**OPINION 6** 

WEST ASIA ERUPTS IN

FLAMES AGAIN

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# WEST ASIA PUSHED INTO AN ABYSS

## Biden calls PM Netanyahu and President Abbas amid the crisis

**PTI** ■ WASHINGTON

 $P^{\text{resident Joe Biden reiterat-}}_{\text{ed the US' unwavering sup-}}$ port for Israel and emphasised the need for humanitarian aid for the people of Palestine as he held separate phone calls with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders amid escalating tensions in Gaza, the White House has

In his first call with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas since Hamas' unprecedented assault on Israel a week ago, Biden stressed that the militant group "does not stand for the Palestinian people's right to dignity and self-determina-

Biden discussed with Abbas US' efforts to work with the United Nations, Egypt, Jordan, Israel and others to ensure humanitarian supplies reach civilians in Gaza.

The President also called Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his fifth such call after Hamas' assault

In both calls, Biden stressed the need to prevent the conflict from expanding.

He spoke to both leaders about coordination with the United Nations, Egypt, Jordan and other countries in the region to ensure access to water, food and

medical care for all civilians. "Abbas briefed Biden on his engagement in the region and his efforts to bring urgently needed humanitarian assistance to Palestinian people, tance to Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza. Biden offered Abbas and the Palestinian Authority his full support for these important and ongoing efforts," the White House said on Saturday House said on Saturday.

'This afternoon, Biden spoke with Netanyahu to reiterate unwavering US support for Israel. Biden updated Netanyahu on US military sup-port and reiterated his warning against anyone seeking to expand the conflict," it said.

Biden affirmed his support for all efforts to protect civilians, it said. "As more information comes to light about Hamas" brutal atrocities committed over the past week, Biden reiterated the need for all countries to unequivocally condemn Hamas as a terrorist organisation that does not represent the aspirations of the Palestinian people," the White House said. "Finally, Biden detailed US efforts to coordinate with partners to prevent the conflict from widening, and the two leaders discussed the need to preserve stability in the West Bank and the broader region," it said about Biden's meeting



A convoy of Israeli armoured personnel carriers (APC) head towards the Gaza Strip border in southern Israel on Sunday

with Abbas

The United States has intensified its global engagement amid an imminent Israeli plan to send its foot soldiers to Gaza.

Palestinian militant group Hamas carried out a barrage of air strikes in Southern Israel on last week.

(IDF) in response launched multiple attacks targeting Hamas' key infrastructure. So far, thousands of people have The Israel Defense Forces been killed in Israel and the State Antony Blinken spoke

Gaza Strip in the biggest escalation in decades between the two sides.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of

attack on Israel, the Strike Group includes the guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), guided-missile destroyers USS Gravely (DDG 107) and USS Mason (DDG 107) and USS Mason (DDG 87), and Carrier Air Wing 3,

staffs," Austin said. The Eisenhower CSG will join the USS Gerald R Ford Carrier

with nine aircraft squadrons,

and embarked headquarters

with his Chinese counterpart

"As part of the administration's

intensive diplomatic engagements to stand with Israel and

condemn the terrorist attacks

by Hamas, the Secretary reiter-

ated US support for Israel's right to defend itself and called for an immediate cessation of Hamas' attacks and the release of all hostages," the State

Department said.
During the call, Blinken also discussed the importance of

maintaining stability in the region and discouraging other

parties from entering the conflict. US Defense Secretary

Lloyd Austin on Saturday directed the USS Dwight D Eisenhower Carrier Strike

Group (CSG) to begin moving

to the Eastern Mediterranean. "As part of our effort to deter

hostile actions against Israel or

any efforts toward widening

this war following Hamas's

Wang Yi on Saturday.

Strike Group, which arrived earlier this week.

The Ford CSG includes the USS Normandy, USS Thomas Hudner, USS Ramage, USS Carney, and USS Roosevelt. Earlier in the week, the US Air Force announced deployment to the region of squadrons of F-15, F-16 and A-10 fighter aircraft, he said.

"The increases to US force posture signal the United States' ironclad commitment to Israel's security and our resolve to deter any state or non-state actor seeking to escalate this war," Austin said.

Austin spoke with Israeli Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant to continue consultations on Israel's response to Hamas' attacks, following his visit to Israel a day earlier. During the call, he under-

scored the United States' unwavering commitment to Israel's

"During the call, he discussed the importance of adhering to the law of war, including civilian protection obligations, and addressing the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza while Israel continues its operations to restore security Finally, he discussed Hamas' abhorrent taking of civilian hostages," the Pentagon said in a readout of the call.

## **BJP versus TMC in Parliament**

 $B_{\text{Sunday accused TMC's}}^{\text{JP MP Nishikant Dubey on}}$ Mahua Moitra of taking "bribes" from a businessman to ask questions in Parliament and urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om committee" to look into the charges against her.

Moitra hit back, saying she "welcomes any move against her after the Lok Sabha Speaker is finished dealing with pending charges against him (Dubey)".

The two MPs, known for their fiery parliamentary speeches and belligerent attacks on adversaries, have often exchanged blows over a host of issues over the years.

On Sunday, Dubey wrote to Birla under the subject "Reemergence of nasty 'Cash for Query' in Parliament, Direct involvement of Mahua Moitra. Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for serious 'Breach of Privilege', 'Contempt of the House' and a 'Criminal Offence' under Section 120-A

Citing a letter he has received



from an advocate, Dubey said the lawyer has shared "irrefutable" evidence of bribes exchanged between the Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader and a businessman.

Hitting back, Moitra said on X, "Am using all my ill gotten cash & gifts to buy a college/ university in which Degree Dubey can finally buy a real degree." Tagging the Lok Sabha Speaker, she said, "Finish the enquiries against him for false affidavits & then set up my enquiry committee?

In his letter to the speaker, Dubey said 50 of 61 questions she asked in Lok Sabha till recently were focused on the Adani Group, the business

conglomerate which the TMC

MP has often accused of mal-

practices, more so after it was

at the receiving end of a critical report of short-selling from Hindenburg. Dubey urged Birla to constitute

an "inquiry committee" into the charges against her. There is not an iota of doubt about a criminal conspiracy hatched by Mahua Moitra to garner and protect the business interests of a businessman — Darshan Hiranandani — by

Parliamentary asking Questions, which is reminiscent of 'Cash for Query' episode of 12 December, 2005,"

Moitra posted several messages on X to hit back at Dubey without directly naming him and fired fresh salvo at the

"Multiple breach of privileges pending against fake degree-Welcome any motions against me right after Speaker finishes dealing with those. Also waiting for ED & others to file FIR in Adani coal scam before coming to my doorstep," she

said.
"If Adani group is relying on dodgy dossier created by dubi-ous Sanghis & circulated by fake degree wallahs to either shut me up or bring me down I would advise them not to waste their time. Use your lawyers wisely," the TMC MP

added. In his letter to Birla, Dubey alleged that Moitra's conduct marks the "reemergence of cash for query", a reference to the 2005 media expose of many MPs asking questions in Parliament in exchange for bribes.

Noting that membership of 11 MPs were quashed on the rec-

ommendations of an inquiry committee within 23 days of its constitution, he said Moitra should also be similarly probed and suspended from the House

till the report is submitted. Citing her vehement attacks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Dubey alleged that a "clever facade" was created in the past few years as she often references to the Adani Group while giving the impression that she was against the govern-

ment. In another post, Moitra said, "Also welcome CBI enquiry into my alleged money laundering right after they finish investigating Adani's offshore money trail, over invoicing,

benami accounts. "Adani may use BJP agencies to browbeat competition & buy airports but just try doing it

with me.' In a post on X, Dubey said membership of 11 MPs were quashed by same Parliament and such brazen conduct will not be acceptable now too and also alleged the use of hawala money by her without naming



Afghanistan stun England by 69 runs. Muieeb Ur Rahman with teammates celebrates the wicket of England's Chris Woakes during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 match between Afghanistan and England, at Arun Jaitley

# Tremors felt in Delhi NCR

STAFF REPORTER ■

**NEW DELHI** 

An earthquake of magnitude 3.1 struck Faridabad in Haryana at 4.08 pm on Sunday, the National Centre for Seismology said.

quake was nine kilometres east of Faridabad and 30 kilometres southeast of Delhi. The quake triggered panic

It said the epicentre for the

among people, with many in Delhi and the National Capital Region reporting vigorous shaking of furniture. Several social media users shared visuals of people rush-

ing out of residential buildings. The tremors woke up some people in Noida from their afternoon slumber.

"I was sleeping. Suddenly, I felt as if someone had climbed on my bed. I woke up only to find that it was an earthquake. A lamp and the fan in the room

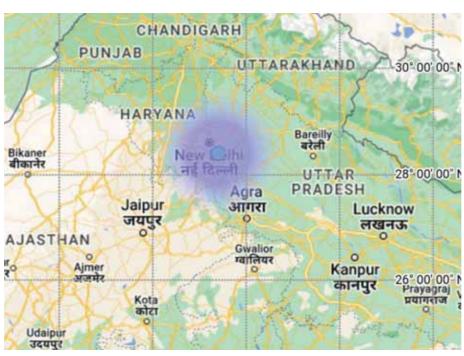
were swinging," Ashwin Saxena, a resident of Prateek Wisteria in Noida, told PTI. Several people who were in crowded places also felt the tremors. Sangeeta Sharma,

ongoing Exhibition at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida was among them. "I felt as if the floor of the exhibition area was shaking. I was told by those nearby that it could be because of activities on the upper deck or outside our hall. But soon we got to

who has put up a stall at the ongoing Handicrafts

know of the earthquake," Sharma said. Previously on October 3, strong tremors reverberated through parts of north India, including the Delhi-NCR, after a series of earthquakes, the strongest being of magnitude

6.2, jolted Nepal in quick suc-India is located in a seismical-



ly active region. But with a lot of microearthquakes occurresonant frequency. ring every day, the stored-up energy gets released, according to Director O P Mishra of the National Centre for Seismology, Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Experts say the impact of a large-scale earthquake can be reduced if people and institutions strictly comply with the bylaws and codes to build resilient structures.

They say the resonant frequency of a building can play a critical role in determining the level of damage that it experiences during an earth-

Buildings have natural frequencies of vibration, also known as resonant frequencies, which are determined by their

mass, stiffness and size. The ground motion during an earthquake can excite these natural frequencies, causing resonant frequency.
If the frequency of the ground

motion matches or is more than the resonant frequency of a building, the structure will experience significant amplifications of the ground motion, leading to more intense shaking and potentially causing significant damage.

In Afghanistan too a powerful 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck on Sunday, just over a week after strong quakes and aftershocks killed thousands of people and flattened entire villages in the same province. The US Geological Survey said the latest quake's epicentre was about 34 kilometres (21 miles) outside Herat, the provincial capital, and eight kilometers (five miles) below the surface. Save the Children said four people have died and that Herat Regional Hospital has

received 153 injured.

Everything in the Baloch area of Rabat Sangi district has collapsed. Several villages have been destroyed, according to the aid group. Authorities have given lower casualty numbers. Sayed Kazim Rafiqi, 42, a Herat city resident, said he had never seen such devastation before with the majority of houses damaged and "people terrified." Rafiqi and others headed to the hospital to donate much-needed blood. 'We have to help in any way possible," he said.

The earthquakes on October 7 flattened whole villages in Herat, in one of the most destructive quakes in the country's recent history.

More than 90 per cent of the people killed a week ago were women and children, ŬN officials reported Thursday. Officials said the earlier quakes killed more than 2,000 people across the province.

## 15 killed, 23 hurt in 2 mishaps on Mumbai-Nagpur expressway

In two more mishaps on the accident-prone Mumbai-Samruddhi Expressway, at least 15 persons were killed and 23 other injured when a speeding mini tourist bus rammed into a stationary container at Vaijapur in Aurangabad district, in while a car hit a road divider on the Expressway in the early hours

of Sunday.
While 12 persons were killed and 23 others injured when a over-loaded mini tourist on the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway at the Jambargaon toll naka on the expressway that has become notorious for recurring mishaps, three family members of All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AÍMIM) state General Secretary Syed Moin died on the spot when a car rammed into a road divider.

The first mishap took place at around 00.30 hours. Of those killed were two minor children and eight women.

The mini private bus with a permitted capacity of 17 passengers was carrying 35 passengers and it was on its way from Buldhana to Nashik via Aurangabad (known now offias Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar), when the mishap occurred. The bus hit the container that had stopped at the RTO toll at Jambargaon

The victims were returning to their homes in Indiranagar at Nashik after performing a pilgrimage at the Sailani Baba Dargah at Buldhana. The

Giving details about the second mishap, AIMIM Syed Imtiaz Jaleel wrote on "X": One more accident on Samruddhi expressway today. Three persons died on the spot. They were family members of our senior leader

@SyedMoin9890

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Eknath Maharashtra Opposition leaders and others mourned those killed in the first mishap that claimed the lives of 12 persons and left 23 others injured.

Prime Minister announced Rs 2 lakh to the families of each of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured, while Shinde declared Rs 5 lakh each as compensation to the families of the fatal victims and full free treatment to all the injured in the mishap. Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT)

Leader of Opposition in the State Legislative council Ambadas Danve and MP Sanjay Raut came down heavily on the recurring accidents on the Samruddhi Expressway. "The Maharashtra government is responsible. This is not an





said, after visiting the spot and meeting the patients at the

The Samruddhi Expressway was built and inaugurated hurriedly without providing for proper facilities and Shinde and Devendra Fadnavis claimed full credit for, now the concerned ministers must take responsibility and should be sacked for this tragedy," Raut

The Shinde government also came in for fierce criticism from the Congress, NCP and AIMIM leaders.

Sunday's was the third mishap that took place on the Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway. Earlier, in an unusual mishap that had taken place on this Expressway at east 20 persons were killed and three others injured when a girder-launching crane collapsed at Shahapur in Thane

The crane crash had come close on the heels of a gruesome tragedy that took place on July 1, 2023, , as many as 26 persons were charred to death and seven others suffered severe burn wounds when a private sleeper-coach AC luxury bus caught fire off the Pimpalkhuta village along the Samruddhi Expressway between Dusarbid and 130-odd deaths. Sindkedraja in Buldhana district of eastern Maharashtra. It may be recalled that the 701-

km long 'Hindu HridaySamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg' Phase I was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December On May 26, 2023, Maharashtra

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated the Phase-II of the expressway from Shirdi to Igatpuri in

Nashik district, a distance of around 80 km.

With 600 km Expressway construction complete, the focus is now on the connection between Igatpuri and Mumbai a distance of 101 km.

The Samruddhi Expressway has earned the notoriety of being a 'killer highway' where there were earlier 30-odd mishaps on the Nagpur-Nashik stretch, involving as many as

On May 8, 2023, an underconstruction bridge along the Mumbai-Nagpur Super Expressway in the Sinnar-Ghoti area in Igatpuri taluka of Nashik district collapsed However, as no construction work was taking place at that time, no one was injured in the mishap. The earlier mishap had thrown up questions about the quality, processes and materials used and proper supervibeing undertaken.

### Poll year sees Ram Mandir theme in Durga Pujas

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

Well ahead of Ayodhya, Bengal is getting its own version of Ram Mandir. The only mark of distinction between the two is the presiding idol. Here in Kolkata Mother Goddess Durga will be the presiding deity inside the 'Ram Mandir' instead of the Ram Lalla.

With general elections barely a few months away Bengal's biggest festival seems to have caught the wind of politics as a number of Durga Puja organisers of the BJP brand have introduced the newly constructed and just-to-be-finished Ram Mandir of Ayodhya as a Theme of the festivities. Take the big-budget Santosh Mitra Square Durga Puja committee of northern Kolkata that draws lakhs of crowds every year for instance. The Marquees here have been shaped after the Ayodhya Ram Temple which is likely to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi early next year. Like most other Durga Pujas which are patronized by one politician or the other, the Pujas at Santosh Mitra Square are organized by Sajal Ghosh, a BJP councilor and a party State committee member.

The organizers of this multimillion budget Durga Puja promise a "complete Ayodhyalike atmosphere. Apart from Mother Durga

with her four children Laxmi, Ganesha, Saraswati and Kartikeya, here you will witness life-size idols and 3D illuminations of Lord Rama and his follower Lord Hanuman. "You will feel like sitting on the banks of Saryu River with an Aaarti of Ram Lalla being performed," Swarup Dey, one of the mem-

On Ram Temple emerging as more of a political than a spiritual topic in the recent years Ghosh said "if you can construct a Burz Khalifa then why you cannot make a Ram Temple." Last year another club presided by Bengal



Minister Sujit Basu had constructed a replica of Burz Khalifa which had become an instant hit.

Ghosh also said "Last year we had constructed the Red Fort to celebrate Amrit Mahotsav of Independence drawing lakhs of people ... this time also we promise to do an encore."

Referring to politicization of themes like this he reminded Lord Rama was the one who had started the Akaal Bodhan or the untimely Durga Puja which is usually celebrated in Vasanta or Spring season and

is traditionally called the

Basanti Puja. Thus goes the story according to Krittivasi Ramayana. Ram after reaching Lanka to rescue his wife Sita from demon king Ravana was told that he could not do so until he pleased Goddess Durga. This is because Ravana being a devotee of the Goddess was "sitting in Durga's lap and was under

Thereafter Lord Rama started the untimely Puja of Goddess Durga in the month of Autumn. Satisfied by his devo-

her protection."

tion the Mother appeared and blessed Lord Rama with victory and promised to leave Sri Lanka allowing Lord Rama to defeat Ravan in the battle. Rest is history. As the Puja started by Rama was in Autumn and not Spring it is called Akal Awakening of the Mother. Cut to Balurghat in North Bengal. Here the New Town Durga Puja committee patronized by local MP and Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar too is modeled after "India's national temple."

When asked whether this had any relation with the next year's general elections, the senior BJP leader replied in the negative saying however that, "the Ram Mandir will only go on to remind the people for ages to come how a wrong can be undone through ages-long struggle of which Ram Temple is an example... definitely it has a clear message that finally there is always a victory of the Truth." Ruling Trinamool Congress

spokesperson Kunal Ghosh

however scoffed at the BJP leaders for "politicizing Durga Pujas" which he called a purely religious and social affair. They have always blamed the

TMC for using religion in politics but this is the best example to show how they are using religion to influence their politics ... having failed to beat us politically, they are trying to bring Ram Mandir in the centre stage of politics well before the BJP as a party and its central governments bring it in January when the Prime Minister will inaugurate the Ram Temple to gain political mileage out of it in the elections," Ghosh said.

The Left too criticized the BJP for mixing politics with religion. "They have always done so and even this time they are doing so by using Ram Mandir but this time it will not be of any help as the people have

started asking basic questions of Roti, Kapda aur Makaan and employment etc," said CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty

Libraries should be built to connect youth with

### Shah to inaugurate 'Ram Mandir' facsimile at City of Joy today

The breaking news is: Home Minister Amit Shah and not Prime Minister Narendra Modi will get the honour of inaugurating the just constructed 'Ram Mandir'.

Come Monday, the Home Minister will inaugurated a facsimile version of the original Temple, at the City of Joy --- thousand miles towards the East of Ayodhya --- months ahead of the original Ram Temple getting inaugurated by the Prime Minister at Lord Rama's own abode.

The Union Home Minister will inaugurate the Durga Pujas organized by the Raja Santosh Mitra Square Durga Puja committee in northern Kolkata where the Marquees have been shaped exactly after the Ayodhya Ram Mandir. With Shah inaugurating this

Durga Puja celebrations in Kolkata, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will no longer hold the monopoly of cutting the ribbons at Durga Puja pandals. "Amit Shah ji will inaugurate

our Puja tomorrow ... this year we have designed it after Ayodhya's Ram Temple and will try to create an exact ambience of what once was the Capital of Lord Rama's empire. Along with him our Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari is also likely to be present there," Sajal Ghosh, a powerful State committee member and a councilor of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation said. Inside sources in the BJP said that apart from inaugurating the Pujas Shah is also likely to hold some important organizational meetings with members of various groups in a faction-ridden State BJP.

### **Former CEC MS Gill** dies after brief illness

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F^{\rm ormer\ chief\ election\ commissioner\ Manohar\ Singh}$ pital on Sunday after a brief illness, according to people close to him. He was 86. Gill will be cremated here on Monday, they said.

A former bureaucrat, Gill served under Parkash Singh Badal as a young officer when the Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch was the Punjab chief minister.

He served as the chief election commissioner (CEC) between December 1996 and June

Gill and GVG Krishnamurty were made members of the Election Commission when TN Seshan was heading the poll panel. It was then that the poll panel became a multimember body, a former government functionary said. He is perhaps the first former



CEC to have joined politics. Gill entered the Rajya Sabha as a Congress member and was made the Union sports minister in 2008.

Gill is survived by his wife and three daughters.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge condoled Gill's demise and lauded his contribution to the development of the nation.

"Extremely saddened at the passing away of former Union minister, Padma Vibhushan, Shri Manohar Singh Gill ji," Kharge said in a post on X. "As a valued colleague in the UPA govt and earlier as a civil the development of the nation in varied fields like sports, electoral processes and agriculture were long lasting," he

Kharge also extended his "deepest condolences" to the family, friends and followers of the former Union minister. 'I pray to the Almighty for his eternal peace," he added. Former Punjab chief minister

Amarinder Singh also expressed his sadness at Gill's passing. Saddened to hear about the

passing away of former CEC and Union Minister Dr Manohar Singh Gill. My heartfelt condolences are with his family and I pray to Waheguru ji to grant eternal peace to the departed soul," he said in a post on X.

### country's history, language and culture: Shah

**PTI** ■ GANDHINAGAR **▼**nion Home Minister Amit

libraries should be built to connect the youth with the history, language and culture of the country, and urged teachers to encourage students to visit the facilities to gain knowledge in the subjects of their interest.

Shah was addressing a gath-

ering in Gujarat's Gandhinagar after inaugurating the "Samau Shaheed Memorial" built as a tribute to 12 martyrs from Mansa who made the supreme sacrifice for the country's freedom during the revolt of 1857. He also inaugurated a library. The Union minister said today's youth will not be able to deliver a speech in Guiarati for 35 minutes without using English words as they are unaware of the richness of their mother tongue.



"Libraries should be built for the youth to connect to the country's history, language and culture," Shah said, stressing that had there not been a rich library in Mansa, he might be working as a businessman

'The library at Mansa gave me the opportunity to recognise

our country's culture, religion and language," the Union min-

ister said. He said there are 7,000 books in the library, and it pleased him to find 'Bhagwat Go Mandal' (encyclopedia of Gujarati language) and Gujarat grammar books on the list. "If I ask the youth, especially

minutes without using they have interest, then will be able to do so because the youth are unaware of the repository of our words, grammar, and rich language. "As a minister in Gujarat, I had

organised a competition in districts for youth to deliver a speech for 20 minutes without using the English language. Nobody could do so," the Union minister said. Shah appealed to the teachers

of primary and secondary schools present in the audience to take the youth and children to the library, because 'the future of Gujarat and the country will emerge from libraries".

At the same time, children should not be made 'pothi pandit, or one who learns everything by rote, as it will vield no result, he said.

the children of Samau village, "If we work to make them to speak in Gujarati for 35" experts in the subject in which get a proper citizen to make contribution for the country, Shah said. He said that while 12 martyrs from Mansa in Gandhinagar district sacrificed their life in 1857 for the country's freedom, there was no memorial in their name. "I wrote to Gujarat chief minister that the state government's Youth and Cultural Ministry should build a beautiful 'smarak' (memorial) and make arrangements for Tricolour hoisting so that when it is hoisted, it gives peace to their soul," he said. During the day, Shah inaugurated the public relations office of Naranpura assembly MLA Jitubhai Patel and Dariapur

assembly MLA Kaushik Jain in

the presence of Chief Minister

Bhupendra Patel.

### Kerala CM welcomes first ever ship to Vizhinjam port

**PTI** ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

rerala Chief Minister Kerala Chief Manager Vijayan on Sunday welcomed the first ever ship at the Rs 7,700 crore inter-

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAGISTRATE/MARRIAGE OFFICER **GAUTAMBUDH NAGAR** /ST-CM (Marriage Registration)/2023 Date: 04 October, 2023





#### NOTICE

received from Mr. Shahenshah Alam S/o Mr. Abdul Rauf R/o House No. 181, Pawan Vihar Koda Colony, Ghaziabad U.P.-201001 and Ms. Aditi Janet Khalkho D/o Mr. Arun Kumai Khalkho R/o House No. B-157, Rail Nagar, Sector-50, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) in the office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may file objection to it on any day upto 03-11-2023 in the office

City Magistrate/Marriage Officer Noida Gautam Budh Nagar

national deep-water port at Vizhinjam here at an event which saw the Congress attribute credit for the project to late party stalwart Oommen Chandy.

As Vijayan said the scope of development that the port would bring to the state was beyond imagination and the arrival of the first ship shows nothing was impossible for Kerala, the Congress said it was all possible only due to the initiatives taken by Chandy when he was the CM.

Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the state assembly V D Satheesan said Chandy bravely took the decision to make Vizhinjam port a reality even when he was accused of piracy and selling real-estate worth Rs 6,000 crore to the Adani

He did not flinch or back down or give up in the face of such accusations," the LoP said while speaking at the event. Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor, who too spoke at the

initiative taken by Chandy that the project -- which was stagnant from 2004 to 2010 -moved forward. Chandy ensured all studies

event, said it was thanks to the

were carried out and all approvals were received from the Centre during his tenure. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief K Sudhakaran, in a statement, slammed Vijayan for not commemorating Chandy as was done by state Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkovil. Sudhakaran alleged that Vijayan was "unlucky" as he

was destined to inaugurate projects initiated by the former CM. Union Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan, on the other hand, attributed credit for the project to the Narendra Modi government. He said the project was an out-

Internation

come of the good governance of the Modi government. Muraleedharan said new life was breathed into the port project in 2015 only after the Modi government came to

Meanwhile, Karan Adani --CEO of Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd -- in a post on social media platform X said that the project journey began in 2015 and the momentous occasion was due to the trust and love shown by

"Our journey began in 2015 when the people of Kerala and Thiruvananthapuram entrusted us with their dream of this port. Today, as the 1st vessel berths at #VizhinjamPort, the trust & love shown by all have brought us to this momentous day. My heartfelt salutation to

each one of you," he said. The CM, in his speech on the occasion, said the arrival of the first ship at the deep water port indicates "nothing is impossible for Kerala" and that the state 'will survive any crisis".

"The scope of development in Kerala due to Vizhinjam port is beyond our imagination. Therefore, we should all take an approach conducive for it," he

He said that with the coming of the first ship at the port, "we are at the threshold of our dream project becoming a reality".

#### Health Minister rejects India's low rank in Global Hunger Index on the topic "Transformation of

 $R^{\text{ejecting India's low rank in}}_{\text{Global Hunger Index-2023,}}$ Mansukh Mandaviya on Sunday said parameters that are currently being followed for evaluation are not based on conditions specific to the coun-

Interacting with students at IIT-Guwahati, he refuted reports of large-scale malnutrition in India.

"Every country and its people have their own body and genetic structures, which also leads to a difference in how malnutrition is measured. What Europe considers as its parameter for determining malnutrition, it may not be applicable for us," he said.

"Some company makes its own index and comes up with a list and we believe it. It can't happen. We are now analysing whether these parameters are



replying to a question from a student on India performing poorly in the Global Hunger Index.

India ranked 111th out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index-2023, released on Thursday, with the country reporting the highest child wasting rate at 18.7 per cent. The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels.

Mandaviya delivered the 'Amrit Kaal Vimarsh Viksit Bharat @ 2047' lecture at IIT-Guwahati Healthcare in Amrit Kaal". Soon after that, he participated in the interaction with the Responding to a query on how

mental health issues can be addressed, the minister maintained that such problems were not a major concern in India earlier due to the societal setup, especially the presence of joint families. "Issues were mostly taken care

of due to the joint family set up previously. We cannot be blindly following others as we have to understand that for someone in a European country, problems will be very different," he said. Mandaviya said that while the government is working on enhanced institutional help, societal remedies also have to be explored.

In hīs speech, Mandaviya stressed the role of students in shaping the future of the coun-

## **SC** to hear Raghav plea against RS suspension

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea moved by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha, chal-lenging his indefinite suspension from the Rajya Sabha.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is scheduled to hear the plea of Chadha, who was suspended on the last day of the Monsoon Session Parliament on August 11 for "gross violation of rules, misconduct, defiant attitude and contemptuous conduct", pending a report by the privileges committee.

In his plea filed through advocate Shadan Farasat, the AAP leader has said the power to suspend indefinitely is dangerously open to excess and abuse."The power to suspend is meant only to be used as a shield and not as a sword, that is, it cannot be penal," the plea has said, adding that "the suspension is in clear breach of Rule 256 of the Rules of



Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, which incorporates a categorical prohibition against the suspension of any member for a period exceeding the remainder of the session".

It has noted that suspension beyond the remaining period of an ongoing session would not only be a grossly irrational measure, but would also be violative of basic democratic values owing to the unessential deprivation of the member concerned and more importantly, the constituency remaining unrepresented in the House

The plea has said suspension cannot have the effect of dismissal as, in terms of Article 101(4) of the Constitution, the effect of an indefinite suspension, particularly outside the period of a session is to de-facto create a vacancy after a period of 60 days. On August 11, a motion was

passed by a voice vote in the Rajya Sabha after it was moved by Leader of the House Piyush Goyal, who sought action against the AAP leader for including the names of some members of the Upper House without their consent in a proposed select committee for the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

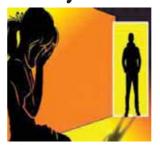
### School van driver gets 7 years | Congress holds Pratigya jail for sexually assaulting girl

A court here has sentenced a 35-year-old school van driver to seven-year rigorous imprisonment for committing aggravated sexual assault on a 10-year-old girl. The court observed that the

convict must be awarded such a sentence to discourage other "like-minded people" in society from committing such offences. The seriousness of the offence lies not in the extent of punishment it carries but in the impact it has on the social psyche and public order, it said. Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Susheel Bala Dagar was hearing a case against Anuj, who was convicted under Section 10 (aggravated sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

According to the prosecution, Anuj was the driver of the victim's school van and committed aggravated sexual assault on her. He also threatened to kill the girl, in case she disclosed his act to her family members, it said.

ASJ Dagar said there was no ground to show leniency to the convict as he, despite having his own children, committed such



a "disgusting assault" on the child whom he used to drive to school in the van for five years from the date of the incident. 'Taking into consideration the aggravating and mitigating circumstances, including the gravity of the offence, the age of the child victim and the convict, the family condition of the convict and the child victim, and social and economic factors governing them, the convict Anuj is sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment for the offence punishable under Section 10 of the POCSO Act," the court said in an order passed on October 10. It said the convict's act was a "ridiculous form of enjoyment" for him but a mental torture for the victim who was alone with the convict in the van at the time of the incident.

"Abusers who indulge in such perverted acts do not seem to

on the fundamental right to privacy of body of the victim child and due to such offenders, the children are not safe inside such places where they would usually expect not to be violated," the court said. In the present case, it said, the

minor victim was sent in the school van where the driver was in a position of trust and confidence. The court said zero tolerance

for crimes against children is the need of the hour.

The seriousness of the offence lies not in the extent of punishment it carries but in the impact it has on the social psy che and public order," it said. It said people who indulge in 'such enjoyment" do not seem to realise how a child may be affected by their acts. The convict must be awarded

such a sentence which discourages the other like-minded people of society from (committing) such offences," it The court said the victim had

been subjected to aggravated sexual assault and mental as well as physical trauma and due to this incident, the victim and her family members were

# rally in Bawana

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Sunday held a 'pratigya rally' in Bawana, an Assembly constituency that falls under the North-West Delhi Lok Sabha seat, a move aimed at reviving the party's fortunes in the national capital, where it has not been able to win even a single Assembly election or a seat in the Lok Sabha for a decade now.

Addressing a rally in Bawana, Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely lashed out at the BJP and the AAP for ignoring people of dehat areas. "The BJP Government at the Centre and the Delhi Government have made the people of 365 villages of Delhi, who played a vital role in the building of Delhi, refugees in their own lands. He said that imposing house tax on the villagers of Delhi was not only a crime, but also a violation of the rules and regulations," he said. Lovely made a frontal attack on the Government on the issue of allotment of ration cards, the ownership of the plots allotted to the poor under the 20-point programme and land pooling, as the Government was acting against

the interest of the common



said that old-age pensions has been stopped, and the facilities provided to rural areas have been discontinued

Before arriving at the Pratigya Rally venue, Lovely was accorded a warm welcome at the Britania Chowk on Ring Road by hundreds of party workers. From there, accompanied by several vehicles, Lovely travelled to Madhuban Chowk, where local people, party workers and shop keepers accorded him a grand reception with garlands. From there Lovely travelled to the Rithala Metro Station, covered almost 15 kms before reaching

He was accompanied with Delhi Congress leader Harun Yusuf, Devender Yadav, Bheesham Sharma, Raj Kumar Chauhan, Jai Kishan, Surender Kumar and Mukesh Sharma. The Congress will hold rallies in all seven Lok Sabha constituencies of Delhi in the com-

### Stretch of Rohtak Road to be redesigned to prevent waterlogging

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The drainage system on the stretch between Nangloi Metro Station and Tikri Border on Rohtak Road will be improved to prevent water-logging, an official statement said on Sunday. Delhi Public Works

Department Atishi held a review meeting with officials on the redesigning of the stretch and asked engineers to conduct a survey in collaboration with experts to prepare a comprehensive plan, it said.

Last month, she conduct-

ed an on-ground inspection of the stretch and instructed officials to redesign the entire road and resolve all the issues. She had instructed them to

emphasise road strengthening through re-carpeting, footpath repair for pedestrian convenience, and horticultural enhancements for road beautification as part of the road

She also directed the offi- Ring Road



cials to focus on redesigning and repairing the existing drainage system as it was not functioning properly leading to waterlogging and road damage.

To prevent future waterlogging problems, a plan should be made to connect the outfall of the main road drain with three major channels -SN Drain, Supplementary Drain, and Hirankudna Drain, along with the desilting of the drains, the statement added.

During the meeting, she said that the stretch of road between Tikri Border and Nangloi Metro Station on Rohtak Road is an important | commission or omission of a

### LG appoints retired HC judge as Police plaints Authority chief

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena has approved the appointment of retired Delhi High Court judge Poonam A Bamba as the chairperson of the Police Complaints Authority, Raj Niwas officials said on Sunday. The Police Complaints

Authority (PCA) deals with complaints of serious misconduct against police personnel, either on a suo motu basis or those received from people on a sworn affidavit, the National Human Rights Commission, the lieutenant governor, the chief secretary or the principal secretary (Home) of the Delhi govern-

"However, no anonymous and pseudonymous complaints are entertained," the officials said.

They said serious misconduct shall mean any act of



hurt and rape or attempt to

rape in police custody.

The PCA can also deal with complaints related to arrest or detention without the due process of law, extortion, land or house grabbing or any other incident involve. or any other incident involving serious abuse of authority, they added.

The name of Poonam A Bamba, who retired on August 31 this year, was forwarded for the position at the amounts to death, grievous of the Delhi High Court, the appointment of the chairper-

officials said.

She will take over as the PCA chairperson, replacing Justice P S Teji (retd) whose tenure ended on August 13.

The PCA was constituted on January 29, 2018, in compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court and the guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The LG is the appointing authority for the chairman and the members of the PCA.

ted by the chief secretary and the LG was informed that a separate proposal for appointments of members will be placed before him, the offi-

Saxena had earlier approved the constitution of a search committee for identifying the replacements of all existing members and had requested the chief justice to recommend the name of a retired high court judge for the position of PCA chairperson. The PCA is headed by its chairperson and has three members, of which one has to be a woman and in case a woman is appointed as the chairperson, then it shall not be mandatory to have a woman member.

The term of the chairperson and the members of the authority is three years and the upper age limit for members is 65 years but the chairperson can continue beyond 65 years, if necessary to com-

### AQI in poor category, minimum temperature 21.6 degrees Celsius



**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The minimum temperature in Delhi settled at 21.6 degrees Celsius on Sunday morning, two notches above the season's average, while the air quality index (AQI) was in the poor category. According to the IMD, the

relative humidity on Sunday

Department has forecast a part ly cloudy sky with the possibility of very light rain or drizzle in the evening. The maximum temperature is expected to set-tle around 35 degrees Celsius. An AQI between 0-50 is

considered "good", 51-100 "satisfactory", 101-200 "moderate", 201-300 "poor", 301-400 "very poor" and 401-500 "severe".

### One dead, three injured in bike accident on JNU campus

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

22-year-old JNU student Awas killed and three others injured after a motorcycle hit two pedestrians on the varsity campus in the early hours of Sunday, police said.
The accident occurred around

2.30 am when two students riding a KTM motorcycle rammed into two students walking towards Godavari Hostel, they said. According to the police, the

deceased has been identified as Anshu Kumar, a first year stu-



Russian language. He was declared brought dead.

The condition of Vishal Kumar, 23, who was riding pillion, is critical. He is not a student of JNU.

The two pedestrians have been identified as Sachin Sharma and Mrigank Yadav. While Sharma's condition is critical, Yadav is stable. Both are pursuing Masters in Political Science from the university.
Police said that the injured students were rushed to AIIMS Trauma Centre.

An FIR under relevant sections of the IPC has been registered and a crime team, along with a forensic team, has inspected 5 students booked for molesting classmate in Noida school **STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Five students have been booked for allegedly assaulting and molesting their classmate on the school premises in Noida and an investigation has been initiated into the matter, police said on Sunday.

The girl's father claimed that she had reported the first instance of "sexual harassment" on October 9 to the principal of the school. But the accused misbehaved with her again on October 13 after which he approached the police, the father said.

The private school, locat-

ed at Noida Sector 100, said it has also started its own probe into the "interdiscipli-

nary" matter. According to a police spokesperson, "The girl, who studies in Class 11, was assaulted by her classmates. An FIR has been lodged at the local Sector 39 police station after which the girl was sent for medical examination."

All allegations in the case are being looked into and investigated appropriately, the spokesperson said, adding, The complainant and the accused all are minors. The school principal was informed about the episode



over mail by the girl. What action did the school take after her complaint, that is also being checked." An FIR

has been lodged under Indian Penal Code sections 147 (rioting), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 352, (assault or criminal force), 345A (sexual assault), and 506 (criminal intimidation), the police said.
In his complaint to the

police on October 13, the father claimed that after his daughter informed the school principal about the "vulgar" talks, and "sexual harass-ment" by them, and objected to the boy's alleged acts, they told her that "we can go to any limits".

"Despite being informed about it, the school did nothing. Today, on October 13, my

daughter called me up once again in the afternoon to inform me of the repeated behaviour. I immediately called up the principal and asked what was happening. They have only been assuring of investigating the matter," he

claimed. The father also alleged that one of the accused students also threatened to kill his daughter. Meanwhile, in a statement issued on Saturday, the school said it was aware of the "unfortunate incident" on the campus. "The interdisciplinary matter is being thoroughly investigated and

An artisan gives final touches to the idols of Goddess Durga ahead of the Durga Puja festival at Chittranjan Park Ranjan Dimri

### Five people arrested | Court appoints former judge in Mundka petrol pump robbery case

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrest ded five persons for allegedly robbing a petrol pump at gunpoint in outer Delhi's Mundka area, an officer said on Sunday.

He said they have recovered two country-made pistols, five live cartridges, and two motorcycles used in the crime from their possession. "On October 11, the Mundka

Police Station had registered a case of robbery and relevant provisions of Arms Act after they got a complaint regarding the incident. We pro-cured CCTV footage of the incident and started an investigation into the matter," said Deputy Commissioner of



He said a police team formed for the task arrested five men identified as Kailash Mehto, 30, Pandav Kumar, 20, Guddu, 27, Mahavir Kumar, 30, and a 19-year-old Ashish Kumar. All five confessed to their crime, said Chiram.



management and illegal functioning of the society.
The plaintiffs said the society was a public religious trust created for the purpose of promoting an awareness of the

moting an awareness of the ethos of Islamic Culture and to assist in the creation of an ethical society based on tolerance, universal brotherhood, love, and charity amongst the members of the public.

In its order, the court noted that in view of the tussle going on



as court observer for IICC

functioning of society has been affected requiring immediate indulgence in appointing an administrator/Observer so that further damage is contained in the interest of members and public at large.

During the course of arguments, all parties have made suggestions for appointment of an observer due to conflict of interest amongst its office bearers... Hence, Mr. Justice Talwant

Singh (Retd.) hereby appointed as learned Court Observer," Justice Yogesh Khanna said in a recent order. The court said Justice Singh would take charge of membership records, and minutes of

meetings of the society and preserve the same as well as conduct membership and financial audits with respect to income and expenditure of the society. The court, which gave several powers and responsibilities to the retired judge in relation to running the affairs of the society, further said after the membership audit is completed, the Court Observer will initiate the election process in accordance with the Memorandum of Articles of Association and hold elections and hand over the management to the newly elected Board of Trustees subject to further directions.

## No support for terrorism in India: Birla

ok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Lon Sunday said he has conveyed to his counterparts from G20 nations that India does not support terrorism or terror activities in any form. Birla was responding to questions on the bilateral meetings he had with Speakers of G20 nations during the Parliament 20 Summit that concluded here on Saturday.

"The position of the Government is very clear in this regard. The Prime Minister has also said it in his statement. The Government has made it clear that terrorism and terror activities have no place in India," the Lok Sabha Speaker said while briefing reporters on

He was responding to a ques-

from the G20 countries had raised the issue of presence of people in India who were pursuing separatist activities

"It is a clear Government policy... terrorism, be it of caste or religion ... terrorism is terrorism, and no form of terror will find any support in India. This is the clear Government policy," Birla said.

On the P20 Summit, Birla said 436 delegates including presiding officers of 27 nations and 49 members of parliament participated in the two-day summit held at Yashobhoomi.

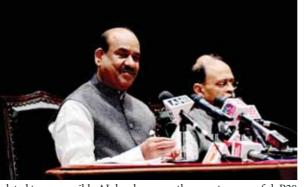
He said this was the maximum attendance at any P20 Summit so far and a consensus on the joint statement was a key highlight of the deliberations. India had hosted the ninth edition of the P20 Summit.

Birla said India also offered to set up an expert group on legislative drafting, an area where the Indian Parliament has considerable expertise and has organised training sessions for parliaments of several coun-

He said the success of the G-20 Leaders' Summit, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also reflected on the deliberations at the P20 Summit, which also led to a ioint statement.

Birla pointed out that a joint statement was not possible at the previous P20 meeting hosted by Indonesia.

Birla said in the conference, some countries emphasised on reliable and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence and data security. He noted that all countries stressed the need to pay attention to dimensions



related to responsible AI development and data security. He further said that Artificial Intelligence should be credible and trustworthy and informed that the P20 countries agreed to form a group to enhance domain knowledge for legislative drafting.

He further told the media that the New Delhi P20 Summit was the most successful P20 Summit ever in terms of participation of delegations. He informed that apart from the G20 countries, 10 other countries were invited to the conference, in which all the countries except one participated. He further informed that a total of 37 Speakers / Chairpersons and Deputy Speakers / Deputy

delegations from 29 countries participated in the summit. Expressing satisfaction, Birla noted that from the historical point of view, the New Delhi P20 conference had the highest participation ever. He also pointed out that the Pan-African Parliament participated in the P20 summit for the first time since the African Union was admitted as a member of the G20. A total of 436 delegates, including 48 Members of Parliament

in addition to the Speakers and Deputy Speakers of the Parliaments of the G20 and invited countries, participated in the summit. Regarding the inaugural ses-

sion, Birla informed that the P20 summit was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi where he highlighted er of democracy. Birla also informed that in line with the Prime Minister's initiative, the conference agreed to promote women-led development.

He said all the Presiding Officers welcomed the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Bill 2023' passed by the Indian Parliament. Describing climate change as a

major challenge before the world, Birla said India has taken several initiatives to deal with the threat of climate change.

Regarding the discussion on the concept of Environment Friendly Lifestyle (LiFE) initiated by the Prime Minister, Birla noted that all the countries shared information about the innovations being made in this regard. He further said now there will

be a special discussion on

Parliaments of all the countries, and the message will be given to the entire world to adopt an environment-friendly lifestyle. By doing this, under the leadership of India, people from all over the world will unite to protect the earth, environment and nature.

Similarly, by sharing each other's best practices and efforts, everyone will be able to move towards a healthy and ideal lifestyle.

On the discussion on the role of digital platforms, Birla said that during the Summit, all the countries accepted the role of digital platforms in bringing socio-economic change in the lives of the common people. He further said all countries agreed that this can further facilitate service delivery and

The party has also fielded its

sitting Lok Sabha MP N Uttam

Kumar Reddy from the

Huzurnagar assembly con-

He currently represents the Nalgonda Lok Sabha seat in

Telangana. Besides, first timer

Kota Neelima, wife of nation-

al spokesperson Pawan Khera,

has also been fielded from

Sanathnagar assembly seat.

Telangana assembly polls will

As for the incumbent BRS

government in, Telangana,

Chief Minister and BRS presi-

dent K Chandrasekhar Rao on

Sunday asked the party candi-

dates to reach out to cadres

during their poll campaign for

the assembly elections. KCR

had announced the candidates

for 115 out of the total 119

assembly seats in much

Raising social security pension

amounts, increasing financial

advance in August.

be held on November 30.

stituency.

stituency.

## Two flights bring back 471 Indians from Israel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

As part of ongoing 'Operation Ajay' to evacuate Indian nationals willing to return home from Israel, two flights from Tel Aviv carrying a total of 471 Indians landed in the national Capital on Sunday morning. One flight was oper-ated by Air India and another by SpiceJet.

A total of four flights have been operated under Operation Ajay, which was launched by the government to facilitate the return of Indians who wish to come back from Israel, where an intense conflict is going on with militant group Hamas.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi on Sunday said the third flight with 197 passengers landed at the Delhi airport in the morning. The fourth flight with 274 passengers landed later.

Two chartered flights from Tel Aviv, operated by Air India, came with a total of more than 435 passengers on Friday and

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $R^{\rm adiation \quad Detection}_{\rm Equipment \ (RDE) \ will}$ 

land crossing points along

India's borders with Pakistan,

Bangladesh, Myanmar and

Nepal to check the trafficking

of radioactive materials for its

possible use in making

Sources said the RDE will be

installed at the Integrated

Check Posts and land ports of

Attari (Pakistan border),

Petrapole, Agartala, Dawki

and Sutarkandi (all on the

Bangladesh border), Raxaul

and Jogbani (Nepal) and

Moreh (Myanmar).

nuclear devices.

On Sunday, two Ministers including Kaushal Kishore and General (retired) VK Singh welcomed the evacuees at the

The third flight from Tel Aviv arrived at the IGI Airport here around 4 am with 197 passen-

The Indian nationals were received by Union Minister Kaushal Kishore, who greeted them with the Indian National flag upon their arrival. The fourth flight carrying 274 Indian nationals from Israel, arrived at Delhi airport around 7 a.m. and Singh welcomed

Addressing questions on the Israel-Palestine conflict, which escalated last week after the Hamas group launched rocket attacks on Tel Aviv, MEA)spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had said the government's prime focus was to bring back those citizens wanting to come back.

"Our focus is to bring back Indians who want to come out

of Israel. There are 18,000 Indians there, including students," he said, informing that the govern-ment has launched 'Operation Ajay' to bring back Indian citizens from war-torn Israel.

RDEs to be soon installed at 8 points across Indian borders

will supply and complete the

The central government has

taken the initiative to install

the RDE so that the traffick-

awarded by the government ing of radioactive materials

through an agreement exe- across international borders

cuted last year and the vendor can be checked. The eight

installation process shortly.

#### Congress pins hope on old guards Malkajgiri Parliamentary con-

**NEW DELHI** 

ongress on Sunday Cannounced its first list of party candidates for the Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Telangana Assembly elections. While the party announced 144 party candidates for Madhya Pradesh elections, it announced 30 candidates for the Chhattisgarh polls and another 55 for Telangana assembly polls slated next month.

In Madhya Pradesh, the party fielded former Chief Minister and PCC chief Kamal Nath from his Chhindwara Assembly constituency. Former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh's son Jaivardhan Singh has been fielded from Raghogarh seat. He was a Minister in the last Kamal Nath Government. Madhya Pradesh elections will be held on November 17.

Another former Minister in MP, Vijay Laxmi Sadho, who has been a former Rajya Sabha member, has been fielded from the Maheshwar-SC assembly seat. Former cabinet minister Jitu Patwari has been fielded from Rau assembly con-

ICPs are known to have a sizeable number of cross-bor-

der movements of people and

Any smuggling of radioactive

for India's security agencies as it could be used for making

nuclear devices or radiologi-

cal dispersal devices, said an

official. The RDE will be

installed in a drive-through

monitoring station that mon-

itors trucks and their cargo.

Even though the movement of

people and goods through

the Attari ICP has come down

drastically due to the current

chill in relations with

Pakistan, footfalls in other

ICPs are significant. The secu-

rity agencies at the ICPs could

announced the names of its 136 candidates, including seven Lok Sabha members. These include three Union ministers - Narendra Singh Tomar, Prahlad Singh Patel and Faggan

Singh Kulaste. In the 2018 assembly polls, the Congress won 114 seats in the 230-member House and formed a coalition government under veteran leader Kamal Nath with the support of the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party and independent MLAs. The Nath government, however, collapsed after 15 months when a section of Congress MLAs, most of them loyal to Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, quit the party and joined the BJP. BJP returned to power in March 2020 with Shivraj Singh Chouhan taking over as chief minister for a record fourth

In Chhattisgarh, the party fielded its chief minister Bhupesh Baghel from his Patan assembly constituency and deputy chief minister T S Singh Deo from Ambikapur assembly seat. Another senior minister Tamradhwaj Sahu has been fielded from Durg Rural

use the RDE to monitor cross-

"The RDE is equipped with

raising separate gamma and

neutron radiation alarms and suspected objects," the official

It will also have the ability to

differentiate between special

nuclear material and natural-

ly occurring radiation in fer-

tiliser or ceramics as well as

high-energy gamma isotopes

which are an attribute of recy-

The government is believed to

have taken technical help

from a few foreign agencies,

including those from the

United States, in installing the

cled uranium.

border cargo movement.



Chhattisgarh assembly Speaker Charan Das Mahant has been fielded from Sakti assembly

Pradesh Congress chief Deepak Baij has been fielded by the party from the Chitrakot-ST assembly seat.

He is currently the sitting Lok Sabha MP from Bastar. Former PCC chief and now a minister Mohan Markam has been fielded from the Kondagaon-ST assembly seat which he earlier represented.

Of the nine OBC candidates featuring in the list, three belong to Sahu, a dominant OBC community in the state that hugely contributed to Congress' victory in the previous polls. Congress has not declared candidate for one seat - Jagdalpur - which is among

the 20 constituencies slated to go to polls in the first phase on November 7.

The filing of nominations for the first phase began on October 13. The second phase of polls will be held November 17, covering 70 constituencies. Votes will be counted on December 3.

The BJP has so far announced its candidates for 85 seats, including the 20 seats where elections will be held in the first phase. In the 2018 Chhattisgarh assembly polls, the Congress registered a landslide victory by securing 68 seats in the 90member House and comfortably formed government.

BJP was reduced to 15 seats, while the Janta Congress Chhattisgarh (J) and the Bahujan Samaj Party had bagged 5 and 2 seats, respectively. The present strength of the Congress in the House is 71. It has set a target of winning 75 seats this time.

In Telangana, the party fielded Pradesh Congress chief Anumala Revanth Reddy from Kodangal assembly seat while CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu has been fielded from Madhira-SC seat.

assistance given under the 'Rythu Bandhu' investment support scheme for farmers and providing LPG cylinders at ₹400 each are some of the promises made by the ruling

#### Revanth Reddy is currently the sitting Lok Sabha MP from BRS for the upcoming assembly elections in Telangana. Training programmes organised

PNS NEW DELHI

U Commission — Malviya Mission Teacher Training Centre is organising teachers training programmes in Delhi University for the professors of higher education on the 'Indian Knowledge System' across the country from

October 16-2. Over 200 professors from various educational institutions of India are expected to participate in the programme being held "to revive the values of Indian Knowledge Tradition, according to a press

Government institutions in India

faced 82 cases of cyber attack,

eight times more than in 2021.



Talking about the objectives of the programme, Prof Geeta Singh, Director, CPDHE, said that under the "National Education Policy' the Indian knowledge System is of immense importance to further the objective of 'Bharat Consciousness'. Governor of Kerala Arif Mohammad Arif

Khan, Chairman UGC Jagadesh Kumar, are to speak at the event.

The event will also be attended by Dignitaries like Padmabhushan Prof Kapil Kapoor, Dr Umashankar Pachauri, RSS leader Indresh Kumar, Eminent Thinker, K. Sanjay Murthy, Secretary of Higher Education.

## ₹315 crore assets attached in Maharashtra bank fraud case

Officials informed that work

order for supply, installation

and maintenance of Radiation

Detection Equipment at eight

operational ICPs has been

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Sunday ■ said it has attached land, windmills, silver and diamond jewellery and bullion worth more than ₹315 crore as part of an alleged bank fraud linked money laundering probe against a former NCP MP from Maharashtra, his family and businesses. Ishwarlal Shankarlal Jain Lalwani (77), the former Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament from the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), is the promoter of the Rajmal Lakhichand Jewellers Pvt Ltd, R L Gold Pvt Ltd and Manraj Jewellers among others. The federal agency said in a statement that a provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act was issued by it on Friday to attach 70 immovable assets located in Jalgaon, Mumbai, Thane, Sillod (in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra) and Kutch (Gujarat) apart from some windmills, silver and diamond jewellery, bullion and Indian currency valued at a total ₹315.60 crore in the bank fraud case of Rajmal Lakhichand

Lalwani and others," said ED. The PMLA case stems from three FIRs registered by the CBI alleging that these companies and its directors/promoters caused wrongful loss of more than ₹352.49 crore to

Jewelers Pvt. Ltd., R L Gold Pvt. Ltd., and Manraj Jewellers Pvt. Ltd and others. "The

attached assets include the benami properties

acquired by the promoters Ishwarlal



'The promoters submitted "fake" financials to avail such loans, the ED alleged.

"The promoters also engaged in round tripping of transactions to inflate the financials

and booking bogus sale purchase transactions in books of accounts of the accused companies to siphon off the loan proceeds for investments in real estate properties, in collusion with the auditors of the companies," it said. Raids were carried out by the ED in this case in August.

Shankarlal Jain Lalwani, Manish Ishwarlal Jain It had then claimed that various "discrepancies like bogus sale-purchase transactions being shown in the books of accounts with the main holding company, Rajmal Lakhichand Jalgaon partnership firm" were detected.

### **Cyber commandos to** battle online threats

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA **NEW DELHI** 

n anticipation of future con-■flicts being centered on cyber warfare, the Centre has called upon the State Governments to establish a specialised and elite workforce known as "Cyber Commandos" to counteract the threat of cyber attacks. The manpower will be drawn

from the police forces of States and Union Territories as well as from Central police organisations just like the elite NSG or SPG commandos are drawn. In its recent communication to

States and UTs, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all police forces to identify 10 suitable personnel who can be designated as cyber commandos.

According to the proposal, the cyber commando wing would be an integral part of police organisations and will have commandos with specialised aptitude in the area of Information Technology (IT) security and digital forensics. Sources said the "hand-picked" commandos would receive training and be equipped with required systems to help them



deal with and counter cyber threats with larger responsibility for the nation's cyber infra-

The MHA letter has specified that the specialised new wing will counter threats to cyber security, defend the information technology network and conduct investigation in the cyber space.

Keeping in mind Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to name this decade as techade and with an aim of countering emerging cyber attacks on the Government's institutions and infrastructure, such a unit has been considered for each district of India," said a top Government official.

The first thought of cyber warriors came after hacking incidents of top hospitals like AIIMS, Safdarjung. Last year, as per official data,

The new cyber unit in districts will keep eye on the activities of hackers from hostile countries and monitor ransomware threats too, said the officials, adding that the unit will have legal and administrative sup-During the DGPs/IGPs

Conference held in January, 2023, the Prime Minister recommended that a special wing of suitably trained cyber commandos should be established to counter threats to cyber security, to defend Information Technology Network, conduct investigation in the cyber space and to take care of cyber security requirements of the Police and Government organisations on an ongoing basis," the MHA letter of October 5 said. The letter mentioned the proposed cyber commando wing would be an integral part of the

police organisation. It would be manned by suitably trained and equipped serving members of the police personnel drawn from the States/UTs and Central Police Organisations/CAPFs.

### SC to hear Congress leader Khera plea against HC order

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea of Congress leader Pawan Khera challenging Allahabad High Court's refusal to quash criminal proceedings against him for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Prashant Kumar Mishra is scheduled to hear the plea.

The matter was also listed on October 13 but was adjourned after Khera's counsel sought time to file some additional documents.

On August 17, the High Court dismissed Khera's plea saying the evidence collected by the investigating officer of the case cannot be evaluated in petition filed under section 482 of the CrPC for quashing the case. It had observed that since the top court had asked Khera to raise all the contentions before the chief judicial magistrate, Lucknow, it would be appropriate if he raises all his grievances before the said court.



clubbed three FIRs lodged against Khera in Assam and Uttar Pradesh for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Modi and transferred the matter to the Hazratganj police station in Lucknow while extending his interim bail. The Lucknow court had

granted him bail in the case. Khera has tendered an unconditional apology in the court for the alleged remarks. The Congress spokesperson was arrested from the Delhi airport on February 23 after he was de-boarded from a plane that was supposed to take him to Raipur. However, he was granted interim bail by the top court the same day, which was extended from time to time.

## **Navratri begins with gaiety** and religious fervour

Shardiya Navratri began with all traditional gaiety and religious fervour in this holy city here on Sunday as thousands of devotees thronged Shailputri Devi temple near Shakkar Talab behind Varanasi City railway station on the auspicious occasion of first day of this Navratra. Right from the morning hours, there was a long line of devotees and to control the rush barricading was done in the temple premises. Due to rush, the 'vrati' (on fast) devotees waited hours to reach the temple and offer prayers. Besides, heavy rush of devotees was also seen throughout the day at the famous Durga Mandir (Durga Kund) where the devotees lined up in long queues and waited for hours to offer prayers. Near the temple, huge quantities of coconut, chunris and other puja articles were sold. Rush was also seen at some other temples including Navdurga temple at Navapura. Not only this, hundreds of devotees through various vehicles also rushed to Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district and Maihar Devi in Madhya Pradesh to offer prayer on this auspicious occasion apart from Old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar, Sheetla Mata Mandir at Adalpura (near



Rush of devotees at Shailputri Devi Temple in Varanasi on first day of Navratri in Varanasi on Sunday.

At both Durga Kund and Shailputri Devi temples, elaborate security arrangements were made and due to rush at Durgakund, the vehicles were also diverted. Throughout the day, there was a festive look in the areas and even in the late afternoon and evening hours the temples witnessed heavy rush of devotees. Kashi is a rare city where there are separate temples of all the nine Gauris and Devis where the devotees

reach to offer prayers on different days during Basantik (Chaitya) and Shardiya Navratra respectively.

This year, there will be no loss of day during this Navratri as it will be of nine days. It is also expected that the rush of devotees would also be seen at Brahmacharini temple in Kotwali area on the second day of this Navratra while at Chandraghanta Devi temple in Chowk on the third. Similarly,

on the fourth day, there will be rush of devotees at Kushmanda Devi (Durga Mandir, Durgakund) while on the Panchmi at Bageshwari Devi temple (Jaitpura), Shasti at Katyayani Devi (Chowk), Saptami at Kalratri Devi temple (Dashashwamedh), Ashtami at Mahagauri

(Annapurna Mandir, Dashashwamedh) and Navmi at Siddhidatri Devi (Siddh Mata Gali, Golghar).

### Durga Puja begins at many places

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chunar, Mirzapur) and others.

With the installation of idols of Goddess Durga at several places, the Durga Puja in this holy city began on the first day of Shardiya Navratra here on Sunday. The city which is known as 'Mini Kolkata' for its grandeur of Durga Puja as around 250 places the idols are installed here every year. The city is all set to see the grandeur of the festival this year as grand pandals are being constructed at dozens of places this year. Though the festival will get

its climax on the occasion of Saptami, the idols of Goddess at about five places including Sarvajanik Durgotsav Samiti at Townhall have been installed on the first day of this Navratri as these puja samities organise their festival for nine days. The idols at these places were also installed amidst the chantrituals. The rush was seen at these places including Maa Durga Pujanotsav Samiti at Daranagar, Maa Durga Puja Navyuvak Samiti at Navapura, Sarda Mandir at Ghai Ghat and SB Durgotsdav Samiti at Sudia apart from Townhall. Some of the famous puja samitis will



Idol of Goddess Durga installed at one of pandals in Varanasi on Sunday.

occasions of Panchmi or Sashti.

To maintain law and order situation during the puja, several samitis of big pandals, will also install CCTV cameras to keep regular watch on the visitors as well as anti-social elements. They were also instructed by the police admintric fittings and fire safety equipment in their puja pandals. The district administration and Varanasi Police Commissionerate have already held meetings to review the security and other arrangements during the puja. The Durga Puja of the city is also

as while most of the Bengalidominated puja samitis maintained their traditional religious fervour giving focus on their idols of Maa Durga, some other groups make attempts to adopt new techniques and a few of them give focus on the uses of electronic gadgets.

## 'No shortage of DR TB medicines'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

There is no shortage of Cycloserine, which is used as an adjunct drug in the eradication of drug-resistant tuber-culosis (DR TB) in the state, claimed Dr Śurya Kant, Chairman of North Zone TB Task Force and Head of Respiratory Medicine Department of KGMU (Lucknow) and State Tuberculosis Officer Dr Shailendra Bhatnagar, adding that the stock of the medicine has already reached the store and soon the same will be sent to all DR TB centres in UP.

According to them, about

TB in the state and its treatment is available at 86 centres in UP for which KGMU has been made the Centre of Excellence and these centres include 24 nodal DR TB centres and 62 DR TB centres. UP is the state with the highest number of DR TB centres in the country, they said.

Dr Surya Kant said that if the medicine for common TB (pulmonary TB) is left midway or if the medicine is not taken properly, it turns into DR TB and in such a situation, the patient's treatment becomes centre regularly because if one complex and takes a long time.

16,000 patients currently He said that seven types of undergoing treatment for DR medicines are given to DR TB patients, among them Cyclosirine is an adjunct medicine which is given to support the main medicine which kills the bacteria of MDR TB.

"In such a situation, the DR TB patients who have been deprived of this medicine for a while, there is no need to worry because apart from this medicine, other medicines which were being given are completely effective in getting rid of the disease," he said, adding that be sure to take the medicines provided from the does not do so, the disease can take a serious form. Along with medicines, take full care of one's diet so that the medicines can show effect quickly.

Dr Surya Kant said that a total of five Centres of Excellence have been created by the Government of India and the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease for technical support of DR TB centres in the country and the same include two Centres of Excellence in Delhi, one in Mumbai, one in Chennai and one in UP. The Respiratory Medicine Department of KGMU has been selected as the Centre of Excellence of UP, he

#### Rural girls take out rally for equality karo' etc. In the festival, the girls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Balika Mahotsav (Girls' Festival) was organised on Sunday in Budapur village under the joint aegis of Lok Samiti Varanasi and Asha Trust. The girls from the rural areas took out a massive rally in the village against female feticide, sexual harassment, dowry, child marriage etc. The girls participating in the rally raised slogans like 'tilak, dahej chodo, jati pati todo', 'bhik nahi adhikar chahiye, jeene ka samman chahiye', 'aurat bhi jinda inshan nahi bhog ki who samaan', 'bhurn hatya band

presented various cultural programmes on girl's rights and through a drama, they tried to appeal to the people to stop gambling and liquor consump-

tion in the village.

The programme was inaugurated by Gram Pradhan Sangh president Mukesh Kumar, along with the general secretary (Arazi Lines) Sanjay Yadav, Mahila Lok Samiti convenor Anita Patel and Chanda Devi by lighting

A seminar was also organised and addressing the same, Lok Samiti convenor Nandlal

of adolescent girls in villages is worrisome as there is still discrimination between boys and girls.

He said that despite being good in studies, many girls are forced to leave their education to get married at a young age which has a very bad effect on their health.

Mukesh Kumar said that there is a need to make girls aware about domestic harassment and sexual violence. Sanjay Yadav said that today girls are not safe at home as many times, they become victims of sexual exploitation by their own families and rela-Seema welcomed the

guests while the function was presided over by Sitaboon. The programme was conducted by Sabana Manab, while the vote of thanks was given by Baby.

It was also attended by Soni, Avneesh, Asha, Saroj, Neelam, Madhu, Sabia, Aanchal, Rabia, Anjali, Sangeeta, Manisha, Jyoti, Sunita, Manab, Malti, Munni, Nirmala. Rajkumari, Asha, Archana, Sangeeta, Ranjana, Rambachan, Bandana, Mamta, Neelam and others.

## Devotees pay obeisance to Goddess Shailputri

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

large number of devotees Alarge number of devotes thronged the prominent city temples to pay obeisance to Goddess Shailputri, the first form of Goddess Durga on the first day of pious festival Shardiya Navratri on Sunday. The devotes took a holy dip at Sangam, placed the urn and offered prayers amid chanting of Vedic mantras

A large number of people turned up for 'darshan' of the goddess at most prominent temples like Sidhapeeth Kalayani, Sidhapeeth Lalita Devi, Sidhapeeth Alop Shankari and Kalibari temple. The famous temples of the city, including Kalyani Devi, Alopi Temple, Kamakhya Devi Temple and others also witnessed a huge crowd. Siddha Devi will be worshipped on the ninth day of Navratri which will mark the end of the fast.

According Acharya Jyotishacharya Harekrishna Shukla, Shardiya Navratri has started from Sunday. Lighting Akhand Jyoti and reciting Durgashaptashi during the the nine days of



Mother Goddess fulfils every one's wishes. A bed of sand is made around the 'kalash' and barley is sown in the same Cultural programmes and 'devi jagran' were organised at many pandals. A long queue of devotees was witnessed since early morning at almost all Durga temples of the city. Devotees offered coconuts,

flowers and 'chunaris' to the deity and offered prayers. Chanting slogans of Jai Mata Di', holding coconut, bangles and red 'chunnis' in their hands, devotees thronged the temples and formed a beeline outside famous temples, including Kalyani Devi temple, Alopibagh, Lalita Devi-which is one of the 51 Shakti Peethsalong with many other temples.

The temple authorities have made extensive preparations to meet heavy rush of devotees. They also decorated the idols with colourful streamers and marigold flowers. The priest of the Sidhpeeth Kalyani Devi temple, Shyamji Pathak said that devotees paid obeisance to Maa Shailputri. Its managing director, Harimohan Verma performed the 'aarti'.

## **Budget of ₹ 6.33 crore** released for six projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

n view of preparations for Mahakumbh, the government has now sanctioned funds for enhancing the health facilities in the city. A budget of ₹6.33 crore has been released for six projects of Medical College, SRN Hospital and Manohar Das Eye Hospital

The entire sanctioned amount has been released in full in one go so that the work could be expedited and put in place before Mahakumbh. Likewise, ₹16.34 crore has been sanctioned for beautification around the Shiv temple near the house of Cabinet Minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' in Bahadurganj

For this, the first installment of ₹8.17 crore has been released. With this amount, beautification work will be done around the temple. The work has to be done by the Prayagraj Development Authority (PDA). An amount of ₹64.54 crore has also been sanctioned for six roads of

Among several facilities at SRN Hospital, ₹59.30 lakh has been released for a modular kitchen in the hospital. Likewise, ₹2.66 crore for construction of security cabin, ₹ 51.30 lakh for modern kitchen, 48.37 lakh for main gate, security room, bathroom in Moti Lal Nehru Medical College campus. The government has sanc-

tioned an amount of ₹64.54 crore for six roads of PDA. Out of this, the first instalment of ₹32.27 crore has been released. From this budget, ₹14.92 crore hasbeen approved for beautification and widening of road from New Yamuna Bridge to ADC Hatiya intersection. Funds have been released for widening of the road from ECC to Kothaparcha intersection, from Kothaparcha to New Yamuna Bridge via Kydganj police station, Sulaki intersection, Baluaghat via Muthiganj

Commencing the devel-PDA has floated tenders for the widening of 11 roads, funds for which were already released by

the government. **VIDEO GOES VIRAL:** A video has gone viral on social media, showing how two members of a poor family were left with no option but to make a hammock using a bedsheet tied to bamboo for taking a body for last rites in Jhunsi

The poor family of Nakhdu, a resident of Bankat village of Varanasi, makes a living by making plates from leaves ('pattal') with his fami-ly in Nibhi village of Jhunsi. His wife Anita (26) was ill for several days and died on Friday. Nakhdu did not even have money for the bier or to per-

form the last rites.

area. Onlookers pooled in

money and arranged for an e-

rickshaw for the family to take

the body for the last rites.

some other relatives, who live under Daraganj bridge, got the news of their daughter's death, Nakhdu's father-in-law, Manager Prasad, reached his failed to arrange for the bier, Nakhdu and his father-in-law decided to carry the body after

When his in-laws and

placing it in the makeshift hammock made using a bedsheet tied from a bamboo.

When the locals of Nyayanagar in Jhunsi saw this, several hands came forward to help the duo. Locals, including Subhash Yadav and Om Prakash, informed the police, which reached the spot. Before that, the locals had pooled enough money to carry the corpse for the last rites.

SHO Jhunsi, Upendra Pratap Singh said Nakhdu of Nibhi village used to earn his living by making plates from leaves and was seen carrying the body of his wife on a bedsheet tied to a bamboo. Locals and police helped the duo and arranged money for the last rites and the body was sent by e-rickshaw to Daraganj Ghat for cremation. Meanwhile, the district administration of Prayagraj has taken cognisance of the incident. District magistrate Navneet Singh Chahal has instructed the administration electricity connection and also make an Ayushman card for

#### Prayagraj airport records highest footfall in Sept

PRAYAGRAJ (PNS): The Prayagraj airport has recorded a footfall of 55,000 passengers in September this year which is the highest in the past four years since the facility became operational in 2019. This achievement is given the fact that the number of flights during this month as compared to 2019 onwards has decreased. These figures are also important because September is offseason in the airline industry but this year, the number of passengers was quite high. This is also the first time since 2019 that the number of passengers has crossed 55,000 in September.

AWARENESS RALLY: The fourth phase of Mission Shakti programme that aims at women's safety, dignity and empowerment was launched in the city on Saturday. Under it

a public awareness rally was taken out by women police personnel from Police Lines on scooters, ambulances and PRB vehicles. The rally was flagged off by Additional Police Commissioner Pawan Kumar and District Magistrate Navneet Singh Chahal. The rally passed through Lakshmi crossing, Bank Road, Balson Crossing, Chandrashekhar Azad park and ended at the district panchayat premises. Apart from this, a rally was taken out by school girls from the Police Lines to the district panchayat premises. Another programme was organised in the auditorium of district panchayat office which was attended by BJP MP Kesari Devi Patel. On the occasion, 12 women, who have done excellent work in various fields, were honoured with shawls and mementos.

#### Women should become self-reliant: Minister

**CORRESPONDENT** ■ MIRZAPUR

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel during the inaugural function of Mission Shakti 4 as the chief guest at Police Lines on Saturday said it is the need of the hour that women become self-reliant availing the facilities provided by the government. She enumerated the schemes run by the government for empowerment of the women. She laid emphasis on emulating those women who had achieved laurels through their strong will power and hard labour. She appealed to the women who were honoured on the occasion to benefit the society. Appreciating the visionary approach of PM Narendra Modi under which the Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Parliament she said it was a step towards utilising the acumen of women in making national policies at the ground level as well as in nation building. She honoured 95 women who proved her

ability in different fields of



Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel and other dignitaries jointly lighting the ceremonial lamp at the inaugural function of Mission Shakti 4 at Police Lines on Saturday

Speaking on the occasion MLC Vineet Singh underlined the contribution of women from the Vedic era to the present. The programme started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp jointly by the dignitaries, including the union minister, MLC, DIG RP Singh, District Magistrate (DM) Priyanka Niranjan, Superintendent of Police (SSP) Abhinandan, Development Officer (CDO)

Srilaxmi VS, Chairman Zila Panchayat Raju Kanaujiya, Chairman Cooperative Bank Jagdeesh Singh Patel and others. The vote of thanks was proposed by DM Priyanka Niranjan. Before the programme the women empowerment rally was flagged off by Madihan MLA Rama Shankar Singh Patel from the Collectorate. On the occasion the SP Abhinandan said under the awareness programme the

women will be made aware about different helpline numbers and their use.

DRAMA TO BE
STAGED: All India joint chief

of management of RSS Anil Ok while addressing the meeting of intellectuals on Saturday claimed that the policies of Chhatrapati Shivaji are still relevant. He said that it is the need of the hour that we follow the path of Shivaji. He said Seva Bharti (the service wing of RSS) had planned that a drama based on life of Shivaji will be staged by artistes across the country. Under it the group will stay in Varanasi for more than a week in November to make aware the people of Purvanchal about the visionary rule of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. He invited the people of Mirzapur to watch the drama on November 22 as fixed for the district. The play will be staged in a theatre located in BHU, he added. He said through the proceeds earned by the play Seva Bharti will construct a building for cancer patients and attendants near cancer hospital of Varanasi. The service will be free of cost, he added.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

### **Bombing positivity**

The ongoing war in West Asia threatens Israel-Saudi peace deal and delays IMEEC

■ est Asia's delicate geopolitical balance has once again been disturbed by the ongoing war, casting a long shadow over the prospects of a historic Israel-Saudi Arabia peace deal and causing an indeterminate delay in the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) project. The recent unprovoked Hamas attacks and the swift Israeli retaliation threaten to upend longanticipated diplomatic breakthroughs and economic connectivity. For some time, whispers of a secret thaw in relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia were circulating. The prospects of a formal peace accord between the regional powerhouses had garnered international attention and hope for a more stable Middle East. Both nations have shared interests in countering Iran's influence in the region, and a peace deal could have had far-reaching consequences for regional politics, security and economy. But the new situation pushes it back by almost a decade,



obliterating the good work done by diplomats on both sides. The war has shifted priorities as both Israel and Saudi Arabia have had to redirect their focus toward addressing the pressing security challenges. Diplomatic efforts, which had been cautiously progressing, have been relegated to the background.

Similarly, yet another fallout of the war in West Asia will be on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), a project that is crucial for India's economy and security. The Corridor is an ambitious infrastructure project aimed at enhancing economic connectivity among India, West Asia and

Europe as an answer to China's 'Belt and Road Initiative'. The IMEEC could counter BRI's imperial designs effectively by providing an alternative route to the landlocked countries of Central Asia. It envisions the development of transportation networks, trade routes and energy pipelines to facilitate the movement of goods, energy resources and people across the region. But since it passes through West Asia, it has to now be delayed for safety reasons. The war's impact on IMEEC is two-fold. First, it has created logistical challenges in the region, making it difficult to continue infrastructure development. The war has disrupted traditional trade routes and the instability has hindered investment and planning for large-scale infrastructure projects, including those critical to IMEEC's success. Two, the war has introduced uncertainty into regional politics. With a potential shift in alliances and priorities among West Asian nations, India's calculations and investments need to be reworked. Amid these challenges, it is essential for all stakeholders to pursue a path toward de-escalation and resolution of the ongoing war which is affecting global economy, safety and security. But the maximum price would be extracted from the developing countries, who can ill afford it.



Helicopters of the Indian Air Force's aerobatic team 'Sarang' during the 91st Air Force Day celebrations in Guwahati PTI

# West Asia erupts in flames again



Israel's all-out attack on Gaza, ostensibly to avenge Hamas' attacks, not only exacerbates the already volatile situation but will also have enormous human cost

he world stands as a witness to the horrendous enfolding assault on Gaza, by Israel, the fifth strongest army in the world, unleashing all its might against the Palestinians with what turned out to be a collective punishment to the inhabitant Palestinians of the Gaza Strip, because of the surprise attack conducted by the militant group on Israel's military posts and settle-ments surrounding the besieged Gaza Strip since 2006. That attack took the intelligence apparatus of Israel by surprise and left scores of Israeli soldiers and settlers dead, injured, prisoners, and humiliated. This spread a wave of anger among the people of Israel in particular, and the western world in general, with most of the western Capitals condemning what had been done and giving the green signal to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to deliver an all-out assault on the Palestinians, aiming to end resistance in Gaza once and for all and erasing any Palestinian resistance to the establishment of a Jewish State in the heart of Palestine.

The Arab world extends from Morocco to Qatar. Due to its strategic location and rich natural resources, more than a century ago, the Arab world was conquered by western powers. The West decided that the Arabs should never unite this region. Instead, it was decided to create a Jewish State in the heart of Palestine to ensure that Israel would always be superior: militarily, politically, and economical-

The establishment of Israel was carried out in accordance with United Nations Resolution No 181 in 1947, which divided Palestine into three countries: "A Jewish State, an Arab State, an international governing region that includes Jerusalem and Bethlehem."The latest conflict will change the paradigm of the war between Israel and the Arab world. It may be seen as a war between Israel and the Hamas. but the end objectives are beyond what the neadlines may teach us. It was 30 years ago that Israel signed the Oslo Agreement with the Palestinian Liberation deceived global public opinion Organisation (PLO), in which it for the last 75 years about its



Israel's policy of divide and conquer led to continued confiscation of the lands of the THE IDEA OF A 2-Palestinian people. More than 1 million Palestinians went to jails after frequent raids, suppression and denial of equal rights as per the 1948 Israel-Arab accord. Repeated attacks PALESTINIANS on Gaza were carried out by Israeli occupation forces. The Hamas was preparing for revenge against Israel and that is what led to the October 7 attack. Israel won not only mil- AL-AQSA MOSQUE. tary wars against the Arabs • CONFISCATING and the Palestinians but also the global media war and PROPERTIES



#### **MAIN OBJECTIVES** OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON GAZA: TO END THE

- RESISTANCE **FORCES**
- TO ERADICATE STATE SOLUTION.
- **CLEANSING OF**
- TAKING FULL

ETHNIC

- CONTROL OF THE WEST BANK AND

own policy against the Palestinians. The attack's fallout on the ground will be devastating for the Palestinians in Gaza and the Palestinians living under occupation in West Bank and East Jerusalem. They will be subjected to more atrocities, attacks and revenge by the Israeli occupation forces and settlers. For Israel, there will be no question of the State's solution even in the remaining 7% area under Palestinian control. Cutting water, power and food supplies to more than 2.3 million people living in the largest open prison in the world would be a crime against humanity.

Egypt, on its part, sealed its border with the Gaza Strip, and it will not open a humanitarian corridor for the movement of Palestinians into Egypt to prevent a second catastrophe ('Nakba') against the Palestinians after 1948's first 'Nakba.' And if the ultranationalist parties go ahead with their plan of destroying the Al-Aqsa mosque to build Solomon temple at the same spot, it will lead to an all-out war against Israel. Israel declared this war on Gaza to dehumanise the Palestinians. It is a one-sided war as there are no army, navy or air forces in Gaza. The Defence Minister of Israel called them "human animals", a term used by the Nazis against Jews, slaves and

peoples of colour. The western world is encouraging Netanyahu to flatten the Gaza Strip along with its people. The number of deaths and injuries in Gaza is staggering and the number grows exponentially every day, mostly children and women with no hospital or medical aid available. They are simply seen as collateral damage because of the unabated bombardments. According to the International Criminal Court (ICC), Israel has committed a crime against humanity. This savage attack and revenge may end, but will the Israelis accept a Palestinian State?

These brutal attacks will never bring peace to the region, nor save Israel from future revolts by the Palestinians who oppose the occupation and apartheid policy. The only way forward is to stop sending warships to the region and let the world community implement UN Security Council resolutions to achieve comprehensive peace in West Asia and end the perpetual bloodshed; otherwise, the region will have more fronts and an all-out war between Israel and the Arab

(The writer is a South Asia-based senior foreign journalist and an expert on West Asia; views expressed are personal)

# THE EDITO

### The worsening financial crisis in the UK post-Brexit



While the debate leading up to the 2016 referendum for Brexit was rife with promises of prosperity and opportunities, the reality, has been far from rosy

he decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, commonly known as Brexit, was a historic moment that promised to bring significant changes to the nation's economic landscape. But the reality has been quite different. The latest figures speak for themselves. Monthly real gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have grown by 0.2% in August 2023, following a fall of 0.6% in July 2023. Looking at the broader picture, GDP increased by 0.3% in the three months to August 2023, with growth in all sectors. Services output grew by 0.4% in August 2023, after a fall of 0.6% in July 2023, and was the main contributor to the growth in GDP in July. Output in consumer facing services fell by 0.6% in August 2023 following a fall of 0.2% in July. Production output fell by 0.7% in August 2023, following a fall of 1.1% in July 2023. The construction sector declined by 0.5% in August 2023, following a 0.4% decrease in July 2023.

Brexit has undeniably contributed to a worsening finan-



cial situation in Great Britain, causing economic disruption, increased costs, and uncertainty for businesses and consumers alike. One of the most immediate consequences of Brexit was economic disruption. The UK was no longer part of the EU's single market and customs union, which meant new trade barriers and customs checks were introduced. This change led to increased paperwork, delays at ports, and disruptions in the supply chain. The sudden implementation of customs checks and additional regulations had a profound impact on British businesses, especially those that relied heavily on seamless trade with the

Many companies found themselves grappling with new red tape, extra costs, and the need to adapt to a new regulatory environment. This disruption has been particularly challenging for industries such as manufacturing, agri-

culture, and fishing, which had deep ties to the EU market. Another significant issue stemming from Brexit is the rising costs. A weaker British pound, influenced by uncertainty and the financial consequences of Brexit, made imports more expensive. This, in turn, has led to inflationary pressures on consumer

For example, the price of many food items, especially fresh produce and meat, has seen an increase due to new customs checks and tariffs. Likewise, some businesses have had to deal with escalating costs related to customs duties and increased shipping charges. The financial burden of these rising costs has been felt by both consumers and businesses, putting pressure on household budgets and eroding profit margins for companies. Brexit brought about an era of uncertainty that still lingers today. Businesses were left questioning the future trading relationship between the UK and the EU, which led to hesitancy in investment decisions. The financial sector, which was once a dominant

contributor to the UK's econ-

omy, was also hit hard. Major banks and financial institutions began relocating some of their operations to EU member states to maintain access to the single market, leading to a loss of jobs and economic activity in the UK. Another concern that has emerged post-Brexit is the loss of talent. The free movement of labour between the UK and the EU has come to As a result, many industries,

including healthcare, education, and technology, are grappling with labor shortages. The country's previously vibrant arts and culture sector is also facing challenges in attracting international talent due to visa restrictions and immigration changes. While Brexit supporters argued that leaving the EU would provide the UK with more economic independence and control, the reality has been a different story. The challenges remain, and it is essential for policymakers to find innovative solutions to mitigate the

adverse effects of Brexit (The writer is a veteran journalist based in London; views are personal)

#### STEP OUT OF COMFORT ZONE

Sir—The Challenges are an inherent part of our journey, and if we wish to accomplish something colossal, we must step out of our comfort zone and confront these impediments. They arise when we start thinking big and act on a grand scale to achieve magnificent things. Hardships motivate us and also illuminate the path to the greatest heights in our lives. As the saying goes, "Hard work is the key to

If you remain confined to your complacency, you will miss significant opportunities in your life. Fill your mind with grand dreams, leaving no space for petty pursuits. Not everyone will support you on your path to greatness, but once you are determined and take substantial steps toward your goals, no one will be able to stop you. Distance yourself from those who attempt to belittle your ambitions. Small-minded individuals often engage in this, but truly great people will inspire you to believe that you, too, can achieve greatness. The greater the obstacle you accept in your life, the more glory you find in overcoming it.

Apurva Garg Ujjain

#### **UNHOLY WAR IN WEST ASIA**

Sir—This The Israeli military's order for one million Palestinian people to relocate from North Gaza to South Gaza within twenty hours is a heartbreaking display of inhumanity. For half of the population in such a small area to be forced to move helter-skelter like desperate immigrants is a stain on our shared idea of civility. While the attack by Hamas on Israel is deplorable, Israel's retaliatory actions in Gaza are equally distressing.

One act of terrorism cannot justify causing suffering to thousands of innocent civilians. The tragic truth is that this is not a clash between titans but a conflict between victims, if not slaves, to historical circumstances and the maneuvers of world powers. Both sides live in constant insecurity about their survival, but

#### The UN must intervene in West Asia



he United Nations is an organisation that has largely remained unnoticed as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rages on. It should have already taken steps to broker

peace in the area. Its formation was primarilv intended to prevent wars, protect human rights, and promote stability and peace in the world. Unfortunately, it has fallen short of achieving these objectives and instead has become a battleground for capitalist and communist powers, led by the US and the USSR. Dag Hammarskjöld's iconic words, spoken over sixty-five years ago, still resonate today: "The UN wasn't created to take mankind to paradise, but rather to save humanity from hell." Regrettably, these words have done little to end conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The world cannot afford a war that has the potential to escalate into a mini-world war.

The UN should not serve as a tool for the powerful but rather as a beacon of hope for peace and justice. Its mission should extend beyond humanitarian aid through agencies like UNICEF and the Red Cross

KV. Chandra Mouli | Mysuru

ing for lost sovereignty. India has responded to the issue maturely, condemning the Hamas attack while also expressing support for the Palestinian cause and standing against terrorism. World leaders must recognize that injustice in one place threatens the cause of justice everywhere. Israel and Palestine must find a lasting solution to their shared woes, with a win-win mentality as the ultimate goal.

Dr DVG Sankara Rao | Vizianagaram

#### SHRADANANDA MURTHY IS NO MORE

Sir—The The passing of veteran journalist K. S. Shridananda Murthy, affectionately known as Sachi among friends and in the media, is a profoundly saddening loss for Indian journalism. He was an outstanding journalist, a highly respected figure in mainstream Indian journalism, and an encyclopedia of state and national political developments. He Palestine deserves sympathy for its long- played a pivotal role in shaping the

careers of numerous reporters. Murthy seldom made political predictions, but when he did, he consistently proved accurate. He distinguished himself in the realm of media and politics, always upholding the highest professional standards. He was one of the most prominent Kannadiga journalists in mainstream national media, based in New Delhi. K. S. Shridananda Murthy devoted nearly four decades to the Malayala Manorama group, working for their weekly magazine, The Week. With his passing, an era in Indian political journalism comes to an end. The nation is undeniably poorer without legends like Murthy, who will be remembered as a towering figure in the realm of Indian journalism. With his passing, a chapter of Indian journalism's glory has concluded.

Ramesh G jethwani | Bengaluru

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### **FIRST COLUMN**

#### **UPFS ARE NOT WHAT MARKETERS SAY**

Most ultra processed foods (UPFs) have have salt, sugar and additives



hy is it that 1 out of 10 is addicted to ultra-processed foods (UPFs)? Dieticians claim that 100% of what I ate yesterday was processed. What do you think foods such as oatmeal; almond milk; frozen berries; popcorn; foxnuts; pasta with canned tomato sauce; and dark chocolates seem to be? Well, they all seem to be nutrient-dense and healthy foods, but did you know that they are all processed? Unfortunately, the word 'processed' is extremely demonised and often found at the top of the list of foods to avoid but what is often not mentioned is that most of the foods that individuals eat are processed to some extent. It includes canned; frozen; packaged; chopped and roasted. Foods can vary anywhere from minimally processed to ultra-processed and what matters is that the individual gets to know its repercussions before and after its usage. In a recent study conducted, researchers have found that almost 57% of the average UK diet is made up of UPF and among children and poorer people, it can be as high as 80%. UPFs have gone through multiple stages of processing and contain many added ingredients that one would not find or be able to recreate in their kitchen. This family of foods includes artificial colours, flavours, and preservatives that promote shelf stability, reserve texture and increase palatability. UPFs have even become significant contributors to environmental, socioeconomic and nutritional issues in many countries across the world. These foods are becoming increasingly popular in developing countries within Latin America and South Asia where high quantities of food can be bought for a low cost.

Not all but some of these products even tend to be low in fibre and nutrients. Sugar-sweetened beverages such as soda, fruit drinks, pre-sweetened tea and coffee mix, energy drinks, frozen meals and desserts, instant and canned soups, granola, and protein bars have the presence of artificial fragrances and chemicals; artificial colourings, vegetable oils; artificial sweeteners; and many more that are highly responsible for hurting one's gut. UPFs are marketed as cheap and ready to eat. Also, their delicious tastes are recognized as a contributor to diseases such as obesity, heart disease and type 2 diabetes.



In some cases, it has even led to an increase in mental problems such as anxiety, depression, and Alzheimer's. In another research, it has also been found that consuming ultra-processed foods can cause age-related cognitive decline, increased risk of cancer, increased risk of developing dementia, and even a shortened life span.

There is no denying the fact that nowadays life has become hectic for everyone and sometimes one needs to rely only on these so-called processed foods. Also, it is not possible to avoid ultra-processed foods, especially when they are cheaper, more convenient, and often tasty. So, one should try to limit these occasional treats rather than making them their regular ones in their diet. Remember bad oils; refined flour or sugar and toxic ingredients are the three foods that will destroy an individual's metabolism whereas foods such as squash; cabbage; spinach; wild salmon; beans; peas; raw nuts; berries; citrus fruits; tropical fruits and many more can be as generous as hormone building foods.

These products are often marketed as a healthy option but have a high content of hidden salt, sugar, and additives. Replacing these foods with a better nutrient composition such as the inclusion of whole meal bread. vegetable-based sauces, eating plenty of and variety of plant foods (such as fruits, and legumes); replacing saturated with unsaturated fats; controlling portion sizes and eating mindfully and when choosing processed foods, making a point to check labels to help identify those that are high in salt, sugar and fats along with the inclusion of some exercises are a few helpful tips that can be kept in mind to keep a healthy mind, body

(The writer is an educator; views expressed are personal)

# Migration transforms lives and communities



While it is true that migration can bring challenges and hardships, it also offers opportunities for growth, prosperity, and cultural enrichment



igration, a term often associated with images of death, poverty, and struggle, has long been entwined with narratives of despair and hardship. Newspapers and magazines frequently feature stories that highlight skewed employment opportunities and mass migrations driven by conflicts, climate change, and economic challenges. Indelible images of vulnerable families, including small children living by the roadside or in ramshackle tents, have become emblematic of this narrative. However, it is essential to recognize that these images represent real human lives, and their experiences must never be dismissed. Equally important is acknowledging that this is not the entire story. The reality of migration and its root causes are far more intricate and diverse. Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, has consistently emphasized that migration possesses the potential to create bridges between peoples and cultures, enriching lives in both old and new homes. Nevertheless, harmful narratives surrounding migrants and migration nave been on the rise in recent times, infiltrating politi-cal speeches, media outlets, and social media platforms.

Migration, as a concept, often evokes powerful emotions, often entangled with suspicion of differences and hostility toward those perceived as outside of our closelyknit "we" group. In an era dominated by fake news and deliberate misinformation, migration is particularly susceptible to distortion, with political agendas exploiting the issue on a global scale.

However, it is crucial to recognize that we can aspire to do better. Migration is not inherently a negative phenomenon. Throughout history, it has fostered global trade, shaped nations, fueled human endeavours, and enabled the exchange of skills and cultures across the globe. As world leaders recognized in the inaugural United Nations Global Compact on Migration in December 2018, migration is a source of prosperity, innovation, and sustainable development in our interconnected world. Even on a smaller, more personal scale,



MIGRATION, AS A CONCEPT, OFTEN **EVOKES POWERFUL** EMOTIONS. WITH SUSPICION OF DIFFERENCES AND HOSTILITY

TOWARD THOSE PERCEIVED AS OUTSIDE OF OUR **CLOSELY-KNIT** "WE" GROUP

> (Writer is political editor, The Pioneer, Lucknow, views are personal)

countless stories demonstrate how migration has generated employment opportunities and created thriving communities in unexpected places. Take the inspiring case of Ashok Rai, who migrated from the impoverished state of Uttar Pradesh to Chennai (Madras then) due to diminishing business prospects in Kanpur.

"After my father's death, the responsibility of supporting my family fell on my shoulders when I was just a teenager," Rai recounted. "I began supplying cotton scraps to paper mills, but my business suffered with the introduction of polyester, which could not be used for paper production. So, I decided to migrate to Chennai, where the quality of cot-ton scraps were cotton based and were of better quality."

Rai vividly remembers the initial struggles. It was the late 1970s and early 1980s, and he could hardly speak English or understand Tamil language. That was the time when anti-Hindi agitation was at its peak in Tamil Nadu and Hindi was the only language which he could speak. Money was scarce, and he and his children lived in humble shanties. The challenges seemed insurmountable, and he often contemplated returning home. However, he persevered.

Eventually, Ashok Rai established the Ashok Rai Paper and Pulp Industries. He not only employed people from his village but also encouraged them to leave behind deprivation. Rai acknowledges that he has brought over 300 people from his village to work in Chennai, some for education. "At present, over 100 people from Uttar Pradesh are working in my factory," he proudly stated. He successfully created a Hindi-speaking community in Chennai that contributed to the development of the Hindi language

Ashok Rai's story is not unique;

there are thousands of similar success stories resulting from migration that have transformed the lives of not just individuals but entire communities. Amidst the distorted narratives surrounding migration, it is essential to recognize that humanity has always been on the move. Migrations are the threads woven into the fabric of our shared existence, strengthening continents, countries, and communities for millennia. Movement within and across continents has been one of the primary drivers of human history. It has led to cultural exchange, economic prosperity, and the sharing of knowledge and skills. Migration has shaped the world as we know it today, contributing to the diversity and richness of human

In recent years, the world has wit-

societies.

nessed a wave of anti-migrant sentiments and policies in various regions. These attitudes stem from misconceptions and unfounded rears about the impact of migration on local economies, cultures, and security. However, research and experience demonstrate that wellmanaged migration can bring about numerous benefits, both for host countries and for the migrants themselves. One of the key advantages of migration is its role in filling labour gaps and contributing to economic growth. Migrants often take on jobs that local populations are unwilling or unable to perform, helping to sustain essential industries and services. In many cases, they become entrepreneurs, like Ashok Rai, establishing businesses that create employment opportunities for both migrants and locals. Moreover, migration can lead to cultural enrichment and diversity, fostering creativity and innovation. When people from different backgrounds and experiences come together, they bring unique perspectives and ideas, leading to cultural

exchanges that benefit society as a whole. This diversity can enhance the cultural fabric of host countries and create a more inclusive and vibrant society.

Additionally, migration has a positive impact on remittances, as migrants often send money back to their home states or home countries. These remittances can significantly contribute to the development of the migrants' countries of origin, improving living standards and supporting local economies. It is essential to dispel the myths sur-

rounding migration and emphasize its positive contributions. Governments, civil society organizations, and the media play a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and policies related to migration. By promoting accurate information and highlighting success stories like Ashok Rai's, we can challenge harmful narratives and foster a more informed and empathetic understanding of migration. Furthermore, comprehensive immigration policies that prioritize human rights, dignity, and integration can lead to more successful outcomes for both migrants and host communities. Such policies should provide pathways for legal migration, protect the rights of migrants, and facilitate their social and economic integration.

In conclusion, migration is a multifaceted phenomenon with the power to transform lives and communities. While it is true that migration can bring challenges and hardships, it also offers opportunities for growth, prosperity, and cultural enrichment. To harness the full potential of migration, we must recognise its positive contributions, challenge harmful narratives, and implement policies that prioritise the well-being of migrants and host communities. By doing so, we can build a more inclusive and pros-

## Providing non-financial services to rural communities

#### SHG federations can be instrumental in providing banking to the 'unbanked' communities in rural areas

HG federations, as pro-Smoted by the Government and nongovernment organisations, have long been recognisancial and livelihood services to their members. In recent times, however, they have also been able to provide critical social services about health, education, and sanitation while also undertaking strong advocacy initiatives to demand better development facilities like roads, electricity, infrastructure, clean water supply etc. in communities. Additionally, women-led federations are drivers of change

known, not much has been

for addressing gender and women's empowerment issues. (The writer is the However, while their role in President, of Hand in promoting empowerment and Hand India and a livelilivelihoods promotion is well hoods and gender special-



ist; views are personal)

non-financial and development services in their commu-In the discourse on SHG fed-

highlighted about the SHG

federation's work in providing

erations expanding women's power in terms of the four disaggregated domains of 'power over, 'power to, 'power with-in,' and 'power with,' it is the last domain (i.e. power with) emanating from group solidarity and collaborations that is most effective in successful collective actions for achieving development goals.

In this regard, it is important to mention that the concerted efforts of NGOs, towards promoting a range of both financial and non-financial services through their large network of SHG federations termed as cluster level (CLNs) and block level networks (BLNs) across the country, has been impactful. As of June 2023, the organization is working with a large network of 3.4 lakh SHGs comprising 3.5 million women who are federated in 1,708 CLNs (each representing a minimum of 10 SHGs i.e. 100 members) and 58 BLNs (each representing 10 CLNs i.e. 1,000 members). It is these strong and immersive federations that are agents of change for their SHG women and communities.

In Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the SHG cluster networks have used theircollective strengths to successfully address issues of water logging, improper drainage systems, lack of concrete roads, clean drinking water, construction of toilets, lack of schools and PHCs, by getting the district administration to take cognizance of these issues and deliver results. The 100 'mothers collectives,' comprising 1,000 women of children involved in mica mining and other forms of labour were trained on the importance of education, nutrition, and financial literacy and were supported with skill training, bank linkages and market tieups to develop sustainable livelihoods. These collectives became catalysts of social change in their communities by networking with village local bodies, child rights protection committees, school management committees and Government agencies to improve school enrolment and continued education in their the supply of development

infrastructure in Government communities. These examples demonstrate that far from being restrictive, the SHG model is a flexible and comprehensive tool to steer holistic development services as opposed to only providing financial and livelihood services to SHG women.

To begin with, the SHG federations can work with the existing panchayat-level committees to contribute to the development process of the village to upgrade education, health, sanitation and infrastructure facilities. Taking advantage of their huge numbers and deep penetration in remote areas, the federations can work as agents of change to bridge the demand-supply gap in service delivery by creating demand and improving

services and infrastructure facilities in their communities. On the demand side, the federation leaders can generate awareness of rights and entitlements of services among SHG women and communities while parallelly working with supply-side institutions like schools, Government hospitals and Banks to improve service delivery.

Here too, the women leaders can work as 'agents' of supplyside institutions and generate awareness among their large masses on the Government's schemes and facilitate access to services to the last mile. The only thing to keep in mind is that in doing so, the SHG federations should work as 'partners' rather than as

Finally, the federations should regularly engage with the block and district level administrations to fill the information gaps regarding needs in the vilages as well as progress made. They can thus be seen as 'well-wishers' and change agents, which, in turn, may lead to their greater involvement in the village development process. The benefits of bonds of sisterhood, community engagement, community acceptance, scale, presence in far-flung areas, stakeholder management and alliance-building capacities of the federations need to be well harnessed if they have to go beyond the provision of financial and livelihood services to effect development and transformative changes at the grassroots.

## Biden and Democrats report raising \$71 million-plus for his 2024 race

**AP** WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden and the Democratic National Committee raised more than USD 71 million for his reelection in the three months ending September 30, a strong indication that party donors remain united behind him going into a 2024 race that may feature a rematch with Donald Trump.

Sunday's announcement comes after the Biden campaign and the party reported raising USD 72-plus million in the 10 weeks between his official campaign announcement on April 25 and the end of the second quarter on June 30. Both totals include donations to Biden's campaign and to a network of joint fundraising arrangements with the nation-

al and state parties. The campaign said Democrats had USD 91 million in cash on hand through the end of last month, the highest-ever total by a Democrat at this point in an election cycle.

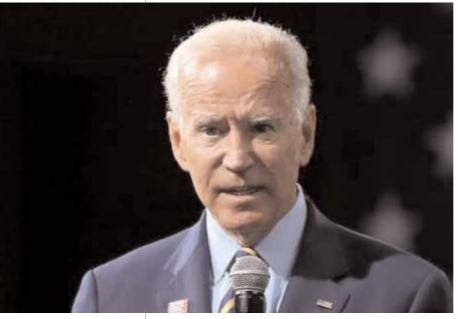
"This quarter's fundraising haul and historic cash on hand speak to the very real enthusiasm and support," Julie Chavez Rodriguez, manager of Biden's reelection campaign, said in a

he pioneer

"These numbers are a testament to one of our core objectives early in this campaign: raise the resources needed to run an aggressive campaign that will win in November

Biden's total has not topped the tally of the last Democratic president, Barack Obama, who raised USD 85.6 million with affiliated Democratic entities during the April-to-June quarter in 2011 when he launched his campaign for a second

Obama did announce his candidacy three weeks earlier that April than did Biden in 2023. Obama, the party and related committees took in about USD 70 million in the third quarter of 2011, which nearly matches 2023 figures even without adjusting for inflation.



Trump's 2024 campaign announced last week that it raised more than USD 45.5 million for the three months ending Sept, 30, without the benefit of the national GOP or

Trump has built a commanding early lead over his rivals in the 2024 Republican primary and has seen his fundraising

remain strong despite four

indictments that have left him facing 91 criminal charges that have strained his campaign

During Trump's reelection campaign in 2019, his cam-

well as the Republican National Committee, raised USD 125 million in that year's third quarter.

But Biden's campaign noted that it was trying to avoid raising the maximum allowed from its most enthusiastic donors, as Trump did in 2020 when he faced fundraising shortfalls in the final months of the campaign. Biden has held just one cam-

paign rally, with some of the nation's largest unions at the Philadelphia convention centre in June. In the meantime, his campaign

has relied heavily on the DNC, having it cover many of the early costs of expanding a reelection effort while also bolstering state parties. "We are building the infra-

structure necessary to aggressively reach voters with our message," DNC Chair Jaime Harrison said in a statement. Biden's campaign's top priority until next year has been fundraising and keeping costs In September, however, it announced a 16-week, USD 25

million television and digital advertising blitz that focused on swing states and has promoted a variety of themes, including his administration's efforts to defend abortion rights and lower drug prescription costs.

One spot even directly criticised Trump as both he and Biden planned separate trips to Michigan early in the United Auto Workers' strike.

Sunday's totals were announced by the Biden campaign, but it doesn't expect to release details on how much it spent until later, in compliance with Federal Election Commission deadlines.

The campaign also said that its third-quarter totals included a large portion of the USD 25 million ad buy.

The campaign expects donations to rise sharply beginning next summer as the election

Biden has avoided serious

lengers, especially with Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Recently leaving the race and announcing that he'd instead run for president as an independent.

But Biden continues to grapple with questions about voter enthusiasm, given his low approval ratings and questions — even from many Democrats — about his age, given that he'd be 86 by the end

win one. The Biden campaign said it doubled its individual contributions since launching to a total of more than 1.4 million, Also, 112,000 people have now committed to be sustaining donors, meaning they have promised to continue to contribute every month, the campaign said.

of a second term, should he

In all, more than 493,000 donors made 843,000 donations across all Biden and Democratic entities over the quarter, with 97 per cent of donations coming in under



Protesters wave flags as they attend a pro Palestinian demonstration in London, Saturday in support of Palestinians caught up

### Weary families trying to flee before Israel's invasion

Deir Al-Balah (Gaza Strip): Some fled home with suitcases jammed with clothes and heirlooms and photographs. Some left with stacks of foam mattresses tied to car roofs. They took buses and vans and cars and carts pulled by don-

Many walked. Many had nothing with them but exhausted family members trudging through streets littered with rubble. All of them were trying to get to safety.

"We left the house without food, without water and without clothes," said Mohammad Hillis, sitting at a wooden school desk scarred by generations of students in a makeshift refugee camp in central Gaza. "We left without taking anything with us."

He said about 150 people lived in his building in their northern Gaza town. All left after clouds of Israeli leaflets began dropping from the sky, warning civilians to flee the north within 24 hours.

"Evacuate south for your

own safety and the safety of could be used as evacuation your families and distance yourself from Hamas terrorists who are using you as human shields," an Israeli statement said. It warned that Israeli forces would "operate significantly" in northern Gaza in the coming days, an apparent reference to an expected land offensive being prepared one week after Hamas' bloody, carefully planned attack on Israel.

The leaflets fueled the fear and chaos already raging in Gaza, which has faced relentless Israeli airstrikes since the

In just 12 hours after the first Israeli warnings, hundreds of thousands of people had either taken to the roads or been forced from their homes by the airstrikes.

But many Gazans chose to stay and face the looming invasion. Some said there was simply no safe place to go in the south, which was far from their friends and relatives. Many also feared the dangers on the roads that Israel said routes, but which had been targeted several times by Israeli airstrikes. Some Gazans sought shel-

ter in places that they hoped would not be Israeli targets. Medical officials say an estimated 35,000 have

crammed into the grounds of Gaza City's main hospital, hoping for refuge. The scale of the evacuation order is vast, and perhaps simply impossible. The order covers an area of

1.1 million residents, or about half the territory's population. The U.N. and aid workers have warned that the mass exodus would be catastrophic. Social media was flooded

with calls for help. "If there is a car, bus, or anything nearby that will take us from Gaza to Rafah, please contact me" a Gaza City doctor pleaded on Facebook.

On Friday, Haifa Khamis al-Shurafa wondered what her 82-year-old father was thinking as they prepared to flee for the second time in a week.

Her father, who is stricken with Parkinson's and unable to speak, had born witness to the 1948 Nakba, or "catastrophe," the term Palestinians use to describe their mass displace-ment when Israel was founded.

As she helped him into a car in Gaza City, along with the family of seven's most important possessions in two suitcases, she felt acutely that history was repeating itself.

Her father was 6 years old when he and his family were displaced from what is now the Israeli city of Beersheba.

"They left their shops and homes," she said later Friday, after reaching Deir al-Balah, a central Gaza city that is south of the zone where Israel had ordered the evacuation. "Now, my father is surrounded by his children and is seeing that we have to leave again, that we have to live this again."

Like many Gazans, Shurafa grew up hearing stories about 1948, and how so many Palestinians were never able to return home. Today, that fuels suspicions about whether Israel has any intention to allow Gazans to return to their homes. Earlier this week, Al-Shurafa, a 42-year-old architect married to a dentist, fled her upscale Gaza City neighborhood after her apartment was destroyed in an Israeli airstrike.

They had just minutes to gather their children and pack some important documents and clothes before the fivestory building was destroyed, bringing down two other buildings. "That was the worst moment of my life, the moment we had to leave, we had leave our memories, our dreams, my dreams, the house that we built together," she said. "We are not young anymore, that was our entire life savings."Asked how she was coping, she nearly cried."Please don't ask me how I feel," she said. "That is the worst feeling I have ever felt or will ever feel.""It was the feeling of

anguish, of humiliation, of

injustice, of abandonment," she

#### Poles vote in a high-stakes election Tomasz Druzynski, an will cause damage. The EU,

with the ruling conservative nationalist party pitted against opposition groups that accuse it of eroding the foundations of the democratic system.

The ruling party, Law and Justice, has a devoted base of supporters in the Central European nation of 38 million who appreciate its defense of Catholic traditions and its social spending on pensioners and families with children. The payments have given relief to poor people.

But support for the party has shrunk since the last election in 2019 - when it won nearly 44 per cent of the vote – amid high inflation, allegations of cronyism and bickering with European allies. Law and Justice has been polling in recent weeks at over 30 per cent, making it the single most popular party but still at risk of losing its majority in parliacampaigned saying that was

Many Poles feel like it is the most important election since 1989 when a new democracy was born after decades of communism. The health of the nation's constitutional order, its legal stance on LGBTQ+ rights and abortion, and the foreign alliances of a country that has been a crucial ally to Ukraine are all at stake. Polling in recent days suggested that opposition parties have a chance to deprive the governing populists of an unprecedented third term in a row. The Civic Coalition, Third Way and New Left have campaigned on promises to repair the rule of law and ties with the EU and other allies if they manage to gain power. The final outcome of the vote could be ultimately decided by the small margins gained or lost by the smaller parties.

ulate that Law and Justice information technology spe- whose funding has driven Poland is holding a high-stakes election on Sunday could need the support of the far-right Confederation party be believes change is possible. much of the economic transformation, is also withholding "I believe in it and I think this is the first chance in eight years to change something. And I hope this change will

come," Druzynski said. The continued growth of Poland's dynamic economy is also on voters' minds. Jan Molak, an 80-year-old supporter of the ruling party, credited it with creating a more just economic system and the development boom of recent "Things are getting better and better," he said after voting in Warsaw.

Others see economic threats in the way the party has governed and believe the high social spending has helped to fuel inflation.

There is also a high level of state ownership in the Polish economy, and the ruling party has built up a system of patronage, handing out thousands of jobs and contracts to its loyalists. Some fear over time that funding to Poland over what it views as democratic erosion.

Political experts say the election will not be fully fair after eight years of governance by Law and Justice, which has eroded checks and balances to gain more control over state institutions, including the courts, public media and the electoral process itself. Retired nurse Barbara Burs, 63, voted early in Warsaw, saying she cast her vote to change the government because she wants a better country for her children and grandchildren — a "just and undivided Poland.

The fate of Poland's relationship with Ukraine is also at stake. While Poland has been a staunch ally of neighbouring Ukraine since Russia invaded and a transit hub for Western weapons, relations chilled over the Ukrainian grain that entered Poland's market

Some 29 million Poles aged 18 and above are eligible to

They are choosing 460 Sejm, and 100 for the Senate for four-year terms. A referendum on migration, the retirement age and other issues is being held simultaneously. Opposition groups oppose the referendum, accusing the government of seeking to tap into emotions to mobilise its electorate in the close and unpredictable race. Some called on voters to boycott the referen-

At one polling station on the southern edge of Warsaw, people could be seen apparently declining to vote in the reférendum, casting just two ballots into the assigned boxes. Voters were offered three ballots, one for the Sejm, one for the Senate and one for the referendum

More than 31,000 voting stations across Poland are open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. (0500-1900 GMT).

### 3 die after shooting at party in Denver

AP DENVER/ DALLAS

Three people are dead after a shooting early Saturday at a party in Denver, police said. party at an industrial storefront where officers found someone dead with gunshot wounds, police said. Another five shooting victims were taken to local hospitals, where two of them where pronounced dead, police said. The names and ages of the victims weren't immediately available. Police said in an email to The Associated Press that they're awaiting information from the medical examiner's office but the three dead appear to be men.

The victims who survived are a man and two women, police said in an email.

Evidence showed that there were shots fired from at least two firearms at the party, police said. "At this point, investigators are working to determine the circumstances that led up to the shooting as well as who was involved," the Denver Police Department said in a



#### **3 PEOPLE INJURED AFTER** SHOOTING IN DALLAS

Three people were injured on Saturday night in a shooting resulting in the evacuation of the State Fair of Texas in Dallas, police said.

Police responded to a report of a shooting in the fair's food court at about 7:45 pm, the Dallas Police Department

Investigators determined one man shot at another man, resulting in three victims being shot and sustaining non-lifethreatening injuries, police said

A suspect, who was not immediately identified, ran

The conditions of the vic-

tims were not immediately

located and arrested him. A gun believed to have been used in the shooting also was found, police said. An earlier social media post by the Dallas police confirmed the park was being evacuated while the department investigated the shooting.

State Fair of Texas also posted a social media notice confirming the evacuation and the police investigation into the shooting. Dallas City Council member Adam Bazaldua, whose district includes the park where the shooting occurred, posted a message saying he was briefed on the situation by Dallas City Manager TC Broadnax. Bazaldua said the shooting involving two

people who knew each other. Videos posted on social media showed groups of peo-ple running along sidewalks and climbing barriers as they fled the area.

### Piper Laurie dies at 91

 $P^{iper\,Laurie,\,the\,strong\text{-}willed,}_{Oscar\text{-}nominated\,actor\,who}$ performed in acclaimed roles despite at one point abandoning acting altogether in search of a "more meaningful" life, died early Saturday at her home in Los Angeles. She was 91. Laurie died of old age, her manager, Marion Rosenberg, told The Associated Press via email, adding that she was "a superb talent and a wonderful human being." Laurie arrived in Hollywood in 1949 as Rosetta Jacobs and was quickly given a contract with Universal-International, a new name that she hated and a string of starring roles with Ronald Reagan, Rock Hudson and Tony Curtis, among others. She went on to receive Academy Award nominations for three distinct films: The 1961 poolroom drama "The Hustler"; the film version of Stephen King's horror classic "Carrie," in 1976; and the roman-



tic drama "Children of a Lesser God," in 1986. She also appeared in several acclaimed roles on television and the stage, including in David Lynch's "Twin Peaks" in the 1990s as the villainous Catherine Martell. Laurie made her debut at 17 in "Louisa," playing Reagan's daughter, then appeared opposite Francis the talking mule in "Francis Goes to the Races." She made several films with Curtis, whom she once dated, including "The Prince Who Was a Thief," "No Room for the Groom," "Son of Ali Baba" and "Johnny Dark."

## Tallest statue of Ambedkar unveiled in US

The tallest statue of Dr B R ▲ Ambedkar, the principal architect of India's Constitution, outside India was formally inaugurated in a Maryland suburb of the US capital here.

Amidst chants of "Jai Bhim", more than 500 Indian-Americans from various parts of the United States and some from India and other countries attended the unveiling ceremony of the 19-feet tall "Statue of Equality".

Heavy rain and drizzle did not deter the enthusiasm and energy of the participants, many of whom drove for as long as 10 hours to attend what they described as a historic

The statue has been made by renowned artist and sculptor Ram Sutar, who also built the statue of Sardar Patel, called as Statue of Unity, and installed on an island in Narmada,



Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat. "We are calling it the Statue

of Equality... this (inequality) is not only the problem in India, everywhere (in) different forms (it exists)," Ram Kumar, president of the Ambedkar International Center (AIC) told PTI after the statue unveiling

Born on April 14, 1891, Dr

Bhim Rao Ambedkar - popular among his followers as Babasaheb - was the chairman of the Constituent Assembly's crucial Drafting Committee that earned him the moniker Architect of the Indian Constitution. Spread over 13 acres, the

AIC in Accokeek township, some 22 miles south of the White House, would consist of a library, convention center, and Buddha Garden among

"This is a great occasion to participate in the unveiling ceremony of statue of Babasaheb. This is the tallest statue of Babasaheb in America. ..After 75 years of independence, the people are realizing the works done by Dr. Ambedkar and that's the reason why day by day he's getting the popularity, ...people are now understanding him in a prop-

"Éarlier he was treated as a

Dalit leader, but now the entire nation is recognizing his contribution of empowering the woman and for the marginalized society as well as the economic weaker sections," Ravi Kumar Narra, national president of Dalit Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DICCI), told PTI.

Narra, who travelled from India to attend the ceremony, said now all the developed nations have realized and also underdeveloped nations are thinking of implementing Ambedkar's ideology that a country cannot become rich and great unless each and every citizen gets empowered.

The greatest economic policy advocated by Dr Ambedkar is now becoming the reality," he said. The "Statue of Equality" represents 1.4 billion Indians and 4.5 million Indian Americans, said Deelip Mhaske from New York who leads the Ambedkarite move-

"Although this is completely done through community contributions, we received congratulatory messages from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar stating 'Ambedkarite has put the foundation of Unified India in the USA and globally," he said.

"This statue will not just inspire millions of Indians residing in the US but all communities including Black, Hispanic and others!" Mhaske said. "This is a historic step towards unifying the Indian-American diaspora and working towards making India a superpower not just in technology but also in social justice,"

Mahindra Rajwade, who drove for more than 10 hours from Kentucky to attend the statue unveiling ceremony, said this is a proud moment for all followers of Dr Ambedkar.

#### Iranian film director, his wife stabbed to death Tehran: Noted Iranian film

director Dariush Mehrjui and his wife were stabbed to death in their home by an unknown assailant, state media reported Sunday. The official IRNA news agency quoted Hossein Fazeli, a judiciary official, as saying that Mehrjhi and his wife, Vahideh Mohammadifar, were discovered dead with knife wounds in their necks. Fazeli said the director's

daughter, Mona Mehrjui, found the bodies when she went to visit her father Saturday night at the home in a suburb about 30 kilometers (19 miles) west of the capital, Tehran. The report said authorities were investigating though the wife had complained about a knife threat on social media in recent

## **Powerful earthquake** shakes Afghanistan

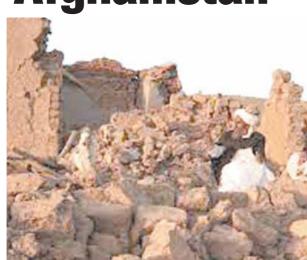
Apowerful 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck west-ern Afghanistan on Sunday, just over a week after strong quakes and aftershocks killed thousands of people and flat-tened entire villages in the same region.

The US Geological Survey said the latest quake's epicenter was about 34 kilometers (21 miles) outside Herat, the provincial capital, and eight kilometers (five miles) below the surface.

So far one person has been reported dead and around 150 injured, Mohammad Zahir Noorzai, head of the emergency relief team in Herat province. He added that casualty numbers might rise, as they haven't reached all affected areas yet.

The earthquakes on Oct. 7 flattened whole villages in Herat, in one of the most destructive quakes in the country's recent history.

More than 90 per cent of the people killed a week ago were women and children, UN officials reported Thursday.



Taliban officials said the earlier quakes killed more than 2,000 people across the province. The epicenter was in Zenda Jan district, where 1,294 people died, 1,688 were injured and every home was destroyed, according to U.N. figures. The initial quake, numerous aftershocks and a second 6.3-magnitude quake on Wednesday flattened villages, destroying hundreds of mud-brick homes that could not withstand such

force. Schools, health clinics and other village facilities also

Besides rubble and funerals after that devastation, there was little left of the villages in the region's dusty hills. Survivors are struggling to come to terms with the loss of multiple family members and in many places, living residents are outnumbered by volunteers who came to search the debris and dig mass graves.

### China, Pak to ink pacts under CPEC projects

**PTI** ■ ISLAMABAD

China and Pakistan will ink significant agreements regarding motorways and high-ways during caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar's four-day visit to Beijing starting Monday, according to a media report on Sunday.

The agreements would be signed under the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) programme,

Dawn newspaper reported.

Kakar would travel to Beijing on October 16 to participate in the 'Third Belt and Road Forum (BRF) for International Cooperation' from October 17 to 18.

The prime minister will attend the opening ceremony of the BRF and address the highlevel forum 'Connectivity in an Open Global Economy," the PM office said in a post on X on Saturday. A significant Memorandum Understanding scheduled to be signed is related to the estab-

Research and Training Centre (HRTC) with China's assistance, the paper said. The project will prominently take centre stage during the prime minister's discussion

with the Chinese authorities, it

lishment of a modern Highway

added. HRTC is a subsidiary of Organisation (FWO) to the National Highway Authority (NHA) for carrying become an associate in research in tunnelling.

out indigenous research in var-Under the ambit of CPEC, ious faculties of highway engithere is a promising joint neering not limited to paveresearch programme enviments, bridges, tunnelling envisioned with the government of ronmental engineering, China from 2023 to 2027, hydraulics and Geotech, but which aims to foster collaboraalso covering technical traintion and innovation in various domains of highway engineer-An NHA official said the

HRTC is also affiliated with A formal memorandum of various engineering institutes in research, especially in pavejoint research extension will be finalised and signed during ments, including the National University of Science and "We anticipate its signifi-

cance in furthering the infrastructure cooperation between China and Pakistan.

This extension is poised to

be a cornerstone of joint cooperation in the road infrastructure with the National Highway Authority being a vanguard of such mutual cooperation," the unnamed official said.

Under the agreement, HRTC Research Institute will be constructed on 530 acres, already acquired by the NHA at a cost of Rs 520 million.

The official said the institute would be built by a Chinese consultant under a Chinese grant of USD 52 million (Rs 15 billion). It includes infrastructure, a test track and indoor and outdoor lab equipment. After completion and required training, it would be handed over to the NHA for

also conduct studies of longterm pavement performance under controlled and uncontrolled conditions. Similarly, various research projects in reclaimed asphalt, bridges and tunnelling, training and degree courses in China and the development of engineering design manuals and standards for Pakistan are included in it.

Kakar will also sign an MoU to upgrade Karakoram Highway (KKH) from Raikot to Thakot, Raikot to Khunjerab (335 km), KKH phase-2 on the E-35 section from Havelian to Thakot, as well as 120 km and 120 Thakot, covering 120 km and introduction of a motorway section connecting Havelian to Mansehra.In the second phase of the KKH project, the official said, the road would be designed in a way that it would remain operational around the year, especially in winter when it is closed due to heavy snowfall. The KKH alignment is being designed in a way that it will not hit Bhasha Dam but it will go over it through tunnels. The prime minister will also discuss the construction of a motorway from Dera Ismail Khan to Zhob, while the Gwadar port will remain the centre of discussion during the meetings in Beijing, according to the paper.

#### 'Death of Indian-origin student not linked to COVID vaccinations'

Singapore (PTI): The Ministry of Health (MOH) has dismissed speculation that the death of a 14-year-old Indian-origin student at a premier Singapore Sports School earlier this week is linked to COVID-19 vaccina-

It is "untrue and irresponsible", reported TODAY newspaper, citing the ministry statement on Saturday.

Secondary 2 student-athlete Pranav Madhaik died on Wednesday after he felt unwell during a 400m fitness time trial on October 5.

On Saturday afternoon, the school revealed that the cause of death was cardiac arrest with antecedent cause of congenital malformation of coronary ves-

Based on the Ministry of Health's vaccination records, the student had received his last dose of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine more than 18 months unvaccinated person, the risk of COVID-19 infection leading to severe illness, far outweighs that

of vaccination." In a press statement issued on Saturday, the Singapore Sports School said Pranav told the badminton coach that he was feeling unwell after completing a 400m fitness time trial at about 6.26 pm on October 5.

The coach told him to rest and the boy did so at the side of the starting point of the track while the coach attended to the time-trial data on his phone. The coach then left the track to brief other students on competition matters, not realising that Pranav was still resting at the same place. He then left the school premises after the briefing. The teenager interacted with two other groups of students before a track and field coach noticed him. After he was given water, the coach assessed that Pranav had difficulty getting up, even with

### Azerbaijanis who fled separatist region decades ago ache to return

AP BAKU (AJERBAIZAN)

s a young man starting out Aas a dentist, Nazim Valiyev was forced to flee his home as ethnic violence roiled a separatist region inside Azerbaijan. More than three decades later, with his medical career over after a stroke, the 60-year-old hopes he can return there, now that it is back under Azerbaijani control. It could still be years, however, before he realises his dream.

Valiyev is among the estimated 700,000 Azerbaijanis who fled or were forced out of the region they call Karabakh amid violence that flared beginning in 1988 and then grew into an outright war.

That conflict ended in 1994, with the territory under the control of ethnic Armenian forces supported by their neighbouring country. A subsequent war in 2020 returned control of much of the area to Azerbaijan, and a lightning offensive last month forced the Armenian separatists to relinquish the rest of the region known elsewhere as Nagorno-Karabakh.

Within days of the capitulation, ethnic Armenians streamed out of the region, leaving it nearly empty. A United Nations mission that visited in early October said there may be no more than 1,000 people left in the region whose population was an estimated 120,000 a month ago.

The blinding speed of events raised spirits among those who had fled so long ago and longed to return to its mountains and thick forests.

"I often saw in my dreams how my neighbours and I, as before, were walking in the forest and picking flowers," Bahar

Aliguleyeva said of her childhood memories in the Karabakh capital city of Khankendi, which was called Stepanakert by Armenians.

When she heard that Azerbaijan had regained control of the city she left in 1988 at age 16, "I somehow didn't even believe it. It's as if I found myself somewhere between the past and reality, but there is a path to happiness," she told The Associated Press in Baku, the Azerbaijan capital. Valiyev, the former dentist,

said he thinks about returning every day, "but I understand that this will not be a quick process." In 2022, Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev established a programme called Great Return to Azerbaijan's Liberated Territories" to bring back long-

displaced people. It envisions

improvements in infrastruc-

ture, construction of residences, and laborious, slowmoving efforts to clear the region of mines. Azerbaijan's budget for this year allocates about USD 3.1 billion for reconstruction projects in the region. So far, only about 2,000 people have returned, but the government aims for 10,000 by the end of the year, according to Fuad Huseynov of the State Committee for Affairs of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons.

Pak PM Kakar with chinese officials

Technology (NUST).

The highway authority has

also proposed the Tunnelling

Institute of the Frontier Works

He told AP that the government plans to return 150,000 people by 2027.

"Mines are a huge obstacle, a huge problem. The territories that were under Armenian occupation for 30 years were not only virtually completely razed to the ground, but also mined with mines and other unexploded military ammunition," he said.

### **Ecuadorians electing** new President

 $F^{\text{rightened by unprecedent-}}_{\text{ed violence on the streets}}$ within prisons, Ecuadorians have a universal demand for the president they will choose on Sunday - safety. The runoff election in the South American country pits an heir to a banana empire, Daniel Noboa, and an attorney, Luisa Gonzalez. Both have limited governing experience and will undoubtedly have their work cut out.

The election comes as more Ecuadorians become victims of drug-related violence that erupted roughly three years ago and intensified in August, when a presidential candidate was assassinated in broad daylight.

People continuously watch their backs and limit how often they leave home. The uneasiness even pushed Noboa to add a bulletproof vest to his daily

Whoever wins with a simple majority of votes will govern for only 15 months, until May 2025, which is what Guillermo Lasso. He cut his term short when he dissolved the country's National Assembly in May as lawmakers carried out impeachment proceedings against him over alleged improprieties in a contract by a state-owned company. Lasso, a conservative former banker, clashed constantly with lawmakers after his election in 2021 and decided not to run in the special election.

Under Lasso's watch, violent deaths soared, reaching 4,600 in 2022, the country's highest in history and double the total in 2021. The National Police tallied 3,568 violent deaths in the first half of 2023.

Security affects us all, and whether poor or rich, no one is safe from criminals anymore. housewife Ximena Flores said ahead of the runoff election. "Do you think that a new president will be able to do something in such a short time? I think not. It will be a new dis-



appointment for everyone." The spike in violence is tied

to cocaine trafficking. Mexican, Colombian and Balkan cartels have set roots in Ecuador and operate with assistance from

operate with assistance from local criminal gangs.

Voting is mandatory in Ecuador for people ages 18 through 64. Those who don't comply face a fine of about USD 45. Polls were to close in late afternoon, and results were expected on Sunday evening. Noboa and Gonzalez, both

of whom have served short stints as lawmakers, advanced to the runoff by finishing ahead of six other candidates in the

Noboa, 35, is an heir to a fortune built on Ecuador's main crop, bananas. His political career began in 2021, when he won a seat in the National Assembly and chaired its Economic Development Commission. He opened an event organising company when he was 18 and then joined his father's Noboa Corp., where he held management positions in the shipping, logistics and commercial areas.

Gonzalez, 45, held various government jobs during the decade-long presidency of Rafael Correa, her mentor, and was a lawmaker until May. She was unknown to most voters until Correa's party picked her as its presidential candidate. At the start of the campaign, she said Correa would be her adviser, but she has recently tried to distance herself a bit in an effort to court voters who oppose the former

### PTI ■ COLOMBO **S**ri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has called

for stability

SL Prez calls

for a fresh approach from the world to maintain a stable geopolitical system in the wake of the escalating conflict involving Israel and Hamas. Speaking at a dinner hosted by the Geopolitical

Cartographer, an international research foundation specialising in the Indian Ōcean, under the theme 'Emerging New Order in the Indian Wickremesinghe on Friday night talked about the impor-

tance of the current situation in West Asia and its potential impact on the global order. The 74-year-old leader expressed concerns about the

global geopolitical implica-tions of the conflict, particu-larly the challenges for the United States in managing multiple international issues simultaneously. "Can the US manage

Ukraine, Taiwan and the Middle East, Gaza? I don't think so. If you are going to groups in the Mediterranean, that's serious. Can you manage it? It's going to be difficult because many issues are going to arise," he said.

He stressed the need for dialogue and cooperation among nations to address these challenges and emphasised that the international community must work together to maintain a stable geopolitical system.

He expressed hope that extreme reactions from different parts of the world should not dominate the discourse and that alternative solutions should be explored, including the possibility of a four-state solution involving Israel, Palestine, Gaza, and Lebanon.

President Wickremesinghe urged a fresh approach to solving the conflict, emphasising that the old ways of addressing the situation may not yield the necessary solutions.

#### Hackers attack Guatemalan govt webpages in support of pro-democracy protests president were targeted, among

**AP** ■ GUATEMALA CITY

Tn what Guatemalan author-Lities described as a national security incident, hackers affiliated with the activist group Anonymous disabled multiple government webpages Saturday. The attacks were in support of demonstrations led by Indigenous organizations in the Central American country.

For almost two weeks, demonstrators have been calling for the resignation of Guatemalan Attorney General Consuelo Porras, saying she has tried to undermine the popular vote that made progressive Bernardo Arévalo the president-elect.

Posting on the social media website X, formerly known as Twitter, hackers under the han-@AnonGTReloaded



announced, "This October 14 #Anonymous will attack the Government of Guatemala, but this time we do not come

The hackers targeted government webpages with floods of automated traffic until they crashed, a technique known as distributed denial-of-service attacks. Webpages for Guatemala's judicial branch, Department of Agriculture and

the General Secretary of the

ly reinstated, but others remained down. Guatemalan authorities said the hacking was a matter of "national security" and they are responding. The attacks come after 13 days of protests and road clo-

others. Some pages were quick-

Thousands of Indigenous

people have demanded that Porras and prosecutors Rafael Curruchiche and Cinthia Monterroso, as well as Judge Fredy Orellana, all resign, accusing them of endangering the country's democracy. Demonstrators maintain that after Arévalo's victory in the August runoff election, Porras mounted an undemocratic challenge against Arévalo, his left-wing Seed Movement party and electoral authorities.

## 'Ring of fire' eclipse brings cheers of joy as it moves across Americas

**AP** ■ CANCUN (MEXICO)

 $F^{\text{irst came the darkening skies,}}_{\text{then the crescent-shaped}}$ shadows on the ground, and finally an eruption of cheers by crowds that gathered Saturday along the narrow path of a rare

"ring of fire" eclipse of the sun. It was a spectacular show for millions of people across the Americas as the moon moved into place and blocked out all but a brilliant circle of the sun's outer edge. Hundreds of people filed into the planetarium in the Caribbean resort city of Cancún to watch the eclipse. Some peered through box projectors, while others looked through

telescopes and special glasses. Excited children whistled, as some adults raised their arms toward the sky as if to welcome the eclipse. Vendors selling plants outside observed the dance between the moon and with the help of trees as the shifting sunlight filtered through the leaves, casting unique shadows on the sidewalk.

"There was silence and like a mist, as if it was dusk, but only a few minutes later the birds were singing again," said Carmen Jardines, 56, one of the vendors.

Artemia Carreto, was telling passersby about her experience as a child in southern Mexico, when they were told to look instead at the river where it reflected beautifully on the sand beneath the water. While she wasn't near a river this time, Carreto said she was carried away by the sensations induced by changing temperatures and a feeling of heaviness that she pegged to the rotation of the

For Pilar Cáceres, there was a sense of energy.

"It is something that nature brings us and that we must watch," said the 77-year-old retired elementary school teacher who watched the eclipse by following its shadow through a piece of cardboard.

Ancient Maya astronomers who tracked the movements of the sun and moon with precision referred to eclipses as "broken sun." They may have used dark volcanic glass to protect their eyes, said archeologist Arturo Montero of Tepeyac University in Mexico City.

Unlike a total solar eclipse, the moon doesn't completely cover the sun during a ring of fire eclipse. When the moon lines up between Earth and the sun, it leaves a bright, blazing

The entire eclipse — from the moment the moon starts to obscure the sun until it's back to normal — lasted 2 1/2 to three

of fire portion was from three to five minutes, depending on the

Saturday's US path: Oregon, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Texas in the U.S., with a sliver of California, Arizona and Colorado. Then: Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Brazil. Much of the rest of the Western Hemisphere got a partial eclipse.

NASA and other groups livestreamed the event.

In the US, some eclipse watchers traveled to remote corners of the country to try to get the best view possible while those in Albuquerque got a double treat as the eclipse coincided with an international balloon fiesta that typically draws tens of thousands of spectators and hundreds of hot air balloon

pilots from around the world. There were hoots, hollers and yelps from the balloon

launch field as the moon began to cover the sun. Some pilots used their propane burners to shoot flames upward in unison as the spectacle unfolded. "It's very exciting to be here

and have the convergence of our love of flying with something very natural like an eclipse," said Allan Hahn, a balloon pilot from Aurora, Colorado. At Bryce Canyon National

Park in Utah, enthusiasts hit the trails before sunrise to stake out their preferred spots among the red rock hoodoos. With the ring of fire in full

form, cheers echoed through the

canyons of the park. "I just think it's one of those things that unites us all," said John Edwards, a cancer drug developer who traveled alone across the country to watch the eclipse from Bryce Canyon.

Kirby James and Caroline McGuire from Toronto didn't realize they would be in a prime spot when they planned their trip to southern Utah. "Nothing that you can read could prepare you for how it feels," said Kirby James, 63, a co-founder of a software company. "It's the moment, especially when the ring of fire came on, you realized you were having a lifetime experience."For

the path, there was a mix of excitement, worries about the weather and concerns they'd be overwhelmed by visitors flocking to see the annular solar eclipse. In Eugene, Oregon, oohs and ahs combined with groans of disappointment as the eclipse was intermittently visible, the sun's light poking through the cloud cover only at times. In southern Colombia

astronomers helping a group of visually impaired people experience the perfect golden ring created by the moon and sun through raised maps and temperature changes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is here by informed that I Harmeet Singh S/o Late Sardar Joginder Singh R/o 2 Pell farm road new Saddle river

New Jersey USA-07458, India address: 37-D, Sujan Singh Park New Delhi-110003

Mob:-+91-9811348837, +1-201-270-8609

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Reg no. 9225 Date of registration: 27/01/2004
Pg. 106-107 Volume -1065 Book-1 1st partyPOI 2nd party - Harmeet Singh I have lodged
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me at above said address and phone numbers. If any other claiment right in the aforesaid property, he or she should file a fir give intimation to DV/ Assistance. Director housing, DDA Vikas Sadan INA New Delhi within 15

days from the date of issuance of this notice

02/10/2023 With Police Station Delhi.

## Quarterly earnings, crude prices, to dictate market trends this week: Analysts

he ongoing second quarter earnings, movement of oil benchmark Brent crude and the uncertainty in the Middle East would dictate terms in the domestic markets this week, analysts said.

Furthermore, the activities of Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) will also influence trading in the markets.

"A slew of earnings reports from heavyweights expected this week will significantly impact market direction. The of Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) will be important, given their

recent consistent selling streak," Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart

Foreign investors have pulled out nearly Rs 9,800 crore from Indian equities this month so far owing to a sustained rise in US bond yields and the uncertain environment resulting from the Israel-Hamas conflict. It was a tumultuous week in the market, marked by significant events and high volatility. Despite this, the market closed on a positive note, largely attributed to strong domestic

Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 287.11 points or



"The Indian market rebounded from the sluggish start, propelled by positive expectations

on Q2 earnings and modera-

tion in global bond yield

despite concerns over the Middle East conflict continues to hover.

"However, the release of higher-than-anticipated US inflain treasury yields marginally offset the positive trend by the end of the week," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. On the macroeconomic front,

domestic factors such as a significant drop in Consumer Price Index (CPI) data and impressive industrial production helped to sustain the broad optimism, Nair added.

According to official data, the country's retail inflation rates moderated to a three-month low of 5 per cent in September while factory output soared to a 14-month high of 10.4 per

However, a weak start to the

dued revenue guidance, combined with uptick in crude oil prices affected the broad market trend, Nair noted. Looking ahead, investors will

closely monitor the further commencement of the second quarter earnings season, which has high expectations from sectors like Auto, Finance and Oil & Gas, Nair said.

Further, the speech by US Fed Chair Jerome Powell on October 19, will also be an important factor to focus on, as the Federal Reserve is still in favour of one more rate hike by the end of this year to tame

### Rice traders seek flat export duty on parboiled rice

 $R^{\text{ice exporters have}}_{\text{requested the Centre for}}$ a flat export duty of USD 80 per tonne for parboiled rice instead of the current 20 per cent duty to smoothen trade, a top official of the rice exporters' umbrella body said on Sunday.

The Indian Rice Exporters Federation (IREF) has also requested the government to reconsider its export ban on white rice which was imposed in July and reduction in the minimum export price for basmati rice to USD 850 per tonne to prevent negative impacts on both export volumes and

On Friday, the government had extended the 20 per cent duty on parboiled rice exports until March 24.

"We request the government to replace the 20 per cent export duty with a fixed USD 80 per tonne export duty. This will eliminate ambiguity and invoicing issues in rice trade," IREF national president Prem Garg told PTI. The federation wants a dia-

logue with the government to reconsider the ban on white rice, he added. IREF also expects the gov-

ernment to release a notification for basmati rice proposing a minimum export price of USD 850 per tonne in contrast to the current rate of USD 1,200 per tonne. The annual non-basmati

rice export value from India exceeds Rs 50,000 crore. These export restrictions

government to ensure adequate stock of rice and to control food inflation.

Garg noted that the export restrictions have led to a 30 per cent increase in rice prices in the international market, benefiting competing countries like Pakistan and Thailand.

IREF director general Sanjeev Ahuja said the world's largest rice exporter accounts for approximately 46 per cent of total rice exports, amounting to around 22 million tonnes annually.

However, only 6.9 million tonnes have been exported so far, he added.

Out of the 22 million tonnes, 5 million tonnes are basmati rice, while the rest comprises white and parboiled rice.

The exporters' body expects that if the government restrictions continue, export volumes will be impacted

Garg emphasized that farmers are under pressure due to reduced demand from exporters. The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh has criticised the timing of the export ban announcement, stating that it sends a negative signal to farmers during the current

planting season. IREF, which is just 100 days old and has 4,000 members, said they successfully resolved the issue with the government by clearing 90,000 tonnes of white rice in transit to export destinations after the ban announcement. These shipments were previously stuck at various ports, according

#### Yokohama bets on local production for sustainable business

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

apanese tyre maker Yokohama is betting on local production in India for a "sustainable and competitive" business model in the country, according to a top company official. Yokohama Rubber company,

which is present in the country through a wholly-owned subsidiary, is coming up with a new plant in Visakhapatnam in addition to its existing plant in Bahadurgarh, Haryana. In an interaction with PTI,

Yokohama India Managing Director and CEO Harinder Singh said the company can manufacture tyres of up to 18 inches in diameter within the country and has plans to extend this capability to accommodate tyre sizes of up to 22 inches, to cater to the demand for biggersized tyres.

"While we still import certain high-end tyres, like run-flat tyres commonly found on luxury vehicles from our overseas manufacturing bases, our commitment to localising production in India is unwavering," he

Singh said the company supports the government's decision to ban tyre imports into the

"Yokohama India supports this decision and recognises the importance of investing in local production. Our investment in the Vizag plant reflects our commitment to the Make in India initiative and positions the company to capture a larger share of the premium SUV market by offering locally manufactured, high-end tyres," he

Local production also helps in reducing costs, lead times, and dependency on imports, contributing to a more sustainable and competitive business model,

The move towards faster and more economical localisation, combined with the capability to manufacture tyres up to 22 inches, positions the company to better serve the growing market demand for SUVs, MPVs, and premium vehicles in the country, Singh said. In 2020, the government imposed curbs on imports of certain new pneumatic tyres used in motor cars, buses, lorries and motorcycles in a move to promote domestic manufacturing.

Tyre companies can now import only a small number of tyres into the country under a limited import licence, which was not the case before 2020.

### IndianOil to invest ₹1,660 crore in joint venture with NPTC

Indian Oil Corporation, the nation's biggest oil firm, will invest Rs 1,660.15 crore as equity in a newly set up joint venture with energy major NTPC Ltd for setting up renew-

able power plants.
In June, IOC and NTPC had formed a 50:50 joint venture company, IndianOil NTPC Green Energy Pvt Ltd, to set up renewable energy projects to meet round-the-clock power requirements of refineries of the

oil company. In a stock exchanging filing, IOC said its Board in a meeting on October 13, "has accorded approval to the investment plan of the joint venture company for setting up of renewable energy power plants and approved the equity contribution of up to Rs 1,660.15 crore towards Indian Oil's share of 50 per cent in the equity share cap-

On June 2, IOC incorporated the joint venture company (JVC) with NTPC Green

ital of the JVC."

Energy Limited, (a whollyowned subsidiary of NTPC

"IndianQil NTPC Green Energy Private Limited will develop renewable energybased power projects (viz. Solar PV, wind, any other renewable energy, energy storage or any combination of the same), to meet the round-the-clock (RTC) power requirements of new projects of IndianQOil Refineries," the firm had said at that time.

The aim is to generate a mini-

power to fulfill the energy requirements of IOC refineries. NTPC, through its whollyowned subsidiary, NGEL, has set an ambitious target of building a renewable generation portfolio of 60 GW over the next decade to aggressively pursue its green energy busi-In March, IOC had announced

mum capacity of 650 MW of

round-the-clock renewable

consolidation of its green assets under one umbrella for better

### 'Prestige Group aims 55 per cent annual growth in sales bookings this fiscal'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prestige Estates Projects Ltd Pexpects its sale bookings to rise 55 per cent this fiscal to touch an all-time high of Rs 20,000 crore driven by strong demand for residential proper-

Its sale bookings stood at Rs 12,931 crore in 2022-23. Buoyed by the company's performance in the first two quarters of 2023-24, Prestige Group Chairman and Managing Director Irfan Razack said sale this fiscal year to over Rs 20,000 crore from Rs 16,000 crore ear-"We have done pre-sales of

around Rs 11,000 crore in the first two quarters. We had guided around Rs 16,000 crore (for the entire 2023-24). But having done Rs 11,000 crore of sales in the first six months, the team is very confident. Once all the approvals come and launches happen, we should cross Rs 20,000 crore," Razack said on the sidelines of CREDAI NAT-CON conference in Egypt He sounded very bullish on demand of residential properties across all price brackets.

"There is a huge demand for housing. We have a strong brand to capitalize it. The sector is going through consolidation. So, there is immense growth potential," Razack said. He said the company has an aggressive launch pipeline for the second half of this fiscal across all major cities including Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai and Mumbai. It also plans to launch luxury

housing projects in Goa and

Razack exuded confidence that new launches and sustenance sales in ongoing projects would help the company in achieving the revised sales guidance of Rs 20,000 crore.

Earlier this month, Prestige Estates reported more than two-fold jump in sale bookings to Rs 7,092.6 crore in the second quarter of this fiscal year. In terms of volumes, sale bookings rose 50 per cent to 6.84 million square feet during July-September quarter.

have been imposed by the to officials.

Rosmerta lines up ₹200 crore to set up 10 vehicle scrappage units the national vehicle scrappage policy to help phase out unfit and polluting vehicles and also promote a circular economy. While the government has financially incentivised scrapping old vehicles and replacing them with new ones, over 50

#### India to leverage this situation and sixth largest manufactur-In an interaction with PTI, and contribute to the circular er of passenger and commercial Rosmerta Technologies economy," he added. vehicles respectively, imports President Kartick Nagpal said The central government metals worth USD 34.7 billion that with the setting up of the believes that the output from In August 2021, Prime Minister

#### ₹2,755 crore pledged with **Indian Biogas Association** PTI ■ NEW DELHI pressed biogas plants in the

**New investments worth** 

New investments totalling Rs 2,755 crore have been pledged with industry body Indian Biogas Association (IBA) during the recently held Renewable Energy India Expo

Talking to PTI, IBA Chairman Gaurav Kedia said "Indian Biogas Association (IBA), an industry association comprising operators, manufacturers, and planners of bioenergy plants, has received a commitment of investment worth Rs 2,755 crore during the Renewable Energy India Expo 2023."

The association has signed joint ventures (JVs), MoUs (memorandum of understanding) and received LoIs (letter of intent) commitments during the recently concluded Renewable Energy India (REI) Expo held at Greater Noida from from October 4 to 6. The industry has made this promise, which is expected to be realised in the next three years, Kedia said. Kedia informed that there was a huge interest from companies

from various countries like Germany, Sweden and Italy. "We have signed several MoUs amounting to more than Rs 1,000 crore of JVs and could get an interest for an additional 54 LoIs for setting up of com-

The IBA is the first nationwide and professional biogas association for operators, manufacturers and planners of biogas plants, and representatives from public policy, science and research in India. The association was established in 2011 and revamped in 2015 to promote a greener future through biogas. The IBA is working with many international organizations like the German Biogas Association to foster the development of the Bio-energy sector in India.

The Bio-energy pavilion was supported by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and several leading national and international industry players. The expo is one of the largest trade expositions and events focusing on renewable energy (bio-energy, solar, and wind) and energy efficiency technologies, including electric vehicles and battery storage. The objective of the exhibition is to accelerate India's pledge towards net zero emission.

IBA President A R Shukla said, "This year's REI expo was a huge success considering the announcement of the Global Biofuel Alliance by the G20 Nations. This has brought in a positive sentiment within the

Automobile technology and automation firm Rosmerta Technologies plans to invest Rs 200 crore to set up ten vehicle scrappage units over the next three years, according to a top company executive. The company currently oper-

ates a single vehicle scrapping facility in Manesar (Haryana)

After the capacity addition, the company will be able to process up to 3 lakh vehicles

30,000 vehicles annually

with a capacity of processing

scrappage centres, the company will be able to contribute to



the circular economy by helping recycle three lakh vehicles 'With this regard, we plan on

investing Rs 200 crore across

scrapped vehicle materials would save about 33 per cent on raw material costs and will bring down reliance on imported metals such as aluminium, copper as well as rubber. India, which is ranked fourth

Narendra Modi had launched

lakh light motor vehicles aged over 50 years (as per industry estimates) continue to ply

#### **'See eventual split in platforms for ICE**, electric passenger vehicles'

PTI NEW DELHI

Tata Motors sees an eventual split in the platforms for its conventional engine and electric passenger vehicles in order to make future products unique and remove the handicap of developing EVs on traditional platforms, according to its Global Head of Design, Martin Uhlarik.

With electrification and connectivity fast gaining momentum, he also said interiors of cars of the future could become more "like a home" driven by minimalistic approach, as sophisticated customers seek material comfort, simplicity and ease of use. "We see an eventual splitting of

ICE (internal combustion

engine) and EV, which is sim-

ply driven by the platform. If

has to carry over an ICE

architecture, it will always be handicapped in terms of its full potential, in terms of range, in terms of battery layout," Uhlarik

Converting EV on an ICE product platform, which has provisions such as the traditional transmission tunnel and firewall, has limitations, he added. "So if you want to do a proper EV or do a pure EV platform, at some point you'll have to see the products split, not just visually but eventually you have to actually make it unique," Uhlarik said.

He said the split is already happening in the industry for most competitors globally but declined to share the timeline for Tata Motors to follow suit. Tata Motors current EVs such as the Nexon EV, Tiago EV and Tigor EV are based on ICE plat-

#### PTI ■ NEW DELHI

he Empowered committee The Empowered community in PLI (production-linked incentive) scheme has approved Rs 1,000 crore disbursement to beneficiary firms of the electronics sector, a top government official said.

The government disbursed Rs 2,900 crore till March 2023, out of claims worth Rs 3,400 crore received under the scheme, which aims at boosting domestic manufacturing, creating jobs and supporting exports.

"In the recent meeting of the committee, Rs 1,000 crore disbursements were approved under the PLI scheme for the electronics sector. Actual disbursement to the beneficiary companies would take a few more days," the official said. This would be the first disburse-



Empowered body in PLI scheme approves ₹1,000 cr

disbursement to beneficiaries of electronics sector

ment of this fiscal.

The scheme was announced in 2021, for 14 sectors including large-scale electronic manufacturing, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, specialty steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell battery, drones and pharmaceuticals with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh

The scheme is doing well in sectors such as electronics, pharma, and medical devices.

As many as 32 beneficiaries had been approved under the PLI scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing, including mobile phones and specified electronic components.

respective ministries/depart-

ments which are implementing

The proposal for disbursement of incentives are presented by

the scheme. It is considered by the Empowered Committee comprising NITI Aayog, department for promotion of industry and internal trade, ministry of electronics and informational technology, and representatives from the Department of Expenditure, Department of Revenue, Department of Economic Affairs and office of DGFT (directorate general of foreign

The committee gives its recommendations for disbursal of incentive to the selected beneficiary under the PLI scheme. In sectors where PLI disbursement is low or if firms are not able to meet their performance thresholds, in such cases, respective departments are looking at course corrections in the scheme.

#### SAIL plans to begin trial production of special rails by month end: hairman

Steel maker SAIL plans to start the trial production of head hardened (HH) rails, used in metro rail and freight corridor projects, by month-end, its Chairman Amarendu Prakash

The steel PSU was earlier looking to start the trial production

from the Indian Railways, Prakash told PTI in an interview. We have the technology. We had planned for it (HH rail production) but then...They (Railways) requested us to defer the trials and now it is at the end of October," the Chairman said.

of HH rails in August but deferred it due to the demand for normal rails like 880 grade and metro rail projects. Such rails are manufactured using head hardening technology to bear about 50 per cent higher pressure compared to normal rails. SAIL has set up facilities for the production of HH rails at the new Universal Rail Mill (URM)

at its Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) in

Chhattisgarh, and the cold trials for the same have already been completed. The PSU will be the second play-

er in India to start the production of HH rails. Jindal Steel and Power Ltd (JSPL) produces HH rails at its plant located in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh.

SAĬL also produces forged wheels for the Railways at

Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) in West Bengal, Prakash said. The rails and wheels are supplied to Indian Railways, he added. On the sourcing of coking coal, Prakash said "We source coking coal from various sources Australia, the US, Russia and

company in Mozambique."

ing coal shipments of 75,000 tonnes each from Russia during the April-September period of FY24. To increase coking coal supplies, there are plans to double the production capacity of Mozambique-based ICVL from 2 MTPA to 4 MTPA, he said, Indonesia. We also have a JV adding a detailed project report is being prepared in this regard. Mozambique-based ICVL is a SAIL sourced around eight cok-

special-purpose vehicle of SAIL, RINL, NMDC, CIL and NTPC for acquiring coal mines and assets overseas. On the rising prices of coking

coal, the chairman said it will directly affect the input cost and build pressure on profit margins. From USD 230 a tonne in June-July 2023, the coking coal prices climbed to trade at USD 341 per

tonne CFR (cost and freight) India in September end. On the EU's mechanism of carbon border adjustment tax (CBAM) on exports, the official said, "It will add to the cost of supplies to Europe for Indian exporters. The exact impact and the quantum of impact is still to be assessed as Europe is still working on this."

## SHUBHANKAR SHARMA FALTERS IN THIRD ROUND, SLIPS TO TIED-14

Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma faltered as he carded an underwhelming 1-over 72 and dropped from tied-sec-ond to tied-14th at the Acciona Open de Espana on Sunday. After two rounds of 66, Sharma struggled on the third day as he had three bogeys and a double bogey against four birdies.

Sharma is now 9-under for three days and he needs some good results to ensure a berth in the season-ending DP World Tour Championships.

Earlier, Manu Gandas missed Matthieu Pavon took a two-

shot lead into the final round as he maintained his fantastic form with a 66 at the Club de Campo Villa de Madrid.

The 30-year-old Frenchman has led the way since carding an opening 63 in the Spanish capital and produced a confident display of front-running to get to 16 under after 54 holes.



Pavon is still looking for a maiden win on the World Tour but has two victories on the Alps Tour and has finished second three times on each of the European Challenge and World

England's Nathan Kimsey was his closest challenger after a 65, two clear of local favourite Alfredo Garcia-Heredia, French duo Romain Langasque and Mike Lorenzo-Vera and South African Zander Lombard.

Kimsey has won both the Qualifying School and the Road To Mallorca but has yet to taste victory on the World Tour after losing out to Vincent Norrman in a play-off at Barbasol Championship. Dane Marcus Helligkilde,

Spaniard Gonzalo Fernandez-Ĉastano, Frenchman Julien Guerrier and England's Eddie Pepperell were then at 11 under, one clear of Dan Bradbury who made his third hole-in-one of the season with a 226-yard four

### Ebenyo, Ayana emerge winners at Delhi Half Marathon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

EBENYO

enya's Daniel Ebenyo and Ethiopian Almaz Ayana lived up to the expectations as they won the men's and women's elite races respectively at the Delhi Half Marathon here on Sunday.

The 28-year-old Ebenyo, who won a silver medal in the 10000m race at the 2023 World Championships in Budapest, finished the men's race in 59 minutes and 27 seconds, ahead of fellow Kenyan Charles Matata (1:00:05) and Ethiopia's Addisu Gobena (1:00:51). Ayana, who won a 10000m third place.

gold medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics, topped the women's elite race in one hour, seven minutes and 59 seconds, ahead of Uganda's Stella Chesang (1:08:28) and Kenya's Viola Chepngeno (1:09:09).

Abhishek Pal and Kavita Yadav were the fastest in the Indian men's and women's elite categories, clocking 1:04:08 and 1:17:42 respec-

The 31-year-old Ayana, winner of the Delhi Half Marathon six years ago, came close to her 2017 winning time of 1:07:11 in the women's race.

Running in company of her country-mates Aberash Minsewo and Dessie Viola Chepngeno and Uganda's Stella Chesang, Ayana maintained her 16minute pace for each of the 5km intervals.

But she slowed down in the final phase of the race and ran alone as her nearest challenger Chesang was way behind her. Ayana went on to claim the top spot in 67:58 seconds.

Chesang finished 28 seconds later for the second place while Chepngeno from Kenya completed the podium in 69:09. For Chesang, it was one place up from her last year's position in Delhi.

"It was not an easy race and the weather was a bit hot as well. However, it was great to run at the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon. I would like to thank the organisers for inviting me to the event and this race has helped me prepare for the events in future," said Ayana.

In the men's elite race, a group of eight runners, mostly Kenyans, stayed together until the 13-km

mark when Ebenyo and his compatriot Charles Matata started breaking away from the rest.

Matata, the runner-up in

this year's Rock-n-Roll Half Marathon in Madrid, was pushing Ebenvo for another five kilometres. However, Ebenyo, the silver medallist in the World Half Marathon earlier this year, increased his pace at the right time to move at least half a minute ahead of Matata.

While Ebenyo romped home in 59 minutes 27 seconds, Matata clocked 60:05 for the second spot while Addisu Gobena brought some cheer to the Ethiopian camp, crossing the finish line 46 seconds later for the

'It was amazing to run here, but I am disappointed with my timing. I was aiming for the event record but fell short. Hopefully, I will be able to break the event record next year," said

Ebenyo. Meanwhile, Abhishek Pal reclaimed the Indian elite men's title after running neck and neck with Hangzhou Asian Games

10,000m silver medallist Kartik Kumar. Pal recorded a timing of 64:07, while Kartik missed the top prize by a fraction of a second and finished with 64:08. Sawan Barwal was

Pal was the 2018 winner with 64:13 and he bettered his timing in this edition. "Kartik and I have had a lot of close contests and today we had another one. It's great to clinch first place once again. Kartik and I train together and I am really happy about his achieve-

ment at the Asian Games.

We'll definitely have anoth-

er photo finish at the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon next year," Pal said. Kavita Yadav clinched the first position in the Indian elite women's race in her Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon debut with a timing of 77:42, while Rima

Patel (77:48) and Poonam Dinkar Sonune (77:49) finished second and third respectively.

to push hard in the last 400m to ensure that I finished first. It was a great experience to run in Delhi and I will certainly come back to defend my title,

### **Andy Bean, 11-time PGA Tour winner, dies** from complications of lung surgery

PTI NEW YORK

Andy Bean, an 11-time PGA Tour winner and three times a runner-up in the majors, has died after complications from a double lung replacement surgery, the PGA Tour said. He

Bean had lung replacement surgery in September. His friend, Alan Pope, posted on Facebook at the time that Bean's lungs had been damaged from COVID-19. Bean was a giant of a man on the PGA Tour at 6-foot-4, and he once earned the reputation for wrestling an alligator at Qschool, a story he explained a few years later was little more than swatting it on the tail while playing alongside a player who had never seen a gator.

"I walked over to the gator, who was more scared of me than I was of him. I grabbed his tail, pond. That's all there was to it, but the story got out that I'd been wrestling this gator and threw him into the pond," Bean said at the Doral-Eastern Open in 1977. His best year was 1978, when he won three times, including backto-back weeks at Quail Hollow



for the Kemper Open and the Danny Thomas Memphis Classic in a playoff over Lee Trevino. He finished third on the money list that year.

His 11 victories - he also won twice on the Japan Golf Tour covered 1977 to 1986. Bean teams in 1979 and 1987.

He made a late charge at Royal Birkdale in the 1983 British Open, finishing one shot behind Tom Watson. He also was runner-up by one shot to Payne Stewart in the 1989 PGA

# Argentina reaches Rugby World Cup semifinals

 $A^{\text{rgentina's rugby team does-}}_{n't \ \text{have a totemic figure}}$ like Lionel Messi to bind it like the national soccer team did when it was winning the soccer World Cup less than a year ago. What the rugby Pumas do have is a collective doggedness that lies dormant too often but erupts when it is least expect-

That Pumas passion propelled them into the Rugby World Cup semifinals on Saturday when they were 12 minutes away from losing to Wales.

They came from behind twice to win 29-17 in a raucous Stade Velodrome, where the Pumas' campaign started with a baffling loss to 14-man England.

"We know it is not going to be perfect; life is not perfect," Pumas captain Julian Montoya said. "It's how you embrace the moment and fight for each

"Two more weeks with this team (in the knockout stage). I don't want this to end ever. We in a lot of things. I know I can be more demanding but I am very proud of this team."

They are going to Paris for the first time in the tournament for their first semifinal since 2015 next Friday against three-time champion New Zealand, which



knocked out top-ranked Ireland 28-24 later Saturday.

Wales built its campaign around defense and being conditioned to play for 80 minutes. But just when it needed to hold on for a little longer, it conceded two game-ending tries to Pumas replacements Joel Sclavi and Nicolas Sanchez.

In between those scores, Wales could have won the match in the 74th minute when zippy wing Louis Rees-Zammit was diving into the left corner but Matias Moroni, who was substituted into the game after half nal-saving tackle.

"The (fight) comes from our personality and the way that we train," Montoya said. "Nothing has been too easy for us for the last couple of years. We trust each other. We are a very tight group. I know you just see the 15 on the pitch or the 23, but there is a group of people behind us who are unbelievable. They work day and night. We are the fortunate guys who wear the jersey.

Argentina and Wales came to France with few expectations and fought their way out of mediocre pools to meet in the Rugby World Cup knockout stage for the first time. Their quarterfinal didn't come alive until the end of the first half. Wales was 10-0 up after 21 minutes thanks to a try by retiring flyhalf Dan Biggar, who con-Also by then, referee Jaco

Peyper hurt his Achilles and was replaced by Karl Dickson. Biggar hooked his next penalty attempt and the Pumas were given more hope by Wales losing three consecutive lineouts,

The Pumas turned them into pressure and Wales succumbed. A couple of silky breaks by flyhalf Santiago Carreras and a silly off-the-ball shoulder tackle by Wales' Josh Adams gave Pumas sharpshooter Emiliano Boffelli two easy penalties to slot at the end of the half. The Pumas trailed only 10-6 at

the interval, during which Wales hooker Ryan Ĕlias was dropped.

"We spoke about how important discipline was and not giving them anything," Wales coach Warren Gatland said. That allowed them to stay in the game.'

Argentina's surge ahead to 12-10 came from Boffelli's third and fourth penalties, the last of which was a stunner from 55 meters out. They led for the first time in the 49th.

Wales retook the lead in the 57th out of nothing when replacement scrumhalf Tomos Williams dummied off an unguarded ruck and flew away. Biggar's extras made it 17-12. The physicality of Argentina's forced Wales to replace backs Liam Williams and Nick Tompkins and they held out two lineout mauls but not a third from which new prop Sclavi scored. Boffelli's conversion put them in front 19-17 with 11 minutes to go.

#### IOC members urge Bach to seek third term as president

Members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Sunday urged the incumbent president Thomas Bach to stay on in his role after he completes his term in 2025. Bach, the former Olympian from Germany, is the ninth president of the IOC. He was elected to an eight-year term at the 125th IOC Session in Buenos Aires in 2013. In March 2021, Bach was re-

elected IOC president for four

The Olympic Charter restricts a president's term to 12 years, a norm that was put in place by

Jacques Rogge to avoid lengthy

Bach had succeeded Rogge, who had served as the IOC chief from 2001 to 2013.

On the inaugural day of the IOC's 141st Session here, most of its 99 members were of the opinion that Bach should stay on for a third term after his tenure ends in 2025, though it will require changes to be made to the Olympic Charter.

IOC member Luis Mejia Oviedo said, "You have shown us the best way to go forward. We have to look after this (Olympic) movement. That is why I would like to put forward this

### F1 governing body FIA to review Hamilton's actions

Formula One's governing body is reviewing a penalty given to seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton for crossing the track after climbing out of his car following a first-lap collision at last Sunday's Qatar Grand

Hamilton tangled with his Mercedes teammate George Russell after making a flying start and went spinning off into the gravel trap when trying to overtake him. He jumped straight out of the cockpit and crossed the circuit, which is a

breach of regulations. Following a stewards' investigation, he was issued his first reprimand of the season and fined 50,000 euros (USD 52,560), with 25,000 euros (USD 26,280) suspended pending any further breach this season.

But, given his role model status within the series, and the danger represented, governing body FIA feels this may not have been enough. Hamilton reached the inside edge of the Losail track shortly before Russell arrived at full speed having exited the pit lane.
"The FIA notes that Lewis was apologetic during the subsequent stewards hearing into the incident and acknowledged that the crossing was a serious safety breach," the FIA said in a statement Sunday. "However, in view of his role model status, the FIA is concerned about the impression his actions may have created on younger drivers." Hamilton is F1's record holder with 103 wins but has not won a race since the penultimate race of the 2021 season in Saudi

Arabia. He is third in the F1

standings behind Red Bull drivers Sergio Perez and Max Verstappen, who clinched his third straight F1 title in Qatar. Hamilton's incident was the second of the race.

Aston Martin driver Lance Stroll apologized to the FIA and received a written warning Friday for his conduct at the race, where he shoved a member of his team in frustration after an early exit in qualifying.

Heat issues marred the race in Qatar with drivers feeling sick due to the extreme humidity.

"The race got very close towards the end and I had

## At brim of saying goodbye: Javelin thrower Annu Rani

PTI NEW DELHI

Indian javelin thrower Annu Rani was so upset with a string of poor performances this year that she had decided to say goodbye to the sport just before the Asian Games.

The 31-year-old from Uttar Pradesh produced a seasonbest effort of 62.92m to became the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games gold in javelin

"I have struggled a lot this year. I went abroad to practice. I went to learn from a foreign coach but my performance dropped. The whole year had gone waste. There was poor

performance in every competition one after the other," Annu told PTI Bhasha in an

"I had decided before the Asian Games that I would leave sports. Despite so much effort, I was not able to win anything. The government and SAI had invested so much money in me but I was not able to perform.
After the World After the World Championships in Budapest, I had thought of quitting the

Annu stood 11th with a best throw of 57.05 meter and could not qualify for the finals in World Championship in Budapest in August. She fin-

ished 7th at the Diamond League in Brussels in September with a throw of 57.74m meters. She could not touch the 60 meter mark in the entire season.

However, she won the gold medal at the Asian Games with a throw of 69.92 metres. Regarding changing her decision of retiring from sports, Annu said, "It came to my mind that I have come here after facing so many struggles, so I will take one last chance in the Asian Games. I worked hard and was confident that I would play well and win a

"The competition was tough



with World Championship medallists and Olympic medallists. I had come down thinking that the worst that had to happen has already happened and now what will get worse and I only wanted gold, not silver or bronze."

Annu said that her childhood struggles inspired her to fight and she wanted to be an inspiration for girls in similar situ-

"I inspired myself by remembering the circumstances of my family and where I started from. I also thought that I am not the only one struggling. People have to struggle in

"I come from a society where people used to stop me even if I wore a lower t-shirt. The family had no knowledge of sports. Was scolded at home for wearing lower t-shirt for the first time. I didn't even have shoes and had to borrow them from a friend when I went to compete. Remembering the journey, the struggle that I faced to reach here, I thought that I will not accept defeat.

Annu said now she is focusing on the Olympics.

"Now the aim is to perform well in the Paris Olympics. I want to tell the players coming from the same background as me that they should not give up, they "Now we are getting support from government, SAI and federation in everything. If collaboration like TOPS and Khelo India continues, there will be a lot of medals in the next Olympics," she said. In the men's javelin throw

should fight for themselves

and girls can do anything.

event in the Asian Games, Olympic and world champion Neeraj Chopra won the gold medal and Kishore Jena claimed the silver. Annu believes that the future of

javelin throw in India is very bright and this performance will inspire the youth to take up

# GURBAZ, ALIKHIL LIFT AFGHANISTAN TO 284 AGAINST MIGHTY ENGLAND

Rahmanullah Gurbaz gave the early impetus while Ikram Alikhil provided the final flourish to guide Afghanistan to a competitive 284 allout against defending champions England in their World Cup match here on Sunday Sunday.

While opener Gurbaz gave the Afghans a flying start, scoring 80 off 57 balls, number 6 batter Alikhil made a solid 58 off 66 deliveries as Afghanistan recovered from a mid-innings collapse to post a good total on board. Off-colour in the first two match-

es, Afghanistan openers -- Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran (28) finally rose to the occasion, scoring the team's 50 in just 6.3 overs after being sent in to bat.

The Afghan openers meant business and played copy book cricketing shots to score their runs. The duo didn't take much risk and Gurbaz mainly ruled the roost, taking the attack to the English

He played all around the park but



his shots through the covers and flicks were a treat to watch. With Afghanistan scoring runs

thick and fast, England skipper Jos Buttler introduced Adil Rashid (3/42) in the 11th over but Gurbaz was in a relentless mood as he swept the leg-spinner for a boundary to bring up his fifty in just 33

Gurbaz looked in ominous form as he dispatched Rashid over deep midwicket to bring up Afghanistan's 100 in just 76 deliv-

England finally tasted their first success in the 17th over when an under-pressure Zadran (28 off 48) gave a simple catch to Joe Root at short mid wicket but not before stitching 114 for the opening wick-

England got back into the game an over later with back-to-back wick-

First Rashid dismissed Rahmat Shah, stumped by Buttler and then in the very next ball Afghanistan suffered a big blow in the form of Gurbaz, who became a victim of an unnecessary run out.

Gurbaz decorated his innings with eight boundaries and four sixes. Following Gurbaz's dismissal, runs started to dry up for Afghanistan as skipper Hashmatullah Shahidi and Azmatullah Omarzai looked to

revive the innings. Omarzai tried to break the shackles in the 25th over, cloberring Chris Woakes for a six and four. But the knock was shortlived as Omarzai departed in the next over, slicing a Liam Livingstone delivery to Woakes at long off as Afghanistan lost four wickets for just 38 runs.

Shahidi too didn't last long, bowled by an unlikely Root with the Afghan skipper caught in two

Veteran Mohammad Nabi too didn't help his side, departing soon as the Afghans slumped to 190 for 6 from a commanding position.

Alikhil played a fine knock and decorated his innings with three fours and two sixes. Rashid Khan played a quick 22-ball 23, while Mujeeb Ur Rahman made 28 off 16 balls before Afghanistan were bowled out in 49.5 overs.

### Every game now becomes almost like a final: Cummins



PTI LUCKNOW

 $F^{\text{orced to treat every game as}}_{\text{a final due to their awful}}$ start, skipper Pat Cummins on Sunday said Australia are fired up to perform against teams that they have done well against in the recent past.

Australia were crushed by tumbling to a 134-run defeat to South Africa on Thursday.

The Men from Down Under find themselves in a precarious position to win at least six of their remaining seven games to make the semifinals. However, Cummins is not pressing the

panic button just yet.

Looking back at 2019, India and South Africa were the two teams that we lost to in the round games there. In the last year, they're kind of the two teams that we've had the most trouble against.

"So, the opportunity now is we've got some teams we haven't played for a while that we've had a lot of success against and be really confident when we go out there," Cummins said on the eve of the match against Sri Lanka

Australia had entered the tournament on the back of away ODI series losses to India and South Africa.

"Not an ideal start at all. Everyone's desperate to turn it around. We're obviously 0-2, so we've got to start winning and

start winning quick. Every game now becomes almost like a final. You've got to win just about all of them.

Australia is the most success ful side in the history of the tournament but the current team has been guilty of churning up lacklustre perfor-

"No doubt we haven't been up to the standard that we like to hold. We've been off the mark and have been outplayed both games. When we're at our best, we're putting big runs on the board. We're putting the pressure back into the opposi-

"Us bowlers are taking wickets through the middle. So, we haven't been able to pull any of that together so far. So yeah, we know what makes us a really good team.

Again, it wasn't that long ago. We're number one in the hosts India in their opener world. So, we don't have to when we're playing our best,' Cummins added.

The Australian team is packed with all-rounders like Mitchell Marsh, Marcus Stoinis and Glenn Maxwell.

With Ashton Agar being ruled out due to an injury, Maxwell has had to share spin duties with Adam Zampa, the only frontline spinner in the side. Asked if it is the lack of role clarity that is hurting the team, Cummins said "No, I don't think so".

The good thing and the luxury we have with the allrounders is they all make it into the team on the back of their primary skill, which for most of them is batting.

"And it's fortunate we've got guys like Stoinis and Maxwell and Marsh that can provide overs and do it really well.

"There's certainly sometimes some teams I've played in where you've got to try and fit in all-rounders that might not make the top seven batters or the top four bowlers, but we're in a really good place," he

#### PTI LUCKNOW owing to their horrendous Net Run Rate (-1.846), while the Lankans are 7th on the table

Their house in complete disarray after consecutive defeats, Australia will look to wake up from their slumber and return to winning ways against an equally stuttering Sri Lanka in the World Cup here on Monday. Both teams are in search of their maiden win in the tournament. While Australia suffered humiliating losses against India and South Africa, Sri Lanka faltered against the

Australia have looked like a pale shadow of their dominant selves in this tournament.

Proteas and Pakistan.

The five-time champions sit ninth in the 10-team league table

to keep their fate in their own hands. But it is easier said than done. Australia have lost seven of

with a NRR of -1.161.

their last eight ODIs compre-During this tournament, they

The Aussies desperately need to

get their act together if they want

have performed poorly in all three departments of the game. The Men from Down Under have been uncharacteristically sloppy in the field.

The Australians have dropped a whopping six catches in two games -- the most by any team



**Embattled Australia take on stuttering Sri Lanka** 

so far in this edition of the World Cup.

Their bowling attack has also looked toothless. They have failed miserably with the bat, suffering mini-collapses, and are yet to cross 200 runs. They

were rocked by India's spin bowling in the opener and then by the South African pacers. But facing the battered and bruised Sri Lankan bowling attack could be the perfect opportunity for the Australian

The Australians are also familiar with the Ekana pitch having trained in the city for close to a week and played against South Africa here. Skipper Pat Cummins had

batters to find some form.

insisted earlier this week that they won't be rotating their bowlers which means Australia will stick to their three-pronged pace attack of Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc with Adam Zampa and Glenn Maxwell sharing spin duties. Sri Lanka too have underperformed at the mega event so far. They occupy the seventh spot on the points table. While their batting line-up has done reasonably

well, putting up scores in excess

of 320 in both the previous games, their bowling is an area of concern.

In the absence of several frontline bowlers, Sri Lanka's relatively inexperienced bowling attack has conceded a whopping 775 runs in their first two matches. The Lankans looked on course to register their first win against Pakistan, but the inexperience of youngsters like 20-year-old Matheesha Pathirana came to the fore as the former champions couldn't stop leaking runs that resulted in a World Cup record run chase.

With skipper Dasun Shanaka ruled out of the tournament due to a thigh injury, Kusal Mendis

### It's scarring, it's a pasting: Ramiz Raja

Cormer captain Ramiz Raja producing an insipid performance against India in the ODI World Cup and termed the defeat as "hurting" and

"scarring". India had bundled out Pakistan for a paltry 191 and then riding on Rohit's brutal fifty registered a seven-wicket win with nearly 20 overs to spare in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

"It's going to hurt them. It's scarring, it's a pasting, it's a battering and they've been outpaced and outplayed in all the three departments," Raja told the ICC Review Podcast.

"If you can't win, then at least compete. Pakistan weren't able to do that," he said.

The defeat was also Pakistan's eighth successive loss in ODI World Cups to India, and Raja said Pakistan would have to find a way to end the unwanted streak

"It's a reality and Pakistan have got to do something about it. They can't be termed as 'chokers' against India because that's not a great tag to have.



Somehow, it's a mental block, it's a skill block as well," said Raja, a member of Pakistan's 1992 World Cup winning squad.

The 61-year-old admitted that Pakistan players go through immense pressure in a match against India, but said they need to rise above that.

"When you're playing against India, it's such an environment where it's 99 per cent India fans and crowds, you're obviously overwhelmed. I understand all of that.

"But Babar Azam has led this side for a good four or five years, so you've got to rise to the occasion," he added.

Raja urged Pakistan players to take a leaf out of India's book in handling pressure in such

"Credit to India for maintaining their presence in World Cup competitions against Pakistan. It's not an easy match for India also because there are emotions involved, there are expectations involved.

"Then you're supposed to win because it has been happening for so many years that this can get you under a little bit of extra pressure. But they've handled it so well," he said. Raja asked captain Babar and other senior Pakistan players to rally around the youngsters so that they come all guns blazing in their next matches. With two wins and four points in their kitty, Pakistan still are very much in the mix to enter

the World Cup semifinals. Babar Azam and the senior players will have to rally around some of the young kids and have got to find an answer.

'They've got to be brutally honest in those team meetings. I think that is where Pakistan need to start," he

### Past experience helps me read the wicket: Jasprit Bumrah

Star pacer Jasprit Bumrah traced the origin of his fine part in Îndia bowling out Pakistan for 191 in their World Cup match on Saturday to his ability to read the pitch at a venue where he played a lot cricket from the junior days. After bundling out Pakistan for a below-par score, India chased down the target in a little over 30 overs to celebrate a seven-

wicket win. Bumrah was later adjudged as the player of the match.

"I have played a lot of junior cricket on this ground. Since it was a flat wicket, I tried to implement that experience of mine here," Bumrah told Hardik Pandya in a video posted by BCCİ.

"Before getting hit for four boundaries, it's vital to realise about the wicket right after one boundary. That's what I was trying to communicate," he added. As fellow pacer Mohammed Siraj reminded Bumrah about his fiery spell against Afghanistan in Delhi, Bumrah attributed the success at that venue to the IPL.

There I tried to use my IPL experience about how to bowl



on flat wickets. I have been playing in the IPL for the past 11

years, so it helps. Pandya credited Bumrah for his thinking mind while bowling: "If he gets hammered for a four off a flick, he instantly bowls a slower one. He is a legendary bowler.'

Meanwhile, Sirai admitted that he was nervous and under pressure during the match against Pakistan. "It was my first Indo-Pak match

in India and my first World Cup stint, so I was highly nervous, along with some pressure," he Siraj then described how he

opener Abudllah Shafique. had a talk with Rohit about Abdullah Shafique's wicket. While my first bouncer didn't

plotted the dismissal of Pakistan

lauded the entire Indian bowling unit. India took the last eight wickets of Pakistan conceding a

trap him leg-before."

work well. I tricked him into

guessing about another bounc-er and bowled a fuller one to

mere 36 runs. "It felt really good to bowl them out for 191 after they were 155/2. It's a great comeback as

a bowling unit. We came hunting in pairs and captured a couple of wickets each.

#### Have been trying to bat like this: Rohit

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma played a brilliant 86, taking his side to victory. The elegant right-hander explained about his methods to Pandya. "It's a good feeling to win a game

like this. I have been trying to bat like this for the last two years because the wickets are so good." "I want to play my shots. I know I missed out on a hundred." Rohit also talked about him showing the muscle to umpire Marais Erasmus after hammer-

Haris Rauf. He (Erasmus) was asking me as to how I could hit such big sixes. Is there something in my bat? I said it's about my power.'

ing a 90-metre six off pacer

## Pak batters couldn't read me from hand: Kuldeep

PTI AHMEDABAD

India spinner Kuldeep Yadav believes that he was able to create confusion in the minds of Pakistani batters as they went for high risk sweep shots despite failing to read his hand in the marquee World Cup clash here.

Kuldeep took the important wickets of Saud Shakeel and Iftikhar Ahmed, both of whom went for the non existent sweep shot off the left arm wrist spinner, hastening the Pakistan col-

Asked if he planned to bowl Iftikhar around his legs, Kuldeep gave an interesting reply.

"No, I didn't plan that I would try to bowl Iftikhar around the legs but since I bowl the wrong 'un (googly), I tried that but it was a wide ball and also a bit on the shorter side which made it difficult for him to sweep,' Kuldeep said during his interaction in mixed zone after the seven-wick-

Iftikhar, also fondly referred to as "chacha" (Uncle) by Pakistani fans, played the ball on to the stumps. "It was lucky wicket for me and this



kind of wicket puts pressure on batters. They weren't able to read me from the hands and were in two minds whether to sweep or play normally. I would have loved to get him out in a better manner though,"

In fact, Kuldeep wasn't supposed to bowl that over and only got to do that

after speaking to skipper Rohit Sharma. "I thought they would try to sweep

as they are known to play that shot. But they didn't take chance but that extra over that I bowled after discussing with skipper, both wickets came in that over. "Obviously Mohammed Siraj got Babar and that breakthrough helped.

Planning to bowl that extra over did

get us those two wickets and they

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couldn't recover.'

spinners from Motera track and Kuldeep reckoned 270 would have been a good target to chase.

"There were no plans that we would restrict them to certain total. All plans are based on nature of surface. 270 was a good score to chase on this

"Singles were coming easily but wicket was so good for batting that whenever you pitched it a bit fuller, batters got easy boundaries. It was important that we found the good length spot and hit it repeatedly." There was no turn or seam move-

"On this track, we can't say that the ball was seaming or spinning (turning) too much. Yes it was slow and plan was to prevent batters from getting room to hit. Squeeze the run flow by cutting singles." He was quizzed about the delivery he bowled to dismiss Babar in Manchester during the 2019 edition of World Cup and he didn't seem to be too excited.

"That was a good ball and it got hyped because of World Cup but I have got people out with similar deliveries in bilaterals. As a spinner, you want to bowl these deliveries where batters are

turning. "That Manchester wicket had nip and bounce. Against good batters, it's important to bowl in one area and force them to make mistakes. Rhythm gives you confidence." Kuldeep hasn't played a game against Pakistan where Indian team has lost and he is happy to keep that record intact. To be honest, I played 3-4 games

against them and lucky to win all of them. For me, you saw the crowd, atmosphere you want to do well. In 2019, best moment was playing against Pakistan.'

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