighting for more economic and security assistance for Ukraine," Schumer said after the bill passed.

Sharif's party to approach court for bail before he arrives in Pak

Lahore (PTI): Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party will approach the Lahore High Court (LHC) for his bail before he arrives in the country later this month, a media report said on Sunday.

Nawaz, 73, recently said that he is excited to return to Pakistan on October 21, ending a four-year "self-imposed exile" and to lead his party in the election likely to be held in January 2024. The decision to approach the LHC for bail was taken to avoid Nawaz's arrest at Lahore airport because he was declared a proclaimed offender, Geo News reported.

It said it was unclear when the party would exactly approach the court for bail.

Citing PML-N officials, Geo News said the party's legal team would approach LHC for bail a week before the three-time prime minister's return to the country. The PML-N leaders said that the decision to approach the court was dis-

cussed with Nawaz, his younger brother Shehbaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam Nawaz in recent meetings held in London.

Citing sources, it said that a protective bail application may also be submitted in the court just two days before Nawaz's return in which it would be urged that the PML-N supremo should not be arrested for seven days and he would surrender himself before the relevant court. If the bail is approved then Nawaz would not go to jail immediately on his return home and he would also be able to address the public gathering planned at Minar-e-Pakistan grounds, sources said. PML-N President Shehbaz on Saturday said that the main goal and agenda of Nawaz will be to provide relief to the masses, rescue them from the miserable situation and eradicate economic darkness. He made the comments during a party meeting to review preparations for Nawaz's return to Pakistan.

Imran, Qureshi named 'principal accused' in cipher case

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi have been named "principal accused" in a case related to the alleged disclosure of state secrets, a media report said on Sunday. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Saturday filed a charge sheet in the Special Court established under the Official Secrets Act, declaring Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Khan and Vice Chairman Qureshi "principal accused" in the case, Dawn newspaper reported.

Both Khan and Qureshi are currently detained in jail on judicial remand. Khan, 70, was arrested in August after the case was filed against him for allegedly violating the Official Secrets Act by disclosing a secret diplomatic cable (cipher) sent by the country's embassy in Washington last year in

March. Qureshi, 67-year-old former foreign minister, was arrested under the Official Secrets Act for violating the secrecy of the official cable sent by the Pakistani embassy in the US to the foreign office when he was the foreign minister.

Khan and Qureshi have been placed in column 3 which describes the names and addresses of the accused sent for trial, the paper said.

The FIA invoked in the charge sheet sections 5 and 9 of the Official Secrets Act which may lead to a death sentence, or two to 14 years' imprisonment if proven. While the investigation agency cited 27 witnesses in the charge sheet, the paper said that about a dozen of them would be produced in the witness box.

The FIA has also attached the transcript of Khan and Qureshi's speeches made on March 27. The cricketer-turned-politician is charged with the violation of the

Official Secrets Act in connection with the leakage of a confidential diplomatic cable from Pakistan's embassy in Washington.

In March last year, ahead of the vote of no-confidence that resulted in his ouster, Khan pulled out a piece of paper - allegedly the cipher - from his pocket and waved it at a public rally in Islamabad, claiming it was the evidence of an "international conspiracy" being hatched to topple his government. However, during the interrogation with the joint investigation team (JIT) in the jail on August 26, Khan denied that the paper he waved at a public gathering last year was the cipher. He also admitted to losing the cipher, saying he couldn't recall where he kept it.

His principal secretary Azam Khan stated before a magistrate and the FIA that the Khan used it for his 'political gains' and to avert a vote of no-confidence against him.



A portrait of Chinese President Xi Jinping is placed in front of Hong Kong activists living in Taiwan during a protest on China's National Day in Taipei, Taiwan, on Sunday

AP/PTI

UK museum to sign pact for Shivaji's 'Tiger Claws' journey to India

PTI ■ LONDON

The Victoria and Albert (V and A) Museum is all set to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Maharashtra government next week, which will see 17th-century 'Tiger Claws' weapon believed to have belonged to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj make a journey back to India for an exhibition.

During a protracted military engagement in 1659, the legendary Maratha leader held metal claws, or wagh nakh, concealed in his hand and is said to have disembowelled his opponent Afzal Khan — the commander of the opposing Bijapur army.

It is believed, though unverified, that the set of claws then came into the possession of James Grant Duff, an officer of the East India Company who was appointed Resident or political agent of the Satara state in 1818 and gifted to the

V and A by a descendant. "The V and A looks forward to welcoming senior leadership from the Maharashtra government, to sign a memorandum of understanding," a V and A spokesperson said.

"The story of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's triumph over Afzal Khan is legendary, so we are delighted that the 'Tiger Claws' will return to India as part of the 350th anniversary events where they can be enjoyed as part of the celebrations. We hope that their display might also enable new research into their history and look forward to working in partnership with colleagues in the months ahead as we develop plans for their display," the spokesperson said.

The MoU, expected to be signed on Tuesday, coincides with Maharashtra's 350th anniversary celebrations of the coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji. It is then expected to be dispatched to India later this

year for an agreed period.

According to the V and A, the weapon is accompanied by a fitted case made after Grant Duff returned to Scotland. The inscription on the case reads: "The 'Wagnuck' of Sivajee With Which He Killed the Moghul General. This Relic was given to Mr. James Grant-Duff of Eden When he was Resident at Satara By the Prime Minister of the Peshwa of the Marathas".

According to historical accounts, Shivaji and Afzal Khan had arranged a truce after political upheavals in order to meet in a tented enclosure, virtually alone.

The V and A description of the history of the 'Tiger Claws' explains: "Both came armed: Shivaji wore mail under his clothes and metal skull protection under his turban. He also held a metal 'Tiger Claws' weapon concealed in his hand. The two men fought, and Shivaji disembowelled his opponent.

Federal agency sues Chipotle after Kansas manager rips off an employee's hijab

Kansas City (AP): A federal agency has sued the restaurant chain Chipotle, accusing it of religious harassment and retaliation after a manager at a Kansas location forcibly removed an employee's hijab, a headscarf worn by some Muslim women.

In a lawsuit filed Wednesday, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission alleged that in 2021, an assistant manager at a Chipotle in Lenexa, Kansas, repeatedly harassed the employee by asking her to show him her hair, despite her refusal. After several weeks, the harassment culminated in him grabbing and partially removing her hijab, according to the complaint. The manager's "offensive and incessant requests" that she remove her hijab, and his attempt to physically take it off, were "unwelcome, intentional, severe, based

on religion, and created a hostile working environment based on religion," the complaint alleged.

Chipotle's chief corporate affairs officer, Laurie Schalow, said the company encourages employees to report concerns, including through an anonymous hotline.

"We have a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination of any kind and we have terminated the employee in question," she said in an emailed statement.

The harassment began in July 2021, when the manager began asking the employee, who was 19 at the time, to remove her hijab because he wanted to see her hair.

According to the complaint, he demanded to see her hair at least 10 times over the course of one month. She refused on every occasion, saying she wore it because of her religious beliefs.

Maldives opp candidate Muiz wins presidential runoff: Media

AP ■ MALE

Opposition candidate Mohamed Muiz won the Maldives presidential runoff on Saturday, securing more than 53 per cent of the vote, local media reported.

The election has turned into a virtual referendum on which regional power — India or China — will have the biggest influence in the Indian Ocean archipelago nation.

Mihaaru News reported that incumbent President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih had received 46 per cent of the vote and that Muiz had won by more than 18,000 votes. Official results were expected on Sunday.

"With today's result we have got the opportunity to build the country's future. The strength to ensure the freedom of Maldives," Muiz said in a statement after his victory. "It's time we put our differences aside and come together. We need to be a peaceful soci-

ety," Muiz also requested that Solih transfer former president Abdulla Yameen to house arrest from prison.

It was a surprise win for Muiz, who entered the fray as an underdog. He was named only as a fallback candidate closer to the nomination deadline after the Supreme Court prevented Yameen from running because he is serving a prison sentence for money laundering and corruption. Yameen's supporters say he's been jailed for political reasons. "Today's result is a reflection of the patriotism of our people. A call on all our neighbours and bilateral partners to fully respect our independence and sovereignty," said Mohamed Shareef, a top official of Muiz's party.

He said it was also a mandate for Muiz to resurrect the economy and for Yameen's release. Neither Muiz nor Solih got more than 50 per cent in the first round of voting earlier in

September.

Solih, who was elected president in 2018, was battling allegations by Muiz that he had allowed India an unchecked presence in the country. Muiz's party, the People's National Congress, is viewed as heavily pro-China. Solih has insisted that the Indian military's presence in the Maldives was only to build a dockyard under an agreement between the two governments and that his country's sovereignty won't be violated. Muiz promised that if he won the presidency, he would remove Indian troops from the Maldives and balance the country's trade relations, which he said were heavily in India's favour. Ahmed Shaheed, a former foreign minister of Maldives, termed the election verdict as a public revolt against the government's failure to meet economic and governance expectations rather than concerns over Indian influence.

GST mop-up rises 10 per cent to over ₹1.62 lakh cr in September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Helped by improved compliance, GST collections increased by 10 per cent to over Rs 1.62 lakh crore in September, crossing the Rs 1.6 lakh crore mark for the fourth time during current financial year.

Gross GST revenue collected last month was Rs 1,62,712 crore. Of this, Central GST was Rs 29,818 crore, State GST was Rs 37,657 crore, Integrated GST was Rs 83,623 crore (including Rs 41,145 crore collected on import of goods) and cess was Rs 11,613 crore (including Rs 881 crore collected on import of goods). The revenue in September 2023 was 10 per cent higher than the GST revenue of Rs 1.47 lakh crore in the same month last year, the finance ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

"During the month, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 14 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year. It is for the fourth time that gross GST collection has crossed Rs 1.60 lakh crore mark in FY 2023-24," it said.

Gross GST collection in the first half (April-September) of FY24 stood at Rs 9,92,508 crore, an increase of 11 per cent from the year-ago period.

Average monthly gross collection in April-September FY24 was Rs 1.65 lakh crore, 11 per cent higher than the year-ago period, it said.

As the normal period of limitation for FY17-18 ended on September 30, some of this increased collection could be linked to businesses having settled issues with payment of taxes for the said period, KPMG Indirect Tax Head Abhishek Jain said.

While Rs 1.6 lakh crore plus seems to be the new normal, this could see a further uptick with the festive season round the corner, he said.

According to Deloitte India partner M S Mani, the September GST collections augur well for the coming months of the festive season and is in line with the other high frequency indicators which reflect an uptick in the economy.

EY Tax Partner Saurabh Agarwal said increased GST collection indicates that the economy continues to be on a stable growth trajectory and rising collections from domestic transactions is an indicator that 'Make in India' policies of the government have started showcasing its impact.



'Resolutions under insolvency law likely to touch 300 this fiscal'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The number of resolutions of stressed assets under the insolvency law is likely to touch 300 this financial year, after rising 80 per cent in the last fiscal, and efforts are on to speed up the process for faster resolutions, senior officials said on Sunday.

Corporate Affairs Secretary Manoj Govil said the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) ecosystem needs to be prepared to deal with 1,000 resolutions.

Under the IBC, which provides for a market-linked and time-bound resolution process of stressed assets, creditors have witnessed recoveries of nearly Rs 3 lakh crore so far and the recovery amount stood at more than Rs 51,000 crore in 2022-23 financial year.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) Chairperson Ravi Mital said the number of resolutions rose 80 per cent to 180 in the last financial year and is likely to touch 300 this year (2023-24 fiscal) and added that till August 2023, the resolutions stood at around 135.

Further, he urged insolvency resolution professionals to speed up their efforts in resolving the cases.

Speaking at the event in the national capital to mark the seventh annual day of the IBBI, a key institution in implementing the IBC, Mital said the law is a factor in the reduction of non-performing assets.

He also stressed that the law is not a recovery mechanism but a resolution mechanism.

Govil said efforts are on to speed up the resolution process and that the government is willing to take up amendments to the IBC to make the resolution process faster.

Mentioning about the pace of resolutions under the IBC, Govil said this financial year, the expectation is that the number of resolutions will go up to 300 and also wondered whether that is 'sufficient' to unclog the pipeline.

Citing a study, he said that around 5,000 new cases are filed every year under the IBC and added that the IBC ecosystem should have the capacity to deal with at least 1,000 resolutions.

Efforts are on to make the resolution process faster and more smooth. This can be done by filling up posts, improving processes and regulations, among others, he noted.

As many as 300 resolutions will be good but the ecosystem should be prepared to deal with 1,000 cases, Govil said.

NCLT President Chief Justice (Retd) Ramalingam Sudhakar stressed on pre-packaged insolvency resolution process in the context of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

"Post Covid, it has been shown very evidently that MSMEs are in great distress... The next phase of evolution in the IBC should be to fine tune... Pre-packaged insolvency," he said.

Further, Sudhakar said an incremental approach is proposed for the development of a comprehensive and overarching platform for the insolvency ecosystem.

"The system should be AI-enabled with a proper decision support system and must have technology... For an integrated case management system... AI will be considered for suitable deployment as part of future contours in the insolvency ecosystem," he said.

Sudhakar also mentioned the need for developing an AI-enabled centralised e-platform for case management before the NCLT.

An AI-enabled platform of the NCLT that will handle all processes, including delivery of notices and fixing of hearings, with minimal human interface is another area of focus, he added.

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) Chairperson Justice Ashok Bhushan said the judiciary's role in interpreting the IBC has been transformative.

Through judgements, it has not only resolved disputes but has also shaped the IBC's evolution ensuring that it remains a robust and effective tool for insolvency and bankruptcy in India, he said and added that technology has been a force multiplier in implementation and evolution of the IBC.

Tata Motors total sales in domestic market rise 2 per cent to 80,633 units in September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors Ltd on Sunday reported a 2 per cent rise in its total domestic vehicle sales at 82,023 units in September, as against 80,633 units in the same month last year.

Passenger vehicle sales in the domestic market, including electric vehicles, were down 6 per cent at 44,809 units last month, as compared to 47,654 units in September 2022, Tata Motors said in a regulatory filing.

Electric vehicle sales, including in international markets, were at 6,050 units as compared to 3,864 units in the year-ago month, a growth of 57 per cent.

"Passenger vehicle sales remained strong in Q2 FY24 driven by new launches and pre-festive offtakes. Tata Motors posted quarterly sales of 1,38,939 cars and SUVs in Q2 FY24, about 2.7 per cent below our highest ever quarter, Q2 FY23," Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd and Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd Managing Director Shailesh Chandra said.

He further said, "Our EV business continues its strong momentum and has posted growth of about 55 per cent year-on-year."

In Q2 FY24, the company extended the innovative twin-cylinder CNG offering to Tiago, Tigor and Punch, which have been received well by the market, Chandra added.

The company said its total commercial vehicles sales were higher by 12 per cent at 39,064 units in September 2023, as compared to 34,890 units in September 2022.

Tata Motors Executive Director Girish Wagh said the company's commercial vehicles domestic sales stood at 99,178 in Q2FY24, 6 per cent higher than Q2FY23.

"Medium and heavy commercial vehicles segment saw a strong growth of 24 per cent over Q2 of FY23, fuelled by continued government infrastructure push, robust replacement demand, and growth in core sectors, along with sustained growth from the e-commerce sector," he added.



Electronics industry body seeks PLI scheme for non-semiconductor sectors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Electronics industry body ELCINA has requested the government to come up with a production linked incentive scheme for non-semiconductor or computer chips sector which is dominated by imports, a senior official of the organisation said.

According to Electronic Industries Association of India (ELCINA) report, total electronic component market in the country was estimated to be around USD 39 billion, of which 68 per cent requirement was met through imports in 2021-22.

While speaking at 48th ELCINA Award Ceremony, organisation's new President Atul B Lall said that the government's scheme for devices has been hugely successful and the incentive scheme for semiconductor sector is seeing a lot of traction and some investments have started flowing in.

"Our humble submission and perseverance is going to be to do the same for non-semiconductor component sector also. For which we request government's intervention," said Lall, who is Vice Chairman & Managing Director of Dixon Technologies.

ELCINA is the oldest electronics industry body of the country established in 1967.

According to the industry body, mobile phones, consumer electronics and industrial electronics account for the major demand (85 per cent) for electronic components in India. This is followed by computer hardware.

ELCINA said that strategic electronics and lighting industry contribute to the balance of the market and industries like mobile phones, industrial electronics (due to the advent of electric vehicles) and strategic electronics are expected to witness substantial growth in the near future.



'India has scope for 130-150 more wide-body aircraft'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's fast-growing civil aviation market has the scope to have 130-150 more wide-body planes as airlines expand their operations and there is also the potential for more such aircraft to be deployed in dense domestic routes, GE Aerospace South Asia CEO Vikram Rai said.

GE Aerospace, a leading aircraft engine maker, sees a "great potential" in India, which is also the world's third largest aviation market and domestic airlines have nearly 1,500 aircraft on order.

While emphasising that "India is a focus market and a priority market for GE Aerospace", Rai said that in his view, domestic airlines would consider having more wide-body planes in their fleet and also deploy them in dense domestic routes. "I see wide-body aircraft as a growth path for us and the airlines which is a win-win (scenario)," he told PTI in a recent interview.

Currently, India has around 700 commercial planes in operation and out of them, there are only about 50 wide-body aircraft. Air India has around 49 wide-body aircraft in its fleet while IndiGo has two wet-leased wide-body planes in operation.

In the current wide-body fleet, there would be replacements required. So, there is "scope to add 130-150 wide-body planes in India," Rai said and added that rising international passengers from the country also augur well for the wide-body segment.

With rising air passenger traffic, the government is also working on ways to develop international aviation hubs in India so that domestic carriers can ferry passengers directly to various overseas destinations.

Currently, a majority of the people flying from India to international destinations travel by connecting flights operated by foreign carriers.

"We have to get to a point where we can get end-to-end carrying our passengers. That is the next step of growth we are talking about," Rai said.



Average office rent in top 7 cities at \$0.4-2/sq ft: Vestian

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Average monthly rentals for prime office space in India's top seven cities are very low at USD 0.4-2 per square feet, which is one of the major factors driving demand for workspace from global firms, according to Vestian.

Real estate consultant Vestian on Sunday released rentals data for major cities globally, which showed that average rent in New York, London, Miami, Seattle and Boston is USD 40-80 per sq ft per month.

Rentals in Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai are USD 3-8 per sq ft a month.

Vestian said the demand for office spaces in the medium to long term would remain strong in India's seven big cities because of cost-effectiveness.

Shrinivas Rao, CEO, Vestian, said: "Indian office mar-

ket has grown leaps and bounds in the past decade due to robust demand from large multinational companies. These companies set up their operations in India to reap the cost benefits."

The demand for office spaces in India is expected to be buoyant amid current macro-economic uncertainty across the globe as companies are majorly focusing on optimizing operational costs for their businesses, Rao added.

As per the data, the average per square feet monthly rentals in New York is USD 60-80, London USD 60-70, Miami USD 55-65, Seattle USD 45-55, Boston USD 40-50, Hong Kong USD 6-8, Singapore USD 6-8, Shanghai USD 3-4.

Among Indian cities, Mumbai commands an average monthly rentals at USD 1-2 per square feet, Delhi USD 0.5-1.5, Bengaluru USD 0.8-1.2, Pune USD 0.7-1.1, Chennai USD 0.6-

0.9, Hyderabad USD 0.6-0.9 and Kolkata USD 0.4-0.7 per square feet.

In Mumbai's BKC and Delhi's central business district (Connaught Place and adjoining area) the average rent is USD 3-4 per square feet a month.

Vestian noted that several multinational corporations have set up their offices in India to effectively manage and execute real-time tasks across the globe from their Indian base.

"This preference is chiefly driven by substantial cost advantage associated with operating from India, as the cost of occupancy and overall operational expenses in India are notably lower in comparison to many other countries," the consultant said.

The availability of high-quality talent pool at an affordable rate is also an important factor for MNCs to set up offices in India, it added.

Luminous Power aims to double growth in 4 years; to invest ₹2,000 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Energy storage solutions company Luminous Power Technologies aims to double its growth in the next four years, and is looking at solar energy vertical as a major growth enabler, where it is investing substantially, CEO Preeti Bajaj said.

Luminous Power, now completely owned by French engineering company Schneider Electric, has plans to invest around Rs 2,000 crore in capacity expansion of its existing plants, a solar greenfield project, research and development (R&D), digitisation, brand building and channel engagements.

The company sees solar as a "growing market" and reach an "inflection" point in the next 2-3 years in terms of cost, as demand for clean energy sources is going to rise, where Luminous Power aims to be a leading company in this transformation journey here, she said. "Our vision is that solar will be a substantial part of our business," said Bajaj.

With the rise in per capita income and increase in power consumption due to multiple appliances in urban households, the demand is shifting towards higher capacity inverters, batteries and residential solar adoption. It is in the process of opening a PV (photovoltaic) module factory at its Rudarpur plant in January, which will have 500 MW to 1 GW (expandable) solar production capacity.

"For the organisation, the growth engines to increase market capitalisation include a stronger focus on solar products. Solar is important towards sustainable and profitable growth," she said.

The company is making "forward-looking investments" to build capacity for solar products and create an ecosystem, which Bajaj sees "as a manufacturing imperative and an opportunity."

"We believe in this market and it is growing at 25 per cent. We want to play a part in that and to that effect, we are bringing new products to market," said Bajaj.

Besides, Luminous Power in collaboration with its channel partners is providing solar solutions to its customers as well.

Maruti Suzuki posts highest ever monthly sales in September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Sunday said its total wholesales increased 3 per cent year-on-year to 1,81,343 units in September, its best ever in a month.

The country's largest carmaker had dispatched 1,76,306 units to dealers in the same month last year.

Total domestic passenger vehicle sales rose to 1,50,812 units last month, up 2 per cent from 1,48,380 units in September 2022, MSI said in a statement.

In the April-September period, the company's total sales crossed the 10-lakh sales mark.

MSI dispatched 10,50,085 units in the first half of the current fiscal as compared with 9,85,326 units in the same period of last fiscal.

It is for the first time that the company surpassed the half-yearly sales mark of 1 million units, the automaker noted.

In September, the company said the sales of its entry level cars -- Alto and S-Presso -- stood at 10,351 units, down 65 per cent from 29,574 units in the year-ago period.

Sales of compact cars also declined to 68,552 units last month from 72,176 units in September 2022.

Utility vehicle dispatches, however, witnessed a jump of 82 per cent to 59,271 units last month from 32,574 units in September last year.

BYJU'S targets to reach break-even by March, hive off Epic

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Edtech major BYJU'S has set the target to become profitable by March 2024 on account of consolidation and restructuring of the organisation and settlement on USD 1.2 billion loan, sources aware of the development said.

The company has undertaken exercise to reduce workforce by about 3,000-3,500 this month by ending duplication in roles across the organisation.

"Think and Learn Private Ltd (TLPL) restructuring will see the current operations spread across several business units streamlined into four core areas of K-12, test prep, online and hybrid. The business restructuring, aimed at matching resources with cash flows, will see the company achieve break-even by coming March, in fourth quarter of current fiscal," a source said.

BYJU'S declined to comment on a query sent in this regard.

TLPL operates under BYJU'S brand name.

BYJU'S had earlier set the target to become profitable by March 2023. BYJU'S booked a loss of Rs 4,588 crore for fiscal year ended March 31, 2021, 19 times more than the preceding fiscal.

The losses in the 2020-21 fiscal widened from Rs 231.69



crore in 2019-20. Revenues during FY21 dropped to Rs 2,428 crore from Rs 2,511 crore in FY20. But in the fiscal ending March 31, 2022, the company had announced increase of revenue by four-fold to Rs 10,000 crore. However, it did not reveal profit or loss numbers for that year.

The company has convened a meeting of shareholders in the second week of October to finalise its delayed financial results for 2021-22.

"BYJU'S is in talks with investors to hive off EPIC to help settle USD 1.2 billion Term Loan B. The company wants to dispose it off within 150 days. The proposal has gone to lenders and their response is awaited," the source said.

Another source said that if required, BYJU'S may hive off Great Learning too, but it expects that the money raised through EPIC sale will meet its requirement.

Hyundai reports highest ever monthly sales in September at 71,641 units

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hyundai Motor India on Sunday said its total wholesales increased 13 per cent year-on-year to 71,641 units in September, its highest ever in a month.

The country's second largest carmaker had dispatched 63,201 units to dealers in September last year. Domestic sales last month rose to 54,241 units, up 9 per cent from 49,700 units in September 2022, Hyundai Motor India said in a statement.

Exports were higher at 17,400 units last month from 13,501 units in September 2022, an increase of 29 per cent.

"While the industry grew by 2 per cent last month, our



domestic dispatches were up 9 per cent. The share of SUV sales in our overall volumes continues to grow," Hyundai Motor India COO Tarun Garg told PTI.

The ongoing festive season has resulted in strong sales momentum, helping the automaker achieve 9 per cent growth, he added.

"Our strong SUV portfolio has received a further boost with the exceptional customer response to the newly launched Exter," Garg said.

The company has garnered over 80,000 bookings for its recently introduced micro SUV Exter, he added.

Garg said SUVs now contribute more than 65 per cent to the company's domestic sales. He said that despite enhanced competition in the market, Creta continues to lead in the mid-sized SUV segment.

Garg noted that despite various challenges like high interest rates and inflation in the market, the automaker remains positive about its sales performance this year.

Alcaraz, Sabalenka sail through at China Open

AFP ■ BEIJING

Top seeds Carlos Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka both breezed into the next round of the China Open with routine victories on Sunday.

Alcaraz sealed a place in the men's quarter-finals with a smooth 6-2, 6-2 victory over Italy's Lorenzo Musetti in Beijing.

The world number two overpowered his opponent and seized the first set when Musetti whacked a baseline backhand into the net.

The Spaniard then broke serve twice in the second set and saw out a comfortable match with an unreturned serve.

He will next face Casper Ruud after the world number nine came back to beat Argentina's Tomas Etcheverry 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (9-7).

"I feel great, honestly. It was a good performance against a really tough opponent," Alcaraz said at a post-match press briefing.

"(My level) didn't (go) up and down. I stayed at a high level, high quality, during the whole match," the 20-year-old said.

A sticking point in the tournament's early rounds has been the match balls, which Alcaraz's main challenger Daniil

Medvedev described on Saturday as "like a grapefruit". Alcaraz said Sunday he had also felt the distinct quality of the balls -- allegedly quick to fluff up -- "since day one".

"It's something tough, but tennis players have to get used to the balls in every tournament," he said in response to a question from AFP.

"Here, in just one or two games, the balls become really different from (when they're) new. It's a kind of different (style of) play," he said.

Also on Sunday, world number seven Jannik Sinner obliterated Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-2, 6-0.

The Italian will play a quarter-final against either fourth-ranked Holger Rune or Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov, who play each other on Sunday evening.

SUPER SABALENKA

Earlier, world number one Aryna Sabalenka sailed into the second round of the women's draw with an imperious 6-1, 6-2 defeat of American Sofia Kenin.

The Belarusian pummelled Kenin with a succession of mighty serves and groundstrokes and wrapped up the opening set with an ace after just 23 minutes.



The 25-year-old broke serve twice more in the second set as Kenin -- playing with heavy strapping on her left thigh -- failed to muster a response.

Sabalenka sealed the match with yet another unreturned serve to set up a tie against either Magdalena Frech or Katie Boulter in the next round.

"Honestly, I didn't expect to play that good on my serve -- in practice, it didn't work very well," Sabalenka said at a post-match briefing.

"But I was super hyped that I was able to bring that level on my serve today. I think it helped a lot," she said.

"I think that was the key of today's match."

The China Open is taking place for the first time since 2019 after Beijing ended its isolationist zero-Covid policies.

All of the eight top-ranked men are taking part except tennis legend Novak Djokovic, while all of the women's top eight are in action.

The women's tournament is also the first since its global governing body ended a boycott of China this year.

The embargo had been declared after Chinese player Peng Shuai made sexual assault accusations against a top government official.



Jerome Boateng trains with Bayern Munich

AFP ■ MUNICH (GERMANY)

Germany defender Jerome Boateng trained with Bayern Munich on Sunday, amid reports the centre-back may be set to make a return to the Bundesliga champions.

The club wrote on its website that Boateng was "among those involved" in Sunday's session, adding the defender "will continue to train over the coming days".

Free since the expiry of his contract with Lyon in June, Boateng, 35, could serve as a backup solution for Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel.

Bayern currently have only three recognised central defenders -- Dayot Upamecano, Kim Min-Jae and Matthijs de Ligt -- with the latter having missed his side's 2-

2 draw with RB Leipzig on Saturday due to injury.

Tuchel was also forced to play midfielder Leon Goretzka and wing-back Noussair Mazraoui in central defence in Bayern's Cup tie against Muenster on Tuesday, which the German champions won 4-0.

Boateng played for Bayern from 2011 to 2021, winning the 2013 and 2020 Champions League titles, as well as the 2014 World Cup with Germany.

Boateng is also currently undergoing a continuing court procedure in Bavaria for domestic violence.

A German court last month threw out the assault conviction against Boateng for attacking his ex-girlfriend in 2018 and ordered a new trial.

PSG players apologise for anti-Marseille chants

AFP ■ PARIS

Four Paris Saint-Germain players on Sunday apologised for offensive chants aimed at rivals Marseille after a Ligue 1 game, saying they "sincerely regretted" their words.

French internationals Ousmane Dembele, Randal Kolo Muani, and Layvin Kurzawa and Moroccan Achraf Hakimi were filmed singing an



insulting song towards Marseille fans after a 4-0 victory at the Parc des Princes on September 24.

"We let ourselves get carried away by the euphoria and we sincerely regret the words we should not have said and would like to apologise," the four said in identical posts on social media.

"We are well aware of the impact of our actions and our words on the public, notably the youngest who

dream watching a football match," they continued, adding "in the future, we will do everything to further respect our duty to set an example".

Homophobic chants were also sung during this match by Parisian supporters for several minutes.

The club and its four players will appear before the French football league's disciplinary committee next Thursday, the day after PSG's Champions League trip to Newcastle.

Kudermetova beats Pegula to win Pan Pacific Open



AFP ■ TOKYO

Russia's Veronika Kudermetova won the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo on Sunday, upsetting tennis' world number four Jessica Pegula in straight sets.

The 19th-ranked Kudermetova overwhelmed the American 7-5, 6-1 in an hour and 24 minutes.

"I knew it would be a tough final... I need to fight for every ball and today it worked really well," she said.

"I'm really happy that I managed to win my second title," said the 26-year-old, who won her first WTA singles title

in Charleston in 2021.

She beat Pegula in three sets on the clay in Madrid this year.

"I played better today than in Madrid," Kudermetova said, adding that Pegula "always fights and plays solidly every match".

"Today I followed my game and my plan" to play aggressively, she said.

Kudermetova had a tough semi-final, needing three hours and 25 minutes to defeat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

She stunned four-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek in the quarters.

Pegula was aiming for her

second title of the season following victory last month in Montreal.

Kudermetova "put a lot of pressure on me at the beginning so it made it very tough", the American said.

"Luckily I was able to get back to the first set but I just don't think I was serving well enough... She was a better player today."

The 29-year-old went into the US Open dreaming of a first ever Grand Slam title, but her campaign came to an abrupt halt as compatriot and close friend Madison Keys recorded a dominant win in just 61 minutes.



VAR officials stood down after Liverpool goal error

AFP ■ LONDON

The match officials at fault for a botched VAR call that cost Liverpool a goal in their 2-1 defeat at Tottenham on Saturday have been removed from duty for the rest of the Premier League weekend.

Referees' body the PGMOL admitted a "significant human error" had meant Luis Diaz's strike, when the game was level at 0-0, was not awarded by a VAR review after being flagged offside.

VAR official Darren

England was due to be fourth official at Sunday's Premier League match between Nottingham Forest and Brentford.

And his assistant VAR Dan Cook was to be assistant referee for Monday's west London derby between Fulham and Chelsea.

Spurs struck in the 96th minute through Joel Matip's own goal to edge a highly controversial encounter.

Liverpool were reduced to nine men as Curtis Jones and Diogo Jota were sent-off either

side of half-time.

"I never saw a game like this with the most unfair circumstances, crazy decisions," said Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp.

PGMOL chief Howard Webb apologised to the Reds after the match for the error that ruled out Diaz's strike.

"This was a clear and obvious factual error and should have resulted in the goal being awarded through VAR intervention, however, the VAR failed to intervene," the PGMOL said in a statement.

Martin 3 points off Bagnaia with wet Japan MotoGP win

AFP ■ MOTEGI (JAPAN)

Jorge Martin narrowed the gap on championship leader Francesco Bagnaia to just three points with six races left on Sunday after winning a Japan MotoGP cut short by rain.

Starting from pole, the Spaniard had already cut the difference to Italy's Bagnaia to only eight points on Saturday with his third straight sprint victory and fifth of the season.

Ducati's Bagnaia came second in the race, giving the defending world champion 319 points compared to 316 for Martin from Ducati satellite team Pramac. Marc Marquez took third.

The 24-lap race began under overcast skies and light rain quickly intensified once the race started in mountainous Motegi.

This made for treacherous conditions with slippery turns and

a sea of spray, and most riders came into the pits early on to change tyres.

Martin and Bagnaia worked their way back to the top of the field before organisers suspended the race with 12 laps to go.

They attempted a restart but the red flags quickly came out again and the riders were awarded full points according to their positions at the stoppage.

"I was committed to do a great result today," Martin said afterwards.

"I felt really good with the rear grip and I was able to overtake all of them (after the pit stop) and make this gap to win today," he added.

"I'm so so happy. Luckily everybody's away but it was too dangerous to keep going," he added.

Bagnaia said he was happy with the result but said he thought



he could have overtaken Martin.

"I was hoping to do more laps to catch Jorge because I was trying to gain (on him) lap by lap without pushing too much," he said.

"Unfortunately, we didn't have time to finish the race... I think, with the time management, I was quite competitive in the last part of the race," he said.

Looking ahead, Bagnaia said competition was turning more "difficult" and "intense" as he duelled with Martin for the championship.

"I think it will be interesting. Could be a great fight. For sure, it's more intense right now. It's more difficult," he said.

Six-time world champion Marquez on Honda made his first podium finish of the year at the home circuit of the Japanese brand.

He started from the third row, but as rain caused other riders to go wide or even into gravel, the

Spaniard saw an opening to race to the podium.

"I enjoyed (it). In the beginning of the race I was very calm, just tried to understand the tyres," Marquez said.

"When I saw that there was water on the track, I started to attack and I was increasing the speed step by step," he said.

South African Brad Binder on KTM crashed out early in the race. He set a lap record on Friday, before Martin renewed it on Saturday.

Johann Zarco also crashed and was not allowed to return to the race after he took a shortcut to get back into the pit lane.

Last weekend, Martin had already narrowed the difference to 13 points in India in Greater Noida.

1 seconds later by Bagnaia, and 0.353 seconds by 2022 Japanese GP winner Jack Miller on KTM.

Sable becomes 1st Indian to win 3000m steeplechase title

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Avinash Sable became the first Indian man to win the gold medal in 3000m steeplechase at the Asian Games while shot-putter Tajinderpal Singh Toor defended his title with an amazing final throw to beat back the challenge from his Saudi Arabian rival here on Sunday.

Sable, the 29-year-old national record holder, earned India its first gold medal in athletics, completing the race in 8:19.50 seconds.

Sable rewrote the previous Asian Games record of 8:22.79 held in the name of Iran's Hossein Keyhani set at the 2018 Jakarta Games.

Sudha Singh had won a gold in women's 3000m steeplechase in the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou.

Toor, the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games gold medallist, came up with a mighty throw of 20.36 metres on his sixth and last attempt to overhaul his Saudi rival Mohamed Daouda Tolo's distance of 20.18 metres.

Toor, however, could not break his own Asian Games record of 20.75m set in 2018 Jakarta. But the 28-year-old's final throw was way too good for his Saudi rival to overhaul



in his final attempt.

In the 1500m for women, India's Harmilan Bains won a silver while Ajay Kumar Saroj and Jinson Johnson won silver and bronze respectively in the men's 1500m.

Earlier, the toast of the nation in the last edition, Indian heptathlete Swapna

Barman's one "last shot" at glory at the Asian Games turned into a nightmare as she struggled with injuries to virtually go out of medal reckoning after the javelin throw event.

The defending champion, who boasts of a personal best of 52.55m in javelin

throw, managed a throw of just 45.13 in the penultimate event of the gruelling two-day competition.

Javelin throw was one of the two events Swapna had won in 2018 en route to becoming the first Indian heptathlete to win an Asian Games gold.

Overall, Swapna was ranked fourth with 4840 points, 11 points behind her nearest rival Jingyi Liu of China ahead of the 800m race, which is the last segment of the seven-event competition. The other Indian in the fray, Nandini Agasara notched a personal best of 39.88m in

India floored by China in basketball; qualify for quarterfinal

PTI N HANGZHOU (CHINA)

The Indian women made it to the quarterfinal despite being pummelled by China in their 5x5 basketball final group-stage match in the ongoing Asian Games here on Sunday.

Indian team suffered a crushing 53-111 defeat, which was its maiden loss in the sport this term, having won the previous two matches versus Indonesia (66-46) and Mongolia (68-62).

The quarterfinal qual-

ification in the sport is earned by the combined ranking of the teams in the tournament post-completion of the group stage, i.e. The top eight-ranked sides, where the Indians are currently ranked sixth.

It is India's fifth appearance in the competition in this sport, having finished ninth in the previous edition in Jakarta-Palembang 2018, whereas its best performance came in its first appearance in New Delhi 1982, finishing fifth.

"But her body condition could not cope up and she failed to get a good start," her coach Subhash Sarkar told PTI.

"She was expecting a good result in high jump but a fourth place finish shattered her and she couldn't recover from there," he added.

Swapna had a jump of 1.70m, which was nowhere close to her personal best of 1.87. "The poor start has affected her morale and it showed in today's javelin throw event. It's as good as over," Sarkar said of Swapna's prospects this time.

Earlier, India's Amlan Borgohain finished at the third position after clocking 21.08 seconds in the men's 200m heats and advanced to the semifinal.

The first three athletes in each heat make the cut for the semi-finals. The top four times from all the heats who have not made the cut will also advance to the semifinals.

The sprinter from Assam, currently the country's fastest, holds both the men's 100m and 200m national records.

However, Jyothi Yarraji failed to make the cut for the women's 200m final. The Indian had a timing of 23.78s.

Yarraji, however, is in contention for a medal in women's 100m hurdles.

India sign off with first-ever team silver after losing to China

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Injured HS Prannoy's absence hurt India as they went down fighting 2-3 against badminton powerhouse China to sign off with their first-ever silver medal in the men's team championships at the Asian Games here on Sunday.

After world No. 7 Prannoy was ruled out due to a back injury, Lakshya Sen produced a gutsy show in the first singles and doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty then bossed over their opponents to put India 2-0 ahead.

So, it was once again left to Kidambi Srikanth to carry the team on his shoulders. The former world No. 1, who had produced a gritty show against South Korea in the semifinals, couldn't go the distance this time despite a healthy lead and multiple game points as China fought back to make it 1-2.

The defending champions then won the remaining two



matches to maintain their hegemony in the Asian Games. With Prannoy missing the summit clash, Sen was handed the responsibility of leading the Indian charge. Sen recovered from a mid-game slump to erase a five-point deficit in the decider and put India ahead with a 22-20 14-21 21-18 win over world No. 6 Shi Yuqi in an 83-minute opening slugfest.

World No. 3 men's doubles pair of Satwik and Chirag then went on a smashing spree to

outclass world No. 2. Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang 21-15 21-18 in 55 minutes to extend the lead to 2-0.

Srikanth, however, squandered an 18-14 lead and multiple game points in the first game to go down 22-24 9-21 against All England champion Li Shifeng in the third singles to expose India's weakest link -- the second doubles and third singles matches.

Scratch pair of Dhruv

Kapila and Sai Pratheek Krishna Prasad then lost 6-21 15-21 to world No. 8 Liu Yu Chen and Ou Xuan Yi, while Prannoy's replacement Mithun Manjunath, ranked 53, went down 12-21 4-21 against world No. 20 Weng Hong Yang in the third singles as India finished second best. Despite the loss, it is a creditable performance from the Indian team as it sealed India's second silver medal in badminton at the continental championships with two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu winning the first in women's singles in the 2018 edition.

The last time the Indian men won a badminton medal in the team championships was at the 1986 edition in Seoul where Sen's mentors Prakash Padukone and Vimal Kumar played a crucial role.

India now has 11 badminton medals in the Asian Games, including three individual singles medals, one silver

and three bronze in the men's team, two women's team bronze and one medal each in men's doubles and mixed doubles. Up against Shi Yuqi, Sen dictated the pace of the rallies to lead 11-6 at the interval. The duo played some exciting rallies with Sen keeping the pressure on his Chinese rival with his resolute defence to lead 15-10.

Floored by Rohit's talent, fascinated by Singham: Shadab

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Tackling a marauder like Rohit Sharma is right at the top of leg-spinner Shadab Khan's check-list but when the Indian skipper doesn't occupy his mind-space, the Pakistan vice-captain doesn't shy away from expressing his love for Bollywood movies and local food.

Ajay Devgn would have little clue about how big an impression he had made on Shadab.

Glancing at the top cop from Hyderabad police manning the media conference room, the leg-spinner couldn't help saying: "Singham bhi aaye hain yaha pe. (I see Singham is also present here)."

The reference of super-hit Bollywood cop movie wasn't lost on anyone as Shadab spoke with a lot of warmth about how the 'City of Nizams' have received their cricket team with open arms.

"The welcome was fantastic at the (Hyderabad) airport and also a lot of people have been thronging the team hotel and hospitality wise it's been really good," Shadab told mediapersons during the first official media conference organised by the team.

Hyderabad food is meant to tickle everyone's taste buds and Shadab is no different.

"The food has been really tasty and the support staff (all South Africans) are worried that we end up increasing our fat percentage (laughs). Hope, we get the same love in Ahmedabad where we play



India (laughs)," said Shadab referring to his team's much-awaited clash against the arch-rivals on October 14.

As the discussion turned towards cricket, the reverence for Rohit was there to be seen. He also picked up Kuldeep Yadav as the most dangerous Indian bowler.

"I admire Rohit Sharma a lot and among the leading batsmen in the world he is the most difficult to bowl to. Once he gets set he becomes very dangerous. Among the bowlers, since I am a leg-spinner, it will be Kuldeep Yadav given his recent form," said Shadab. "We have learnt from our Asia Cup mistakes"

Pakistan failed to defend 346 against the New Zealand and have plenty to think about in the bowling department including the form of premier spinner Shadab who did not bowl in the warm-up but had

a forgettable Asia Cup. The next warm-up game is against Australia on October 3.

His form is key for Pakistan in the middle-overs and the 24-year-old had no qualms in admitting that he did not have the best of times in Asia Cup where four of his six wickets came against Nepal and he ended with an average of 40.83.

"The Asia Cup didn't go well but that's the beauty of cricket you learn from your mistakes and there is always an opportunity to learn and play good cricket. After we lost the Asia Cup we got good rest and I believe it's no more a skill game but a mental game and it's the World Cup situation. You can take good decisions when you are relaxed mentally."

Shadab is already a star but he knows the World Cup provides him with the opportunity of becoming a superstar.

India, South Korea play out 1-1 draw in women's hockey

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

The Indian women's hockey team was held to a 1-1 draw by South Korea but the Savita Punia-led unbeaten side still continued to lead its pool in the Asian Games here on Sunday.

Navneet Kaur (44th min) scored the equaliser for the higher-ranked India after Cho Hyejin (12th) had put South Korea ahead at the Gongshu Canal Sports Park Stadium.


Thanks to the draw, the Indian team, currently ranked sixth in the world, held onto the top spot in Pool A by goal difference over 12-ranked Korea.

The top two teams from each pool will qualify for the semi-finals.

India crushed Singapore 13-0 in the opener before notching a 6-0 win over Malaysia.

Both teams looked to score from the word go but the Koreans had the first opportunity of the match when Cho Hyejin shot at the goal. However, Deep Grace Ekka effected a fine save to keep India from going behind. The Koreans, though, took the lead minutes later as Cho Hyejin scored off a penalty stroke after she was fouled by Udita inside the circle. The first quarter ended with Korea 1-0 ahead with the Indians lacking the finishing skills upfront.

Desperate to find the equaliser, India earned a few penalty corners but none of them resulted in a goal as the first half ended with South Korea leading by a goal.

**OFFICE OF THE DHENKANAL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DHENKANAL**

E-Procurement Notice
C-1523
Tender Call Notice No. **3840** /DKLMPLTY/Date **27.09.2023**

1. Name of the Work

: Individual Civil Construction work
Published the website.

2. No of works put to tender

: 104 Nos. Individual works

3. Estimated cost

: Rs. 1.926 Lakhs up to 19.97 Lakhs

4. Period of completion

: 45 Days.

5. Date and time of availability

: from 11.00 hours of Dt. **03.10.2023** to 17.30 of
Dt. of bid document in the portal Dt. **09.10.2023**

6. Last date/Time for receipt of bids

: 17.30 hours of Dt: **09.10.2023**

7. Date and time of opening of bid

: 11.00 hours of Dt. **11.10.2023**

8. Name and address of the Officer


: Executive Officer, Dhenkanal Municipality, Dhenkanal

Inviting Bid

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tenderorissa.gov.in>

OIPR-13146/11/0025/2324

Executive Officer
Dhenkanal Municipality



Child Labour is Strictly Prohibited

- Engagement of children below the age of 14 years in all occupations and processes is an offence.
- Engagement of adolescents (15-18 year of age) is prohibited in the Hazardous occupations / processes.
- Whosoever employs any child / adolescent in hazardous occupations and processes shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than six months but which may extend to two years, or with fine which shall not be less than twenty thousand rupees but which may extend to fifty thousand rupees, or with both.
- Engagement of children below 14 years and adolescents in hazardous occupations/ processes is a cognizable offence.
- Repetition of such offense will attract imprisonment up to 3 years
- Please Contact Child line No. 1098 or Toll Free Help line No. 155368 for compliant.

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