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## ISRAEL BEGINS GAZA SIEGE | Poll semifinals next month

PTI/AP ■ JERUSALEM/BRUSSELS

Israel's Defence Minister Yoav Gallant on Monday ordered a "complete siege" of the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip, two days after shock attacks by the militant group killed more than 700 Israelis, including soldiers.

Gallant is currently conducting an operational assessment at IDF (Israel Defence Forces) Southern Command, together with the Head of Southern Command Major General Yaron Finkelman.

"I have given an order — Gaza will be under complete siege. There will be no electricity, food or fuel (delivered to Gaza). We are fighting barbaric (terrorists) and will respond accordingly," Gallant said.

Gaza depends on Israel largely for its basic supplies and such a decision will have far-reaching consequences for 2.3 million people living in the densely populated area.

While Hamas activists looked celebrating on the streets of the coastal territory on Saturday, wary commoners were seen looking to stock up on basic needs speculating about the imminent harsh attack.

The streets of Gaza for the last two days have looked completely deserted, much like most Israeli towns in the south.

The "complete siege" of the coastal Strip comes amid unabated air strikes being carried out by Israel in which, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, 560 Palestinians have



been killed so far and 2,900 wounded.

The spokesperson for Hamas's Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, going by the nom de guerre Abu Obeida, claimed that Israel's bombing in the Gaza Strip has killed four Israeli hostages.

More than 100 Israelis, old, young and children have been taken captive by Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the attack which started on Saturday.

"The occupation's bombing tonight and today on the Gaza Strip led to the killing of four enemy prisoners and the martyrdom of their captors, the Qassam Mujahideen," Abu Obeida said in a statement on his Telegram channel.

Israel witnessed a surprise and unprecedented attack by Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip, in its southern parts on Saturday morning.

Israel's Minister of Defence

has been issuing stern warnings of a protracted fight since Saturday.

"Today we saw the face of evil. The Hamas (terrorist organisation) has launched a brutal attack against the citizens of the State of Israel, — attacking men, women, children and the elderly, indiscriminately. Hamas will understand very quickly that it has made a mistake — a grave mistake, and will pay a (heavy) price," he said soon after the brutal attacks.

"Fifteen years ago, as Head of the Southern Command, I came close to 'breaking the neck' of [destroying] Hamas. I was stopped by the political echelon. This phenomenon will not continue. We will change reality on the ground in Gaza for the next 50 years. What was before, will be no more. We will operate at full force," Gallant asserted.

After more than 50 hours of firefight, the Israeli army claimed that it has regained control of all Gaza border towns, but said that some militants who infiltrated may be remaining around.

Israel has imposed various levels of blockade on Gaza since Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces in 2007. Dr Maher Awawdeh, a West Bank-based analyst, described the Hamas attack as a "turning point" in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and said the multifront assault shocked everyone by its strength, size, scope, and achievements.

"We saw how the Israeli image, projecting itself as a superpower that sells intelligence and warfare, collapsed before a group of Palestinians, less than 1000 in number, as per the Israeli media," he told PTI. He blamed Israel for provoking Palestinians by entering the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, preventing them from praying there and restricting their movement.

"All of that was the spark that ignited what happened after the 17 years of siege to the Gaza Strip," he said.

"We saw Germany, France and the US expressing support for Israel and saying Israel has the right to defend itself. Israel has the right to defend itself, but it doesn't have the right to defend its occupation," he added.

Meanwhile, European Union Commissioner Oliver Varhelyi said Monday the bloc is suspending "all payments immediately" to the

Palestinians because of what he called the "scale of terror and brutality" during the attacks on Israel by Hamas.

The surprise announcement by Varhelyi came just hours after EU officials stressed that no EU money whatsoever was going to Hamas in the first place and that contacts had been frozen for 16 years. The EU considers Hamas a terror group.

Queries about what the move entailed and whether it would hit all humanitarian aid to Palestinians were not immediately answered.

Varhelyi said that "as the biggest donor of the Palestinians, the European Commission is putting its full development portfolio under review," which he said amounted to 691 million euros. Varhelyi said that the measures include that "all payments (be) immediately suspended. All projects put under review. All new budget proposals... Postponed until further notice."

The EU says it is the biggest donor to the Palestinian people and has been advocating for years for the two-state approach that has guided international diplomacy since the 1993 Oslo peace accords between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. EU foreign ministers are slated to meet in Muscat, Oman, on Tuesday to discuss the situation and see what actions should be taken.

Varhelyi's announcement seemed to preempt the discussions.

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Monday announced the schedule for Legislative Assembly elections in five States, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Telangana.

Single-phase Assembly polls will be held in Madhya Pradesh on November 17, Rajasthan on November 23, Telangana on November 30 and Mizoram on November 7, while Chhattisgarh will go to the polls in two phases on November 7 (20 seats) and 17 (70 seats).

Counting of votes in all States will take place on December 3.

There has been a lot of buzz around the elections this season, especially in view of the the Lok Sabha elections next year as these five States account for 83 Lok Sabha seats.

The term of the Mizoram Assembly ends on December 17, while the terms of the legislative Assemblies of Telangana, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan end on different dates in January next year.

Speaking at the Press conference, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said nearly 16 crore voters would be eligible to cast their



Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar addresses media persons in New Delhi on Monday  
 Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

votes in these elections. He said strong measures are being put in place to make these polls inducement free.

Kumar said these five States will have 1.77 lakh-polling stations, of which 1.01 lakh will have webcasting facilities. He said with over 940 inter-State border check posts in five States, any cross-border movement of illicit cash, liquor, freebies and drugs will be checked.

"Around 60 lakh first-time voters will participate in elections. As many as 15.39 lakh young voters are eligible to participate in elections due to amendment on qualifying dates. To inspire young voters, over 2,900 polling stations will be managed by youth," said Kumar.

More than 8,000 polling stations will be managed by women, he said. Responding to a query on freebies announced by various political parties, Kumar said the freebies announced by political parties and State Governments have a "tadka" of populism and it is difficult for those who win polls to either implement these sops or stop this practice.

The upcoming Assembly elections will be a major litmus test especially for the Opposition bloc INDIA as it will not only determine its standing against the ruling BJP but also set the tone for the Lok Sabha elections 2024. Out of five States slated to go to polls this year, the Congress is in power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, while the BJP in Madhya Pradesh. Telangana, on the other hand, is ruled by the KCR-led Bharat Rashtira Samiti and the Mizo National Front (MNF) is in power in Mizoram.

The BJP and the Congress will be engaged in a direct fight in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan while the two parties are also in contention for power in Telangana, where Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao-led Bharat Rashtira Samiti is eyeing a third straight term.

Continued on Page 2

## BJP counts on old warhorses | Toll par Calm to soothe frayed tempers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Not projecting any Chief Ministerial face in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the BJP on Monday inducted its old warhorses, Union Ministers and several members of Parliament in the electoral battle in the three Assembly polls.

The party announced Madhya Pradesh four-time Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's name from his traditional Budhni seat in the State's fourth list and named former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh and its State president Arun Sao, also a Lok Sabha MP, as its candidates in its second list for the State.

Polling in Madhya Pradesh will be held on November 17.

In the first list released by the party for Rajasthan, the BJP included royal scion and Rajsamand MP Diya Kumari and Jaipur Rural MP and former Union Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

The party released the names of 64 candidates in its second list for Chhattisgarh, 57 candidates in the fourth list for Madhya Pradesh and 41 for the first list of Rajasthan.

Polling in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Mizoram, Telangana will be held between November 7 and 30 and results will be

announced on December 3. Chouhan's name appeared on the fourth list of candidates for Madhya Pradesh on Monday.

The delay in announcing his name triggered considerable speculation as the party had already fielded three Central Ministers — Narendra Singh Tomar, Faggan Singh Kulaste, Prahlad Patel — four MPs and general secretary — Kailash Vijayvergia, by releasing their names in its second list of nominees.

MP's Home Minister Narottam Mishra will fight from the Datia seat.

In the second list for the Congress-ruled Chhattisgarh, the BJP fielded Raman Singh, a three-term former Chief Minister, from Rajnandgaon, his traditional constituency, while Sao will contest from Lormi.

BJP's State president Arun Sao, also a Lok Sabha MP, will also be contesting the Assembly election.

Three MPs, including Renuka Singh and Gomati Sai, figured in the list as the party continued with fielding parliamentarians in the Assembly polls, underlining its all-out bid to win power in the current round of five-State elections.

Chhattisgarh is going to the polls in two phases on November 7 and November 17. The Congress had won 68

seats and the BJP 15 in the 2018 Assembly polls.

The BJP's Central election committee comprising party national president JP Nadda, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other senior leaders had approved the names of 57 candidates for Madhya Pradesh at its meeting on October 1.

With this, the BJP has so far announced its candidates for 136 seats in the 230-member Madhya Pradesh Assembly which is expected to be a hard-fought contest between the BJP and the Congress with the latter banking on the anti-incumbency factor against the ruling party.

Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia is also seen to be a probable nominee from Shivpuri Assembly seat which has been vacated by Yashodhara Raje Scindia announcing that she will not contest elections from Shivpuri.

The first list of candidates for Rajasthan included Rajsamand MP Diya Kumari and Jaipur Rural MP Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

These are among the seven BJP parliamentarians who will contest the Rajasthan Assembly polls, according to the first list of 41 candidates issued by the party on Monday.

While Diya Kumari will

fight the elections from Jaipur's Vidhyadhar Nagar constituency, Rathore, a former Olympian shooter, will be contesting from Jhotwara, also in Jaipur district.

Diya Kumari is a member of the erstwhile Jaipur royal family.

Rajasthan has the 200-member Assembly for which polling will take place on November 23.

The BJP is hopeful that it would wrest power from the Congress in Rajasthan as it fights evenly matched poll contests in Chhattisgarh which is again ruled by the Congress.

In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP has sought to reduce anti-incumbency by announcing several welfare schemes, particularly those centered around women.

There is a direct contest between the BJP and the Congress in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

The BJP has sought to undercut factionalism in the State units by not projecting any Chief Minister face with the Prime Minister stressing in Rajasthan that the party's election symbol 'Kamal' alone will be the face for the BJP.

BJP's next list for Rajasthan is likely to include Central Ministers and more MPs to balance the caste and influence over the voters in different Assembly segments, according to sources.

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ New Delhi

The NHAI has issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) aimed at mitigating altercation incidents and bolstering security at National Highway Toll Plazas. The measure serves to protect the interests of both commuters and toll operators alike.

"Toll par Calm" special drive has been initiated by NHAI at toll plazas across the nation and under this initiative the Central road making agency has collaborated with professional psychologists for anger management and customer delight training to toll plaza staff.

Toll plazas often see disputes between road users and toll plaza staff regarding toll-related matters, and in some cases, these arguments escalate into physical altercations, occasionally involving public representatives.

The SOP will help minimise such instances and will help both highway users and toll plaza officials in smooth conduct of the day-to-day operations.

The detailed Standard Operating Procedure includes guidelines for NHAI field offices to ensure strict implementation and adherence by toll collecting agencies to manage staff and road users. The first training session



was recently conducted at Murthal Toll plaza in Haryana, and more training will be conducted on other toll plazas across the country.

Last month at the Murthal toll plaza in a shocking incident, a video went viral on social media that showed hooliganism of the toll plaza employees where they were beating a man and a woman after an altercation. The employees were seen punching and beating the woman with a stick, rod and pipe.

Earlier this year, five toll plaza workers were arrested in connection with a brawl at Luharli toll plaza in Greater Noida. They had assaulted a local resident over a toll payment dispute, which subsequently led to a physical altercation, resulting in injuries to the victim.

As per the SOP, NHAI field offices will make sure that the toll collecting agency performs their duties as per the guidelines. The toll collecting agency will ensure that staff at

necessary documents/ proof.

NHAI field offices will have to ensure that the toll collecting agency possess police verification of each and every staff deployed at the toll plaza. In addition, the toll collecting agency must direct the toll plaza staff to be courteous with road users.

The toll collection agency should also give a monthly statement of incidents/ FIRs to the concerned NHAI Project Implementation Unit, so that in case of inaction by the authorities, NHAI field officials can report the same to the District Collector and request action. Consolidated reports may be taken up by NHAI Regional Office at state level meetings.

Incidentally, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray threatened to burn toll plazas in and around Mumbai if toll for small vehicles are not abolished. "Our people will stand at toll booths and will not allow toll to be collected. If this is opposed, we will burn down the toll plaza. Let the government do whatever it wants to do next. If the State Government is saying that for four wheelers, two wheelers and three wheelers there is no toll then these toll people are looting," said Thackeray while his MNS workers held protests at toll plazas in Mumbai, Thane and Panvel calling for the abolition of toll tax for small vehicles.

Toll Plaza officials may take help from local police and lodge a FIR in case the issue persists or escalates. Videography can be done by the staff as proof to report such incidents to the police. Any incident which involves physical violence by the road user or damage to public property at the toll plaza should immediately be reported by the toll collecting agency to the police and concerned NHAI Project Implementation Unit with all

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## How Akhil Sheoran hit bullseye in China

ASAD ■ NEW DELHI

The adage "practice makes a man perfect" encapsulates the remarkable journey of Indian athlete Akhil Sheoran.

As a key member of India's 50-metre rifle men's team, he clinched a Gold medal, establishing a new world record at the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. Other members in the team included Aishwary Tomar and Swapnil Kusale.

Back in 2008, while Sheoran was just an eighth-grade student at Godwin Public School in Meerut, he stumbled upon the world of shooting. Little did he know then that those early moments of fascination, watching others prac-

tise under a tree at the school, would eventually shape him into an iconic figure in the shooting world, inspiring countless youngsters along the way.

"Shooting is incredibly popular in my village. I began my journey in this sport on my parents' suggestion, with the hope that it would open doors for a sports quota job opportunity for me. I hail from the same village as the renowned shooter Dadi Chandro Tomar. Her legacy was a constant topic of conversation among the villagers," 28-year-old Sheoran, born in Baraut, Uttar Pradesh, told *The Pioneer*.

As Sheoran began to excel in the sport after school, his



commitment deepened. But climbing the ranks was not a cakewalk for a farmer's son, given the high costs associated with shooting games. With unwavering support from his parents, he persevered in his training.

"When I earned a spot in the Indian team, the responsibility of purchasing my own equipment and funding my training expenses fell upon me. At that time, I faced financial constraints and lacked the necessary funds. It was the support of my parents that made it possible for me to reach the position I hold today.

"My family even took a loan on interest to help me acquire my guns and sustain

my practice," said the shooter, a Delhi University's Hansraj College graduate who completed his MBA from Jamia Millia Islamia.

The Asian Games accomplishment is just one of the many achievements he has earned in recent years.

He won a Gold medal at the 2023 ISSF World Shooting Championship in Baku, Azerbaijan, in the men's 50m rifle 3-position team event, along with a Bronze in the individual men's 50m rifle 3-position event. Having secured his qualification for the Paris Olympics 2024, Sheoran now aspires to fetch a Gold medal from the biggest sporting event.

"We are ready for the

Olympics...It is my first medal in the Asian Games, and I dedicate it to my parents, coaches, Government, federation, and support staff," he said.

However, Sheoran's rise to stardom is not without cost. His busy schedule with national and international commitments prevents him from visiting his family. "My family members reside in a village in UP, and I have not been able to visit them for several months. I really miss them. Last month when I visited my village for a few hours," he said.

Reacting on India's best ever haul at the Asian Games this year, the shooter said, "Our belief in reaching the 100-medal milestone was steadfast.

Every athlete diligently followed their training routines in the pursuit of this objective.

"The Government has played a vital role in lifting the spirits of athletes and improving hostel and stadium facilities. There is potential for young talents to shine if they perform well at a young age." The Sports Authority of India and our federation left not stone unturned, he said. From inviting foreign coaches and arranging the players' foreign tours for international exposure have been immensely helpful, he added.

Sheoran's advice for young shooters is to maintain perseverance while keeping their focus on the bullseye.

# Shah lauds Cooperative Development Corporation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Monday lauded the role of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) in boosting the country's economy through cooperatives and expressed confidence that it will be able to achieve the target of Rs 50,000 crore kept for 2023-2024.



Shah said that since the formation of his Ministry, at least 52 initiatives in the last 26 months to strengthen cooperative movement in the country and to increase cooperatives share in the GDP.

"These initiatives have special focus on strengthening the Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS)."

"The initiatives aimed towards ease of doing business include computerization of PACS, model byelaws, widening the functioning of PACS to undertake more than 25 business activities like dairy, setting up of godowns,

LPG/Petrol/Green energy distribution agency, banking correspondents, Common Service Centres (CSC) and preparation of an updated data repository of cooperatives," the Minister enlited steps taken to boost the cooperative movement in the country.

There are about 8.9 lakh cooperatives in the country with 29 crores farmers as its members.

Amit Shah also talked about the National Cooperative Database being developed with the assistance of State Governments, saying that it will have comprehensive, authentic and updated data of more than 8 lakh cooperative societies.

The Ministry has pinned lots of hopes on the NCDC. It has been entrusted with the task for strengthening cooperative sugar mills in the country for which it has been granted Rs.1000 crore which will enable loans up to Rs.10,000 crore.

At the same time, it has also been given the nod to raise government guaranteed bonds worth Rs 2000 crore to enhance its lending capacity.

# Christian body to protest against Hamas onslaught

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The ongoing war between Israel and Hamas has caused widespread anguish among civil society in Kerala.

The report about a nurse from the State working in Israel getting seriously injured in the Hamas attack has added to the tension among the people. Two years back, a nurse from Idukki district was killed in a missile attack by the Hamas and this had caused a furor.

Though all top diplomats from Israeli embassy had called on the bereaved family, no representatives from the Kerala Government did visit the home of the victim.

The coming days will see protest rallies across the State to be staged by Christian Alliance for Social Action (an umbrella organisation of all Christian sects in the State), Kevin Peter, General Secretary, CASA told *The Pioneer*.

While thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for declaring India's solidarity with Israel, Peter said India should provide all assistance to the Jewish nation in this hour of



crisis. "For the last two years, Hamas has been engaged in attacking Israel and murdering hundreds of innocent people including infants. This is a cardinal sin and the Hamas should be put in their place," said Peter.

Rama Chandran, veteran scribe and former chief editor of Janmabhumi, who has undertaken tours across Israel, said that the CPI(M) stance on the Hamas aggression is out of political gains.

"Hamas is a Sunni organization. Sunnis are CPI(M)'s vote bank. This support extended by the CPI(M) towards the Hamas is nothing but a strategic policy. The Marxists were the first political outfit to accommodate the Muslim League in their front.

The seven-party government in Kerala led by E M S

# Congress to hold caste consensus

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday resolved to go ahead with the caste census in the States ruled by the party and also passed resolution with a promise that a Government by the grand old party at Centre will conduct a nationwide caste census as part of the normal decadal census which was due in 2021.

Led by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, his predecessors Sonia Gandhi and Rahul at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the leaders raised the demand for conducting a nationwide caste census to ensure social justice and rights to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in accordance with their population, while noting that the BJP is silent on this.

The party also promised to implement the 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies at the earliest, ensuring adequate representation for women belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled

Tribes and including Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in it as well.

Besides the other members of the CWC, Chief Ministers of Congress ruled States - Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh - were present and all of them committed to initiate the caste based survey sooner on the pattern of Rajasthan which has already issued a notification in this regard.

Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot said his government took a cue from Bihar model of caste census where Congress is a stakeholder in the Nitish Kumar government.

Sonia in the meeting said she was "100 per cent" in support of a nationwide caste census and asserted that this was the party's "highest priority" which it should get done.

Addressing a Press conference after the Congress Working Committee meeting, Rahul Gandhi said a "historic decision" has been taken unanimously to support the idea of a nationwide caste census, asserting that it is a "powerful step" for the emancipation of the poor.

# Sunak may visit India towards October end

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak may visit India towards the end of this month and watch the India-England World Cup one-day international cricket match in Lucknow on October 29. However, the visit depends on whether India and United Kingdom(UK) could resolve the remaining differences to firm up the much-awaited free trade agreement (FTA), sources said here on Monday.



mobility of people and import duty concessions on certain items, they said.

It is learnt that both sides were even looking at the possibility of Sunak watching the India-England World Cup one-day international cricket match in Lucknow on October 29. There is no finality on the visit, sources said adding that it may depend on whether both sides are able to finalise the free trade deal.

Sunak visited India last month to attend the G20 Summit. On the sidelines of the summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sunak held bilateral talks.

# Mumbai airport commissions DARK facility to recover stranded aircraft

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a major technical upgrade aimed at enhancing passenger safety and operational resilience, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) on Monday became the first airport in Asia to commission the 'Disabled Aircraft Recovery Kit' (DARK) to help stranded aircraft.



The DARK facility comprises high pressure lifting bags of superior durability but requiring minimal manpower and providing a more efficient aircraft recovery process compared with the conventional low-pressure counterparts. Weighing a maximum weight of 390 tonnes, DARK can quickly recover large commercial and transport aircraft including the world's biggest aircraft, the Boeing 777-300ER, and others that may be involved in runway excursions or other incidents.

Operating with a single crossover runway, CSMIA can use the DARK facility with High pressure kit to the best of its capabilities for faster movement & deployment, restoring runway operations while protecting the aircraft. The recovery process encompasses a meticulous sequence of steps, from ground preparation to aircraft lifting, de-bogging, and towing. Furthermore, the compact design of the equipment enhances its transportability, allowing rescuers to reach crash sites swiftly and effectively.

# Fadnavis says no toll tax for small vehicles; Raj calls it lie

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid a threat by the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) to "burn down" all toll stations over its demand for complete waiver of toll on small vehicles, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday claimed that from midnight of May 31, 2015, road toll tax collection had been stopped at 11 of the 38 PWD toll station and one MSRTC toll station.



On a day when the Maharashtra Congress questioned the need for collecting toll from vehicles in view of the fact that all the major roads in the state are ridden with potholes, Fadnavis came out with a detailed statement on the status of the toll tax collection in the state.

Responding to the MNS chief's threat that his party activists would "burn down" toll

booths if the State Government did not announce a complete waiver of road toll tax on small vehicles in the State, Fadnavis said, "Small vehicles like cars, jeeps and State Transport buses at the remaining 27 (of the 38 run by PWD) and at 26 toll booths of the MSRTC have been exempted from the toll tax since May 31, 2015"

"A decision to pay compensation in this regard was also taken in 2017 and its relevant Government Resolution was issued on Aug. 31, 2017," Fadnavis said.

However, Raj contested the Fadnavis' claim saying that the deputy chief minister's statement was a "blatant" lie and reiterated that the MNS men would stand at toll booths and allow small vehicles to pass without paying the toll taxes. Maintaining that the toll tax is "the biggest scam" in Maharashtra, the MNS chief warned the state government that if the government tried to stop his men, then they would set fire to the concerned toll booths. Giving a foretaste of their party chief's threat, the MNS activists swooped on some toll booths in Mumbai, Raigad and other places and allowed small vehicles to cross over without shelling out the toll taxes. Blaming several past state governments for only paying lip service to the issue of stopping toll, the MNS chief demanded to know why the same companies keep getting the toll collection contract, where the money is going and what is being done with it.

# Governor assures TMC to take up MNREGA issue with Centre

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

There were some signs of respite in the ongoing Delhi-Kolkata conflict over the MNREGA dues with Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose assuring the agitating Trinamool Congress leaders that he would take up the issue with the Centre.



Even as the sit-in demonstration led by TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee reached its fifth day a 30-member delegation of the Bengal ruling outfit led by Banerjee on Monday met the Governor at Raj Bhavan.

Emerging out of the 20-minute meeting the TMC leadership dubbed the interaction with Bose as "satisfactory" and a "moral victory" for the Mamata Banerjee Government which wants the Centre to release the

wages under the 100-days' work scheme withheld by the Narendra Modi Government for the past two years.

"The meeting was satisfactory and the honourable Governor has listened to us and has promised to bring this to the notice of the Centre... for now we are lifting the dharna but if the Centre fails to take any concrete step regarding this then again we will return after October 31," Banerjee said.

The Centre had withheld MNREGA funds after it was

# Swamy approaches Delhi HC over RTI on 'Chinese encroachment on Indian territory'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

BJP leader Subramaniam Swamy Monday approached the Delhi High Court over the alleged failure of authorities to decide under the Right to Information Act his application seeking details of "Chinese encroachment on Indian territory" from the Central Government.

Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notice to the Centre seeking its stand on the former MP's petition for a direction to the authorities to give an "effective response" to his query.

"Today in Delhi High Court Justice S. Prasad issued notice to the Modi Government to answer my RTI question on whether or not

Chinese troops have captured undisputed Indian territory in Ladakh since April 2020," Swamy tweeted on social media platform 'X'. In his petition, Swamy said he filed an RTI application in November 2022 asking the Home Ministry to state the extent to which "sovereign land has been acquired by People's Republic of China, across 1996 mutually agreed upon Line of Actual Control".

The RTI application, the petition stated, also sought to know how much of Indian "sovereign land has been lost due to further creation of buffer zones or 'no man's land' since 2014"; the number of times there has been "Chinese military incursions over Indian territory across the mutually agreed upon Line of Actual Control since 1996" and "under

what agreement or otherwise India had ceded the Aksai Chin region to China". It also sought information pertaining to the number of people displaced in India due to the creation of buffer zones, the petition added.

The petition alleged no effective response was received to Swamy's RTI application, which was transferred from one department to another, leading him to first file the first appeal under the RTI Act and then approach the Chief Information Commissioner.

"Nearly six months after filing the second appeal, the petitioner has not received any response whatsoever," the petition claimed, adding the denial of information sought by him violates article 19 (1)(a) of the Constitution of India.

# Indian Space Conclave kicks off in Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The second edition of the Annual Indian Space Conclave organised by Indian Space Association kicked off in the national Capital on Monday. The first day was dedicated to India-France collaboration in the space sector. The event was attended by representative of French and Indian space industry leaders, startups and government officials.



The collaboration will help foster sustainable growth, promote innovation and advocate adoption of new technologies in France and India space industries.

The MoU will act as an extension to the already flourishing Indo-French relationship in the space sector and augment the individual and collective membership bases of the organizations through the benefit of greater international linkages for the members.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mrs. Pooja W/o Mr. Ajeet is the owner of a Plot, admeasuring 119.59 sq. yards in 100 sq. meter, Out of Kh. No. 205, Situated at Village Mangpur, Pargana Dausa, Taluk Sardana, Dist. Meerut (U.P.), vide registered sale deed dated 14.03.2011 Book No. 01, Vol. No. 5245, Document No. 3769 Page No. 243/255 Executed by Mr. Rajender & Mr. Harinder Both S/o Mr. Bishamber in Favor of Mrs. Kavita W/o Mr. Jaiveer Singh, sale deed Lost that Mrs. Pooja informed to Meerut Police on dated 27.09.2023 FIR No. 2023000646165 All Persons are hereby informed that Mrs. Pooja & Mr. Ajeet are mortgaging the said property with VASTU HOUSING FINANCE CORPORATION LTD. General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interestable in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

# 4,153 VDGs, 32,355 SPOs engaged in J&K

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 4,153 Village Defence Groups (VDG) and 32,355 Special Police Officers were engaged in Jammu and Kashmir in different responsibilities for the protection of civilians and aiding anti-terrorist operations.



According to the annual report of the Union Home Ministry for 2022-23, the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir was affected by terrorism and secessionist violence, sponsored and supported from across the border for about three decades.

The report said Maoist violence has pushed back the development process in many parts of the country by decades which needs to be recognised by the civil society and the media to pressure the Naxals into eschewing violence and joining the mainstream.

# CBI arrests 5 in ₹31.5 crore RLDA, BoB misappropriation case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested five persons, including two retired officials of the Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) and Bank of Baroda in connection with alleged misappropriation of Rs 31.50 crore.



The agency presented the arrested accused - RLDA's former manager Vivek Kumar, former branch manager of Bank of Baroda Jaswant Rai, and three private individuals Gopal Thakur, Hitesh Karelia and Nilesh Bhatt - before a special court, which remanded them to judicial custody, the officials said.

# AAP legal cell begins 'Save Constitution, Save Nation' campaign

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party's legal cell in Delhi and Haryana has started the 'Save Constitution, Save Nation' campaign against the decision of the BJP-led central government to amend the Indian Constitution.

The AAP has appealed to lawyers to participate in the march scheduled for Tuesday starting from the Patiala House Court and ending at the Supreme Court. President of AAP's legal cell Advocate Sanjeev Nasir, stated here on Monday that after the protest on Tuesday, they will submit their memorandum to the Chief Justice of

the Supreme Court. This memorandum has been signed by 17,500 lawyers and around 2,000-3,000 lawyers from across the country will participate in this march in March.

Addressing a news conference, Nasir claimed the way the central government is weakening the Constitution in the country, keeping these circumstances in mind, the AAP's legal cell had started the "Save Constitution, Save Nation" campaign with the consent of its central leadership about one and a half months ago.

Throughout this period, they have been appealing to lawyers from all over the country to participate in this campaign.

# Poll semifinals next...

From Page 1

In Mizoram, regional parties and the Congress will challenge the incumbent Mizo National Front amid the Opposition party's hope that political polarisation on ethnic lines following violence in Manipur may boost its chances.

In Madhya Pradesh, a fierce competition among parties to offer freebies and guarantees, a scramble for tribal, OBC, women votes and a touch of Hindutva — all have combined to make the Assembly polls a high-stakes battle with main rivals the BJP and the Congress pulling out all the stops to gain power.

# AAP to contest polls in MP, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



his party will contest the elections as part of the INDIA bloc, he said that "whatever happens will be appraised". AAP convener has already over dozen of political rallies in these three states promising free electricity and health clinics if voted to power and accusing political opponents of indulging in corruption.

According to political experts, Kejriwal's decision to contest in three states is the clear indication that all is not well in the grand opposition INDIA Alliance. The second thing is if AAP is contested, they will dent the Muslim and

three states. Will fight and win," she said.

AAP national general secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak said the party is fully prepared. "People have given opportunities to all parties. Now people want to give an opportunity to the AAP," he said. Pathak stressed that the INDIA alliance has been formed for the Lok Sabha polls and not for Assembly elections.

When asked about the AAP's poll plank, he said providing round-the-clock free electricity, good education, health facilities and good governance will be on its agenda. The Karnataka election was the first Assembly poll the AAP fought after getting the status of a national party.

The Election Commission has announced that assembly polls in Mizoram, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Telangana will be held on different days beginning November 7 and the votes will be counted on December 3.

# Chintels H tower declared unsafe, residents asked to vacate in 15 days

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM



The Gurugram administration declared tower H of the Chintels Paradiso Sector-109 condominium unsafe on Monday, weeks after it was declared unsafe by IIT Delhi. The administration has also directed the residents of the tower of the Chintels Paradiso Sector-109 condominium to vacate them within 15 days or else the Disaster Management Act would be in force. The Act would empower authorities to forcibly vacate the buildings.

Deputy Commissioner and Chairman of District Disaster Management Authority Nishant Kumar Yadav on Monday issued orders to vacate Tower-H of the Chintels Paradiso society in Sector 109. The structural audit report released by IIT, Delhi in July had declared the tower unsafe for human habitation.

The DC issued notice to the residents of Tower H to vacate the flats within the next 15 days. "Orders have been

given to vacate the premises. District Town Planner (Enforcement) has been appointed the nodal officer and duty magistrate for this work. Legal action will be taken against those who violate these orders under Section 188 of the IPC and Section 51 to 60 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005," the notice read.

"The settlement work between residents and builders is also in process. Out of 288 affected residents, around 50 per cent got their full and final settlement. Others are also under process. According to the IIT Delhi

report, H tower is unsafe and the residents must vacate the flats in 15 days," said Yadav, DC Gurugram.

In a recent report, IIT-Delhi declared Towers D, E, F and G are unsafe to live in. Towers D, E, F and G of the housing society have already been vacated.

On February 10 last year, six floors of Tower D collapsed partially, killing two residents. There are nine towers in Chintels; five of these have been declared unsafe so far — D, E, F, G and H.

The district administration on the recommendations of IIT Delhi declared the

building unsafe in November. In January this year, the district administration declared towers E, F and G unsafe and a structural audit by IIT Delhi directed residents to vacate the buildings.

"These towers are unsafe and any unwanted incident can take place anytime. The builder should pay for the relocation of the residents. We cannot let people risk their lives," said a senior district administration official requesting anonymity.

An ultimatum was also issued to the builders to work out compensation with Tower D, E, F, G and H residents at the earliest or the administration would auction all its assets and reimburse the residents, he said. "We are in a lurch and no choice and direction have also been passed for flat vacation. We are aware of the risk but if we move out of the towers, the builder will not provide us with any land and we will be homeless," said Chintels RWA (residents' Welfare Association) president Rakesh Hooda.

# Develop Narela sub city into education hub: LG to DDA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena has directed speedy development of the Narela sub-city projects with an emphasis on developing it into an education hub, according to a Raj Niwas statement on Monday.

Saxena has personally taken charge of improving connectivity, civic infrastructure and new projects in the Narela sub-city area, an ambitious Delhi Development Authority (DDA) project lying neglected so far, he said.

Chairing a meeting with the DDA recently, he directed that a major portion of the Narela sub-city be developed into an educational hub by providing land parcels to universities and other academic institutions looking for land to set up campuses, according to the statement.

Narela sub-city is spread over about 9,866 hectare, of which the project area is of 3,828 hectare. Land pooling area amounts to 3,537 hectare and 2,501 hectare is defined as the green belt, he said.

The Narela area, already home to many relocated and new industries, has recently got a court complex, police station, hospital, jail complex and



enhanced bus connectivity and is now slated to become an education hub, he said.

Institutions to which land has already been allotted include NIT (20.8 hectare), Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (20 hectare) and National Institute of Homeopathy (4.04 hectare).

Also, under the proposed plan, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University is to be allotted 8.08 hectare and Delhi Teachers University 4.04 hectare in the area, he said.

The LG has directed DDA that all these land parcels should be allotted in a cluster, close to its housing projects so as to ensure that residential and hostel facilities are already available for the institutions.

Apart from this, the plan is also to develop the area as a

multi-modal logistics park on approximately 40 hectare land. Narela also lacks in large commercial centres like corporate parks, shopping malls and the LG has also flagged it to DDA.

Other civic infrastructure projects to be developed in the area are club and sports complex over 7.28 hectare, district jail 16 hectare, district court near Tikri Khurd 4 hectare, district park-Smriti Van (Sector A-7) 15.8 hectare, three DSIIDC industrial areas in Narela over 247 hectare and in Bawana and Bhorganahar over 221 hectare and 172 hectare, respectively, it added.

Plans are also afoot to develop a vegetable mandi over 14.6 hectare and ecopark for e-waste management over 8.5 hectare, apart from a secured land fill facility over 69 hectare, it added.

# Divyang get State awards for achieving feats

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday gave away the State awards to specially-abled persons for their achievements in diverse fields, and said that with determination they "converted their disability into strengths". Furthermore, hospitals specializing in services for people with disabilities, namely Dr Ambedkar Hospital and Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital, were also honoured.

Addressing the State Awards ceremony for individuals with disabilities held at Shah Auditorium in Civil Lines, Kejriwal also suggested to the social welfare department of the city government to publish their "inspirational stories and photographs" in "full-page advertisements" in newspapers to let more people get motivated from their accomplishments.

Delhi Government's State Awards for Persons with Disability were given to several achievers, including sportspersons, authors, a motivational speaker, among others. Kejriwal, while giving away the awards, briefly interacted with some of the awardees on the dais.

"Today's award function



for me was an emotional and spiritual experience. Each one of the awardees has achieved something in their lives, someone plays badminton sitting on a wheelchair, someone is a motivational speaker. Story of each one of them is very inspirational," he said in his address at the event.

"Our government has many plans for the elderly, pensioners, and people with disabilities. If more plans are needed, we will create them. The government has no shortage of funds. In the entire country, the Delhi government is the only government whose budget is not in deficit but in surplus because it is an honest government," Kejriwal said.

During this event, the Chief Minister also launched the "Dharohar" mobile app, designed to facilitate the convenience of pensioners, along-

side the unveiling of a publication by the Social Welfare Department. The Dharohar App is designed to assist all pension beneficiaries in receiving important notifications. On this app, pension beneficiaries can register their complaints, which will be promptly addressed. Beneficiaries can register by providing their name, mobile number, Aadhar number, and district name, along with a photo.

The chief minister hailed the awardees and said with determination, they have "converted their disability into strengths".

He suggested to the department that their inspirational stories and photographs can be published in "full-page advertisements" in newspapers to let more people get motivated from their accomplishments.

# Section of JNU, JMI students call Israel 'oppressor'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A section of students from Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia on Monday made some posts on X calling Israel an "oppressor" state and demanding "freedom" for Palestine. "An occupier and oppressor State (Israel) has no right to lecture about the 'Right to Defend'. This comes after students of Aligarh Muslim University on Sunday took out a march in protest of Palestine and Hamas in Aligarh. The students shouted slogans in support of Palestine. A video of the incident is being circulated on social media.

JNU Students Union president Aishe Ghosh wrote on X, "Today remembering Comrade Che Guevara on his death anniversary and what he had said years ago. 'Homeland or Death'. With Palestine". Left-backed All India Students' Association expressed solidarity with Palestine and called for restoration of peace in the region. In a post later deleted, Jamia's National Students' Union of India unit too threw

its lot behind Palestine and called the presence of Israel in the region "terrorism". "Israel's seven-decade-long occupation in Palestine is terrorism. Palestine deserves freedom from Israel's Zionist terrorism, and collective efforts must be made to ensure a just and peaceful resolution to this long-standing conflict," read the deleted post by the Congress' student wing.

In its latest tweet, the NSUI said that a peaceful resolution is the only path to justice and urged the world organisations to prioritise diplomatic solutions. Another student group, Dayar-I-Shauq Students' Charter, championed the Palestinian cause.

"We stand in Solidarity with Palestinian people and the Palestinian freedom fighters in their struggle against the settler colonial state of Israel," DISSC posted on X. Hundreds of students at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) on Sunday demonstrated on campus in support of Palestine amid the ongoing war between Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas.

# Rai orders strict action against anti-dust norms violators

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Monday directed officials to take strict action against construction agencies found violating anti-dust norms at Sarai Kale Khan. Delhi has recorded 200 days of "good to moderate" air quality this year so far, a first since 2015 excluding 2020 which saw a strict lockdown due to COVID-19. Delhi on Monday recorded a 24-hour average air quality index of 175 which falls in the moderate category.

"For the first time since 2015 (barring Covid affected 2020), Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) has been in 'Good to Moderate' AQI category for 200 days," the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) posted on X. The total number of "good to moderate" air quality days during the corresponding period in 2022, 2021 and 2019 stood at 154, 183 and 174 respectively, it said.

As part of the Delhi government's anti-dust campaign, Rai inspected several construction sites in the area and found they did not have a working anti-smog gun, water



sprinklers and tin sheds to prevent dust pollution.

The minister directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to issue notice to the project proponents concerned. He said a penalty will be imposed on the violators if they fail to submit a satisfactory reply within 24 hours.

Rai Saturday launched a

month-long drive to prevent dust pollution in the capital and said strict action will be taken against anyone found violating relevant norms.

The Centre's air quality panel on Friday directed authorities in the National Capital Region to enforce a ban on coal usage in hotels and restaurants, and to take punitive measures against polluting industries and thermal power plants as the air quality in Delhi plunged into the 'poor' category.

This action comes as part of the central government's pollution control plan known as the 'Graded Response Action Plan' (GRAP) which is implemented in Delhi-NCR to combat air pollution during the winter season.

The Anti-Dust Campaign

includes measures such as the installation of dust control equipment at all sites exceeding 500 square metres, with real-time monitoring available through a web portal.

Rai said 591 teams have been set up to ensure strict compliance with dust control norms, with 530 water sprinklers and 258 mobile anti-smog guns employed to combat dust pollution.

He said separate and specific action plans have been designed for each of the 13 air pollution hotspots in Delhi based on real-time air quality data collected from 40 air quality monitoring stations in the capital. The minister said a total of 13 teams had been formed to implement these action plans at the identified air pollution hotspots.

# Congress seeks declaration of Chhath Puja as 'dry day'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A five-member delegation of the Delhi Congress met Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena on Monday and submitted a memorandum requesting him to declare "Chhath Puja" festival as "dry day". The Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) delegation also raised the issue of rise in dengue cases in the capital. It urged the LG to ensure round-the-clock power and water supply, and cleanliness around religious places.

Led by Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely, the delegation also said if their demand related to



'Chhath Puja' is not met, they will stage protests. The party has also accused the AAP government of hurting the religious sentiments of the people from Purvanchal residing in the national capital by excluding Chhath from the list of dry days.

The Bhojpuri-speaking natives of eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand settled in Delhi are considered Purvanchalis. According to an estimate, they form around one-third of the total 1.46 crore votes in the national capital.

# DANICS officer Premnath facing DA charges given premature retirement

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Curtailed the tenure of a 1997-batch DANICS officer, the Union Home Ministry on Monday ordered the premature retirement of AV Premnath. However, the Ministry has granted an aggregate amount of his pay and allowances for three months which comes to Rs 4.06 lakh as a full and final compensation for relieving him prematurely from service.

In a note, the Home Ministry has informed the Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh

Kumar of the Centre's decision. Premnath is considered close to the AAP government in Delhi and was under suspension for facing criminal case relating to possession of disproportionate assets prior to his premature retirement.

Top sources said that the three member review committee headed by additional secretary in the Ministry, has reviewed his service records and it was decided to issue his premature retirement.

"I am directed to refer to the subject mentioned above and to say that the Competent Authority has approved the

premature retirement of Shri A.V. Prem Nath, an Entry Grade officer of DANICS (1997) in public interest under sub-rule 1 of Rule 56(j) of the Fundamental Rules and Rule 42 of CCS (Pension) Rules 1965 with immediate effect by giving three months pay and allowances in lieu of notice. Two copies of the order of premature retirement are enclosed. One copy of the order may be served on to the concerned officer namely, A.V. Prem Nath DANICS(1997) along with a cheque for a sum approximate to the aggregate amount of his pay and allowances for a period of three months. Action taken in this regard may be intimated to this Ministry at the earliest," said Kshitish Kumar, Deputy Secretary, Home Ministry said in an order on Monday.



Earlier in June this year, the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has filed an FIR against former joint commissioner of the Delhi Labour department, A V Premnath, for allegedly "acquiring illegal

properties across the country in the name of his family members."

The FIR was registered on June 16 by the ACB following a complaint that was transferred from the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Economic Offences Wing (EOW), in December 2019 for conducting an enquiry. It has been alleged that the officer has connections/dealing in real estate business. It was found that he even sold properties that were purchased on his wife's name. He had allegedly set up a school in Uttarakhand's Almora in 2017

through a foundation in which his wife is the chairperson and one of the members is his mother-in-law. The officer allegedly designated him as vice-president of this foundation. He had bought five properties allegedly bought by Premnath in Tirupathi, Andhra Pradesh.

Premnath had filed a complaint on June 2 with the Delhi Assembly speaker demanding a probe by the Central Bureau Investigation (CBI) into the "fake credentials" of Special Secretary (Vigilance) YVVJ Rajasekhar. In his complaint, Premnath alleged that Rajasekhar

entered the second list of selected candidates for the Civil Services Main Examination in 1994 through "fraudulent OBC credentials". The committee first issued a notice to Rajasekhar on June 5 asking him to appear before it on Friday. However, it did not mention the name of the complainant.

The Special Secretary also accused Premnath of "trying to use the shoulder of Hon'ble Assembly/Committee to obtain a finding which he may likely to plead or use it for his legal purposes in various forums in ongoing disciplinary/criminal cases"

# Freebies tadka of populism: CEC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Monday said the freebies announced by political parties and State Governments have a 'tadka' of populism and it is difficult for those who win polls to either implement these sops or stop this practice.

Responding to a question on freebies announced by various parties and Government ahead of elections, he said while it is the domain of the State Governments, they do not remember such sops for five years but announce them just a month or a fortnight before the poll schedule is announced.

Kumar made these remarks at a Press conference convened here to announce the schedule of elections in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Mizoram. He said the matter was at present subjective and the poll panel will act as soon as clarity and decision is available on this.

He recalled that the EC had



recently brought out a proforma for parties and States to explain how and when the promises made by them in

their poll manifesto will be implemented.

"Some announcement in one State and some other

announcement in others. I don't know why it is not remembered for five years and all the announcements are made in the last one month or 15 days. Anyway, that is the domain of the State Governments," he said.

The proforma States that while parties are free to tell what they will do, the voters have a right to know how it will be implemented and how much and when it will be done, he pointed out.

Parties and State were asked about the debt to GDP ratio, interest payment to total revenue and whether they will breach the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) targets.

The Governments were also asked whether they will reduce some of the schemes to implement what has been promised in the manifesto, and whether there will be an extra burden of tax on the people. "The intention behind it was to bring every thing in public domain," he said.

Voters should know the picture which emerges on the

basis of financial fundamentals, he said, adding there has to be a balance on present versus mortgaging the future generations. "These announcements have a 'tadka' of populism. It is difficult to either implement or stop such (sops). Therefore, people have a right to know how these freebies will be implemented," he said.

The Election Commission had in October last year proposed amending the model code to ask political parties to provide authentic information to voters on the financial viability of their poll promises, a move that came amid the freebies versus welfare measures debate that has triggered a political slugfest.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had dubbed the freebies and populist announcement as "revdi culture". The Election Commissioner had also said empty poll promises have far-reaching ramifications, adding it cannot overlook the undesirable impact inadequate disclosures on election promises have on financial sustainability.

# Assemblies in States going to polls met for just 29 days a year: Report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As five States go to polls, data compiled by a PRS Legislative Research, showed that these State Assemblies — Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram — met for less than 30 days a year and the number of sittings have been going down over the years.

According to a report, the Rajasthan assembly met for 29 days in a year on an average and the Telangana assembly for 15 days.

Between 2019 and 2023, average sittings of the assembly in Chhattisgarh was 23 days a year, with average sitting time being five hours.

The Madhya Pradesh assembly had sittings for 16 days, around four hours a day on average, and the Mizoram assembly sat for 18 days, with each sitting being around five hours long.

The Election Commission on Monday announced the assembly poll schedule for



these five states, to be held between November 7 and 30. Single-phase assembly polls will be held in Madhya Pradesh on November 17, Rajasthan on November 23, Telangana on November 30 and Mizoram on November 7, while Chhattisgarh will vote in two phases on November 7 (20 seats) and 17 (70 seats).

According to the PRS Legislative Research report, the Rajasthan assembly had the highest number of sittings among these five States — around 29 days per year, and each sitting was around seven hours long.

In four of the five states for which long-term data is available, sittings have reduced over

time, it stated.

In their first 10 years, the Rajasthan Assembly, on average, met for 59 days a year, while the MP Assembly met for 48 days a year. In the last 10 years, the average annual sitting days have declined to 29 in Rajasthan and 21 in MP.

Telangana had its highest sittings in 2017 — 37 days. However, in every year since then, it met for less than 20 days.

Around 48 per cent of bills in these state assemblies were considered and passed on the same day or the day after introduction. Mizoram passed 57 bills during its current term, all on the same day or the day after introduction.

# Modi to interact with Asian Games contingent today

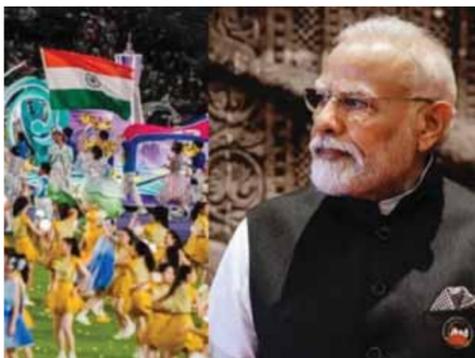
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with and address India's Asian Games contingent at the Major Dhyan Chand Stadium here on Tuesday.

Indian athletes bagged 107 medals at the Asian Games in Hangzhou over the last fortnight, surpassing their previous best of 70 at the 2018 Jakarta edition.

The Prime Minister will interact with and address the contingent of Indian athletes who participated in the Asian Games 2022 at around 4:30 pm on October 10, 2023 at Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, New Delhi, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement.

The programme is an endeavour by the prime minister to congratulate the ath-



letes for their outstanding achievement at the Asian Games and to motivate them for future competitions, it said.

India's total of 107 medals includes 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze.

Tuesday's programme will

be attended by the athletes of India's Asian Games contingent, their coaches, officials from the Indian Olympic Association, representatives of National Sports Federations and officials from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

# Navy to hold disaster relief exercise in Goa

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Navy is hosting the three-day annual humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HADR) exercise Chakravart starting Monday in Goa to synergise efforts at the national level among all stakeholders as well as witness participation from eight countries of the Indian Ocean Region.

Giving details of the exercise here on Monday, navy officials said the Annual Joint HADR Exercise (AJHE) is an outcome of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directive promulgated during Combined Commanders' Conference-2015.

Since its first edition in 2015, the exercise has transformed itself into a multi-agency endeavour involving participation of all three Services, Paramilitary Forces, as well as several disaster

response organisations, NGOs, academic institutions and international organisations.

The exercise has been conducted by Indian Army, Indian Navy (IN) and Indian Air Force (IAF) in rotation since 2016. The last edition of the exercise was conducted at Agra by IAF. The 2023 edition of the exercise is being hosted by the Indian Navy at Goa, officials said.

Developing collective and coordinated effective response mechanisms to address humanitarian crises and natural disasters are one of the most visible elements in India's inclusive vision for the oceans - SAGAR, or Security And Growth for All in the Region. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations form a key component in the Indian Navy's benign role, as climate change has significantly

increased vulnerability of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to natural disasters.

The challenge posed by climate change is accentuated by the limited capacity of littoral IOR states to address this rapidly growing threat. Therefore, Indian Armed Forces have been frequently called upon to render assistance to our friends and partners in the Region, thereby, strengthening the need and our resolve to be the 'First Responder' in the region.

While the three Services continue to provide relief and succour in the event of a calamity, a whole of government approach would further enhance our preparedness and response to such unfortunate events.

AJHE-23, planned over three days includes a seminar, a Table-Top Exercise and a Multi-Agency Capability Demonstration.

# India, Tanzania review ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Tanzania reviewed the entire gamut of their bilateral ties here on Monday during talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Samia Suluhu Hassan and announced elevating their relationship to strategic partnership. The two sides also agreed on a five-year roadmap to significantly expand defence co-operation.

The two sides inked six agreements providing for cooperation in the digital domain, culture, sports, maritime industries and white shipping information sharing.

In his media statement after the talks, Modi said both sides are also working on an agreement to increase trade in local currencies, describing India and Tanzania as important partners for trade and investment.

"Today is a historic day in the relations between India



and Tanzania. Today, we are tying our age-old friendship into a strategic partnership," he said in presence of Hassan.

In the field of defence, we have agreed on a five-year roadmap, Modi said, adding it will add new dimensions to cooperation in areas like military training, maritime sphere and defence industries.

The prime minister also noted that India and Tanzania are "unanimous" that terrorism is the "most serious security threat to humanity".

"We have decided to increase mutual cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, he said. Modi also called Tanzania a "valued partner" in the Indo-Pacific.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
General public is hereby informed that Mr. Rajendra Yadav S/o Mr. Ram Kuber Yadav is intending to sell the Plot No. 72, area measuring 48 Sq. Ft., out of Khastha No. 921/M, situated at Shree Ram Nagar Colony, in Village Pasanda Pargana Loni, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, U.P. 201015, to Mrs. Raj Kumar W/o Mr. Kobander Singh, to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e., Mrs. DMI Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. The Original Sale Deed dt. 22.05.2023, vide doc. No. 643, pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and complaint bearing GDN No. 68 was registered on 02.09.2022 with U.P. Police. Any persons found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from the date of this notice on below address, failing which, this claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.  
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate  
Ch. 830, Patala House Courts,  
New Delhi - 110001 Mob. +91-9876186322

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that one of the partners in the firm, M/s A.G. Polymers having registration no. Firm/West/2023/1686, namely Mrs. Dolly Goyal has voluntarily retired from the Firm w.e.f. 01.04.2019 and in her place new partner namely Mr. Vinay Goyal S/o Late Shri Sanwar Mal Goyal R/o B-132, Club Road, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088 has joined as partner in the said firm w.e.f. 01.04.2019.  
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that there is neither any dues and liability of the outgoing partner in the firm nor the Firm has any liability upon the outgoing partner.  
Date: 10/10/2023  
Place: New Delhi  
Partner, M/s A.G. Polymers  
Registration No.: Firm/West/2023/1686  
Anirudh Goyal

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I, Mitu Malhotra, Wife of Justice Sh. Harbaksh Rai Malhotra R/o House No. 271/10, Cross Lane No. 2, Forest Lane, Sainik Farm, Hauz Khas, South Delhi, Delhi - 110068, is hereby informing general public that I had changed my name from Mrs. Mitu Malhotra to Mrs. Sumitra Malhotra. I want to clarify that Mrs. Sumitra Malhotra and Mrs. Mitu Malhotra refer herein is one and the same person for all legal and practical purposes.  
Date: 10/10/2023  
Place: New Delhi  
Partner, M/s A.G. Polymers  
Registration No.: Firm/West/2023/1686  
Anirudh Goyal

# Insurance firms unfairly rejecting claims: AHPI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The insurance companies are "unfairly" rejecting claims by patients and blatantly disregarding guidelines laid down by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India, thus leaving the insured patients at the receiving end, The Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI) has said.

The AHPI which is a collective of hospitals and other healthcare providers has demanded action against such private insurance companies as it accused them of forming an "alarming cartel".

The AHPI contended that private insurance companies are collectively discontinuing cashless facilities provided to hospitals, depriving patients of their right to choose treatment and healthcare providers in an arbitrary manner.

"As claims are denied, individuals find themselves in urgent need of funds to cover mounting medical expenses, especially those seeking emergency care while private hospitals find themselves grappling

with escalating costs and mounting losses due to the conduct of these insurance companies, the association said in a statement here.

Dr Girdhar Gyani, Director General of AHPI, said, "The AHPI's efforts to rectify this situation have been met with resistance. Multiple complaints have been filed with IRDAI, but no tangible action has been taken yet. Several members from across the nation have also reported similar harassment by insurance companies, prompting us to take these concerns seriously."

"Consequently, we are now considering legal action and approaching the Competition Commission of India to draw attention to these concerning practices. One particularly distressing case that I came across involved the sudden de-empowerment of one of our member hospitals in Delhi by a well-known insurance company. The insurer insisted on substantial discounts from the previously agreed-upon rates, resulting in the de-empowerment without providing a satisfactory justification."

# IIM-L team develops model to protect healthcare systems from cyber threats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Months after the country's premier Delhi-based health institutions such as AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospital cybersecurity was breached, a research team of the Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIM-L) said it has developed a model to protect healthcare systems globally from cyber threats.

The research titled 'Healthcare Cyber Risk Assessment Model' evaluates and mitigates risks of cyberattacks thereby ensuring the security of patient data and the continuity of digital healthcare services for healthcare institutions. The team led by Prof. Arunabha Mukhopadhyay aims to tackle this issue by investigating the weak points in healthcare data security that hackers exploit.

They propose that cyber threats become more likely when the healthcare staff lacks training to counter tactics like

phishing and when IT governance and security technology are not effectively implemented.

The research funded by the cybersecurity division of the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), has been published in the 'Journal of Organisational Computing and Electronic Commerce' (ABDC A category).

The paper has been co-authored by Mukhopadhyay, along with his research scholars Swati Jain and Saloni Jain. Explaining the details of the model, Mukhopadhyay said: "Our risk assessment and quantification models have helped us group 1788 US healthcare firms on a 'heat matrix' that shows the likelihood of a cyberattack and its potential severity. This gives us a clear picture of how ready the firms are to tackle cyber threats. We also propose a plan to tackle the risks, which is customised according to the position of the firm in the matrix."

# HC reserves its orders on plea of editor of NewsClick

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Delhi High Court on Monday reserved its orders in the petition filed by NewsClick portal's editor Prabir Purkayastha and others with the portal claiming no funding from China and the Delhi Police arguing that the portal compromised country's stability and integrity.

Justice Tushar Rao Gedela reserved the order on pleas by Purkayastha and the news portal's human resources department head Amit Chakravarty challenging their arrest and the subsequent 7-day police remand after the investigation agency defended its action claiming NewsClick received ₹75 crore from a person in China to ensure the country's stability and integrity were compromised.

"Arguments heard. Order reserved," said Justice Gedela said after hearing the rival sides for around two hours. The court said any further remand of the accused will be subject to its order on the petitions by the two senior executives of the news portal. The portal argued that allegations against them were "false" and "bogus", and "not a penny has come from China".

Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta, appearing for the investigation agency, said the case involves "serious offences" and the probe was still going on.

# SC relief for NCP leader after HC rejected plea for suspension of conviction

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a relief to NCP leader Mohammed Faizal, the Supreme Court Monday stayed a recent Kerala High Court order rejecting his plea for suspension of his conviction in an attempt to murder case, an order which may lead to revocation of his disqualification as Lok Sabha MP for a second time in a year. After the Kerala High Court's October 3 order, he was disqualified as a member of the Lok Sabha last Wednesday. Faizal, who represented Lakshadweep in Parliament, has been disqualified twice as a lawmaker this year.

"In the meantime the operation of the impugned order October 3, 2023 of the High Court is stayed. The interim order passed by this court (the Supreme Court) in favour of the petitioner earlier is made operational," said a bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Sanjay Karol after hearing brief submissions by senior advocate Kapil Sibal and Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj.

A sessions court in Lakshadweep had sentenced Faizal and three others on January 11 for attempting to kill Mohammed Salih, son-in-law of the late union minister P M Sayeed, during the 2009 Lok Sabha elections.

# Provide hybrid mode of hearing option: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Days after ordering High Courts to allow virtual hearings, the Supreme Court on Monday asked all State Information Commission (SICs) to provide litigants the option of hybrid mode of hearing. A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud directed SICs across the country to ensure that e-filing of complaints and appeals is provided to all litigants.

"All State Information Commission must provide an option for availing of hybrid mode of hearing...", said the

bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. Observing that technology will help amplify access to justice, the bench said, "That apart, we also direct that all state information commissions must ensure that e-filing of complaints and appeals is provided in a streamlined manner to every litigant."

The apex court passed the order while hearing a plea seeking directions for better functioning of SICs. The petition said SICs should hear complaints as well as appeals by giving an option of both physical as well as virtual hearing through digital platforms.

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**  
ICICI Bank  
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005  
Whereas Notice is being issued in relation to the enforcement of security in respect of a housing loan facility granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between Bank of Rajasthan Ltd (hereinafter referred as "eBOR") and the borrower and co borrower mentioned below. As per the order dated August 12, 2010 the Reserve Bank of India has approved the scheme of amalgamation of eBOR with the ICICI Bank Ltd, (herein after referred as "the Bank"), pursuant thereto all the undertaking of eBOR stands transferred to the and vested in favour of the Bank as going concerns to become the properties, estates, assets, rights title, interest and authorities of the Bank. The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.  
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.  
Sr. No. Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.) Name of Branch  
1. Rajendra Kumar Sharma/ Ravi Kant Sharma/ Shivam Shankar/ Sunil Mohan Sharma/ Shyam Sunder Sharma/ RBDEL00001861499 House No-A-88, Inderpuri Colony Loni, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh/ October 06, 2023 November 30, 2017 Rs. 1,39,100/- Delhi & NCR/ Meerut  
The above-mentioned borrower/s/guarantors/s are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.  
Date : October 10, 2023 Authorized Officer  
Place: Delhi/ NCR ICICI Bank Limited

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**  
ICICI Bank  
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005  
Whereas A housing loan facility was granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor, which term shall include its successors and assigns) and the borrower & co-borrower, mentioned below ("Borrower(s)", which term shall include his/ its/ their respective successors, assigns, heirs), The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Secured Creditor ("Authorized Officer") under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, ("Rules") has issued demand notices under Section 13(2) of the Act calling upon the borrowers / co borrowers mentioned below to repay the amount payable pursuant to the loan agreement and as specifically mentioned in the said respective demand notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.  
The borrowers / co-borrower, having failed and neglected to repay the amount as claimed in the said demand notices, a notice is hereby given to the borrowers / co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13 (4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules. The details including date of symbolic possession of the properties are as mentioned below  
Sr. No. Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.) Name of Branch  
1. Neeraj Gupta/ Malini Gupta/ LBDEL0000376508 Flat No.812/G-3, HIG, Ground Floor, Shubham Apartment-IV, Situated At Plot No.812, Shalimar Garden East, Village Pasanda, Pargana Loni Uttar Pradesh Ghaziabad/ October 06, 2023 June 05, 2023 Rs. 36,20,372/- Delhi & NCR  
The above-mentioned borrower/s/guarantors/s are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.  
Date : October 10, 2023 Authorized Officer  
Place: Delhi/ NCR ICICI Bank Secured Creditor

# AD Health inaugurates IMI 5.0

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Additional Director (Medical Health and Family Welfare), Varanasi Division, Dr Manjula Singh, along with Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary, inaugurated the third and final phase of Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI-5.0) at Urban Community Health Centre (CHC) Chowkaghat here on Monday. On the occasion, both the senior Health department officials administered polio medicines to newborn babies. Many children were also given vaccinations including measles-rubella at the booth. Apart from this, the third phase of the campaign was also started at all the eight block level community and primary health centres (CHCs/PHCs) and other health centres.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Manjula said that IMI 5.0 has been started to immunise children up to five years of age and pregnant women who are left out of regular vaccination due to some reasons.

The final phase will continue till October 14 in the other four districts of the division including Varanasi, she said, adding that in the campaign, special emphasis will be given to vaccinating children against measles and rubella along with all the missed vaccinations, as the target has been set



AD (Health) Dr Manjula Singh, CMO Dr Sandeep Chaudhary inaugurating final phase of IMI 5.0 in Varanasi on Monday.

to eradicate MR by December 2023.

Along with this, she said that the pregnant woman will be vaccinated against tetanus-diphtheria (TD). This vaccine protects pregnant women and their fetus from tetanus and diphtheria, she said, appealing to the family members to motivate others around their houses to go to PHCs/CHCs to get their children up to five years of age vaccinated.

Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that if any child is left out, the same must get vaccinated. "All vaccines are completely safe. Normal fever may occur after vaccination but there is no need to panic. Rapid Response

Teams (RRTs) have been formed to deal with adverse effects. Apart from this, advice can also be taken from the doctors at the nearest CHCs/PHCs, he said.

ACMO (Immunisation) Dr AK Maurya and Superintendent Dr Falguni Gupta also administered polio drops to the children. Dr Maurya said that for the third phase of IMI 5.0, 15455 children up to five years of age and 2448 pregnant women of the district have been targeted for vaccination.

For this, a total of 1720 vaccination sessions will be organised in the district. During this period, children will be

vaccinated against 11 diseases including diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, polio, tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis B, meningitis, pneumonia, Haemophilus influenzae type B infection, diarrhoea, rotavirus and measles-rubella. (MR).

On the occasion, senior medical officer Dr Sunil Gupta, staff nurse Priyanka, Pradeep Vishwakarma and Dr Shahid from UNICEF, SMO Dr Shriram Swami and Dr Satrupa from WHO, Ashutosh Mishra and Reena Verma from UNDP, Asha workers Ranjana, Rajmani, Sunita, Geeta and other health workers and staff were also present.

# Asiad medal winner Saroj given rousing welcome

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Ajay Kumar Saroj, who hoisted the tricolour of India by winning the silver medal in 1500 metre race in the Asian Games held in China, was given a rousing welcome on reaching Prayagraj on Monday. Players and fans showered him with garlands. After this Ajay was welcomed at Madan Mohan Malaviya Stadium.

Ajay said only passion towards the goal takes the player to his destination. He

said told new players to work hard and blindly trust their coach. "Coach is the guide with the help of whom you can reach your goal. Along with believing in yourself, also believe in the coach. You will get 100 per cent success by working hard with full honesty".

**RAIL COACH RESTAURANT:** Rail coach restaurant will open at Prayagraj Junction, Subedarganj and Kanpur Central Railway Station early next year. The Prayagraj division of North Central Railway (NCR) has completed the ten-

der process and has also selected the firm. Rail coach restaurant will open next to Hotel Polo Max on Civil Lines side at Prayagraj Junction.

A private firm has received a contract for Rs 51.51 lakh to open a railway coach restaurant at Prayagraj Junction.

Similarly, the contract has been allocated to a private firm for Rs 41.34 lakh in Kanpur and Rs 10.50 lakh at Subedarganj station. Rail coach restaurant in Kanpur will be built near the union office in the Cantt side. It will be built near the main building at

Subedarganj station. The contract has been allotted for five years each at these three railway stations.

After these three stations, there are plans to open rail coach restaurants in Aligarh, Etawah, Mirzapur, Tundla, Prayagraj Cheoki and Firozabad.

Senior DCM, Prayagraj division Himanshu Shukla, said the e-auction was conducted for coach restaurant. Three private firms obtained the tender by making highest bids. This earned the Railways an income of Rs 1.03 crore.

# Route for Indira Marathon finalised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The route for Indira Marathon to be held on November 19 on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has been finalised. This time also the competition will be held on Rewa Road itself. The opening ceremony of the competition will be held at Anand Bhawan, while the closing ceremony will be held at Madan Mohan Malaviya Stadium.

According to sports officials, the sports minister will inaugurate the competition. Online registration of runners to participate in the marathon will be started soon. The offline application process will start from the first week of November. Regional Sports Officer Vimala Singh said the route for Indira Marathon has been selected. The application process will start soon.

According to sports department officials, more than 1,000 runners are expected to participate in the marathon.

The total distance of Indira Marathon will be 42.195 km. The winning runners will also be honoured with prizes. A sum of Rs 2 lakh was given to the first winner of the men's and women's category, Rs 1 lakh to the runner-up and Rs 75,000 to the runners securing the third place. Eleven players each of both categories are given Rs 10,000 each as consolation prize.

**PROTEST:** Enraged over erratic power supply, the villagers of Jafra of Meja tehsil

gheraoed the the substation at Surwa Dalapur by locking it and blocking the traffic for a few hours here on Monday. Villagers also raised slogans against the officials of the Electricity department. Taking cognisance of it executive engineer instructed the JE to restore power supply as soon as possible. Executive Engineer Major Pradeep Sonkar took cognisance of the matter and directed the JE to restore power by replacing the transformer within 24 hours.

# Separate clinics in govt hospitals for fever patients: CMO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In view of increasing rush of inpatients suffering from fever, separate filter clinics have been set up at OPD in government hospitals to provide quick follow up to them. "The number of patients admitted in the hospitals suffering from fever is high so efforts are being made to provide proper treatment to them with the human resources available there," he said, adding that the doctors have been put on round-the-clock (24-hour) duty only to take care of admitted patients and medical officers in the trauma centres established in the hospitals.

According to him, about 1,700 new patients are being seen in the OPD every day in the government hospitals and by keeping some alternative beds in addition to the total beds available there, treatment of the patients who come to the hospitals is started immediately on stretchers under a temporary arrangement and as soon as the beds become vacant, the concerned patient is shifted there without any delay, he claimed, denying the reports

that the patients are turned away without treatment from the hospitals.

The CMO informed that in Shri Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Divisional Hospital, about 1400 to 1700 new OPD slips and about 2,000 old patients come every day, out of which the doctors/specialists, considering the condition of the patients, admit 100 to 120 patients every day. Dr Chaudhary further said that with the smooth arrangements have been made for the treatment of patients suffering from fever in Lal Bahadur Shastri (LBS) Hospital, Ramnagar with two physicians regularly. "In OPD/IPD, expert level treatment is being provided to all the patients as per requirement. In this hospital, due to no posting against the four sanctioned posts of EMO, only specialist doctors do duty in all three shifts of emergency service and due to which they are not available during the day after night duty," he accepted and added still, in case of special need, experts come to the hospital to provide medical advice to the on-call patient.

Regarding Pt Deendayal

Upadhyay (DDU) Government Hospital, he said that a total of 250 beds are available in OPD and the patients do not have to wait unnecessarily to get admitted to the hospital. "At present 240 patients are admitted in the hospital and receiving treatment. The remaining 10 beds are available for admitted patients. Roster wise round the clock duty has been imposed for the patients admitted in the hospital, so that the admitted patients can get proper treatment," he said, adding that at present there has been a huge increase in the number of patients infected with (dengue, typhoid, malaria and viral fever) in the district and due to which the number of patients in Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSHU) in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has also increased significantly.

The CMO said that when patients come, all of them are given treatment and necessary consultation on priority. "The patients from other hospitals of Varanasi and nearby districts of entire Purvanchal (eastern UP) apart from adjoining states also come here for treatment in

very high number," he said, adding that the hospital administration has strongly refuted certain complaints regarding the situation being out of control and termed such allegations as baseless, and misleading.

According to him, similarly, due to increased fever in the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Hospital, Pandeypur, the number of patients in the hospital has increased.

He said that the token system has been established to manage queues of patients at registration counters and pharmacies. "Moreover, to facilitate the services, check-in numbers are generated separately for each clinical department. Most of the medicines are available in the hospital pharmacy and issued to the patients. For some specific medicines, the patients are instructed to obtain the same from the respective ESI dispensaries," he said, adding that there is a provision for reimbursement of the cost of medicines in case of non-availability of such medicines in the ESI dispensary.

# 'Aim of education should be to develop national character'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The objective of education should be to develop the national character among the students and this responsibility should be taken by the teachers and society as well. To care for the respect and rights of each and every person and institution so that they could not divert from their duty of developing the national character. These words were expressed by Dinesh Pathak, Intellectual Head, Kashi Vibhag, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) while speaking as chief guest in a seminar held by the Varanasi Unit of the Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (RSM), Varanasi on the topic of "Teacher, in the interest of Education: Society, in the interest of Teachers" in Varanasi Public School here on Monday.

The guest of honour and Principal of Malikpura PG College, Ghazipur Prof Diwakar Singh said that the primary education play the role of foundation stone in building any nation and added that but today, the teachers of primary education are being forced to discharge other works than teaching and it is not in the interest of the country and it should be stopped immediately.

The special guest and Regional Convener of Legal Cell of Kashi Region of BJP Shashank Shekhar Tripathi said

that the teacher has only duty to make character building of the students so that they could discharge their duty of nation building as the best citizen and added that but today, the teachers are being used as government employees to make arrangement of crowd for non-educational activities. It is an insult of teachers and teaching system as well and it should immediately be stopped, he further said.

In the seminar, Chavi Agrawal was nominated as Working President of the Women Wing of RSM. The executive committee of Varanasi Unit of RSM was extended and Kamlesh Yadav & Dharendra Singh were nominated as its Secretaries, while Ajay Kumar & Chandra Mohan Yadav were nominated as Joint Secretaries. The Working President of Varanasi Unit of RSM Jyoti Prakash and General Secretary of Women Wing Kumud Singh were honored to work for the interest of teachers. The district president of RSM Shashank Kumar Pandey 'Shekhar' and district general secretary Anand Kumar jointly conducted the seminar and the district president of women wing Dr Rama Rukhaiyar propose the vote of thanks, while the Principal of Lal Bahadur Shastri PG College Prof Udayan Mishra presented over it.

**PRESENTED:** Dr Shashi Prakash Mishra from Department of Surgery and Dr Manjaree Mishra from

Anesthesia, Trauma Centre of Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, have presented their research papers in Trauma and Acute Care Conference held in Singapore recently. Both these research papers have been from the research work conducted with the funding from Institute of Eminence (IoE) Scheme of BHU. Dr Shashi Prakash Mishra has presented his research work on role of biomarkers in blunt trauma abdomen and Dr Manjaree Mishra has presented her research work on critically ill trauma patients admitted in ICU. There were around 50 selected presentations in this conference from various countries like Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bahrain, Korea, Australia and the United States of America. The research works were well appreciated by judges and they suggested sharing these researches with the researchers around the world by publishing research papers.

**FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED:** On the completion of one year of its centre in Varanasi, the Birla Fertility, IVF from CK Birla Group held a programme to celebrate the first anniversary of the centre. Talking to media persons at the centre in Srigra here, the Consultant of Birla Fertility, IVF Dr Deepika Mishra said that the centre is providing outstanding clinical outcomes and compassionate care at Varanasi centre and added that the centre has

recently provided the joy of motherhood to a 36-year-old post multiple IVF failures.

Opened in 2022, the Varanasi Centre has provided the joy of parenthood to the couples, through holistic fertility care and world class infrastructure, not only in Varanasi but from adjoining areas such as Azamgarh, Mirzapur, Bhadohi, Ghazipur, Badlapur, Ballia and eastern side of Bihar-Buxar and Sasaram.

Dr Mishra also highlighted an interesting case study of a 36-year-old patient who was suffering from a complex case of secondary subfertility and failed IVF cycles alongside other medical complications and how with Birla Fertility, IVF's expertise, the couple is now expecting their second child. The 36-year-old patient who was struggling with sub-fertility for 10 long years with blockage in the fallopian tubes, irregular menstrual cycles and hyperthyroidism adding to the complexity of fertility challenges, resulting in failed IVF cycles. The patient and her partner subsequently underwent a Controlled Ovarian Stimulation (COS) and Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI) followed by a Frozen Embryo Transfer (FET).

The team at Birla Fertility, IVF with their combined experience of 21,000+ cycles, treated the patient through a customized plan, helping her conceive after years of disappointment, she said.

# Cong demands govt withdraw case against Ajay Rai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Congress Party on Monday demanded the state government to withdraw the case lodged against its state president Ajay Rai in connection with Anyay Pratikar Yatra and submitted a memorandum in favour of the demand to the district administration to be forwarded to the Governor.

A joint delegation of the District and City Units of Congress Party led by district president Rajeshwar Patel and city chief Raghendra Chaubey reached the office of the district magistrate in the Collectorate premises here and submitted a memorandum to his representative in the absence of the DM.

The delegation said that a case was lodged against as many as 82 persons including party state president Ajay Rai in 2015 in connection with Anyay Pratikar Yatra and alleged that the present state government withdrew the case against as many as 81 persons barring only the UP Congress chief.

The delegation termed it as a part of conspiracy of the state government against Rai who never bowed down to the OM and the CM and continued raising voice against the faulty policies of both the central and the state governments.



The delegation of Congress Party coming out from Collectorate after submitting memorandum.

Rai always raised the voices of the common people, the delegation said and demanded the state government to withdraw the case against Rai too in this matter like it withdrew against others named in the case. The delegation threatened that if the case was not withdrawn against the party state chief, the Congressmen would have no option except to come to the street to protest it.

Durga Prasad Gupta, Shailendra Singh, Fasahat Hussein, Dr Rajesh Gupta, Ajay Singh Shivji, Rajendra Srivastava and others were present in the delegation.

**BHU STARTS REGISTRATION FOR MOP-UP ROUND:** The Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has started the registration process for the mop-up round for vacant seats in the UG and PG courses. Interested candidates should visit the BHU admission portal www.bhuonline.in and click

the 'Mop-up Registration cum Counselling' button and fill in their details. The last day for registration for the mop-up round is October 10 (Tuesday) by 11.59 pm. The university has put 'Vacant Seats for Mop-up Round' on the portal. The candidates should make sure that they fill only those preferences in which seats are vacant in their category and in the location (institutions) they are interested in taking admissions.

For participation in the mop-up round the candidate has to first register on the portal. Those candidates who had registered for the BHU Counselling process earlier but were not offered a seat during the regular round allotment or were offered seat (s) but could not deposit the fee/ or could not fill their preference entries or deposited the fee but got their admission cancelled later, are all eligible for admis-

sion. Even those candidates who did not apply earlier but are interested now and their information/score has been provided to the university by the National Testing Agency are eligible to apply. The candidates who have already got admission and are holding a seat are not eligible for Mop-up Round. While candidates already registered for admission will have to pay only Rs 1,000 as mop-up fee, someone registering for the first time will have to pay registration fee as given in the UET/PET bulletin. If the candidate manages to get a seat out of his preferred choice in the mop-up result, Rs 1,000 will be adjusted in the total eventual fee of the programme. The amount will be refunded also when the candidate does not get his preferred choice. However, in case the candidate is offered a seat but he/she does not opt for it Rs 1,000 will be forfeited.

# 'Kalash yatra' taken out



CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel while addressing a programme organised under 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign under the aegis of Nagar Palika Parishad, Mirzapur, on Sunday exhorted the youth that it is the need of the hour that we emulate the path of our heroes and contribute in developing the country by the centenary year of our independence. She said under the visionary approach of Prime Minister Narendra Modi programmes are being organ-

ised across the country to make people aware of sacrifices of our ancestors whose struggle paved the way for our freedom. The programme was based on the theme to instil the spirit to respect our soil. After collecting soil from each house it was to be sent to the state as well as national capital and a park is being developed in Delhi, she added. The programme started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp jointly by the chief guest, District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjana, Chairman NPP Shyam Sundar Keshari, district president BJP Brij Bhushan Singh and district president Apna Dal (S) Ram

Lotan Bind. A 'kalash yatra' was taken out from City Club and after passing through the thoroughfares of the city it culminated at Ghantaghar. Amit Shrinet, Gaurav Umar, ward members of NPP and others took part in the procession.

**INSPECTED:** Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan inspected the Vindhya Mela area. During it the SP directed the police personnel to identify the important spots and ensure installation of CCTV cameras at those places. The SP inspected the Ganga ghats as well as temple premises and directed the officials to adopt precautionary measures and maintain coordination with the agencies involved in preparations.

**TWO COUPLES REUNITE:** Under Project Milan programme two 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. The police had sent the cases to the FCC and after separate sittings the couple agreed to live together. Incharge of the cen-

tre sub-inspector Shashi Tiwari, head constable Savitri Devi, counsellors Nirmala Rai, Prakash Chand and Dr Krishna Singh along with others concerned were present during the counselling.

**BODY FOUND HANGING:** The body of a man was found hanging from a roof under unknown condition at his residence under City Kotwali police station on Sunday. The deceased Sanjay Singh(53) of Songarha under Halia police station was working in the Irrigation department. He was living on rent on the first floor of Raj Kumar Gupta's house in Ghurahoopli locality for more than 10 years. When the landlord saw the body hanging in the morning he informed the police as well as family members of the deceased. On getting information SHO City Kotwali Bal Mukund Mishra reached the spot and took the body into possession.

The family members allege that it is not a case of suicide but murder due to land dispute. No case was registered regarding the allegation of murder so far, last reports received here said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Cracks show

### Israel-Hamas war has again exposed the hidden faultlines among India's parties

The Israel-Palestine conflict has started resonating in India, igniting a political debate and revealing various parties' perspectives and self-interests. Showcasing the complexity of its constituent ideologies, even the INDIA bloc could not come up with a unified statement. The BJP grabbed the opportunity to highlight the Narendra Modi Government's achievements – zero tolerance against terror and enhanced national security. Drawing a comparison to the UPA eras, which witnessed the Mumbai terror attacks as well as a series of bombings in Delhi, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad, it argued that India is much safer today. The party framed this argument in the context of supporting Israel's counter-action against Hamas, emphasising that a nation's security is paramount. Modi, however, practically overturned India's balanced and neutral official policy on the Middle East conflict since 1962 when Israel seized control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla

drew attention to the Israeli Opposition's united support for their Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in contrast to what he called "divisive politics" here. While the BJP, a right-wing party, has a natural affinity with Netanyahu's extreme right approach, the Congress takes a left-of-centre approach that aligns with its historical commitment to the Palestinian cause.

The INDIA bloc comprises parties with varying interests and views on the Israel-Palestine conflict, making it a challenge to maintain a unified stance. In contrast to the BJP's unequivocal support for Israel, the Congress position was more nuanced. Condemning



the violence directed at Israel, it also expressed solidarity with the Palestinians' "legitimate aspirations". The views of the CPI(M), led by Sitaram Yechury, were somewhat similar: It condemned the aggression from both Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Aligning with the Palestinian cause, Yechury underscored their casualties but did not mention Israel's losses owing to the Hamas unprovoked attack. Mincing no words, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said that it often took "death and destruction" to awaken the world to the Israel-Palestine scenario's truth. "Now that the shoe is on the other foot, the so-called democracies are outraged. This selective outrage is criminal, to say the least." Responding to the BJP's claim of zero-terror tolerance, the Samajwadi Party pointed to the Parliament attack during the party's reign, "which was the biggest and most serious of all", and the continuing terror incidents in J&K. The Middle East conflict has fired up the intricate web of India's political system. The differences amongst the political parties on international issues are at divergence and could have consequences for India's foreign policy. As the war intensifies, India's political parties will be forced to grapple with the challenge of balancing international interests with their domestic political considerations.

## PICTALK



Artists perform during the closing ceremony of the 19th Asian Games, in Hangzhou, China

# Does India need a caste census?

## A caste census is deemed discriminatory and opposed by those who seek equal rights for all. Besides, opinions are sharply divided on its impact



KALYANI SHANKAR

Does India need a caste census? If conducted, will it bring positive or negative consequences?

There is debate over this issue. The issue is controversial due to differing opinions on potential benefits or drawbacks. Opinions vary, with some acknowledging its long-standing presence and others expressing concern for adverse outcomes. In preparation for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, political parties are seeking to establish connections with marginalized communities, resulting in increased demands for a caste census.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has provoked the present debate by conducting a caste census. He released the results on October 2 and has projected himself as the champion of marginalized communities. The census report may lead to political demands for removing the 50% reservation ceiling imposed by the Supreme Court. At its recent Mumbai meeting, the newly formed Opposition coalition INDIA also requested a caste census. Maharashtra, Odisha, and Jharkhand have agreed to conduct a caste census, while Bengal has not decided yet. Madhya Pradesh Congress has also promised.

The topic of caste census sparks varied opinions. It encompasses aspects such as its impact on elections and communities. It still needs to be completed, given the need for more reliable data since 1931. Some argue favouring a caste census, but it's akin to trying to wink in the dark. Before 1931, the Decennial Census included data on Caste. However, 1941 was skipped due to World War 2. From 1951 to 2011, all of India's independent censuses contained information on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but not on other castes. India saw a census conducted for administrative and demographic purposes without collecting data on Caste during the British Colonial period. After independence, the Nehru government did not favour a caste census. The successive Congress governments opposed a caste census for decades. During the Janata



Government, the Mandal Commission was established in 1979.

After a decade, Janata Dal Prime Minister VP Singh implemented a 27% reservation for O.B.C.s in government jobs, based on the Mandal Commission report. The 2001 Census considered adding Caste as a category, but practical issues and concerns prevented it from being implemented. However, in 2010, the Manmohan Singh government conducted a survey based on economic factors. The 2021 census has been postponed due to the pandemic and has yet to be carried out. Today, there is a change in Congress's stand. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi used the phrase "Jitni Abadi, utna haq" to discuss issues related to Caste. In 2011, the SECC included information about Caste, but the main focus was living conditions and financial status.

The Modi government released the financial component of the SECC in 2015, but the census for the caste component was not included. Unfortunately, the 2021 decennial population census has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Defining Caste is a complex issue. A caste census is deemed discriminatory and opposed



INDIA SAW A CENSUS CONDUCTED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEMOGRAPHIC PURPOSES WITHOUT COLLECTING DATA ON CASTE DURING THE BRITISH COLONIAL PERIOD. AFTER INDEPENDENCE, THE NEHRU GOVERNMENT DID NOT FAVOUR A CASTE CENSUS

by those who seek equal rights and opportunities for all. The BJP has so far not taken an official stand on the caste census, a demand first raised by regional parties like the RJD and the JD (U) and then supported by most other opposition parties. The Party is among those who believe that conducting a caste census could hinder the creation of a more united society due to political and logistical challenges.

Historically, the Constituent Assembly met between December 1946 and November 1949 to draft a constitution for India's independence. Stalwarts like Dr BR Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sardar Patel were important figures who led discussions on topics like government structure, citizens' rights, and fundamental principles. Their contributions were crucial in shaping the new republic's Constitution. Affirmative action is allowed by the Constitution to address past social injustices. However, there may not have been enough discussion about collecting specific data, such as conducting a caste census. There are valid arguments both for and against carrying out a caste census. Ultimately, the decision to conduct a census largely depends on political factors, public sentiment,

and the ruling Party's priorities. The government's actions can also be influenced by the public's demands and level of awareness.

As of now, we need a more favourable environment to acknowledge the importance of the caste census. BJP leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi and Lohia, have recognised that caste discrimination weakens society. The BJP hesitates to back a caste census, though they hold a majority in the Lok Sabha. But caste-based parties advocate for it, creating a dilemma for the BJP to appease them and their supporters. Some Political parties have gained influence by addressing caste issues. Specific communities seek recognition as Other Backward Classes. Congress, DMK, and JD(U) support a caste census, which Bihar has already conducted. Other states may run one as well. The situation's success depends on Modi's political determination. To avoid repeating VP Singh's mistakes, Modi must build a consensus and explain the effects beforehand. Due to limited time, the BJP might need to take a delicate approach to address the issues.

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BANK RETIREES' PENSION

Sir—Recently, thousands of bank retirees held a massive protest rally in Freedom Park, Bengaluru, demanding pension updation. They were all between the ages of 65 and 80. Despite their age-related health issues, they braved the hot sun to draw the attention of the concerned authorities, such as the Department of Finance in New Delhi and the Indian Bank Association in Mumbai, to their long-pending demand. Women bank retirees also participated in significant numbers in the protest rally, which was replicated in almost all state capitals.

After decades of prolonged struggle and hard bargaining, bank employees were granted pension facilities in 1993-94. The salary and some service conditions of bank employees are determined through bipartite settlements between the unions and the Indian Bank Association, commonly known as IBA. Initially, these settlements occurred every three years, then every four years, and now every five years. However, the required five-year revision often gets delayed by several years. Alongside salary revisions, pension updates are also necessary. Unfortunately, for bank retirees, pension updates have been neglected, resulting in a situation where a General Manager who retired in the nineties receives a lower pension than an attender retiring today. This raises the question: if the Reserve Bank of India and the NABARD Bank can update their pensions, why can't this be done in Public Sector Banks? The retirees argue that the Indian Banks Association, responsible for making these decisions, is avoiding the issue, citing a lack of contractual relationship with the retirees' association. They question why the IBA can make decisions regarding retirees' health insurance but not address pension updation issues?

Despite the Finance Ministry's advice in 2012 for banks to utilize the Banks Staff Welfare Fund to assist retirees in paying their health insurance premiums, the banks have not taken any steps in this regard, according to retirees. They have

### Promoting Sports from school level



India's remarkable achievement of winning 107 medals (28 gold, 38 silver, and 41 bronze) in the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, underscores the importance of introducing sports at the school level from a young age, with at least two daily classes. Reducing the syllabus, particularly for non-scientific subjects like languages and social studies, by 30 to 50% can make room for this initiative, potentially resulting in more international sports medals for India.

repeatedly expressed their problems to the IBA, the Ministry of Finance, Members of Parliament (MPs), Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs), Ministers, and even the Karnataka Governor. Three years ago, the Finance Minister advised the IBA to address the issue sympathetically, but nothing has been done so far.

Ramanand Sharma | Bengaluru

### ADDRESSING THE DRUG MENACE

Sir—The drug menace in our country has escalated to a national crisis. Due to the immense profits involved, it has found both legal and illegal protection, affecting not only the affluent and the rich but also the disadvantaged sections of society. Even Bollywood actors, who hold significant influence, have not been immune to this issue. Despite accusations of consuming banned drugs, many wealthy and famous individuals seem to operate without fearing the law, while our youth falls victim to addiction. It is the collective responsibility of society and the government to rescue our youth from the clutches of drug

abuse. We must take urgent steps to combat this menace.

N Mateeni | Mumbai

### INDIA SHINES IN THE ASIAN GAMES

Sir—Congratulations and a heartfelt salute to all the members of the Indian contingent who displayed extraordinary passion and dedication in achieving this golden success. While this is a spectacular achievement, we must acknowledge that we still have a long way to go to surpass countries like China, Japan, and South Korea. The government of India (SAI) deserve recognition for creating a conducive sports environment in the past decade. We must now prepare for the Paris Olympics, viewing the Asian Games as essential preparation. It's essential to prioritize sports like cricket, squash, and kabaddi to continue our medal-winning streak.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

# Studies on mental health are inadequate

## The process of scholarly studies on mental health needs to be balanced, ambitious and mindful

The spine-chilling dialogue "Yeh suicide nahin murder hai sir" in a Bollywood movie is still fresh in our minds and getting renewed from time to time. The scene of the movie argues to combat mental health issues in the academic atmosphere. One of the ways to curb the menace of mental health issues is to foster robust academic research. Academic research promotes learning by highlighting the key issues of society. But unfortunately, this research is a shambles. However, the dearth of such research across the globe remains a stark reality. The apathy of academic probes toward the issue has not been duly addressed. The precarious condition of research continues unabated. Over the years, scholarly studies on mental health have been lacklustre. From several researchers' perspectives, the scholarly studies on mental health remain shoddy and slow-paced and have been grappling with certain issues. It is not confined to any country; rather such academic blight has contaminated the academic fraternity on a global



scale. The scientific probe or research process is plagued with shortcomings starting from literature review to publication. Literature review has its standing in the process of scholarly research. Mostly, studies have been conducted with a quantitative approach, and the robust qualitative approach to the topic is de-emphasised. The qualitative narratives on the topic are getting skewed and lopsided owing to excessive stress on quantitative research methodology. There is an inadequate approach while deliberating the topic in light of children, women and geographical locations of the subjects. Mental health issues in rural areas are not getting judicious space in research and publications. Focus on issues unique to those living and working in rural areas is abysmally missing. The dichotomy in terms of studies considering the mental issues of males and females

has been narrowly addressed, neglecting other sexual orientation groups. Domestic violence has been excessively placed in the domain of scholarly studies about mental health and wellness. Data collection through a qualitative approach remains a herculean task that needs to be suitably handled.

Research publication is an imperative part of academic research. The structures and processes of universities, research organisations and funding agencies tend to focus on disciplinary expertise and publication outputs, driven by the quest for research excellence. This arrangement has arguably been very efficacious, with an increasing number of scientific publications. However, there has been a growing disparity between the global south and the rest of the world when addressing mental issues. Developing countries do not have adequate publication scopes compared to developed countries. Many interdisciplinary journals in developing countries are not paying minimum heed to the issues of mental health. There is a time scarcity of

reviewers. Again, potential reviewers are not available in the domain.

Factors like a dearth of skilled research supervisors in a particular area remain a stumbling block in the process of academic research. Mental health research has been underfunded when compared to the global burden of suffering, and little has changed despite words from various funding organizations. Mental health research funding is too little. Sometimes it is not logical and too much of the meagre investment is on basic research. The WHO's clarion call "Make mental health & well-being for all a global priority" for the current year in celebrating World Mental Health Day is well-deserving. Prioritising mental health will be more pragmatic if research and practice go hand in hand, and a holistic approach to mental well-being can be maintained.

(Biswal is an Associate Professor of Journalism and Behura is an Assistant Professor, Gender Studies. Both work at Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar; views are personal)



SAYANTANI BEHURA



SANTOSH K BISWAL



## FIRST COLUMN

### ONLY WE CAN REFORM OUR SOCIETY

Yoga is the only solution that can eradicate man's mental pollution



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ

The ongoing communal or religious disharmony in various parts of the world reminds us that there has been a vast discrepancy between what religions have preached and what most of their followers have practised. Going by the frequent confrontations happening between two west asian countries as well as unresolved conflicts between two eastern European countries brings one to the conclusion that religious preachers and believers have done more harm to the cause of religion than its opponents. Blind faith, meaningless and tiresome rituals, needless physical austerities, dryness and dogmatism, and unbridgeable gulf between religious preachers on such vital topics as the true identity of God, their rigidity of views, narrowness of outlook and intolerance are some factors that are responsible for repulsion in the minds of the people towards Religion, as a result of which it has become uninspiring. Though there is no dearth of temples, mosques, synagogues, vihars and churches in the East as well as in the West, the number of persons-devotees, visiting these places, has considerably dwindled, which clearly shows that religion has quickly been losing its appeal. Most religious preachers do not have any reliable experience about God, nor is there any unanimity among them even on fundamental subjects such as soul. They can neither explain religious truths logically nor inspire others from their practical example. All this has naturally led people to distance themselves from religion. This, however, does not mean that religion has lost its utility or is unnecessary. If religion loses its influence on the minds of scientists, politicians and men in general as it has been losing, the world will soon face an unprecedented catastrophe. It was not so long back when Swami Vivekananda reflected on the necessity of the concept of universal religion for society.



He realized the nature of man, according to which mankind in the whole world has been trying to look beyond in the quest for his ultimate destiny or search for God. Therefore, the whole of the world community today expects a religion, that is acceptable to all, is universal in its scope and teachings and works as a unifying force. The need of the hour is to thus have a religion of spiritual love and brotherhood that can inspire men, women and children to build up a new world of total peace, amity and spirit of brotherhood. Looking at various problems that are faced by our society daily, it can be easily said that spirituality can easily tackle those with ease. For example, problems like over-population, eve-teasing, criminal assault and adultery, are due to inflamed sex-lust. Economic exploitation, bribery, adulteration, etc. are due to man's greed. All wars and acts of violence are due to anger. Many countries are backwards in the comity of nations because of sloth or laziness. All these basic evils are recognised by religion and it gives ways to eradicate these if man cares. It has been found and thoroughly researched that easy Yoga is the only solution that can eradicate man's mental pollution and if man does not take to ways of spiritual wisdom, purity and Yoga even at this critical phase of the world, natural processes will set at work to wipe off these dominating evils and corrupt society built up on false values with its strong hand of nuclear weapons and grave elemental fury. Now it's up to us what way we want to go!

*(The writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist, views are personal)*

# Loneliness: A prelude to mental sickness



HARISH BARTH WAL

Man is solitary by nature, yet, staying too lonely can lead to a plethora of mental health problems with serious consequences



Man is born alone, with a distinct mind and a distinct body. He has a unique mental frame and bio-chemical composition like none else has. The innate individuality of each person is attested by the impressions of his fingers and eyeballs that do not match with that of any other among eight billion people on earth. That shows that nature has carved out a distinct role for each of us that can be served by using the enormous in-built capacities. Further, the human brain remains the most elusive and intriguing part of the body to the medical scientist because his approach to understanding it is based on empirical, evidenced-based premises. The brain is the seat of thought, which is not only non-material but has ethereal linkages. Kahlil Gibran refers to thought as 'a bird of space' that cannot have free play in the cage of formatted mundane settings. This is in line with the Indic belief that man is essentially a tiny divine unit that eventually merges with 'Parmatma', the Creator. Mankind's landmark achievements and innovations owe to the solitary efforts of individuals with gravitas, and not the mobs of mediocre calibre. It is because one cannot contribute one's best in the multi-responsibility situation. Yet, the trailblazers, also made of flesh & blood, do not marginalise the multitudes, who need to be kept in a positive frame. It is now fashionable to appreciate the collective efforts of many. "None of us is as good as all of us" proclaimed Raymond Kroc, who through his solitary vision catapulted a fast-food outlet to the mammoth, worldwide food chain of McDonald's fame we witness today.



LONELINESS HAS ALREADY BEEN LINKED TO HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, DEPRESSION, HEART DISEASE, AND STROKE, AND IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN SMOKING 5 CIGARETTES A DAY

*(The writer is a senior journalist and has worked in several publications; views expressed are personal)*

Of the two persons from a similar background, health status, economic condition, family responsibility, etc. one is found to be perennially stressed, grumbling, and dissatisfied with the status quo, while the other is generally cheerful, carefree, and flamboyant. Staying carefree is partly instinctive, but the hard truth is, that such a mindset can be acquired by a clear understanding of purpose and training the mind. The same action can have opposite reactions on the two because it is a perception that matters. Men can die of mere imagination. It is our response to a situation that causes suffering and not the situation per se. Not clearing civil services exams, inability to seek admission in desired college or stream after plus two, break in affairs, etc. have led many to become isolated, depressive, and even attempting or committing suicide. At the same time, there have been others who knew that odds are pathways to beautiful destinations, and turned out to become assets to their family and society. Unfortunately, the thought system most of us have espoused is a corollary of distorted aspirations, convictions, and beliefs. The guiding principle seems to be the hefty bucks one makes in the shortest time, the position & possessions one acquires and the Kudos elicited. In a recent post on Facebook, a friend depicts his son landing in

a foreign university; this was followed by about a hundred Wows, Smiles, emojis, comments and thrice that 'Likes.' None queried about the course being joined, whether admission was through competition, or own funding, what about his marriage – he has already turned 40, etc. A great task was declared to have been achieved! In yet another message in a WhatsApp group, a lady routinely greets her husband. These very issues are the ones keeping us mostly engaged. Ignoring about the best age for going the family way, newly-weds not opting for issues till the next two career promotions are attained, which may take several years, is also trending. Certain employers, in their interest, provide incentives for not having issues. Mark that loneliness, depression, or suicidal thinking has nothing to do with one's social position, material prosperity or popularity. Sometimes being surrounded by everyone is the loneliest. It is the habit of sharing one's real concerns, manifested in intimate relationships that keeps one mentally and emotionally healthy. Vested interests and apathy towards others are sickening our social fabric. Underscoring that nobody should be denied access to mental health care, the 2023 theme of World Mental Health Day is that mental Health is a Universal Human Right. Loneliness has already been linked to high blood pressure, depression,

heart disease, stroke, and many more. Lack of social connection is stated to be more dangerous than smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and deadlier than obesity. Terming 'loneliness' as an epidemic as challenging as hypertension or diabetes mellitus, Dr Vivek Murthy, Surgeon-General USA suggests a three-pronged strategy to combat social isolation: strengthening social infrastructure, controlled use of technology, and re-establishing personal connections. "Our need for human connection is like our need for food and water: essential for our survival," he concludes in his 85-page report. The habits & practices uplifting our inner self are the ones – and not the career or material accumulation – that morally and spiritually strengthen us and disable us from being rendered lonely. Developing feelings of gratitude, and regular practice of Yoga and meditation help keep negative thoughts at bay. Joining a club or hobby, volunteering for a cause, dropping unrealistic goals, adopting a pet, gardening, regular rapport with friends, talking to strangers, recognising that things go wrong, treating oneself with respect and helping others in need, can obviate feelings of loneliness. Mind that only a mentally healthy person is enabled to lead a satisfying, meaningful and productive life. Start today, so the television or social media does not become your sole companion.

# Natural disasters occur due to our apathy towards environment

We need to enhance our responsibility and responsiveness towards climate cure and healing; we must investment in climate-pro solutions

The climate situation in the 21st century is turning more fragile than ever before. Coined in the 1970s, the term Adam Tooze, today proved every meaning of itself. The root cause of the Polycrisis is the anthropogenic reasons in the greater proportion; with some natural causes, which no one of us could ever deny. Unfortunately, man has increased his greed to such a level beyond that, today multiple crises have been created altogether due to the changing climatic conditions. The most recent Glacier Lake outburst flood tragedy and outflow of South Lhonak Lake water towards Teesta Bank had created flood havoc for vast areas of Sikkim, is an alarm for the whole of



KIRTI WADHWAN

*(The writer is assistant professor, Management Department, Dr VSICS, Kanpur; view are personal)*

mankind that we are crossing our limits of exploitation. Today river based flooding is becoming very common in three major Indian states such as Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and now Sikkim. So many people are missing there, tourists got stuck due to an unprecedented avalanche, and flood water took away the entire Chungthang Dam with it. After the Tapovan Hydel Power Project of Uttarakhand, this will be another big dam from the Himalayan region to be affected. Repeated incidences of Cloud bursting, Land subsidence and sinking, cracks development and landslides have been reported. This would be the recent proportion of the entire Polycrisis story.



Let's focus on the other perspective too, most of us are living in a scenario of poor air quality. The quality of the air we breathe sometimes switches to a very poor or severe category depending upon the extent of air pollution in our

surrounding areas. Developed and developing countries are rushing towards making deadlines to accomplish Net Zero. Regrettably, we are only extending the deadlines on paper, and no real improvement is made from a larger

perspective. Net zero emission, carbon neutrality, Carbon accounting, and carbon sink creation are only the tall talk by leaders today for meeting their climate change-related obligations. But the point of consideration is that we are not taking any concrete action for a larger cause. Look at the condition of South America's largest Freshwater Lake Titicaca, it is dying up today. The indigenous communities living alongside are facing extreme drought conditions there, which is making their survival difficult. Coming back to the Asian continent once again, the shrinking Aral Sea also presents a concerning story for all of us. Disappearing and shrinking water bodies and lakes are a common story for

most countries across the whole world. Just a few days back, Nepal faced earthquake shocks and tremors. Which creates tremors in areas of UP as well. The vicious cycle of Polycrisis which is creating simultaneous and overlapping crises is creating troubles on a larger scale. The climate is changing very rapidly, glaciers are melting which is increasing water levels and water is causing floods and then loss of life & property and infrastructure. The cycle of crisis keeps on rotating in one or another face. But we can't keep rushing to manage all the crises constantly coming to us in one way or the other. Yes, all these disasters are created by us and now it's the responsibility of we the humans to put

an effort to come out of this menace of polycrisis. We need to be pro-environmental and have to study the cause of this very problem. If the very beginning point of the crisis is fixed, many of our troubles will be cured automatically. We need to enhance our responsibility and responsiveness towards climate cure and healing. We all need to enhance our investment in making climate-pro solutions. Enhance cooperation for mitigation efforts, and develop sustainable and viable ecosystems for a crisis-free society. Let's help nature to go back to its original status of peace and natural flow. Let's adhere to the eco behaviour in us, and pledge to never harm the climate for our mean cause.

# Israeli survivors recount terror at music festival

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The night was a getaway. Thousands of young men and women gathered at a vast field in southern Israel near the Gaza border to dance without a care. Old and new friends jumped up and down, reveling in the swirl of the bass-heavy beats.

Maya Alper was standing toward the back of the bar with teams of environmentally conscious volunteers, picking up trash and passing out free vodka shots to party-goers who reused their cups.

Just after 6 am, as a light-blue dawn broke and the headliner DJ took the stage, air raid sirens cut through the ethereal trap music. Rockets streaked overhead.

Alper, 25, jumped into her car and raced to the main road. But at the intersection she encountered crowds of stricken festival attendees, shouting at drivers to turn around. Then, a noise. Firecrackers?

Panicked men and women staggering down the road just in front of her fell to the ground in

pools of blood. Gunshots.

The open-air Tribe of Nova music festival will go down in Israeli history as the country's worst civilian massacre.

Dozens of Hamas militants who had blown through Israel's heavily fortified separation fence and crossed into the country from Gaza opened fire on young Israelis who had come together for a joyous night of electronic music.

Some attendees were drunk or high on drugs, magnifying their confusion and terror. "We were hiding and running, hiding and running, in an open field, the worst place you could possibly be in that situation," said Arik Nani from Tel Aviv, who had gone to the party to celebrate his 26th birthday.

"For a country where everyone in these circles knows everyone, this is a trauma like I could never imagine."

While rockets rained down, revellers said militants converged on the open field while others waited near bomb shelters, gunning down people who were seeking refuge.

Israeli communities on either side of the festival grounds also came under attack, with Hamas gunmen abducting dozens of men, women and children — including elderly and disabled people — and killing scores of others in Saturday's unprecedented surprise attack. The staggering toll of the festival was becoming clear early Monday, as Israel's rescue service Zaka said paramedics had recovered at least 260 bodies.

Festival organisers said they were helping Israeli security forces locate attendees who were still missing.

The death toll could rise as teams continue to clear the area. As the carnage unfolded before her, Alper pulled a few disoriented-looking revelers into her car from the street and accelerated in the opposite direction.

One of them said he had lost his wife in the chaos and Alper had to stop him from breaking out of the car to find her. Another said she had just seen Hamas gunmen shoot and kill her best friend.

Another rocked in his seat,



A relative of an Israeli missing since a surprise attack by Hamas militants near the Gaza border, is overcome by emotion during a press conference in Ramat Gan, Israel, Sunday. AP/PTI

murmuring over and over, "We are going to die." In the review mirror, Alper watched the dance floor where she had spent the past ecstatic hours transform into a giant cloud of black smoke.

Nowhere was safe, she said. The roar of explosions, hyster-

ical screams and automatic gunfire felt closer the further she drove.

When a man just metres away shouted "God is great!", Alper and her new companions sprung out of the car and sprinted through open fields toward a mass of bushes.

Alper felt a bullet whiz past her left ear. Aware the gunmen would outrun her, she plunged into a tangle of shrubs.

Peering through thorns, she said she saw one of her passengers, the girl who had lost her friend, shriek and collapse as a gunman stood over her limp

body, grinning. "I can't even explain the energy they (the militants) had, it was so clear they didn't see us as human beings," she said. "They looked at us with pure, pure hate."

For over six hours, Alper — and thousands of other concert attendees — hid without help from the Israeli army as Hamas militants sprayed automatic gunfire and threw grenades.

Her limbs were so contorted into a tangled mess in the bush that she couldn't wiggle her toes. At different points, she heard militants speak in Arabic just beside her.

A yoga devotee who practices meditation, Alper said she focused on her breath — "breathing and praying in every way I knew possible."

"Every time I thought of anger, or fear or revenge, I breathed it out," she said. "I tried to think of what I was grateful for — the bush that hid me so well that even birds landed on it, the birds that were still singing, the sky that was so blue."

A tank instructor in the Israeli army, Alper knew she was

safe when she heard a different kind of explosion — the sound of an Israeli army tank round.

She shouted for help and soon soldiers were lifting her out of the bush. Around her lay the lifeless body of one of her friends. The girl from her car she had seen collapse was nowhere to be found — she believes that Hamas militants took her into Gaza.

Alper said the Israeli army, on its way to fight Hamas militants in the hard-hit kibbutz of Beeri near the Gaza border, was at a loss as to know what to do with her.

At that moment, a pick-up truck full of Palestinian citizens of Israel pulled up. The men from the Bedouin city of Rahat were scouring the area to help rescue Israeli survivors.

Helping Alper into their car, they drove her to the police station, where she collapsed, crying, into her father's arms.

"This is not just war. This is hell," Alper said. "But in that hell I still feel that somehow, we can choose to act out of love, and not just fear."

## 10 Nepali students killed in Hamas attack in Israel

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Ten Nepali students have been killed and four others injured in Israel after the Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a wave of rocket attacks in the country's southern region, Nepal's foreign ministry said on Monday.

Hamas carried out a barrage of air strikes in Southern Israel on Saturday, killing over 700 people, including soldiers, and wounding more than 1,900. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in response launched multiple attacks targeting Hamas' key infrastructure. More than 500 people have been killed in Gaza in the biggest escalation in decades between the two sides.

In a press statement, the foreign ministry here said 10 Nepali nationals lost their lives in the recent attack by Hamas in Israel. Out of the 17 Nepali nationals working on a farm at Kibbutz Alumim, an area near the Gaza Strip, two safely escaped, four

were injured and one is still missing, it said. "We have received the information of the sad demise of ten Nepali nationals from the site, where the Hamas had launched an attack," Nepal's embassy in Jerusalem said in a statement. All 10 people killed in the Hamas attack were students of agriculture from Sudur Paschim University in Western Nepal, according to ministry sources. There are currently 4,500 Nepali nationals working as caregivers in Israel. A total of 265 Nepali students are studying in Israel under the 'Learn and Earn' programme of the Israeli government. Of them, 119 are from Agriculture and Forestry University, 97 from Tribhuvan University and 49 from Sudur Paschim University. All of them are bachelor-level students of agriculture.

"We are trying to identify those killed in the incident. Efforts are being made to search for one missing student. The bodies will be brought back to

Nepal soon after the identification is completed," the embassy said. The Nepal government has also requested the Israeli government that necessary arrangements be provided to the injured people, who are undergoing treatment.

The ministry said it was collaborating with the Israeli government and the embassy in Tel Aviv to bring back those nationals who want to return home. "Nepal government is committed to evacuate its nationals from the war-torn region at the earliest," said the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "A meeting of the coordination mechanism formed under the leadership of Foreign Minister N P Saud is underway at the ministry to take stock of the situation in Israel, to identify Nepalese nationals and to make efforts for rescue Nepalese nationals if necessary," read the statement issued by secretary of Foreign Minister Saud.

## Questions emerge over Israel's intel prowess

AP ■ TEL AVIV

For Palestinians in Gaza, Israel's eyes are never very far away. Surveillance drones buzz constantly from the skies. The highly-secured border is awash with security cameras and soldiers on guard. Intelligence agencies work sources and cyber capabilities to draw out a bevy of information. But Israel's eyes appeared to have been closed in the lead-up to an unprecedented onslaught by the militant Hamas group, which broke down Israeli border barriers and sent hundreds of militants into Israel to carry out a brazen attack that has killed hundreds and pushed the region toward conflict.

Israel's intelligence agencies have gained an aura of invincibility over the decades because of a string of achievements. Israel has foiled plots seeded in the West Bank, allegedly hunted down Hamas operatives in Dubai and has been accused of killing Iranian nuclear scientists in the heart of Iran. Even when their efforts

have stumbled, agencies like the Mossad, Shin Bet and military intelligence have maintained their mystique.

But the weekend's assault, which caught Israel off guard on a major Jewish holiday, plunges that reputation into doubt and raises questions about the country's readiness in the face of a weaker but determined foe. Over 24 hours later, Hamas militants continued to battle Israeli forces inside Israeli territory, and dozens of Israelis were in Hamas captivity in Gaza. "This is a major failure," said Yaakov Amidror, a former national security adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "This operation actually proves that the (intelligence) abilities in Gaza were no good."

Amidror declined to offer an explanation for the failure, saying lessons must be learned when the dust settles.

Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, the chief military spokesman, acknowledged the army owes the public an explanation. But he said now is not the time. "First, we fight, then we invest-

igate," he said. Some say it is too early to pin the blame solely on an intelligence fault. They point to a wave of low-level violence in the West Bank that shifted some military resources there and the political chaos roiling Israel over steps by Netanyahu's far-right government to overhaul the judiciary. The controversial plan has threatened the cohesion of the country's powerful military.

But the apparent lack of prior knowledge of Hamas' plot will likely be seen as a prime culprit in the chain of events that led to the deadliest attack against Israelis in decades. Israel withdrew troops and settlers from the Gaza Strip in 2005, stripping it of a close handle on the happenings in the territory. But even after Hamas overran Gaza in 2007, Israel appeared to maintain its edge, using technological and human intelligence.

It claimed to know the precise locations of Hamas leadership and appeared to prove it through the assassinations of militant leaders in

surgical strikes, sometimes while they slept in their bedrooms. Israel has known where to strike underground tunnels used by Hamas to ferry around fighters and arms, destroying miles (kilometers) of the concealed passageways.

Despite those abilities, Hamas was able to keep its plan under wraps. The ferocious attack, which likely took months of planning and meticulous training and involved coordination among multiple militant groups, appeared to have gone under Israel's intelligence radar. Amir Avivi, a retired Israeli general, said that without a foothold inside Gaza, Israel's security services have come to rely increasingly on technological means to gain intelligence. He said militants in Gaza have found ways to evade that technological intelligence gathering, giving Israel an incomplete picture of their intentions. "The other side learned to deal with our technological dominance and they stopped using technology that could expose it," said Avivi, who served as a conduit for

intelligence materials under a former military chief of staff. Avivi is president and founder of Israel Defense and Security Forum, a hawkish group of former military commanders.

"They've gone back to the Stone Age," he said, explaining that militants weren't using phones or computers and were conducting their sensitive business in rooms specially guarded from technological espionage or going underground.

But Avivi said the failure extends beyond just intelligence gathering and Israel's security services failed to put together an accurate picture from the intelligence they were receiving, based on what he said was a misconception surrounding Hamas' intentions.

Israel's security establishment has in recent years increasingly seen Hamas as an actor interested in governing, seeking to develop Gaza's economy and improving the standard of living of Gaza's 2.3 million people. Avivi and others say the truth is that Hamas, which calls for Israel's destruction, still sees that aim as its priority.

## Major airlines suspend flights to Israel

New York (AP): Major airlines have suspended flights to Israel after the nation declared war following a massive attack by Hamas. American Airlines, United Airlines and Delta Air Lines suspended service as the US State Department issued travel advisories for the region citing potential for terrorism and civil unrest.

American suspended service to Tel Aviv through Friday. The airline said that it has issued a travel alert providing additional flexibility for customers whose travel plans are impacted. "We continue to monitor the situation with safety and security top of mind and will adjust our operation as needed," American said. United said it allowed two scheduled flights out of Tel Aviv late Saturday and early Sunday and accommodated its customers, crews and employee travelers who were at the airport.

## Schumer says grateful for stronger China statement on Hamas attack

AP ■ BEIJING

US Senate Majority Leader Schumer said Monday he was grateful for a strengthened statement from China condemning the killing and kidnapping of Israeli and foreign civilians by Hamas, issued during a bipartisan Congressional visit to Beijing that included a lengthy meeting with President Xi Jinping.

Schumer had said earlier in the day that he was very disappointed by China's failure to strongly condemn the attack on Israel and show sympathy for the country and its people.

Schumer led a delegation of six senators to China for talks aimed at stabilising ties following a sharp deterioration in recent years over trade, US support for self-governing Taiwan, human rights and other issues.

The delegation, which

included three Democrats and three Republicans, was the first visit by US lawmakers since 2019 and came at a time of growing attacks on China in Congress as America contends with Beijing's rise as a global power.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Monday that China is "deeply saddened by the civilian casualties caused by the conflict between Palestine and Israel".

"China opposes and condemns acts that harm civilians," along with actions that "expand conflict and undermine regional stability," Mao said at a daily afternoon press briefing.

China hopes for a resumption of peace talks, implementation of a two-state solution, and a "comprehensive and proper settlement of the Palestinian issue, which guarantees the legitimate concerns of all parties, through

political means, as early as possible," Mao said.

Meanwhile, China's embassy in Israel said a young woman of mixed Israeli-Chinese heritage was among the scores of hostages seized by Hamas fighters who killed at least 800 in Israel.

"Noa was kidnapped by Hamas terrorists when attending a peace music festival in southern Israel. She was dragged from Israel to Gaza," the embassy's statement said. "She is a daughter, a sister and a friend."

Schumer's delegation also met with the head of China's rubber-stamp parliament and the country's highest-ranking diplomat, Wang Yi, to whom he delivered the same statement about the recent violence. Xi's comments were not immediately reported, and Wang did not respond before journalists were escorted out of the room.

## Terrorism will not prevail: UK PM

PTI ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has extended the UK's steadfast support to Israel in the face of a terrorist attack from Hamas and reassured his Israeli counterpart of the safety of the Jewish community in the UK, as the police in London recorded some offences as a fallout of the conflict in the Middle East.

During a call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday, Downing Street said Sunak reaffirmed that the UK stands with Israel "unequivocally" against the "deadly acts of terror".

Sunak later tweeted an update of his call with Netanyahu to declare that "terrorism will not prevail". "The Prime Minister [Sunak] offered Prime Minister Netanyahu any support Israel needs," Downing Street said in a readout of the call. "The Prime Minister outlined the diplomatic work the UK is doing to ensure the world speaks with one voice in opposition to these appalling

attacks...The Prime Minister also stressed his commitment to ensuring the Jewish community in the UK feels safe and secure at this time. The leaders agreed to stay in close contact as the situation develops," it said.

In a video message on X, formerly Twitter, Sunak added: "The scenes we have seen in Israel over the last 36 hours are truly horrifying. I spoke to Prime Minister Netanyahu earlier today to assure him of the UK's steadfast support as Israel defends itself against these attacks. Terrorism will not prevail." It came as Scotland Yard warned that it will be adopting a zero tolerance approach towards any reports of criminality on the streets of London as a fallout of the conflict.

"We are aware that a number of demonstrations and protests are planned. We have spoken to the organisers and we expect these will pass off peacefully. However, we will take a zero tolerance approach to any activity which crosses the lines



into criminality," said Deputy Assistant Commissioner Andy Valentine, the Met Police officer in charge of policing London this week.

"We are aware that this conflict has a far reaching impact on communities around the world, and we extend our full support to those affected in London. We are listening and working with communities and partners to ensure people feel safe and protected. We ask that members of the public report anything concerning, such as threatening behaviour," he said.

The Met Police said a small number of "low level public order incidents" in different parts of London have been reported and highlighted on social media, and that its officers had attended all of the incidents and were able to resolve them without arrests being made. Meanwhile, the Opposition Labour Party also reiterated its condemnation of the terrorist attacks and said the party "stands with the people of Israel".

"Israel has a right to self-defence against terrorism," said David Lammy, Labour's shadow foreign secretary, at a fringe event for the party's ongoing annual conference in Liverpool.

Later, Labour leader Keir Starmer expressed solidarity with the family of British man Nathaniel Young, who was serving with the Israel Defence Force and was killed in the conflict in Israel, "and with all those whose families and communities have been touched by this terrible violence".

## Largest Hindu temple inaugurated in New Jersey

PTI ■ ROBBINSVILLE

BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham, the largest Hindu temple in the United States spread over 185 acres, has been inaugurated here, with devotees underscoring the temple's message of unity, peace and harmony for people living across America and the world. The grand dedication ceremony of Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey was conducted on Sunday in the presence of Mahant Swami Maharaj following a nine-day celebration that commenced on September 30.

Swami Maharaj performed the 'Pran Prathista' ceremony at the temple amid rituals and traditional ceremonies.

The construction of the temple, dedicated to Bhagwan Swaminarayan, started in 2011 and concluded this year. It was created by 12,500 volunteers from around the world. Among

the several key unique features of the temple is the largest elliptical dome ever constructed from stone.

Volunteer Lenin Joshi noted that Swaminarayan Akshardham presents India's heritage and culture to modern America. Created by volunteers around the world, this masterpiece stands as an enduring symbol of love while preserving traditions and spreading messages of peace, hope, and harmony across generations, he said. "We were waiting for this moment for the last several years," Joshi said, adding that the day has finally come when people from all around the country, irrespective of their faiths and religions, will be able to visit the temple and see the grand symbol of Indian Hindu tradition, peace, devotion and architectural marvel.

He said the temple has been built by nearly 12,500 volunteers - men, women and



children from all walks of life - who took a break from their jobs and studies and dedicated themselves for days and months to construct the temple. Highlighting some of the unique aspects of the temple, Joshi said 1.9 million cubic feet of stone was used in its construction.

He said the temple was designed to incorporate elements from ancient Indian art, architecture and culture, including 10,000 statues, carvings of ancient Indian musical instruments and dance forms as well as water from the holy rivers of India. Deputy Commissioner at the New York City Mayor's Office for International Affairs, Dilip Chauhan told PTI here that the inauguration and dedication of the Akshardham temple is a "dream come true" for devotees, volunteers and followers across the US.

He said the Akshardham in Robbinsville is a temple not just for any one community but "this cultural complex is going to bring all communities together" and will be a bridge between the local, state, and federal government and the faith-based community.

"We can see real diversity here," Chauhan said.

## UK's Labour Party to invest for growth

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Britain's main opposition Labour Party said on Monday that it will focus on economic growth rather than higher taxes to "rebuild" the country after more than a decade of Conservative rule.

Labour economy spokeswoman Rachel Reeves told delegates at the party's annual conference that "Labour will tax fairly and spend wisely".

"But I must tell you, you cannot tax and spend your way to economic growth," she said. "The lifeblood of a growing economy is business investment."

Reeves was making her pitch to British voters and businesses at the four-day conference in Liverpool, where Labour is trying to cement its front-runner status in opinion polls before an election due in 2024.

The party is running 15 or more points ahead of the gov-

erning Conservatives in multiple opinion polls, as Britain endures a sluggish economy and a cost-of-living crisis driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and economic disruption following the UK's exit from the European Union.

Labour is trying to show it can provide an alternative to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives, who have been in power since 2010. But the opposition party is wary of promising big public spending increases that would require tax hikes. The social democratic party also wants to convince corporate Britain that it is on the side of business.

For years, businesses have been wary of the party, which has its roots in the trade union movement, and tended to favour the Conservatives. But recent economic and political upheavals have made many think again.

Reeves said a Labour government would get the econo-

my growing faster to fund public services and boost investment through a new national wealth fund. She pledged to build 1.5 million homes to ease Britain's chronic housing crisis, reform an "antiquated" planning system Labour says is holding back infrastructure improvements, and repair the creaking, overburdened state-funded National Health Service.

Money for health and education will come from abolishing "non-domiciled" tax status, which allows some wealthy individuals to avoid paying UK tax, and ending private schools' tax-free status, she said.

Reeves said Labour also will strengthen workers' rights and abolish "zero hours" contracts that do not guarantee employees a minimum number of hours a week. The speech was broadly welcomed by both business and workers' groups — no mean feat.

# Xi Jinping: China challenging US superpower status is not inevitable

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday told a delegation of influential American senators that the "Thucydides Trap" is "not inevitable" as he played down the concerns in Washington that China is out to challenge the superpower status of the US.

Thucydides Trap is a term to describe an emerging power threatening to displace the existing great power.

"Competition and confrontation are not consistent with the trend of the times. Still less can it fix one's own problems and address the challenges facing the world," Xi told a US Senate delegation headed by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer during a meeting.

"China maintains that the common interests of the two countries far outweigh their differences, and the respective success of China and the US is an opportunity, rather than a challenge, to each other," Xi told the six-member delegation of top American legislators.

"The Thucydides Trap is not inevitable, and Planet Earth is vast enough to accommodate the respective development and common prosperity of China and the US," he said, referring to the widely-held view in the American establishment that, China is out to challenge the sole superpower status of the US.

The discussion in the meeting was, however, domi-



File photo of Xi Jinping with US President Joe Biden

nated by the escalating conflict in the Middle East after the brutal attack by Hamas militants on Israel on Saturday.

While Xi focussed his remarks on allaying the US' fears of China challenging its superpower status saying, "How China and the US get along will determine the future of humanity," Schumer told the Chinese leader that he was "very disappointed" that China has not condemned the Hamas militants attack on Israeli civilians.

"I urge you and the Chinese people to stand with the Israeli people and condemn these cowardly and vicious

attacks," Schumer said.

China on Sunday called Israel and Palestine to exercise restraint and immediately end the hostilities, without naming Hamas and the attack in which over 1,100 people were killed on both sides.

On Monday, Beijing said it is probing reports that one of its citizens attending a music party has been taken as hostage by the Hamas militants.

Meanwhile, reacting to Schumer's comments that China should condemn the attack by Hamas militants, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here that China

opposes violence against civilians.

"We are saddened by the civilian casualties caused by the conflict. We oppose and condemn violence and attacks against civilians. The priority now is to get fighting to stop and restore peace as soon as possible. We hope relevant parties in the international community will play an active role and work together to de-escalate the situation," she said on Monday.

Beijing, which backs the Palestinian state and also maintains close ties with Israel, is concerned that the new conflict will overshadow its successful diplomatic initiative of brokering a peace deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia in March this year.

The delegation of the US senators comprising three Democrats and as many Republicans is the first visit of American lawmakers since 2019.

The meeting comes amid US lawmakers asking China to iron out differences in trade and economic ties between the two world's largest economies and a likely meeting between Xi and US President Joe Biden next month during a regional summit in San Francisco in a bid to manage the increasingly fraught relationship. President Biden said Friday that he could potentially meet with Chinese President Xi on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco.

# Af quakes: People dig out dead, injured

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Men dug through rubble with their bare hands and shovels in western Afghanistan Sunday in desperate attempts to pull victims from the wreckage left by powerful earthquakes that killed at least 2,000 people. Entire villages were flattened, bodies were trapped under collapsed houses and locals waited for help without even shovels to dig people out.

Living and dead, victims were trapped under rubble, their faces grey with dust. A government spokesman said Sunday that hundreds were still trapped, more than 1,000 hurt and more than 1,300 homes destroyed.

"Most people were shocked ... some couldn't even talk. But there were others who couldn't stop crying and shouting," photographer Omid Haqqoo, who visited four villages Sunday, told The Associated Press by phone from Afghanistan's fourth largest city, Herat.

Saturday's magnitude 6.3 earthquake hit a densely populated area near Herat. It was followed by strong aftershocks. A Taliban government spokesman on Sunday provided the toll that, if confirmed, would make it one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike the country in two decades.

An earthquake that hit eastern Afghanistan in June 2022, striking a rugged, mountainous region, wiped out stone and mud-brick homes and killed at least 1,000 people.

People in Herat freed a baby girl from a collapsed building after she was buried



Afghan women mourn for relatives killed in an earthquake to a burial site after an earthquake in Zenda Jan district in Herat province, western of Afghanistan on Sunday.

up to her neck in debris. A hand cradled the baby's torso as rescuers eased the child out of the ground. Rescuers said it was the baby's mother. It was not clear if the mother survived. The video was shared online and verified by The Associated Press. The US Geological Survey said the quake's epicentre was about 40 kilometres (25 miles) northwest of Herat. It was followed by three very strong aftershocks, measuring magnitude 6.3, 5.9 and 5.5, as well as lesser shocks.

With much of the world wary of dealing directly with the Taliban government and focused on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, Afghanistan hasn't received an immediate global response. Almost 36 hours after the first earthquake hit Herat province,

there have been no planes of aid flying in, no specialists.

Aid agencies and non-governmental groups have appealed for the international community to come forward but only a handful of countries have publicly offered support, neighbouring China and Pakistan among them.

The International Rescue Committee warned that the lack of rescue equipment could push up the death toll in western Afghanistan because trapped survivors cannot be freed. "There's not much disaster management capacity and what there is can't cover people on the ground," said Salma Ben Aissa, the committee's country director for Afghanistan. "The numbers (of dead) are increasing hour by hour."

People injured in the quake on Saturday can't get the treatment they need because of poor medical infrastructure so they are losing their lives. A lack of food, shelter and clean water are increasing the health risks among communities.

Ben Aissa's colleague, Jawed Niamati, said Herat city is empty. People are sleeping in the open air, on roadsides and in parks, because they fear more quakes. Temperatures drop to 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) at night, he said. The world rushed in aid after an earthquake rocked Syria and Turkey this year, killing tens of thousands of people.

Abdul Wahid Rayan, a spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture, said Sunday that hundreds of civilians were buried under the debris in Herat, and he called for urgent help.

At least a dozen teams have been scrambled to help with rescue efforts, including from the military and non-profit organisations like the Red Crescent. The United Nations migration agency deployed four ambulances with doctors and psychosocial support counsellors to the regional hospital. At least three mobile health teams were on their way to the Zenda Jan district, which is one of the worst-hit areas. Doctors Without Borders set up five medical tents at Herat Regional Hospital to accommodate up to 80 patients. Authorities have treated more than 300 patients, according to the agency. UNICEF dispatched thousands of supplies, including winter clothes, blankets and tarpaulins as temperatures dropped.

# Nobel economics prize goes to Claudia Goldin

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

Claudia Goldin, a Harvard University professor, was awarded the Nobel economics prize on Monday for research that helps explain why women around the world are less likely than men to work and to earn less money when they do.

Fittingly, the announcement marked a small step toward closing a gender gap among Nobel laureates in economics: Out of 93 economics winners, Goldin is just the third woman to be awarded the prize and the first woman to be the sole winner in any year.

Her award follows Nobel honours this year in medicine, physics, chemistry, literature and peace that were announced last week. And it follows last year's three winners in economics: Former Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke, Douglas W Diamond and Philip Dybvig for their research into bank failures that helped shape America's aggressive response to the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

Only about half the world's women have paid jobs, in contrast to 80% of men. Economists regard the gap as a wasted opportunity: Jobs have



often failed to go to the most qualified people because women either weren't competing for work or weren't being properly considered.

In addition, a persistent pay gap — women in advanced economies earn, on average, about 13% less than men — discourages women from pursuing jobs or continuing their education to qualify for more advanced job opportunities.

Goldin, 77, explored the reasons behind such disparities. Often, she found, they resulted from decisions that women made about their prospects in the job market and about their families' personal circumstances. Some women underestimated their employment opportunities. Others felt over-

whelmed by responsibilities at home. "Women are now more educated than men," Goldin noted in an interview with The Associated Press. "They graduate from college at much higher rates than men. They do better in high school than men do. So why are there these differences?"

"And we realise that these differences, although some are found within the labour market, are really reflections of what happens within individuals' homes, and they're an interaction between what happens in the home and what happens in the labour market."

To understand what was happening, Goldin pored through 200 years of labour market data. The task required a labourious process of sleuthing: Women's jobs frequently didn't appear in historical records. Women who worked on farms alongside their husbands or who laboured at home in cottage industries such as weaving, for example, often went uncounted.

Goldin compiled new databases using such resources as industrial statistics and historical surveys on how people used their time.

# Imran, Qureshi to be indicted in cipher case on October 17

Islamabad/Lahore: Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi will be indicted in the cipher case on October 17, a special court here announced as hearing in the case officially began on Monday.

Special Court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain presided over the hearing at the high-security Adiala jail. Both Khan and Qureshi were present and they were provided with the copies of the charge sheet.

Prosecutor Zulfiqar Abbas Naqvi, Khan's counsel Salman Saifdar and Qureshi's daughter and son were also present at the hearing at Adiala jail in Rawalpindi.

Khan, 71, was arrested in August after a 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 in March last year.

During Monday's hearing, copies of the charge sheet were distributed among the lawyers of Khan and former foreign minister Qureshi.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. Jitendra Tiwari S/o Mahendra Tiwari and Vidya Tiwari W/o Sh. Jitendra Tiwari R/o H. No. 162, New Manglapuri, Mehrauli, South Delhi-110030, have severed all relations from their daughter Payal Tiwari alias Payal and disowned her from all their movable and immovable properties for their misconduct, disobedience behavior. My clients will not be responsible for her future act. The said Payal Tiwari shall not claim any right in the Court of law against my properties.

Sid, Akhlesh K. Singh (Advocate) Seat No.-2, Patiala House Court, New Delhi-110001.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the Public at large that Original Allotment Letter of Flat No 534, Sargodha Vihar, Plot No.13, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075 has been lost/misplaced by me i.e., Kailash Arora D/o Shri Shadil Bhatti and an NCR/FIR has been registered/lodged via Online Portal of Delhi Police vide LR No.828513/2023 dated 27/08/2023. The said flat is free from all encumbrances. Founder/claimant please inform in writing to the concern society within 15 days starting from the date of publication of this notice and thereafter the user/holder of lost/misplaced missing document/article shall be responsible for use of the same.

## LOST & FOUND

This Public at large is hereby notify that my client M/s Essess Edifices Pvt. Ltd. is the absolute and lawful owner of Apartment No. T-08-01-01 situated at The Common Wealth Games Village, Located off NH-24, Adjacent to Akshardham Temple at Noida Crossing, Delhi-110092. That the Original Builder Buyer's Agreement dated: 01/12/2009 along with Possession Letter, Allotment Letter, Transfer Letter and Payment Receipt has been all lost/misplaced by me and it is not traceable by my best efforts and for the same I have filed NCR vide L.R. No. 9570 19/2/2023, Dated: 01/ 10/2023 If anyone found or have any objection/Claim for any type such as any Loan, Mortgage, Surety, Security etc. Over the said property regarding the above said original documents, then contact to the undersigned within 15 days of this Notice. Thereafter no body have any right on the said property.

## SAHIL ARORA (Advocate)

Office No. 107, F/F, M.S Chambers, Anuna Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client namely Singh Rana having its address at S-222, School Block, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092 had entered into an AGREEMENT TO SELL the Properties with plots numbering C-4, C-5, and C-6 of 3000 sq. meters each, situated in Block-C, Hosiery Complex, Phase-II Extension, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, UP-201305 Dated, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022, by its owner P/PINDIA LIMITED represented by its directors Smt. Amila Singhvi and Shri. Rishabh Singhvi, situated at B-206, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi - 110020, vide written agreement. It is informed to the public at large that Smt. Amila Singhvi and Shri Rishabh Singhvi are trying to sell the above-mentioned property illegally in connivance with a few brokers/agents.

Advance money under the said agreements has already been paid to the owners by my client. The said agreements are valid, binding and subsisting. The owners are not coming forward to fulfill their part of the contract. General Public is hereby warned not to deal or transact in any manner whatsoever with the owners about the said properties, failing which the same shall not be binding upon my client and shall be subject to the prior rights of my client under the said agreement. My client is also in the process of filing criminal and civil actions against the said owners, as may be warranted under the Law. It is also cautioned that, "Any party who does any dealing with regards to the above said property shall also be prosecuted as per law."

Place: New Delhi Sd/-  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2023 Animesh Rastogi  
Advocate  
B-30, GF, SECTOR-6,  
NOIDA, UP- 201301  
Ph :- 9990898680  
animesh.legalcare@gmail.com

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that my clients Mr. Satish Anand S/o. Late Shri G.R. Anand and his wife Mrs. Poonam Anand, both R/o. Flat No.214, Pocket C-8, Sector-8, Rohini, Delhi-110085, have severed all their relations with their son Mr. Nimish Anand, their daughter-in-law Pooja Anand and their granddaughters Titiksha Anand & Janisha Anand due to their bad habits. Both of my above named clients hereby disown and debar their said son, their daughter-in-law and their granddaughters from all their movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with their son Mr. Nimish Anand, their daughter-in-law Pooja Anand and their granddaughters Titiksha Anand & Janisha Anand, will do so at his/her/their own risk and responsibilities and my clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by their son Mr. Nimish Anand, their daughter-in-law Pooja Anand and their granddaughters Titiksha Anand & Janisha Anand.

Karrik Srivastava (Advocate), Delhi High Court D-2802/2020

## Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar NOTICE

Applications forms for allotment of hostel Canteen for session 2023-24 upto 30-06-2024 of University Campus, Amritsar are invited till 16-10-2023. The details, terms & conditions and forms can be downloaded from the university website link- <https://online.gndu.ac.in/tenders-notice.aspx> Dean Student's Welfare

NA/12/19420/2023/28593  
Dated CHD :- 10/6/2023

## Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

Tender Notice Reference No. GNDU/PP/1/2023

The Department of G.N.D.U. Amritsar invites online bids for the following:

Sr. No.	Items for E-Tendering	Size	Qty
1.	Sunshine Super Printing Paper	23x36, 18.6kg, 70GSM	250 Reams
2.	Sunshine Super Printing Paper	17x27, 10.4kg, 70GSM	80 Reams
3.	Maplitho Paper Belt Graphic Paper	23x36, 21.3kg, 80GSM	80 Reams
4.	Ledger Paper Be It Graphic Paper	17x27, 14.1kg, 95GSM	80 Reams

Closing Date & Time: 30-10-2023  
For details log onto [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in)

Note: Any corrigendum (s) to the tender notice shall be published on the above website only.

Professor Incharge  
Publication Bureau,  
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar  
NA/12/19433/2023/28609 Dated CHD :- 10/9/2023

## Office of Project Manager, Temporary Construction Unit (HQ)

UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL SANSADHAN VIKAS EVAM NIRMAN NIGAM,  
Head Office: 11 - Mohini Road, Dehradun

Letter No. 234/Nivada/87 E-Tender Notice Dt. 09.10.2023

S.No.	Name of Scheme	Tentative Cost of Project	Completion Period
1	Construction Of 500 KI Rcc Over Head Tank Of 22M Staging, Rising Main Distribution System And Construction Of 01 No 300x200 MM Dia 100 MTR Deep Tubewell And Sitc Of Submersible Pumping Plant Thdc Rishikesh	Rs. 166.14 (Including G.S.T.)	08 Months
2	Name & Address of Officer Inviting the Bid:-	General Manager (Admin.) Head Office, Uttarakhand Peyalaj Nigam, Dehradun.	
3	Date and Time of Availability of bid documents in the portal:-	10-10-2023 - 11.00 Hrs.	
4	Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal:-	25-10-2023 - 14.00 Hrs.	

Details of subsequent addendum/corrigendum/cancellation etc. may be obtained from the website. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "https://uktenders.gov.in" General Manager (Admin.)

## ORISSA SPONGE IRON & STEEL LIMITED

(Formerly Orissa Sponge Iron Limited)  
(An ISO 9001 & 14001 Certified Company)  
CIN: L27102OR1979PLC000819

Regd. Office: OSIL House, Gangadhar Meher Marg, Kili, Bhubaneswar - 751024  
Corporate Office: A-201, First Floor, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi - 110 020  
Site: P.O. Palaspanga, Dist. Keonjhar - 758 031, Odisha

E-Mail: [corporate@orissaspange.com](mailto:corporate@orissaspange.com); Website: [www.orissaspange.com](http://www.orissaspange.com); Tel: +91 11-43742000

## NOTICE CONVENING 43<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, BOOK CLOSURE AND E-VOTING INFORMATION

Notice is hereby given that Forty-Third (43rd) Annual General Meeting ("AGM") of the members of Orissa Sponge Iron and Steel Limited (the "Company") will be held on Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at 03:00 P.M. through Video Conferencing/other audio visual means (VC/OAVM) only, in compliance with all the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 ("the Act") and the Rules made thereunder and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 read with applicable circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs ("MCA") and Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI"), to transact the business as set out in the Notice of the AGM. The registered office of the Company shall be the deemed venue of the Meeting. The Notice of the 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM along with the Annual Report 2022-23, through electronic mode has sent only to those Members whose e-mail addresses are registered with the Company or Registrar & Share Transfer Agent and Depositories. The requirement of sending physical copies of the Notice of the AGM has been dispensed with vide MCA Circulars and the SEBI Circular. However, in line with SEBI circular dated January 5, 2023, hard copy of AGM documents will be sent to those members who specifically request for the same. In respect of the receipt of hard copy of AGM documents, members are requested to drop an email to [Corporate@Orissaspange.com](mailto:Corporate@Orissaspange.com) duly quoting their folio No./Client ID. The Annual Report 2022-23 of the Company, inter-alia, contains the Notice of the 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM is available on the website of the Company at <https://orissaspange.com/docs/Notice%202023.pdf> and on the website of National Securities Depository Limited ("NSDL") at [www.evoting.nsdl.com](http://www.evoting.nsdl.com).

Remote E-Voting and joining AGM through VC/OAVM: In compliance with Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 ("the AGM") read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, as amended from time to time, the Secretarial Standard on General Meetings (SS-2) issued by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India and Regulation 44 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the Company is providing to its Members the facility of remote e-Voting before as well as during the AGM in respect of the business to be transacted at the AGM and for this purpose, the Company has appointed NSDL for facilitating voting through electronic means. The detailed instructions for remote e-Voting and joining AGM are given in the Notice of the AGM. Members are requested to note the following: a. The remote e-Voting will commence from 09:00 A.M. (IST) on Saturday, October 28, 2023 and ends at 05:00 P.M. (IST) on Monday, October 30, 2023. The remote e-Voting module shall be disabled thereafter by NSDL for voting. b. The voting rights of the Members shall be in proportion to their share of the paid-up capital of the Company as on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 ("Cut-off date"). c. The facility of remote e-Voting system shall also be made available during the AGM and the Members attending the Meeting, who have not already cast their vote by remote e-Voting shall be able to exercise their right during the Meeting. A person whose name is recorded in the Registrar of Members/Registrar of Beneficial Owners as on the Cut-off date shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-Voting before/during the AGM. d. Any person who acquires shares of the Company and becomes a Member of the Company after dispatch of the Notice and holds shares as on the Cut-off date, may obtain the login-id and password for remote e-Voting by sending a request at [evoting@nsdl.co.in](mailto:evoting@nsdl.co.in) or may contact on toll free number 022-48867000 and / or 022-24997000, as provided by NSDL. A person who is not a Member as on the Cut-off date should treat the Notice of the AGM for information purpose only. e. Members who have cast their vote by remote e-Voting prior to the meeting may also attend the meeting electronically, but shall not be entitled to vote again. f. The same login credentials for e-Voting, may also be used for attending the AGM through VC/OAVM. g. The Company has appointed Mr. Neeraj Jain, Practising Company Secretary (Membership No. FCS 9599, COP No. 26163), Proprietor of M/s. Neeraj Jain & Associates, Company Secretaries, to act as the Scrutinizer for conducting the e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner. The Scrutinizer will submit his report to the Chairman / or a person as may be authorized by the Chairman, within 48 hours of the conclusion of AGM. The voting results of the voting conducted for 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM along with scrutinizer's Report will be made available on the website of the Company at [www.orissaspange.com](http://www.orissaspange.com) and on the website of NSDL at [www.evoting.nsdl.com](http://www.evoting.nsdl.com).

REGISTRATION OF E-MAIL ADDRESS: Members who have not yet registered their e-mail addresses are requested to register their email address. Member holding shares in demat form are requested to update the same with their Depository Participant or to Skyline Financial Services Private Limited ("RTA") for information purpose only. In case of any queries, grievances connected with remote e-Voting, you may refer to the Frequently Asked Questions and e-Voting user manual for shareholders available at the "Downloads" section of [www.evoting.nsdl.com](http://www.evoting.nsdl.com) or call on toll free no. 022-48867000 and / or 022-24997000 or send a request to Ms. Pallavi Mhatre, Senior Manager at [evoting@nsdl.co.in](mailto:evoting@nsdl.co.in). Further, the shareholders may also write to Mr. Karik Khandelwal, Company Secretary at email ID [corporate@orissaspange.com](mailto:corporate@orissaspange.com). The members are requested to carefully read all the notes set out in the notice of 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM and in particular, instructions for joining AGM through VC/OAVM, manner of casting vote through remote e-Voting. BOOK CLOSURE: Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 91 of the Act and rules framed thereunder, the register of members and the Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2023 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of holding 43<sup>rd</sup> AGM.

For Orissa Sponge Iron and Steel Limited Sd/-  
Karrik Khandelwal  
Company Secretary and Compliance Officer

Place: New Delhi  
Date: October 09, 2023

# Top Pak court issues notice to ex-ISI head for distorting facts

Islamabad (PTI): A top Pakistani court on Monday issued notices to former army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and ex-ISI chief Lt Gen Faiz Hameed for violating the laws for retired servicemen by allegedly distorting facts during their media interviews.

The notices were issued after the Islamabad High Court (IHC) received a petition by a citizen seeking action against the two senior former army officers. IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq also issued notices to journalists Javed Chaudhary, and Shahid Maitla and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra), the media regulatory watchdog. Earlier this year, the former army chief reportedly discussed various matters including jailed former prime minister and Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) chief Imran Khan's ouster from power, civil-military ties and other issues in interviews with the two journalists, who wrote articles and talked to TV channels.

# Trump's winter home valuations at core of his fraud trial

AP ■ FORT LAUDERDALE

Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago worth is been a point of contention after a New York judge ruled that the former president exaggerated the Florida property's value when he said it's worth at least USD 420 million and perhaps USD 1.5 billion. Siding with New York's attorney general in a lawsuit accusing Trump of grossly overvaluing his assets, Judge Arthur Engoron found that Trump consistently exaggerated Mar-a-Lago's worth. He noted that one Trump estimate of the club's value was 2,300% times the Palm Beach County tax appraiser's valuations, which ranged from \$18 million to USD 37 million. But Palm Beach real estate agents who specialize in high-end properties scoffed at the idea that the estate could be worth that little, in the unlikely event Trump ever sold.

"Ludicrous," agent Liza Pulitzer said about the judge citing the county's tax appraisal as a benchmark. Homes a tenth the size of Mar-a-Lago on tiny inland lots sell for that in the Town of Palm Beach, a

wealthy island enclave. "The entire real estate community felt it was a joke when they saw that figure," said Pulitzer, who works for the firm Brown Harris Stevens.

"That thing would get snapped up for hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars," said Rob Thomson, owner of Waterfront Properties and a Mar-a-Lago member. "There is zero chance that it's going to sell for USD 40 million or USD 50 million."

In the ongoing trial over the lawsuit, though, what a private buyer might pay for a place like Mar-a-Lago isn't the only factor in determining whether Trump is liable for fraud.

Mar-a-lago is 126-room, 62,500-square-foot (5,810-square-meter) mansion is Trump's primary home. It is also a club, private beach resort, historical artifact and banquet hall with a ballroom that features gold leaf. It is where Trump stored government documents federal prosecutors say he took illegally after leaving office in 2021. While Trump has long admitted using "truthful hyperbole" in his business dealings, he is

not exaggerating when he calls Mar-a-Lago unique.

Built in 1927 by cereal heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post and her second husband, financier E.F. Hutton, she gave the property its name — Spanish for "sea-to-lake" — because its 17 acres (7 hectares) stretch from the Atlantic Ocean to the Intracoastal Waterway.

Post kept the mansion after the couple's divorce, using it to host opulent galas. In 1969, Mar-a-Lago was designated a National Historic Landmark.

Post, who died in 1973, bequeathed the property to the US government as a winter get-away for presidents, but Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter never used it. The government, citing the high upkeep costs, returned it to Post's foundation in 1981.

The property fell into disrepair. Trump bought it in 1985 for about USD 10 million, the equivalent of USD 30 million today. He invested heavily in its refurbishment.

By the early 1990s, however, Trump was in financial distress after several of his businesses flopped.

# Indian oil firms targeting net zero ahead of deadline: Puri

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian oil companies are targeting net zero by 2046 as they decarbonise operations to cut emissions and transition to cleaner fuels, Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Monday.

While India has pledged net zero carbon emissions by 2070, state-owned companies have set targets ranging from 2038 (ONGC) to 2046 (IOC).

"Indian energy sector is on the cusp of a transition and is rapidly moving towards the centre of global oil and energy market as we are set to become a USD 5 trillion economy," Puri said, addressing the 26th Energy Technology Meet here.

India's energy demand, he said, will continue to provide fuel for future economic growth. India is the world's 3rd largest consumer of oil, 3rd largest LPG consumer, 4th largest LNG importer, 4th largest refiner, and 4th largest automobile market.



The country is likely to account for 25 per cent of global energy demand growth over the next two decades, he said. While the oil demand grows, Indian companies have set ambitious net zero emission targets. The transition, he said, will be a gradual shift from fossil fuels to cleaner fuels and renewables.

The minister said high oil prices accelerate the energy transition. On the Israel-Palestine conflict, he said India is watching the situation closely. Oil prices rose over USD 3 a barrel on Monday following military clashes between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas. "So far as energy is con-

cerned, let us be absolutely clear that the place where the action is taking place is in many respects the centre of global energy. We will watch very carefully as we go along, we will navigate our way through this," he said.

Talking about biofuel in India, he said, "We reached the target of 10 per cent ethanol blending five months beforehand. Now we are at 12 per cent, and the target of 20 per cent by 2025 can be achieved easily".

India today is the 4th largest refiner having a refining capacity of 254 million tonnes per annum after the United States, China and Russia. This refining capacity is further being increased to 310 million tonnes by 2028 with a view to becoming a major refining hub for exports of refinery products.

On the recently launched Global Biofuels Alliance, he said this presents a USD 500 billion opportunity globally as the less polluting fuel is taken up globally.

# Unemployment rate dips to 6.6 per cent in urban areas in April-June 2023: Govt survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years and above in urban areas declined to 6.6 per cent during April-June 2023 from 7.6 per cent a year ago, the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data showed.

Joblessness or unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons in the labour force.

Joblessness was high in April-June 2022 mainly due to the staggering impact of Covid-related restrictions in the country.

The unemployment rate (UR) for persons aged 15 years and above in April-June 2022 was 7.6 per cent in urban areas, the 19th Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) showed.

In January-March 2023, the unemployment rate was 6.8 per cent. It was 7.2 per cent in July-September 2022 as well as October-December 2022.

It also showed that the unemployment rate among females (aged 15 years and above) in urban areas declined



to 9.1 per cent in April-June 2023 from 9.5 per cent in the same quarter a year ago.

It was 9.2 per cent in January-March 2023, 9.6 per cent October-December 2022 and 9.4 per cent in July-September 2022.

Among males, the unemployment rate in urban areas dipped to 5.9 per cent in April-June 2023 compared to 7.1 per cent in the same quarter a year ago.

It was 6 per cent in January-

March 2023, 6.5 per cent in October-December 2022 and 6.6 per cent in July-September 2022.

Labour force participation rate in CWS (Current Weekly Status) in urban areas for persons aged 15 years and above increased to 48.8 per cent in April-June 2023, from 47.5 per cent in the same period a year ago.

It was 48.5 per cent in January-March 2023, 48.2 per cent in October-December 2022

and 47.9 per cent in July-September 2022.

Labour force refers to the part of the population which supplies or offers to supply labour for pursuing economic activities for the production of goods and services and, therefore, includes both employed and unemployed persons.

The NSSO launched PLFS in April 2017. On the basis of PLFS, a quarterly bulletin is brought out giving estimates of labour force indicators namely unemployment rate, Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), distribution of workers by broad status in employment and industry of work in CWS.

The estimates of unemployed persons in CWS give an average picture of unemployment in a short span of seven days during the survey period. In the CWS approach, a person is considered unemployed if he/she did not work even for one hour on any day during the week but sought or was available for work at least for one hour on any day during the period.

# Sensex slumps nearly 500 points amid escalating tensions in West Asia

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark index Sensex tumbled nearly 500 points on Monday as investors offloaded finance, banking and energy stocks amid escalating tensions in the Middle East and surging crude oil prices overseas.

Investors stayed on the sidelines and refrained from taking risks amid uncertainty due to the Israel-Hamas conflict, analysts said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 483.24 points or 0.73 per cent to settle at 65,512.39. The Nifty declined 141.15 points or 0.72 per cent to end at 19,512.35.

Only three Sensex stocks settled in the green, while the Nifty-50 saw its 43 scrips closing in the red.

Investors dumped equity assets as they turned risk off on concerns that a faceoff between Israel and Hamas could further deteriorate the global economy already reeling under higher interest rates and stubbornly high inflation.

"There are concerns that since most of the oil-producing nations are close to the conflict zone, a prolonged war could trigger an upsurge in international crude oil prices. With a fresh surge in crude oil prices, higher oil import bills going ahead would stoke domestic inflation and prompt the central bank to take a hawkish stance," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research



(Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said. Mahindra & Mahindra was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, sliding 2.05 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Tata Steel, SBI, Asian Paints, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Titan. However, IT majors HCL Technologies and TCS defied the trend and gained 1.02 per cent and 0.47 per cent, respectively. FMCG firm Hindustan Unilever rose 0.32 per cent. In the broader market, BSE SmallCap fell the maximum by 1.72 per cent, while MidCap skidded 1.22 per cent and LargeCap lost 0.84 per cent. Among sectoral indices, capital goods dropped 1.34 per cent, commodities declined 1.30 per cent, bankex fell 1.04 per cent, and auto slipped 0.95 per cent.

Besides, realty skidded 0.92 per cent, healthcare declined by 0.31 per cent, teck dipped by 0.19 per cent, and IT fell by 0.18 per cent.

"Financials and consumer discretionary sectors underperformed due to concerns regarding earnings vulnerability if inflation continues to rise.

"Conversely, the IT sector is displaying signs of returning to normalcy. While consensus estimates for Q2FY24 remain positive, it is important to note that geopolitical tensions could potentially disrupt this optimistic outlook," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Investors were also trading cautiously ahead of macroeconomic data to be announced later this week. The industrial production and

banks and already rising oil prices," Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said.

Elsewhere in Asian markets, Hang Seng was trading 0.19 per cent higher. Shanghai Composite Index was down 0.41 per cent, while Taiwan T SEC 50 Index was up 0.28 per cent. The Japanese stock markets were closed on Monday.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. Germany's DAX declined 0.50 per cent, and France's CAC 40 was down 0.27 per cent. London's FTSE 100 was trading 0.26 per cent higher.

The US markets ended higher on Friday, with the S&P 500 closing with a gain of 1.18 per cent and the Dow Jones Industrial Average Index up 0.87 per cent.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude rose sharply by 3.32 per cent to USD 87.39 a barrel on Monday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 90.29 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark had climbed 364.06 points or 0.55 per cent to settle at 65,995.63 points on Friday. The Nifty had advanced 107.75 points or 0.55 per cent to end at 19,653.50.

"The market may continue to exhibit a sell on the rise sentiment until Nifty surpasses the 19,700 level," Rupak De, Senior Technical analyst at LKP Securities, said.



# Automobile retail sales up 20 per cent in Sept amid festive season demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile retail sales in India surged over 20 per cent in September as demand soared across vehicle segments with the onset of festive season, dealer's body FADA said on Monday.

Overall automobile registrations rose to 18,82,071 units last month from 15,63,735 units in September 2022, the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said in a statement.

The year-on-year (YoY) analysis reveals broad-based growth across segments as two-wheeler sales grew 22 per cent, three-wheeler retails soared 49 per cent, passenger vehicle sales grew 19 per cent, while commercial vehicles saw a sales growth of 5 per cent, FADA President Manish Raj Singhania said.

Tractor retail sales, however, declined 10 per cent last month, as compared to the same month last year, he noted.

Passenger vehicle registrations rose 19 per cent YoY last month to 3,32,248 units, as compared to 2,79,137 units in September 2022, as vehicle availability improved.

New product launches also

led to improved offtake of vehicles last month, Singhania said.

Two-wheeler retail sales grew by 22 per cent to 13,12,101 units, last month as against 10,78,286 units in September 2022.

"With the introduction of new models and attractive promotional offers, demand increased, especially in rural areas, fostering improved market sentiments," Singhania said.

Commercial vehicle registrations rose by 5 per cent YoY to 80,804 units last month. Three-wheeler sales saw an increase of 49 per cent to 1,02,426 units last month, as against 68,937 units in September 2022.

Tractor sales declined to 54,492 units, as compared to 60,321 units last September.

On sales outlook, Singhania noted: "As we move past the Shraadh period on October 14, the market is poised for the onset of Navratri, heralding a 42-day festive window. With these promising indicators, FADA adopts an optimistic stance, anticipating a thriving festive season for the auto retail sector."

FADA said it collated retail data last month from 1,352 out of 1,440 RTOs across the country.

# 'Affordable homes' share in total new housing supply dips to 18 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Builders are now launching lesser number of homes priced Rs 40 lakh and below, as the share of affordable housing in the total new supply during July-September 2023 fell to 18 per cent across seven major cities, according to Anarock.

During July-September 2018, the share of affordable homes in the total new launches stood at 42 per cent.

According to Anarock data of top seven residential markets, the total new housing supply stood at 1,16,220 units during July-September 2023 and out of that 20,920 units (18 per cent) were in affordable housing categories.

In July-September 2018, the total new housing supply was 52,120 units, of which 21,900 units (42 per cent) were affordable homes.

In Q3 of 2019 calendar year, the share of affordable homes in new supply was 41 per cent, which came down to 24 per cent in Q3 of 2021.

The seven cities tracked by



Anarock are — Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Pune.

Real estate developers are focusing on launching more luxury housing projects to earn higher profits.

Profit margins in affordable housing category are less. Moreover, the high land cost has made development of affordable housing projects unviable.

While the share of affordable homes in total new supply is coming down, Anarock said the share of luxury homes priced more than Rs 1.5 crore is expanding rapidly, in fact tripled in the last five years. Out of 1,16,220 units launched in July-September in the top 7 cities, 27 per cent (31,180 units) were in the luxury category.

"This is the highest quarterly luxury supply entering the market in the last five years," Anarock said.

Back in third quarter of 2018 calendar year, the supply share of luxury housing was just 9 per cent. Out of 52,120 units launched, just 4,590 were luxury homes.

Prashant Thakur, Regional Director & Head - Research, Anarock Group, said, "Developers have been bullish about the luxury homes segment because of its superlative performance after the pandemic, with overall sales rising steeply across the top 7 cities."

Post pandemic, he noted that homebuyers have been seeking bigger homes.

"...Apart from high-end amenities and good location, luxury housing is primarily defined by generous floor space," Thakur said.

While luxury housing supply continues its bull-run, affordable housing (homes priced at or under Rs 40 lakh) has reduced further to 18 per cent in Q3 2023, he pointed out.

# Gold jumps ₹300; silver rallies ₹500

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices jumped Rs 300 to GRs 58,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid strong cues in international markets, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at Rs 58,050 per 10 grams in the previous trade.

Silver also rallied Rs 500 to Rs 72,500 per kilogram.

"Geopolitical concerns cause a new wave of worldwide risk aversion, which helps safe haven assets like gold. In addi-



tion to hurting the market, the escalating geopolitical turmoil is a threat to global economic growth. "Amid these worries, the price of gold found new momentum to continue Friday's recovery, which was driven by a mixed US labour market recovery," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the global markets, gold and silver were trading higher at USD 1,848 per ounce and USD 21.70 per ounce, respectively. Navneet Damani, senior vice-president of commodity research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said gold prices rose as clashes between Israel and Hamas has raised the risk of a wider conflict in the Middle East and boosted the demand for safe haven assets like gold.

# DGTR reviews anti-dumping duty on Chinese alloy wheels

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The commerce ministry's investigation arm DGTR has initiated a probe to review the need to continue the anti-dumping duty on aluminium alloy wheels imported from China, following complaints from the domestic industry.

Kosei Minda Aluminium Company, Maxion Wheels Aluminium India, Minda Kosei Aluminium Wheel, and Steel Strips Wheels have filed an

application on behalf of the domestic industry for initiation of sunset review investigation for continued imposition of anti-dumping duty levied on imports of aluminium alloy road wheel' exported from China.

DGTR in a notification has said the applicants have submitted prima facie evidence of dumping of the product from China in spite of the existing anti-dumping duties.

"The authority hereby initi-



ates sunset review investigation to examine whether the expiry of existing anti-dumping duties against China is likely to lead to

continuation or recurrence of dumping and consequent injury to the domestic industry," the notification said.

As per laws, normally, an anti-dumping duty is imposed for five years on a product unless the government decides to revoke that. The DGTR can review the need for the continued imposition of the duty before the end of five years.

The duty on the product was first imposed in May 2015. It was extended in 2019 and then

again in 2022. The existing duties are set to expire on April 8, 2024.

The duty is aimed at ensuring fair trade practices and creating a level playing field for domestic producers with regard to foreign producers and exporters.

In a separate notification, the DGTR has recommended the imposition of the duty on imports of "Viscose rayon filament yarn" from China for five years.

# IN BRIEF

## DMRC WINS AWARDS

New Delhi: Delhi Metro has won "Most Admired Company in the Infrastructure Sector (Metro)" award (ET Infra Focus Summit and Awards) and the Corporate Communication Awards at the 17th Global Communication Conclave organized by the Public Relations Council of India (PRCI).



DMRC's Managing Director Dr Vikas Kumar and Principal Executive Director Anuj Dayal with awards

## POWERGRID GETS D&B PSU AWARD 2023

New Delhi: Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) has been conferred with the Dun Bradstreet PSU Award 2023 in the Power Transmission category. Stanley Mathews, ED (HRD Corp. Comm.) and B Anantha Sarma, ED (CPMM) received the award from Vivek Joshi, Secretary, Deptt. of Financial Services and Ajit B Chavan, ACEO, GeM, at a glittering ceremony held in New Delhi. Dun & Bradstreet is the world's leading provider of business information and knowledge.

# 635 UK companies employ over 660,000 in India: Report

PTI ■ LONDON

There are 635 companies incorporated in India that are owned or controlled from the UK with a combined turnover of approximately Rs 4,88,840 crores and employing around 666,992 people, according to the 2023 edition of Britain Meets India' (BMI) report.

The third edition of the annual report, collated by Grant Thornton Bharat in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and supported by the UK government's Department for Business and Trade (DBT), was launched in

New Delhi on Sunday.

It comes as the 13th round of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations are ongoing between India and the UK, expected to significantly boost the bilateral trade partnership estimated at around GBP 36 billion in 2022.

"It's fantastic to see even more UK companies thriving in India this year, generating thousands of jobs and delivering significant growth for both our countries," said UK Minister for International Trade Nigel Huddleston, in a message for the report launch.

"By unlocking barriers to



trade and making it easier to sell abroad, we are generating even more opportunities for British businesses in India - which is expected to become the third largest economy by 2035 - and

around the world," he said. Of the 635 UK companies, 68 per cent are classed as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and 60 per cent have their parent firm headquartered

in London. As many as 147 companies in the report met the qualifying criteria to feature in the 'BMI Growth Tracker', with a combined turnover of Rs 3,923.9 billion and achieving an average growth rate of 46 per cent.

"With the India-UK FTA having the potential to further strengthen the bilateral partnership and boost economic prosperity on both sides, the BMI report offers clear insights into the business camaraderie that exists between the two nations," said Pallavi Joshi Bakhru, Partner and India-UK Corridor Leader at Grant Thornton

Bharat, who was among those present at the launch in New Delhi.

"The sectoral analysis of 635 UK companies found that technology is the most dominant sector this year. India is a leading hub for GCCs [Global Capability Centres] for large UK retail giants due to its reputation for innovation, and a large and skilled workforce of coders, engineers, and software developers. The government has improved infrastructure and made it easier to do business in India, further boosting the country's appeal as a GCC hub," she said.

# SEVERAL FIRSTS FOR INDIA AT HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The Asian Games in Hangzhou will be remembered by India not just for the record number of medals its contingent brought from the showpiece but also for the athletes who explored the limits of their endurance to return home successful in disciplines which were hitherto out of their preserve.  
Here are some of the athletes who covered the nation, and themselves, in glory by winning the first-ever medals in their disciplines or reclaiming glory after several decades.  
**ATHLETICS: Avinash Sable (3000m steeplechase):** A record-breaking Sable became the first Indian man to win a gold medal in 3000m steeplechase at the Games. The 29-year-old national record holder, who earned India's first gold medal in athletics, completed the race in 8:19.50 seconds. Sable also rewrote the previous Games record of 8:22.79 on way to the top podium finish.  
**Parul Chaudhary (5000m):** Parul pulled off a heist for a sensational women's 5000m

gold and stamped her class to become the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games gold in 5000m race, adding to the 3000m steeplechase silver that she had won earlier.  
The 28-year-old was behind Japan's Ririka Hironaka in the closing stage but produced a stunning dash in the final 40 metres to claim the yellow metal with a timing of 15:14.75.  
**Annu Rani (Javelin):** The athlete conjured up her season-best performance to claim the top prize in women's javelin throw and become the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games gold in javelin throw with an effort of 62.92m. This was her second Asian Games medal as she had won a bronze in the 2014 edition.  
**BADMINTON:** HS Pranoy, and the pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, won India's first singles and men's doubles medals after 41 years. It was Syed Modi who won a bronze in 1982, while the doubles pair of Leroy D'sa and Pradeep Gandhi won a bronze in 1982.  
Satwik-Chirag gold was a first for India at the Asian



Games. For the men's team, the silver was a first since 1986 Seoul.  
**TABLE TENNIS:** Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee's giant-slaying act clinched a historic bronze medal after the Indian duo lost the closely-fought women's doubles semifinal to North Korea.  
The medal came after the Indian duo beat the Chinese pair of Meng Chen and Yidi Wang in the quarterfinals. In 2018, India made history by picking up an unprecedented men's team and mixed doubles bronze.  
**SHOOTING:** The team of Manisha Keer, Rajeshwari Kumari and Preeti Rajak combined to win India's first-ever Asian Games medal in women's skeet — a silver.  
Anantjeet Singh Naruka too

etched his name in the annals of Indian sports history by clinching the country's first ever silver medal in men's skeet individual event. Young Sift Kaur Samra also stole the show with a gold medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 position event — a first for India — with a Final World Record score to boot.  
**CANOING:** India's Arjun Singh and Sunil Singh Salam clinched a historic bronze medal in men's canoe double 1000m event to bag the country's second medal ever in the event in the Asian Games. In the 1994 Hiroshima edition of the Games, India had bagged a bronze in the same event through Siji Sadandan and Johnny Rommel.  
**ARCHERY:** A 13-year wait ended in archery when the Indian men's and women's recurve teams surpassed expectations to clinch a silver and bronze respectively, their first medals since the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games.  
The women's recurve team of Anika Bhakat, Simranjeet Kaur and Bhajan Kaur defied odds to clinch a bronze medal beating Vietnam.  
The women's team's splen-

did show then rubbed off on their male counterparts as the triumvirate of Atanu Das, Tus-har Shelke, and Dhiraj Bomma-devara too returned with a silver medal, losing to South Korea in the final.  
**EQUESTRIAN:** The quartet of Sudipti Hajela, Divyakruti Singh, Vipul Hriday Chheda and Anush Agarwalla won India's first-ever dressage team gold in Asian Games. It was India's first equestrian yellow metal in 41 years. In the 1982 edition in New Delhi, the Indian team had grabbed three gold medals.  
Anush Agarwalla won India's first-ever individual medal, a bronze, in the dressage competition at the Games.  
**SAILING:** Sailor Vishnu Sarvanan's bronze was India's first-ever medal in the men's dinghy ILC-7 event at the Games.  
**SEPAKTAKRAW:** India clinched their first-ever medal in women's sepaktakraw at the Games with the regu team winning a bronze.  
**GOLF:** Olympian Aditi Ashok won a silver and became the first Indian woman to claim a medal in golf.

## Shooters excel in Hangzhou but Olympics will be the real test

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Indian shooters made a huge statement at the Asian Games, scripting a trail of success and returning home with an unprecedented 22 medals, the country's best ever showing in the continental showpiece.  
There was a feeling of invincibility every time Indian shooters took their designated spots on the ranges and matched their Chinese counterparts shot for shot. With a tally like that — six gold, nine silver and six bronze — everyone can be proud of the achievements of the band of young shooters such as Rudranksh Patil, Esha Singh, Ashwary Pratap Singh Tomar, to name a few.  
Following the bumper harvest at the Asian Games, expectations of stellar performances at the 2024 Paris Olympics will grow, given that medals at the quadrennial global showpiece are the only ones that remain etched in the collective memory of the nation.  
To achieve those goals, and also to erase the memories of Indian marksmen returning empty-handed from the 2016 Rio and 2020 Tokyo Games, a lot still needs to be done.  
Rifle marksman Abhinav Bindra's top-podium finish at the 2008 Beijing Olympics still remains the only gold in shoot-



ing so far, and the Hangzhou showing would have fanned the country's desire for a few heroic efforts in Paris.  
But unlike the Asian Games, where contingents are selected by the respective sports federations, at the Olympics every athlete has to qualify — and that is where the biggest challenge lies.  
**DISCONCERTING NEWS**  
A total of 15 shooters had qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and so far for Paris, only seven Indians have earned quota places for the country, but none of them is in pistol events.  
This indeed is disconcerting news.  
India's performance in Hangzhou might be creditworthy but viewed in the perspective of the Olympics, a lot still needs to be done on this count.

— an Olympic qualifying event — will give a final count of the number of shooters India will send to Paris. Hopefully, there would be a few pistol shooters as well.  
**RIFLE SHOOTERS TO THE FORE**  
While the performance of pistol shooters was creditworthy, their rifle counterparts were at a different level altogether.  
Led by the young Punjab shooter Sift Kaur Samra, who bagged the women's 50m rifle 3 positions gold, most of them brought individual glory.  
Sift, who has already qualified for the Olympics and will be a medal contender in Paris, shot a world record score in Hangzhou, while several other rifle shooters excelled in their respective events.  
With five of the seven Olympic quota places earned by the country being bagged by rifle shooters — Rudranksh Patil (men's 10m air rifle), Swapnil Kusale (men's 50m rifle 3 positions), Akhil Sheoran (men's 50m rifle 3 positions), Mehuli Ghosh (women's 10m air rifle) and Sift Kaur Samra (women's 50m rifle 3 positions) — they are certainly in a better place going to Changwon, where the pressure of winning an Olympic quota place will be off their minds.

## France defense hit by injuries ahead of European qualifier against Netherlands



**AP ■ PARIS**  
Malo Gusto and Axel Disasi have been called up as injury replacements ahead of France's match against the Netherlands in qualifying for the UEFA European Championship.  
The two players replace defenders Jules Kounde and Dayot Upamecano, the French soccer federation said on Monday as the French squad gathered at the team's training camp outside Paris.  
France takes on the Netherlands in Amsterdam on Friday. Les Bleus will then host Scotland in a friendly game in the northern city of Lille on October 17.  
Kounde picked up a left knee injury while playing for Barcelona in the La Liga on Sunday. Upamecano injured his left hamstring this weekend with Bayern Munich.  
Their withdrawals follow that of Arsenal defender William Saliba, who was replaced Sunday by Jean-Clair Todibo in France's squad.



## HI announces 20-member Indian junior men's team for Sultan of Johor Cup

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**  
Uttam Singh was appointed captain while Rajinder Singh will serve as his deputy as Hockey India on Monday announced a 20-member Indian junior men's team for the Sultan of Johor Cup to be held from October 27 to November 4 in Malaysia. The 11th edition of the tournament will feature eight teams instead of the customary six.  
India have been placed in Pool B along with Malaysia, Pakistan, and New Zealand, while Pool A will consist of Germany, Australia, South Africa, and Great Britain.  
"The selection committee has taken all previous tournaments into consideration to come up with a well-balanced team to compete and succeed in the 11th Sultan of Johor Cup," coach CR Kumar said in a release. "We are looking to encourage and give an opportunity to players who have the skills to outperform the opponent, to play penetrative passes between lines."  
"The tournament is also an opportunity to assess and understand six nations that will be heading to the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup 2023 and it's being played under the same climate conditions that we can expect at Kuala Lumpur in December."  
The goalkeeping role will be performed by the reliable duo of Mohith H S and Ranvijay Singh Yadav, while the defenders travelling to Johor are Amandeep Lakra, Rohit, Sunil Jojo, Sukhvinder, Amir Ali, Yogember Rawat  
**INDIAN TEAM:**  
**Goalkeepers:** Mohith H S, Ranvijay Singh Yadav  
**Defenders:** Amandeep Lakra, Rohit, Sunil Jojo, Sukhvinder, Amir Ali, Yogember Rawat  
**Midfielders:** Vishnukant Singh, Poovanna C B, Rajinder Singh, Amandeep, Sunit Lakra, Abdul Ahad  
**Forwards:** Uttam Singh, Arun Sahani, Aditya Lalage, Angad Bir Singh, Gurjot Singh, Sathish B.

## IOC, Reliance sign agreement to promote Olympic sports in India

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
The International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Olympic Museum and Reliance Foundation on Monday announced an agreement to promote Olympic values through sport among children starting with the Mumbai region and soon expanding it across the state of Maharashtra. The agreement will focus on grade-specific activities in selected schools, sessions between athletes and students to promote physical activity and raising awareness to promote Olympism and Olympic values.  
The programme has had a world-wide impact so far, said IOC president Thomas Bach, adding that the agreement with the Abhinav Bindra Foundation in Odisha has been reaching 'unprecedented heights'.  
Talking about the agreement with Reliance Foundation, Bach said, "They have the potential to reach 17.5 million children across Maharashtra and with the Abhinav Bindra Foundation in Odisha, there is potential to reach another 7 million children."  
"Most of these children are coming from the underprivileged section of the society and they get access to sports for the first time, sports education and the Olympic values," he added.  
The Olympics Value Education Program (OVEP) was launched in India last year with the Abhinav Bindra Foundation in Odisha. It is one of the first major IOC projects to be implemented in India.

## Arsenal enjoys special win over Man City to end losing PL streak



**AP ■ LONDON**  
It wasn't the greatest game — or the prettiest goal — that the Emirates Stadium has seen, but the roar of celebration was among the loudest it has ever heard. Perhaps the pendulum has finally swung Arsenal's way in the fight for Premier League supremacy.  
Gabriel Martinelli's late goal handed Arsenal a 1-0 win over defending champion Manchester City on Sunday, ending a 12-game losing streak in the league against Pep Guardiola's team in the process.  
Despite 30 games still to play, and only two points separating the two teams, it was a result that will fuel the belief at Arsenal that Mikel Arteta's team can finally end a 20-year title drought after coming up just short last season.  
"It gives (us) more confidence," Martinelli said. "We know our potential and how tough it is to play against them. Today we beat them and it gives us more confidence to kick on."  
Second-place Arsenal has the same number of points as leader Tottenham.  
City pipped Arsenal to the title by five points last term, in part by beating the Gunners 3-1 away and 4-1 at home. In fact, Arsenal had not taken a point against City in the league since 2017, its longest losing streak against a single opponent in club history.  
While Arsenal did beat City on penalties in the pre-season Community Shield at Wembley, this result was perhaps the biggest statement win of Arteta's reign and the final whistle was greeted by a massive roar as the Emirates crowd stood up as one to celebrate. There hadn't been much to cheer about for the first 85 minutes, though, aside from the fact that City never looked like its normal self — perhaps because of the absence of suspended midfielder Rodri.  
For once, City's high-powered attack was kept quiet throughout the game — including striker Erling Haaland, who finished without a single shot but got into a heated argument with a member of Arsenal's backroom staff after the final whistle. City as a team only had four shots in the game, its lowest total ever under Guardiola in a Premier League game.  
City has now lost consecutive league matches for the first time since 2018 after a 2-1 defeat at Wolves last weekend.  
"It was a tight game. Not many chances, one deflection," Guardiola said. "It is football, we lost the game. We will come back stronger." Arsenal didn't create much either without injured winger Bukayo Saka, whose club record streak of starting 87 straight league games came to an end.



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## Yamal becomes youngest scorer in Spanish league

**AP ■ MADRID**  
Barcelona teenager Lamine Yamal added his name to the record books again on Sunday, becoming the youngest scorer in the Spanish league in Barcelona's 2-2 draw at Granada.  
At the age of 16 years, 87 days, Yamal surpassed Malaga player Fabrice Olinga, who was 16 years, 98 days old when he scored against Celta Vigo in 2012. Yamal scored his milestone goal by pushing a loose ball into the open net in first-half stoppage time.  
He was already the youngest player to debut in the league, and the youngest to start in the Champions League. Yamal also



Stadium. His second came in the 19th minute after a couple of nifty moves to clear a defender inside the area.  
Sergi Roberto equalized in the 85th for Barcelona, which almost left with the victory when João Félix scored in stop-

page time but saw the goal called back because of an offside by Ferran Torres.  
The result left defending champion Barcelona in third place, one point behind fellow Catalan club Girona and two behind rival Real Madrid. Both Girona and Madrid won Saturday.  
Barcelona was without striker Robert Lewandowski because of an injury. Midfielder Fermin López made his debut at 20 as a starter with the Catalan club.  
Barcelona lost defender Jules Kounde with an injury just before halftime.  
It was the third straight draw for Granada, which stayed in second-to-last place.



## Saudi Arabia formally informs FIFA of its wish to host 2034 World Cup as favourite to win

**AP ■ GENEVA**  
Saudi Arabia formally informed the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) of its wish to host the men's World Cup in 2034 on Monday in a bidding contest that increasingly looks designed for the kingdom to win.  
The Saudi Arabian soccer federation said it "submitted a letter of intent and signed declaration to FIFA to bid" in a vote that is open only to members of the Asian and Oceania soccer governing bodies.  
FIFA fast-tracked starting the 2034 contest last week after its ruling body also agreed to accept only a candidate for the 2030 World Cup — now an unprecedented six-nation, three-continent co-hosting plan in Europe, Africa and South America that removed those continents from bidding to get back-to-back tournaments.  
The Spain-Portugal-Morocco-Argentina-Paraguay-Uruguay project in 2030 will follow the inaugural 48-team, 104-game tournament in 2026 in the United States of America, Mexico and Canada. That allows the 2034 edition to return to Asia 12 years after Qatar hosted the 2022 World Cup.  
Last week, FIFA set tight deadlines of October 31 to formally express interest in hosting and November 30 to return a signed bidding agreement that requires the support of national governments.  
Australian soccer officials have shown interest in the 2034 tournament after successfully co-hosting the 32-team women's edition with New Zealand two months ago, but they now have only eight weeks to produce a bidding agreement.  
Australia also may be short of the FIFA-demanded seven existing stadiums on a minimum slate of at least 40,000-seating capacity.  
Saudi Arabia, which is preparing to host the 2027 Asian Cup, meets that FIFA criteria.  
The Saudi Arabian soccer federation also cited public pledges of support from "over 70" of FIFA's 211 member federations.



# NZ BEATS NETHERLANDS BY 99 RUNS

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Mitchell Santner produced a five-wicket haul to complement a superlative batting display as New Zealand continued their impressive run in the World Cup with a massive 99-run win over the Netherlands here on Monday.

Santner (5/59) spun a web around Netherlands who were all out for 223 in 46.3 overs on a sluggish pitch after Will Young (70), Rachin Ravindra (51) and Tom Latham (53) posted fifties to power New Zealand to 322 for 7. The 31-year-old Santner, who had provided the final flourish with a 17-ball 36 not out to push New Zealand's total, dismissed Max O'Dowd (16), Colin Ackermann (69), Scott Edwards (30), Roelof van der Merwe (1) and Ryan Klein (8), while Matt Henry (3/40) took three. Chasing the stiff total, the Dutch batters couldn't provide a flying start as they were reduced to 67 for 3 in 16.4 overs.



Colin Ackermann held Netherlands innings together with a 73-ball 69 and added 50 runs with AT Nidamanuru (21) and 40 with Scott Edwards (30). However, Netherlands couldn't push the run-rate and wickets kept tumbling frequently. Once Henry (3/40) saw the back of a tentative-looking opener Vikramjit Singh (12) with a good length delivery, the spin duo of Santner and Ravindra then made life difficult for the opposition.

Netherlands could manage just 35 for 1 after 10 overs and by the time the 25th over ended, they were at 114 for 3, leaving them with a mountain to climb. Ackermann tried to take it deep before his innings ended when he was caught at short third by Henry. Earlier, Will Young, Rachin Ravindra and Tom Latham defied the sluggishness of the pitch to construct well-paced fifties and lead New Zealand to a healthy total.

After being asked to bat, Young and Ravindra gave the Kiwis some momentum against the Dutch bowlers, who exploited the slowness of the track with an assortment of slow balls and cutters. Captain Latham gave some impetus to the Black Caps while making a 46-ball 53 towards the business end of the innings. The course of the innings was revealed very early when the Netherlands managed to tie down

However, Conway (32) did not last long as his attempt to speed up the proceedings did not fetch a good result. The left-hander jumped down the track against left-arm spinner Roelof van der Merwe and tried to deposit him over long-on, a repeat of the shot he played against Dutt, but this time the Kiwi found Bas de Leede in perfect position under the ball. It ended the 67-run opening alliance but Ravindra, who made a hundred against England, and Young compiled a 77-run stand for the second wicket.

During this period, the Kiwis made runs at nearly 6 an over, but the Dutch did not allow them to motor away. New Zealand's performance was in stark contrast against the rollicking effort they dished out against England a few days back at Ahmedabad. But the Kiwis team management will certainly be pleased with the way their batters adapted and made substantial runs through a different method. However, the dismissals of Ravindra and Young pegged back New Zealand a bit. Young could not read a slow ball from Paul van Meekeren and his attempted pull transformed into a simple catch to De Leede. Ravindra too soon followed after he edged Van der Merwe to Scott Edwards behind the wicket. However, the Kiwis kept themselves ahead of the curve through a 53-run stand between Latham and Daryl Mitchell (48 off 47 balls).



## There was lack of aggression from Australian batters: Finch on World Cup opener loss

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Australian batters lacked intent and failed to play an aggressive brand of cricket against India's world class spinners, said former skipper Aaron Finch, adding they will need to bring a change in their mindset to be at the forefront. Indian spinners seized six wickets as Australia were shot out for 199 on a track offering spin and grip during a six-wicket loss in their World Cup opener on Sunday.

that they weren't able to put any pressure back on India. It needs a mindset shift, to look to be on the front foot a little more and take some calculated risks.

"The Aussies look to be in the game when they left India reeling at 2 for 3 after the second over. However, the dropped chance of Virat Kohli (85) by Mitchell Marsh of pacer Josh Hazlewood when he was at 12 proved to be costly.

"Australia created enough opportunities, and if they'd got Virat, that would have put a totally different complexion on the game," he wrote.

"When Virat gets in, he gets the crowd onside, and the momentum starts to swing his way; he feels unstoppable. The way he managed that run chase was unbelievable, and KL Rahul played a masterful knock."

Finch was all praise for the Men in Blue and picked them as the side to beat in the show-piece.

"All in all, India have got such a well-rounded squad, three brilliant spinners and three brilliant quicks, and Hardik Pandya being back bowling is huge for the balance of their side. They will be so hard to beat in these conditions," he wrote.

While India takes on Afghanistan in Delhi on Wednesday, Australia will be up against South Africa in Lucknow the day after.



## Gill ruled out of India's World Cup clash against Afghanistan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shubman Gill was on Monday ruled out of India's next World Cup fixture against Afghanistan here on October 11 as he remains under medical supervision in Chennai.

The Indian team on Monday travelled from Chennai to Delhi but Gill, who also missed the World Cup opener against Australia due to an illness, stayed back. Ahead of the Australia game, the BCCI said Gill was under the weather and did not specify the nature of his illness.

In a fresh update, the board said, "Team India batter Shubman Gill will not be travelling with the team to Delhi on 9th October 2023.

"The opening batter who missed the team's first fixture in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 against Australia in Chennai is set to miss the team's next fixture against Afghanistan in Delhi on the 11th of October.



"He will stay back in Chennai and will be under the supervision of the medical team."

The right-handed Gill was replaced by Ishan Kishan for the Australia game, which India won by six wickets. Kishan, Rohit Sharma and Shreyas Iyer got out without scoring before K L Rahul and Virat Kohli shared a match-winning 165-run stand.

The 24-year-old Gill has been in sensational form over the past 12 months and has five ODI hundreds to his name this year. He is expected to play a crucial role if India are to regain the trophy after 12 years.

## Indian cricket team lands in Delhi for World Cup clash against Afghanistan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian cricket team landed here on Monday for its second World Cup-fixture against Afghanistan on October 11.

India overcame a horror start to complete a six-wicket win against Australia in their campaign opener in Chennai on Sunday.

"The team is in Delhi," said a BCCI source.

The team travelled without its star opener Shubman Gill, who continues to recover from an illness under BCCI's medical supervision in Chennai. Gill also missed the game against Australia.

Since Monday was a travel day for the team, no training session was scheduled. Rohit Sharma and Co. Will hit the nets at the Feroz Shah Kotla on Tuesday evening.

Afghanistan, who lost their tournament opener to Bangladesh in Dharamsala, are scheduled to train on Monday evening.

## Good to have Rahul back, he gives us stability: Mhambrey

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Architect of India's six-wicket win over Australia, wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul has a solid all-round game and provides stability in the middle-order, said bowling coach Paras Mhambrey.

Rahul scored an unbeaten 97 to steer India to a fine victory in their World Cup opener on Sunday.

Chasing 200, Rahul, batting at number five, arrived at the crease in the third over with Australia striking in the opening two overs to leave India reeling at two for three.

Rahul tailored a crucial 165-run partnership with Virat Kohli (85) to bring India back into the chase.

"We always knew what Rahul brings to the team, the quality of a batter he is, especially in the middle order. We need someone, and he is that kind of a player who plays spin well, also the fast bowlers and the seamers," said Mhambrey during an interaction.

"So, in that sense, he gives you the stability and confidence. And, the way he has played in the past, we definitely trusted him, and it's good to have him back."

After returning to the Indian team following a long injury lay-off, Rahul has scored an unbeaten hundred against Pakistan in the Asia Cup and also made two fifties in the three-

ODI series against Australia. The spin trio of Ravindra Jadeja (3/28), Ravichandran Ashwin (1/34) and Kuldeep Yadav (2/42) shared six wickets as India restricted Australia to 199.

"Looking at the way they (Australia) approached the last few games, we realised that they went hard in the first ten overs. We knew with the ball being hard, it does come on to the wicket," Mhambrey said.

"The approach has been very simple. They went hard against the seamers and spinners.

"So, picking early wickets was really important for us, and that made the difference, as they lost (Mitchell) Marsh early. And that kind of tilted the batting, putting (Steven) Smith with (David) Warner. So, they had a different set-up to go with."

Mhambrey feels Indian spinners bring a lot of variety into the attack.

"That's the beauty of this game. In a team combination, you want variety. And for us, all our spinners offer different kinds of options and varieties," he said.

"All three of them have the ability, especially someone like Ash (R Ashwin) or (Ravindra) Jadeja. They are the kind of options that you can use in the first powerplay and the middle. Kuldeep (Yadav) is also another option that we can use."

# Problems galore as Pakistan, Sri Lanka face off

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

The win against the Netherlands wasn't the most convincing but an inconsistent and mercurial Pakistan will still fancy their chances against a bruised and battered Sri Lanka in the World Cup match here on Tuesday.

If their batting against the Associate nation was any indication, then Pakistan will need to do a lot more in the coming weeks, starting with the clash against Sri Lanka, whose spinners have the ability to cause damage in the opposition ranks.

Pakistan are traditionally good against spinners but Babar Azam and Co. Would take the likes of promising Dunith Wellalage and company lightly at their peril. Sri Lanka will be closely monitoring the fitness of spinner Maheesh Theekshana, who missed their first match against South Africa in New Delhi. Lanka had lost that match by 102 runs.

Theekshana had suffered a hamstring injury during the Asia Cup. Stationed in the city for over 10 days now and having already played a

few matches, including the two warm-up games, Pakistan are aware of the conditions at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Uppal.

But still, they were troubled by the bowlers from the Netherlands in their tournament opener, at one stage being reduced to 38/3 before Mohammad Rizwan and Saud Shakeel joined forces to steady the innings and lift them to 286 all out with an over to spare.

Had it not been for handy knocks from Mohammad Nawaz and Shadab Khan, the Pakistanis wouldn't have crossed even 280. These are among the things the 1992 champions would not like to repeat against the Sri Lankans who are expected to offer stronger resistance than the Dutch.

Even as their top-order failed against an Associate nation, Pakistan must be quite happy with the manner in which Shakeel went about his task in his first World Cup game.

In the company of senior partner Rizwan, Shakeel showed clarity and calmness as they rescued the team after the top-order failure in a match that will be remembered more for Bas de Leede's



all-round heroics than any other performance.

Pakistan arrived in India after an Asia Cup campaign that exposed the chinks in their armour, but playing in the land of their arch-rivals is an opportunity for their players to become

The 1996 winners are coming off a thrashing at the hands of South Africa who created a plethora of records with the bat the other day.

What could stand Sri Lanka in good stead is that, unlike the Pakistanis, a lot of their players are familiar with the Indian conditions, having played matches in this part regularly, and they would look to use that to their advantage.

**TEAMS (FROM):**  
**Pakistan squad:** Babar Azam (c), Shadab Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Abdullah Shafique, Mohammad Rizwan, Saud Shakeel, Iftikhar Ahmed, Salman Ali Agha, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Afridi, Mohammad Wasim.  
**Sri Lanka Squad:** Dasun Shanaka (c), Kusal Mendis (vc), Kusal Perera, Pathum Nissanka, Lahiru Kumara, Dimuth Karunaratne, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Wellalage, Kasun Rajitha, Matheesha Pathirana, Dilshan Madushanka, Dushan Hemantha.

# Smarting from Kiwi lessons, Buttler's England take on upbeat Bangladesh in World Cup

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

Defending champions England's nine-wicket loss to New Zealand in their World Cup opener would have given Jos Buttler the jitters, and the skipper would like his teammates to make a strong comeback when they take on Bangladesh here on Tuesday.

The loss against New Zealand was an early wake-up call for Buttler, whose team members know the Indian pitches and the conditions here like the back of their hand with many of them playing in the Indian Premier League.

always going to be difficult to defend at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, the pace at which Kiwi opener Devon Conway and young left-handed batter Rachin Ravindra decimated the England bowling, scoring unbeaten centuries and making a mockery by finishing the contest in only the 37th over, would have jangled many a nerve in the team management and the fans back home.

While the likes of New Zealand pace bowlers Trent Boult, Matt Henry decimated the England batting, on the other hand, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood and Sam Curran were simply ineffective in breaking

the mammoth 272-run partnership between Conway and Ravindra.

While former England skipper Joe Root, opener Jonny Bairstow and the skipper himself made some useful contributions, a big innings was sadly lacking, which cost the defending champions the opening match.

Bangladesh would like to exploit those chinks in England's armour when they clash at the HPCA Stadium, that has drawn flak for the reported quality of the outfield.

Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott had expressed his displeasure over the outfield at the



Dharamsala Stadium following the six-wicket loss to Bangladesh in their opening match here, saying it was sheer fortune that some of the players did not pick up niggles while fielding.

Injuries so early in the tournament to any of their key players could jeopardise any team's chances in the tournament and both side would like to avoid such a scenario.

While Buttler would like a more committed performance from both his batters and bowlers, whose best efforts could not breach the defences of Conway and Ravindra, Bangladesh would be upbeat following their winning start in the tournament.

While 36-year-old all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will always be a threat to any side, top-order batters Litton Das, Mehidy Hossain Shanto, and Najmul Hossain Shanto, among others, have also given fine performances over the years.

In a low-scoring match against Afghanistan here on Saturday, both Miraz and Najmul smashed fine half-centuries as they overhauled the 156-run total with more than 15 overs to spare.

While England will certainly be the favourites, Bangladesh know how to turn the tide, and the defending champions know all too well that

they can ill-afford a second successive loss.

**TEAMS (FROM):**  
**Bangladesh:** Shakib Al Hasan (c), Najmul Hossain Shanto, Hasan Mahmud, Litton Das, Mahedi Hasan, Mahmudullah, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mustafizur Rahman, Nasum Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Tanzid Hasan, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Taskin Ahmed, Towhid Hridoy.  
**England:** Jos Buttler, Moeen Ali, Gus Atkinson, Jonny Bairstow, Harry Brook, Sam Curran, Liam Livingstone, Dawid Malan, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Ben Stokes, Reece Topley, David Willey, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood.