OPINION 6

INDIA'S WEST

ASIA QUANDARY

MONEY 10

FPIS WITHDRAW ₹20,300-CR

FROM EQUITIES IN OCTOBER

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAP RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

> Late City Vol.33 Issue 300 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

LANKA TO TAKE ON SPIRITED AFGHAN IN MUST-WIN CLASH

NEW DELHI, MONDAY OCTOBER 30, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3 the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

Unprecedented Terror Attack on Indian Soil

Several dead and injured in serial blasts at a gathering at Ernakulam

✓ erala was rocked on Sunday Kerala was locked and morning as a series of explosions claimed the life of a woman and injured 36 people during a prayer meeting organised by Jehovah's Witnesses at Kalamassery, an Ernakulam

The convention hall that could accommodate 2,500 people were filled to capacity as explosives went off leading the people to run helter-skelter to save themselves from the fire caused by the explosions. Sleuths of the National

Investigation Agency and Intelligence Bureau are probing the incident even as Governor Mohammed expressed shock over the incident. Union Home Minister Amit Shah held discussions with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan about the explosions. Later, the Chief Minister called for an all-party meet which would be held on Monday at the capital city.

The bomb blast on Sunday morning at the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses took a curious turn by evening as Dominic Martin, a member of the sect claimed that it was he who per-

petrated the bomb blast. "I do have serious differences with the leadership of the Jehovah's Witnesses as it is an anti-national organisation work-



WORLD 9

UN CHIEF GUTERRES MEETS

NEPAL PRIME MINISTER

People gather after an explosion that killed a woman and injured several others, at a convention centre in Kochi, on Sunday

ing against the country. I have said in a video message posted been warning the leadership for the last so many years and it all fell on deaf ears. That's why

on Facebook which disappeared from public domain within

minutes I chose to strike like this," Martin He surrendered to the police at

Kodakara, some 70 km from the blast site and the cops are interrogating him

But a senior IB official told The *Pioneer* that Martin's confession

is a cock and bull story. "It is impossible to cause a bomb attack like this without any help from others. The improvised explosive device and the tiffin

This seems to be an attempt to derail and subvert the investigation," said the official who has probed many bomb explosion related cases in the past.

The three-day prayer meeting was to conclude on Sunday and it had drawn people from all over the district.

The Kerala Government has declared a State wide alert following the incident and all Superintendents of police have been asked to beef up security. Kalamassery is a stronghold of Islamic extremists belonging to the banned Popular Front of India, SDPI and PDP led by Abdul Nazar Madani who is the prime accused in many bomb blasts reported in various parts of the State.

It was at Kalamassery that a Tamil Nadu State Road Transport Corporation bus was set ablaze in 2005 demanding the release of Madani.

Chief Minister Vijayan, who was on a sojourn at the national Capital, told the media that a probe was on to find out the details of the explosion.

P Rajeeve, the Kerala Minister for Industries and the CPI-M's chief ideologue who too was in New Delhi to chalk out a strategy for the ouster of Narendra Modi Government, has rushed to Kalamassery to take stock of the situation

"All we know is that an explosion

has taken place and one person has died. The injured have been admitted to Kalamassery Medical College," said Rajeeve before emplaning for Kochi. "Since the beginning of the Hamas attack on Israel, Kerala has seen communal polarisation of the worst kind and an incident like this was waiting to happen," Professor Stanly Sebastian, an educationist, told *The Pioneer*. He said the Kerala Police would not be able to undertake a free investigation into the explo-

"The probe should be handed over to Central agencies like the National Investigation Agency and the Centre should promul gate Armed Forces Special Power Act in Kerala. The Congress and the CPI-M are vying with one another in encouraging the Islamist organisations against Hindus and Christians. The Jehovah's Witness is a faction owing allegiance to the Jewish community," said Professor Sebastian. Last Friday saw Khaled Mashal, founder of Hamas, virtually addressing a meeting "Uproot Hindutva and Zionism" held at Malappuram by Jamaat-e-Islami to express solidarity with Hamas. Mashal had delivered a provocative speech in which he had asked for liquidating the friends

and allies of Zionists. The attack came immediately after his address to the Islamists and their friends in Kerala. The CPI-M led Kerala Government has come under attack from the BJP for giving permission to Mashal to address the gatherings. Security experts, including former director general of police Dr Jacob Thomas, had warned of this kind of attacks in the State. By evening it was announced by the police that the explosion was caused by a tiffin box bomb and remnants of improvised explosive devices were recovered from the Convention Hall.

his family members had a narrow escape from the bomb blast. "My wife and daughter were injured in the blast and they have been admitted to a private hospital," said Iacob. He said there was no reason for anybody to attack the congrega-

Jacob, a local chieftain of

Jehovah's Witnesses, said he and

tion as the members of the sect were leading a silent and peaceful life with prayers. "Our hope is that Jesus Christ

would come back to establish the Kingdom of God and till then we have been asked to wait," he said and declined to reveal

At the time of going to Press, there are strong reports that the State Government is likely to entrust the probe to the Central

Tharoor no longer invited to pro-Palestine meet, see P2

Diwali spending goes beyond Chinese goods

This festive season of Diwali cycle of a whopping ₹3.5 lakh crore, without the 'fetish' for sales of Chinese goods during the occasion.

In a survey conducted in 30 cities, including the metropolitans Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Nagpur, Kanpur, Patna, and Raipur, by trade associations, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) found that the markets have embraced the festive spirit much better than in previous years, despite high inflation pinching the common man's pockets.

The Diwali season is all set to bring more cheer to the trading community of the country, as it is expected that there will be a fresh infusion of about ₹3.5 lakh crore into the markets through shopping, the sale of goods, and the use of services.

This is excluding the on-going wedding season which is projected to be ₹4.5 lakh crore business till December 16.

Data from the CAIT shows Diwali recorded sales of over ₹3 lakh crore in 2022. The data further shows during Diwali,



File photo Ranjan Dimri

female shoppers contribute about 30 per cent of total transactions, while males make up 70 per cent and 25 per cent of revenue comes from the 18-24 age group, while the largest 55 per cent comes from the 25-34 age group. Data from the CAIT, shows Diwali 2020 recorded sales of about ₹72,000 crore, in 2019 it was ₹60,000 crore and ₹50,000 crore in 2018 and ₹43,000 crore in 2017.

CAIT's secretary general Praveen Khandelwal said almost about 65 crores consumers across the country are expected to do Diwali festival shopping and even if, we assume an average of ₹5,500 spending per head and we will achieve ₹3.5 lakh crore target very comfortably. "Although a large number of people shop for goods worth as little as ₹500, there are simultaneously tens of thousands of consumers who spend lakhs and lakhs of rupees on festival

shopping," he said. As per an estimate, about 8-10 crore gifts from small to high ranges of all sorts of items are being exchanged during the festival period which does form a substantial contribution to the Diwali sales.

Such growth is attributed to the sale of Indian products having no influence of any Chinese product.

Khandelwal said though trade is expecting large volume of business but prominently the keen, dry fruits, electronics, automobiles, clothing, jewellery, imitation jewellery, utensils, decorative items, furniture & fixtures, kitchenware, mobiles, computers and peripherals, stationery, cosmetics, beauty products, consumer durables FMCG products, kirana, electrical items, confectionery, fruits flowers, earthen lamps & other items, God's pictures and Moorti, food items, readymade food, hardware, paints, soft drinks, toys will be the biggest

gainers of festival sales. During the Diwali season, tens of thousands of events are organised all over the country, which significantly contribute to the service industry, including hotels, restaurants, banquet halls, event management groups cab services, the delivery sector, performers, artists, etc. Besides, the big fat wedding ceremonies are expected to generate business worth ₹4.5 lakh crore till December 16. Around 3.5 million weddings are expected to be held across the country during the period.

Adani Group wins a Rubicon

Dhamra Port in Odisha to save ₹5000 cr per annum for users

dani Ports and SEZ's Dhamra LNG ter-Aminal will save over ₹5,000 crores

annually for users. It will act as a primary source of gas for more than 35 per cent of India's population and serve more than 8 eastern States by substituting expensive and polluting fuels like Naphtha and HSD. Dhamra is one of the deep draft ports of India which can accom-

modate super cape-size vessels The project cost of Dhamra LNG Terminal is estimated to be ₹6,450 crores. It is fully financed by equity and debt by the sharehold

ers of Dhamra LNG Terminal. There has been no amount upfront or during the project either as cash or Bank Guarantee has been given by Indian Oil

Corporation Limited or GAIL Dhamra LNG Terminal is owned 50/50 by Adani and TotalEnergies. Total equity of Adani and TotalEnergies (of France) shareholders is ₹1,900 crores. The entire investment has been made without any financial undertaking by IOCL or GAIL. Adani had started committing capital expenditure to the project from 2016 onwards and commercial operations commenced on 21st May 2023. All risks related to the completion and performance of Dhamra LNG have been solely borne by the Adani-TotalEnergies JV.

The tariff and commercial terms of Dhamra LNG Terminal (inclusive of port charges) was arrived at through competitive benchmark-



ing. Petronet LNG (which is owned by IOCL, GAIL, BPCL and ONGC) operates India's largest LNG terminal at Dahej and was used as benchmarking the tariff and commercial terms. Dhamra's tariff is 1.5 per cent lower (₹46.49 per tonne or ₹21 crores annually over 4.5 million tonnes of LNG capacity use) than Dahej LNG terminal charges and has better commercial terms.

In addition to the tariff of Dhamra LNG Terminal being 1.5 per cent lower than Dahej, supply from Dhamra (instead of Dahej) to the nearby markets of IOCL and GAIL (e.g., refineries and fertiliser plants in UP, West Bengal, Bihar) helps these users save at least ₹800 crores annually on pipeline tariff. Dhamra LNG is located within the limits of Dhamra Port. It is a multi-user, multicargo, all weather, deep draft port. As such, the port continuously looks to grow its business and Dhamra LNG development was ably served by the Indian infrastructure capabilities of the Adani Group and the strong international LNG credentials of TotalEnergies.

This grouping saw tremendous value in creating a new LNG market in the eastern part

of India via the development of the termiare owners of gas molecules at all times during the process of using Dhamra LNG Terminal. IOCL and GAIL contract for LNG volumes internationally from global suppliers. Dhamra LNG will not buy and sell LNG during the operations of the facility. It only provides the service of LNG handling and dispatch. While the offer remained for IOCL and GAIL to take equity in Dhamra, the companies did not take that option as their strategic objective was to supply gas competitively to their consumers in the eastern part of the country.

At the same time, Dhamra was able to offer commercially competitive terms to its users. Hence, their strategic objective was met without injecting equity and they decided to progress on a capacity booking basis only. The Dhamra Port Company Limited (DPCL) is a 100 per cent subsidiary of Adani

Ports and SEZ. DPCL has been awarded a concession by Government of Odisha to build and operate a port north of the mouth of river Dhamra in Bhadrak district on BOOST (Build, Own, Operate, Share and Transfer) basis for a total period of 34 years including

a period of 4 years for construction. Situated between Haldia and Paradeep Dhamra Port is in close proximity to the mineral belt of Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal offers deepened hinterland connectivity and operational efficiency.

Friend of Friends Passes Away

Matthew Perry aka Chandler leaves

AP ■ LOS ANGELES

 Γ riends star Matthew Perry, the Emmy-nominated actor whose sarcastic, but lovable Chandler Bing was among television's most famous and most quotable characters, has died at 54.

The actor was found dead at his Los Angeles home, according to coroner's records. An investigation into how Perry died is ongoing, and it may take weeks before his cause of death is determined.

Perry's body was found in a hot tub at his home, according to unnamed sources cited by the Los Angeles Times and celebrity website TMZ, which was the first to report the news. LAPD Officer Drake Madison told The Associated Press on Saturday that officers had gone to that block "for a death investigation of a male in his

"Matthew was an incredibly gifted actor and an indelible part of the Warner Bros. Television Group family," the company said in a statement. "The impact of his comedic genius was felt around the world, and his legacy will live on in the hearts of so many. This is a heartbreaking day, and we send our love to his family, his loved ones, and all of his devoted fans."

Perry's 10 seasons on "Friends" made him one of Hollywood's most recognisable actors, starring opposite Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Matt LeBlanc, Lisa Kudrow and David Schwimmer as a friend group in New York.



As Chandler, he played the quick-witted, insecure and neurotic roommate of LeBlanc's Joey and a close friend of Schwimmer's Ross. During the show's hijinks, he could be counted on to chime Some of his "Friends" costars in with a line like "Could this BE any more awkward?" or another well-timed quip.

Perry was open about his long and public struggle with addiction, writing at the beginning of his 2022 million-selling memoir: "Hi, my name is Matthew, although you may know me by another name. My friends call me Matty. And I should be dead."

2004, winning one best comedy series Emmy Award in 2002.

together for later seasons to

obtain a salary of \$1 million

per episode for each.

"Friends" ran from 1994 until The cast notably banded paid tribute on social media, posting photos, GIFS and bloopers from their favorite episodes.

What a loss," actress Maggie Wheeler, who played his girlfriend Janice, wrote on Instagram. "The joy you brought to so many in your too short lifetime will live on. I feel very blessed by every creative moment we shared.

Actress Morgan Fairchild, who played his mother on the show, said the loss of a "brilliant young actor" was a shock. 'I'm heartbroken about the untimely death of my 'son," she wrote on X, formerly known as

ily, reflecting the journey of the core cast from single New Yorkers trying to figure their lives out to several of them married and starting families. The series was one of television's biggest hits and has taken on a new life — and found surprising popularity with younger fans — in recent years on streaming services. Perry described reading the "Friends" script for the first time in his memoir, "Friends,

By the "Friends" finale,

Chandler is married to Cox's

Monica and they have a fam-

Lovers and the Big Terrible Thing.' "It was as if someone had followed me around for a year,

stealing my jokes, copying my mannerisms, photocopying my world-weary yet witty view of life. One character in particular stood out to me: It wasn't that I thought I could 'play Chandler. I was' Chandler." Unknown at the time was the struggle Perry had with addiction and an intense desire to please audiences. 'Friends' was huge. I couldn't

jeopardise that. I loved the script. I loved my co-actors. I loved the scripts. I loved every-thing about the show but I was struggling with my addictions which only added to my sense of shame," he wrote in his memoir. "I had a secret and no one could know."

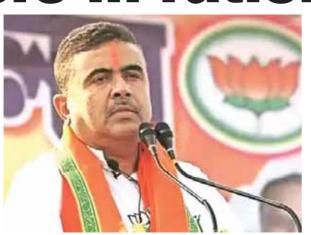
'ED must probe TMC top leaders in ration scam'

The Bengal Opposition parties have appealed to the Enforcement Directorate to investigate the role of the "topmost" leadership of the Trinamool Congress in the high-profile ration scam that has led to the arrest of Jyoti Priya Mallick, former Food Minister and close aide of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee

This, following reports that the State Government had refused to send details of digitization of ration cards to the Comptroller and Auditor General despite repeated requests from the top auditing agency in 2016 and 2017.

According to sources the CAG had --- between 2/09/206 and 13/12/2016 --- written several letters to the Food Department including its Principal Secretary seeking inputs on the digitisation of ration cards. "As the CAG requests were not

responded to, a letter was sent to the Principal Secretary of the Department ... needless to say that it also went unheeded.



Then another letter was sent to the then Chief Secretary on 30/03/2017 ... still no reply was sent," a retired government officer said, adding a senior IAS officer was then transferred out of his department because he had serious differences with Mallick at that time.

"If it is true that the CAG's letters were not responded to by top officials then they should be quizzed as to what prevented them from sharing the information ... after they were

not dealing with the common public ... they were dealing with the CAG," said the official adding "those officials, particularly the Chief Secretary should come clean on whether they were not cooperating with the CAG on their own or on

When asked to comment on the matter, present Food Minister Rathin Ghosh said he was "not in a position to comment as I was not in the min-

the instructions of someone

ly hit at the roots of Education and Hunger the two basic req-uisites of man," he said adding About 1.66 crore ration cards were cancelled after Ghosh was given the charge of the Food Department. Mallick who "they have hit at the very roots of the social security system by handled the Food Department ruining education and PDS

system.

Meanwhile, there could be more problems for Mallick as sources in the ED said that about 25 mobile phones and 10 shell companies were on their radar. WhatsApp chats between the minister and businessman Bakibur Rehman who was arrested days before Mallick, reveals transaction details worth several crores, sources

When asked to comment about any possible links between Mallick and his political bosses TMC MP and spokesperson Shantanu Sen said, "before investigating the TMC's scam the BJP which is trying to malign our Government should investigate how a RS 250 crore can be spent on the construction of a road initially billed at Rs 18 crore ... also ask them to account for the fake cards in the Ayushman

Tharoor no longer invited to pro-Palestine meet in Kerala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Till last Friday, Shashi Tharoor, who takes pride in claiming that he is the one and only global citizen from India, was the most sought after public speaker in meetings organized by Islamic outfits in the State. It was not without any reasons. Tharoor is a repository of information and vocabulary with which he criticizes the Narendra Modi administration and the Hindutva brand of politics. In his writings and speeches, he entertains the readers and audience with anecdotes on the Nairs of Kerala which is music to their rival communities.

But all these factors came down like a pack of cards on 26 October 2023 at Kozhikode where the Muslim League had organized a massive rally to express solidarity and admiration to the Hamas who is fighting against Israel. Tharoor was the guest of honor and while addressing the rally, the Global Citizen, described Hamas as a terrorist organisation, an unpardonable sin as far as the Islamist outfits are concerned. The Muslims in Kerala, including the self styled moderates rate Hamas as freedom fighters and angels of peace. The newspapers in the State carry pictures of Palestine people crying in agony and anguish against the high handedness of Israeli Defense Forces.

Once Tharoor completed his speech, leaders of Muslim League including P K Kunhalikutty and M K Muneer were seen pacifying the audience who were upset by the words. For them, the Hamas can do no wrong while Israel and Zionists are Fascists of the worst kind. Though Tharoor tried his best to convince the Muslim League leadership and other extremist outfits that he was with the Hamas and Palestine, it did not cut any ice with them. Fate of Shashi Tharoor has been sealed and he has become a persona non grata for the Muslim community. Before the October 26th Human Rights Rally in support of Hamas, Tharoor was the automatic choice of the Muslims in the State for the post of Chief Minister in the eventuality of the Congress-led UDF winning the election. The Muslim League leaders had made it known openly that Tharoor was their choice. Tharoor had launched the campaign for his chief minister's chair from Malabar. With the Muslim League leaders getting annoyed with his state-ment on Hamas, the chief ministerial dreams too evapo-

Though he issued many statements, it has not impressed the Muslims. Tharoor who was scheduled to inaugurate the rally in support of Hamas scheduled

Thiruvananthapuram was unceremoniously dropped from the programme. Last heard, the MP from the capital city is busy trying to buy peace with the Muslim community in the State.

At stake is not only his chief ministerial hopes but the possibility of getting nominated as the Congress candidate for the Lok Sabha seat too looks bleak.

One cannot survive in Kerala by offending Islamic sentiments. Whether the break up with Muslim League is the end of the road for Tharoor would be known in days to come.

Rashtrapati

illuminated

for Dyslexia

awareness

campaign

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Bhawan

Mamata, Suvendu on same page on Tagore plaque issue

Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore seems to have brought Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and State Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari on the same side of the

A day after Banerjee attacked the Centre for omitting the name of Tagore --- who founded the Visva Bharati University also known as Shantiniketan -- from the plaque commemorating its gaining the UNESCO World Heritage status, Adhikari on Sunday slammed University Vice Chancellor Bidyut Chakrabarty for not getting

Tagore's engraved name on the

When it comes to Gurudev compromise ...because the name is engraved in the hearts of the Bengali people ... his name cannot be omitted because he was the founder of Shantiniketan ...the sentiments not only of the people of Birbhum or Bengal but also of the entire country is attached to Tagore's name so ... the V-C should drop his ego and include



the name of the Poet Laureate on the plaque," Adhikari said. Adhikari, a former trusted lieutenant and a powerful minister of Banerjee's Cabinet had quit the TMC before the 2021 Assembly elections to join the BJP --- an act that many Trinamool leaders interpreted in terms of his ploy to save himself from central agencies.

"He is an FIR named accused in Sharada and Narada scams ... he left the TMC and fell on Amit Shah's feet because he wanted to save himself from the spokesperson Kunal Ghosh had

However on Sunday Adhikari said that he was "against the TMC and not against Tagore and Bengal's sentiments ... so whatever mistake has been done should be corrected and there should not be any question of ego between the State

Indira Gandhi University Meerpur, Rewari



इंदिरा गांधी विश्वविद्यालय मीरपूर

(A State University Established under Haryana Act No. 29 of 2013) Recognized u/s 12-B & 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956

Employment Notice (Advt. No. 10/2023 to 55/2023)

Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur (Rewari) invites online applications from the eligible candidates for recruitment of Teaching Posts in various Departments against sanctioned vacant posts. Subject-wise and category-wise number of vacant teaching posts along with Advt. Nos., detailed instructions, requisite qualifications, pay scales and modalities for selection are given on the university website www.igu.ac.in. The link for submission of online application shall be available on the university website w.e.f. 21.10.2023.

Registrar

Registrar

RO 22273/27/4 DT. CHD 27/10/2023

Indira Gandhi University Meerpur, Rewari



इंदिरा गांधी विश्वविद्यालय मीरपूर

(A State University Established under Haryana Act No. 29 of 2013) Recognized u/s 12-B & 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956

Employment Notice (Advt. No. 57/2023 to 73/2023)

Indira Gandhi University invites online applications from the eligible candidates for recruitment of various Non-Teaching posts against sanctioned vacant posts. Category-wise number of vacant non-teaching posts along with Advt. Nos., detailed instructions, requisite qualifications, pay scales and modalities for selection are given on the university website www.igu.ac.in. The link for submission of online application shall be available on the University Website w.e.f. 26.10.2023

RO 22274/27/4 DT. CHD 27/10/2023

Shinde Government wants to grant legally sustainable reservation to Maratha community: NCP MP Tatkare not survive in the courts, he delegation of Maratha leaders

Lok Sabha MP and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Sunil Tatkare on Sunday said he traced the history of reservations given to Marathas and the issues it faced in the judiciary, and the state government wanted to grant a legally sustainable reservation to the community. Speaking to reporters here, Tatkare said the constituents of the 'Mahayuti' - the Shiv Sena, NCP (Ajit Pawar faction) and BJP - are now working towards "Mission 45 plus" and are sure to bag more than 45 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha elec-

for about 10 years was later sent

"I want the role of the Chief Minister's office also to be

investigated in the ration scam

as without the assent and active

participation of the highest office a scam of such a big magnitude would not have been

possible," Bengal Opposition

Leader Suvendu Adhikari said.

"You will have to understand

the impact of these 1.66 crore

ration cards \dots this means this

minister and his men and of

course his political bosses got

the share of those hundreds or

thousands of crores of rupees

that they pocketed by selling the ration lifted on account of

those 1.66 crore ration cards ..

this seems as big a scam as the recruitment scam," CPI(M)

leader Sujan Chakrabarty said.

"Education minister and Food

Minister are in jail ... this means that Mamata Banerjee

Government has systematical-

to the Forest Ministry.

The seat distribution among the Mahayuti constituents will happen properly and the leaders of the state and centre will be party to the same, he said. The NCP leader reiterated that the Maharashtra government under the leadership of Eknath Shinde was committed to grant reservation to the Marathas.

"I have traced the history of reservations given to the Marathas and its journey and the issues faced by it in the judiciary," he said The community's demand for

CM Siddaramaiah says his

Government will accept

caste census report

PTI ■ BENGALURU

NSiddaramaiah on Sunday

said his government will

accept the caste census report

this November or December.

Speaking to reporters here, he

said the report will be tabled

before the cabinet where dis-

cussions will take place. After

the discussions we will take

the next course of action,

'Now, he (Karnataka State

Commission for Backward

Classes Chairman Javaprakash

Hegde) has said that he will

submit the report in

November or December,

which we will accept,

He charged that during his

previous tenure as the Chief

Minister, the then chairman

the Commission H Kantharai

had conducted the survey,

which three previous chief ministers namely H D Kumaraswamy, B S

Kumaraswamy, B S Yediyurappa and Basavaraj

Bommai declined to receive it.

Earlier, speaking at an event,

Siddaramaiah claimed it was

Siddaramaiah said.

Siddaramaiah said.



reservation was justified and it should get it, the Ajit Pawar-led NCP's state unit president said. The Marathas were granted reservation following the Rane committee's report, but it did

■ the two main contenders in

the November 25 assembly

elections in Rajasthan - have

fielded at least 29 candidates

who are kin of leaders or

belong to political families so

Of the 200 assembly con-

stituencies, the BJP has so far

announced candidates for 124

seats and the ruling Congress

Leaders of both the parties said

they have taken cautious steps

to avoid any revolt within their

respective parties, which could

affect their prospects in the key

In its two lists of 124 candi-

dates, the BJP has given tick-

ets to at least 11 people who are

family members of prominent

leaders. The Congress, which

has announced 95 candidates

so far, has given tickets to 18

people hailing from political

The BJP list has several sons,

daughters, granddaughters and daughter-in-laws of promi-

nent leaders. It has given due

elections.

families.

said, adding that the state government wants a legally sustainable reservation for the community.
The NCP leader referred to the

agitations carried out by the Sakal Maratha Samaj and said that even his party was concerned about the suicides in the state over the issue of reserva-

Earlier in the day, activists and leaders of Maratha Mahasangh showed black flags and shouted slogans when Tatkare arrived for a programme in the city.
The NCP leader later met a

RAJASTHAN POLLS

Congress, BJP fielded 29 relatives

The BJP has given a ticket to

Ram Swaroop Lamba, the son

of late MP Sanwar Lal Jat, to

contest from the Nasirabad seat

and Shailesh Singh, the son of

late former state minister

Digamber Singh, from the

The party has once again bet

on Lamba who won the 2018

elections. He had also contest-

ed the Lok Sabha bypoll from

Aimer earlier and lost to

Congress' Raghu Sharma by a

The BIP's other such candi

dates are Gurjar leader Kirodi

Singh Bainsla's son Vijay from

the Deoli-Univara seat, former

MP and erstwhile Jaipur royal

family member Gayatri Devi's

granddaughter Diva Kumari

from Vidhyadhar Nagar, for-

mer MP Karni Singh's grand-

daughter Siddhi Kumari from

Bikaner East, former legislator

Harlal Singh Kharra's son

Jhabar Singh Kharra from

Srimadhopur, former legislator

Dharampal Chaudhary's son

Manjeet Chaudhary from

margin of 80,000 votes.

Deeg-Kumher constituency.

attention to family members of Mundawar, former MP leaders who died owing to Nathuram Mirdha's grand-

of leaders as candidates so far

and discussed the issue of reservations and the government's stand.

He explained the situation and appealed to them not to resort to suicide and other extreme Talking to the media, one of the

leaders of the delegation Ramesh Ambre said, Whenever a leader comes to our town or city, we are not allowed to meet them. Hence, we showed black flags to Tatkare?

The NCP leader has assured that he will take up the issue in

Nagaur, former legislator

Gautam Lal Meena's son

Kanhaiya from Dhariyawad,

former minister Kiran Maheshwari's daughter Deepti

from Rajsamand, and former

MLA Shri Ram Bhinchar's

daughter-in-law Sumita from

Party leaders said that the step

has been taken to avoid any

revolt as well as the results sim-

ilar to the 2008 assembly elec-

tions when the BIP had to lose

power due to loss of more than

The BJP won 78 seats in 2018

If the BIP had not suffered a

jolt due to a revolt against then

chief minister Vasundhara

Raje, it could have formed the

government taking along

Independent legislators. The

BSP won six seats and 14 went

to Independents in the 2018

elections. The ruling Congress

has also fielded a number of

people with political back-

ground. Most of them also won

the 2018 elections.

and the Congress 96 seats.

Makrana.

15 seats.

Tn a bid to spread awareness Lon Dyslexia, Rashtrapati Bhawan, North and South Block, along with several other historical monuments and government buildings across the country were illuminated

in red on Sunday evening. Every year, October is celebrated as International Dyslexia Awareness Month, when highimpact events and advocacy drives are organized under

the theme 'Go Red'. The aim of such events is to remove the stigma associated with dyslexia and other learning disabilities, eradicate discrimination, and raise public

awareness. UNESCO MGIEP and its partner ChangeInkk Foundation had sought the support of the Government in 'Go Red' campaign, where several important

buildings and monuments across Delhi displayed red lighting on Sunday. As part of a country wide campaign to raise awareness, a "Walk4Dyslexia" was co-orga-

nized by the Changeinkk Foundation, UNESCO Foundation, MGEIP, Orkids Foundation, and Soch Foundation on Saturday, October 28, 2023 at Kartavya Path in New Delhi. The Walk was flagged off by Rajesh Aggarwal, Secretary of Department

Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities and Saniay Kumar, Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy reinforcing the Government's commitment to celebrating diversity.

The Walk in Delhi included more than 300 persons across age groups and includ-

ed people from all walks of life.

Eight dead, 20 injured as two passenger trains collide in Andhra PTI VISAKHAPATNAM/ on in full swing. "The total number of casualties serious. More ambulances are

his government, which con-

ducted the caste census for the

'We (the Congress govern-

ment) had got the caste cen-

sus done to know the socio-

economic condition of various

castes but successive govern-

ments did not receive the

report," the Chief Minister

He said no one is born talent-

ed. It is only after they get an

opportunity, they show their

"Talent is not restricted to just

one caste or religion. It is only

after they get the opportuni-

ty and education, their inher-

ent qualities come to fore,

Siddaramaiah explained.

first time in the country.

t least eight persons died At least eight person. injured after two trains collided in Vizianagaram district on the Howrah-Chennai line on Sunday evening, a police official said. A senior official of the East

Coast Railway said the Palasa Passenger hit the Rayagada Passenger from behind at Kankatapalli, which caused three coaches to derail. A senior Railway official meanwhile said 18-20 people were injured, adding that the injured are being shifted to hospitals in Visakhapatnam Vizianagaram.

Divisional Railway Manager Saurabh Prasad reached the site, and rescue operations are

is eight, as of now we have identified. We are in the process of seeing all the coaches. Once that is done, we will be able to identify the exact numbers. We have sent 13 injured people to the government primary health care centre. There may be some people with simple iniuries." Prasad told PTI.

He further said they are in the process of separating entangled coaches and would get a clearer picture once that is done. Dr S Appala Naidu, Superintendent of the Government General Hospital In-Charge, Vizianagaram, spoke to PTI and said, Ambulances have been sent to the accident sites and as of now

we have received 20 injured

people, out of which, three are

on the way so the number of injured persons might increase. The doctor added, "We haven't

received any bodies in the hospital as of now. However, there are reports of death of some passengers too." East Coast Railway CPRO said

that the accident took place between Alamanda and Kantakapalli in Vizianagaram-Kottavalasa Railway Šection of Waltair Division of East Coast Railway Zone at about 1900hrs.

The officials said train number 08532 Visakhapatnam-Palasa Passenger train and 08504 Visakhapatnam-Rayagada Passenger Special were involved in the accident and said that the Rayagada passenger had overshot the signal.

TELANGANA POLLS

Only BRS can protect Telangana, says CM KCR at election rally

PTI KODADA (TELANGANA)

Hitting out at the Congress party for never having protected the interests of Telangana when some of the irrigation projects were constructed during their tenures (in undivided Andhra Pradesh), BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao on Sunday said his party will protect the state like the armour of

Speaking at a rally here in the run-up to the November 30 Assembly elections, the Telangana Chief Minister KCR, seeking votes for his party's candidate, said the state has been progressing and became number one in several parameters such as per capita income and

Taking a dig at Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, KCR said he is talking in Telangana about Siddaramaiah-led governments five hours of free power to farmers where BRS government offers 24 hours free power to peasants. "BRS protects Telangana like the

legendary Karna's Kavach (from the Mahabharat). BRS was born for Telangana state, its development and to protect Telangana people and their rights," he said. Congress leaders never thought of irrigation projects that would benefit Telangana people," KCR hit out, referring to the Nagarjuna Sagar irrigation pro-

Inspector playing cricket injured in terrorist attack

PNS JAMMU

A police officer, playing a game of cricket, was critically wounded after he was targeted by an unidentified terrorist at the Eidgah ground in downtown Srinagar on Sunday. According to police, the terrorist used a pistol to target the police officer. Till the time of filing the report, the doctors were trying their level best to save the life of a police officer identified as Inspector Masroor Ahmad. The police officer was shot in the head. Kashmir Zone police in a post on X, for-Twitter merly stated. Terrorists fired upon & injured Inspector Masroor Ahmad near Eidgah, Srinagar. He was immediately shifted to the hospital for treatment.

Ban BS III, BS IV diesel buses in NCR: Rai to Centre

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Sunday demanded the Centre impose a strict ban on buses operating with poor-quality diesel in the NCR areas of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

During a surprise inspection at the Kashmere Gate interstate bus terminal, the minister found that all buses registered in Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh were BS III and BS IV vehicles.

"Vehicular emissions account for a significant portion of Delhi's air pollution. While buses in Delĥi operate only on compressed natural gas and electricity, those belonging to the neighbouring states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are BS III and BS IV vehicles," he told reporters

Starting from November 1, only electric, CNG and BS VIcompliant diesel buses will be allowed to operate between



Delhi and the cities and towns in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan that come within the National Capital Region, or NCR, according to directions issued by the Centre's Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM).

"While the CAQM has issued strict directions in this regard, we demand that the Centre implement a complete ban on BS III and BS IV buses being

Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan," Rai said.

He also said the city government will issue notices to operators of BS III and BS IV buses coming into Delhi from NCR areas of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

In an effort to reduce pollution levels, the Centre in April 2020 announced that all vehicles sold in India must comply

fuel efficiency and engine As vehicle manufacturers pro-

with Bharat Stage VI (BS VI)

Bharat Stage emission stan-

dards set legal limits on the

amount of air pollutants such

as carbon monoxide and par-

ticulate matter that vehicles in

These standards focus on

improving emission control,

emission standards.

India can emit.

tion on Thursday, a year after Lieutenant Governor V K

world's cleanest fuel.

Saxena put it on hold, questioning its effectiveness.
A 2019 study conducted by the
Central Road Research
Institute showed that keeping engines running at traffic signals can increase pollution

levels by more than nine per

new norms, oil companies supply fuel that adheres to BS

VI standards, known as the

The government launched the 'Red Light on Gaadi off' campaign to curb vehicular pollu-

A range of emission inventory and source apportionment studies carried out for Delhi in the past few years suggested that on-road vehicular exhaust emissions account for nine to 38 per cent of PM2.5 emissions in the capital.

The campaign will be conducted in all the assembly constituencies in the city on November 2, and more than 2,000 eco clubs will take it to every school on November 3.

City's air very poor for 2nd consecutive day

Earlier in the day, Delhi

Environment Minister Gopal

Rai demanded that the Centre

impose a strict ban on buses

operating with poor-quality

diesel in the National Capital

Region (NCR) areas of Haryana,

Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

During a surprise inspection at

the Kashmere Gate inter-state

bus terminal, the minister found

out that all buses coming to

Delhi from Haryana, Rajasthan

and Uttar Pradesh are BS-III and

Delhi's air quality was recorded in the "very poor" category for the second consecutive day on Sunday and relief is unlikely until the end of the month, according to weather-

monitoring agencies.
The city's 24-hour average Air
Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 325, worsening from 304 on Saturday and 261 ("poor") on Friday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

It was 256 on Thursday, 243 on Wednesday and 220 on Tuesday. The AQI was 286 in neighbouring Ghaziabad, 309 in Faridabad, 198 in Gurugram, 281 in Noida and 344 in Greater Noida.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered "good", 51 and 100 "satisfactory", 101 and 200 "moderate", 201 and 300 "poor", 301 and 400 "very poor", and 401 and 500 "severe".

The city's air quality deteriorated to the "very poor" category on Saturday due to a slow wind speed at night and a dip in temperatures.
The air quality is expected to

"Vehicular emissions account

BS-IV vehicles.



remain very poor till the end of for a significant portion of Delhi's the month, according to the air pollution. While buses in Delhi operate Centre's Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi.

only on compressed natural gas (CNG) and electricity, those belonging to the neighbouring states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are BS-III and BS-IV vehicles," Rai told reporters

Starting November 1, only electric, CNG and BS VI-compliant diesel buses will be allowed to operate between Delhi and the cities and towns of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan falling within the NCR, according to directions issued by the Centre's Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM).

Integrated nursing education and service model to be implemented at AIIMS Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AIIMS Delhi administration has decided to implement integrated nursing education and service model at the premier medical institute. The Indian Nursing Council, through its letter dated April 4, 2019, had granted approval for the adoption of an innovative approach - the Integration of Nursing Education and Service (Dual Role).

This model aims to enhance the quality of nursing care provided to patients while simultaneously advancing the clinical skills of nursing stu-

This initiative is also expected to optimize the utilization of nursing cadres in both academic and clinical settings, an official said.

Several institutions, including the College of Nursing, CMČ Vellore, and St. John College of Nursing, SJMCH, Bangalore, have successfully implemented



a similar model, demonstrating its potential to bridge the gap between theory and practice, elevate nursing standards, and efficiently utilize nursing personnel across various roles within the healthcare domain.

"In light of these successful implementations, AIIMS, Delhi has decided to proactively explore the possibility of adopting the Integrated Nursing Education and Service Model. To evaluate the feasibility and modalities of this implementation, the administration has constituted a dedicated committee comprised of key stakeholders," said Dr M Srinivas, the director of the institute. The terms of reference of the

committee includes reviewing the Indian Nursing Council's notification on the Integration of Nursing Education and Service (Dual Role).

It will also study the experiences and outcomes of institutions that have already implemented a similar model and assess the potential advantages and challenges of implement-ing the Integrated Nursing Education and Service Model at AIIMS Delhi.

The committee will also formulate a comprehensive proposal for the integration of nursing education and service within the AIIMS Delhi framework. It will also recommend strategies for the effective implementation of the model, considering the unique context of AIIMS Delhi. The committee is tasked with

submitting its recommendations by November 30, 2023. Dr Rima Dada, professor in charge of media cell, said, This groundbreaking model aims to enhance the quality of nursing care provided to patients while simultaneously advancing the clinical skills of nursing students. This initiative is also expected to optimize the utilization of nursing cadres in both academic and clinical set-

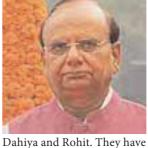
LG grants sanction to prosecute 10 cops in fraud case

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

T ieutenant Governor V K **L**Saxena has granted sanction to prosecute 10 Delhi Police personnel in a case of embezzlement of Rs 2.44 crore government funds, a Raj Niwas statement said on

An FIR was registered by the economic offences wing (EOW) of Delhi Police against two women sub-inspectors, three head constables and five constables - posted in Outer District - on charges of cheating, criminal conspiracy and criminal breach of trust on October 1, 2019. The accused included two

women sub-inspectors Meena Kumari and Harender, head constables Vijender Singh, Viju PK, Anand Kumar, and constables Krishan Kumar, Anil Kumar, Ravinder, Sanjay



been charged with embezzlement of funds of Rs 2.44 crore for personal use, the statement said.

While seeking sanction for prosecution of these police personnel, the Home Department submitted that in the disclosure statements, Krishan, Vijender Singh, Anil Kumar and Meena Kumari have "admitted" that they embezzled government funds,

Two held in city for supplying illegal fire arms



 $T^{\text{wo men allegedly involved}} \\ \text{In supplying illegal fire} \\ \text{arms have been arrested here,} \\$ the Delhi Police said on Sunday. The arrested accused have been

identified as Shakib (22) and Monu Mavi (31).

"Both accused are involved in six different criminal cases," a senior police officer said.

On a tip-off that Shakib would visit Chand Bagh area here, a raid was carried out and fire arms were recovered. "A gun and two live cartridges

were recovered from Shakib's possession. During interrogation, he told police about Mavi, who was arrested later with one gun and two live bullets," Special Commissioner of Police (crime), Ravindra Singh Yadav

Doctors take out march in Capital over | DCW issues notice to Delhi | violence against healthcare workers



Alarge number of doctors took out a march here on Sunday and raised among others the issue of violence against healthcare workers, a medical association said. The protesting doctors began

the march from Maulana Azad Medical College and tried to move towards the Rajghat, the medical association said in a

The rally was led by Delhi Medical Association (DMA) president Dr Ashwini Dalmiya and other officials.
"Doctors protested against the

unfair treatment by the authorities and repeated violence against the healthcare workers," the statement said. A large number of doctors took

part in the march, said the medical association, adding the police placed heavy barricades and prevented the rally from added.

proceeding towards the Rajghat. The doctors sat on the road for more than an hour during their protest, the statement said. More than 100 ambulances

were also part of the rally. Every branch of the DMA, the representatives from nursing homes, the Indian Dental Association and its members and the resident doctors associations of the Delhi hospitals also took part in the march, it

Police over sale of obscene pictures of goddesses

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for ■ Women (DCW) has issued a notice to Delhi Police after it received a complaint regarding objectionable pictures of Hindu goddesses being sold on the internet, according to an official statement.

"The complainant has alleged that some persons are selling online pornographic pictures of Hindu goddesses and that he has been receiving some email regarding the same. The alleged email also contains some sample pictures of goddesses depicted in an obscene manner," the DCW statement said.

DCW chairperson Swati Maliwal has issued a notice to Delhi Police and sought a report on the action taken in the matter. A senior police official said they have received the complaint and an investigation has been

nection with JMI as my husband's family donated land to the

varsity and a wonderful sports

complex is built there and

according to all the cricketers, it

is one of the best cricket grounds," she added.



The commission has sought a copy of FIR along with details of accused arrested in the matter and details of steps taken by Delhi Police to remove the content from the internet.

"The act is extremely disrespectful and has the potential of hurting religious sentiments and causing enmity among groups. This is a very serious matter. An FIR must be registered immediately and the accused should be arrested. The objectionable content must be removed from the internet immediately," Maliwal said.



Sharmila honoured with Imtiaz-e-Jamia

ctor Sharmila Tagore was Aconferred with Imtiaz-e-Jamia, the highest honorary award of Jamia Millia Islamia, on

Tagore was conferred with the award by Jamia Vice Chancellor Najma Akhtar on the university's 103rd foundation day. She received the award for her contribution to the Hindi Cinema. A slideshow on the journey of Tagore in the industry was screened before conferring of the

Addressing on the occasion, VC Akhtar praised the achievements of the chief guests -- Tagore and Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) Director Shiv



Kumar Sarin -- and said the university would like to associate with them for its development. "It is a great moment for us that the university has completed 103 years of its existence and the presence of such esteemed guests has made this day more special and memorable. They have been

inspiring people with their

achievements and good works and I hope that their association with JMI will greatly benefit the university. "The university would like to associate with them in different ways and would like to use their experience and advice for its betterment," Akhtar said. In her acceptance speech, Tagore said she has a "family connect"

with Jamia. "From the moment I entered the

Islamia University," she said.

"There has been a family con-

university, it was an emotional roller coaster for me...My work reflects 60 years of being in the public eye, and it's heartwarming to see the kindness people have shown to me. I am grateful to be and it has a very significant place in the country. I hope that peohonoured by the first female Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia

grounds, she added.

Tagore further said she is associated with AJK-Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC) in advisory capacity and would like to contribute in the same field to support the university. port the university.
ILBS Director S K Sarin offered his support for the university's upcoming medical college.
"JMI is a historical institution

ple here should be healthy and

establishment of a medical col-

lege is the need of hour. I am ready to provide all the necessary guidance and help in that direction," he said.

The event began with the unfurling of Jamia's flag and inauguration of its centenary gate by the VC and the chief guests. Imtiaz-e-Jamia, the highest award of Jamia Millia Islamia, is given to recognise the contribution of Indians towards the bet-

terment of society.
A five-day celebration of Jamia's 103rd foundation day started on October 27 and will culminate on October 31 with a flag-lowering ceremony at the forecourt of Dr MA Ansari Auditorium. During the event, several students and professors were felicitated for their achievements.

2020 Delhi riots: Court acquits man of arson, loot, vandalism charges Vihar locality in Karwal Nagar ness the rioting incident.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

court here has acquitted a Acourt here has acquitted a man accused in a 2020 Delhi riots case of all charges, including arson, vandalism and loot, saying the prosecution failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a riotous mob was responsible for the incident and that the accused was its part. Additional Sessions Judge

Pulastya Pramachala was hearing a case against Sandeep Kumar, who was accused of being a part of an unlawful assembly that looted a house and set ablaze household items and a two-wheeler in the Shiv here on February 25, 2020.

"The prosecution though established the incident of vandalism, loot and setting ablaze of some household articles and a motorcycle, but it failed to prove a mob being responsible for the same and the presence of accused in such a mob, beyond reasonable doubts," ASJ Pramachala said in a judgment dated October 27.

The court said while the complainant had not witnessed the incident, there was a "discrepancy" in the testimonies of two police eyewitnesses and so it was doubtful to believe that they were present in the lane to wit-

Therefore, the formation of an unlawful assembly in the lane and the mob being responsible for the incident was not proved beyond doubt, the court said. Regarding the identification of Kumar as part of the riotous mob, the court said when the presence of the police officials was doubtful, then there could not be any question of relying upon their identification of the accused.

Also, while one of the police officials recorded his statement identifying Kumar on February 29, the other confirmed having seen the accused only on August 1, 2020, the court added.

Israel-Hamas conflict: Modi, El-Sisi bat for peace

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $P_{\text{Modi and Egyptian}}^{\text{rime Minister Narendra}}$ President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi discussed the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation arising out of the Israel-Hamas conflict and agreed on the need for early restoration of peace and stability in the

In a phone conversation on Saturday, the two leaders shared their concern over terrorism, violence and loss of civilian lives and emphasised on facilitating humanitarian assistance to those in need. Modi and El-Sisi also deliberated on the implications of the and the world, according to an Indian read-out.

"Yesterday, spoke with President @AlsisiOfficial. Exchanged views on the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in West Asia," Modi posted on social media 'X' on Sunday.

"We share concerns regarding terrorism, violence and loss of civilian lives. We agree on the need for early restoration of peace and stability and facilitating humanitarian assistance," he said. Modi had held phone conversations with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas in view of the

unprecedented attacks on Israel by Hamas militants on October 7. Israel has launched a massive counter-offensive.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the two leaders discussed the current situation in West Asia and its implications for the region and the world. "Both leaders expressed their shared concern at terrorism, violence and loss of civilian lives. The prime minister reiterated India's longstanding and principled position on the Israel-Palestine issue," it said.

The MEA said the prime minister highlighted India's development partnership and



ers agreed on the need for early restoration of peace and stability and facilitating humanitarian assistance," it said in a statement.

There has been mounting global concerns over the plight of civilians in Gaza in view of Israel's retaliatory attacks. India on October 22 sent over 38 tonnes of relief material, including medicines and medical equipment, for the people of Palestine.

A statement issued by the Egyptian side said President El-Sisi received a phone call from Prime Minister Modi and the two leaders exchanged views on the latest developments in the Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip. They also discussed the gravi-

ty of the continuation of the current escalation, given its formidable impact on the lives of civilians and the threat it poses to the security of the entire region, it said. Spokesman for the Egyptian

Presidency, Counselor Ahmed Fahmy, said President El-Sisi confirmed that Egypt is pursuing its endeavours to coordinate regional and international efforts to push towards reaching a ceasefire.

The president warned of the grievous humanitarian and security repercussions of a ground offensive in the Gaza Strip, the statement said. He underscored the critical

action to find a prompt solution at the diplomatic level, which stipulates reinforcing an immediate humanitarian truce that protects the lives of civilians and allows sustainable and unfettered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip, in accordance with the resolution of the UN General Assembly which was adopted on October 27, it said. El-Sisi and Modi "expressed relief at the outstanding level" in bilatoral relations between in bilateral relations between India and Egypt, according to the statement. They stressed their determination to continue to lead the two countries' institutions to further strengthen joint cooperation, it said.

Security stepped up nationwide after Kerala blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

Security was beefed-up in the metropolitans of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and other important cities particularly around churches, metro stations, railways stations, bus stands and market places in the wake of the Kerala convention centre blast on Sunday.

The Delhi Police said that security has been stepped up in crowded areas of the city in view of the blasts. Similarly, the Mumbai Police too issued a high alert and increased security in view of the festive season, upcoming cricket matches, and the recent blasts in Kerala. Security has already been stepped up at Chabad House, a Jewish centre in Mumbai, owing to the ongoing



Israel-Hamas war. A senior Delhi police officer said security has been tightened across the city's main markets, churches, metro stations, bus stands, railway stations, and other public places. "Teams have been informed to put barricades across the border area from Uttar Pradesh Side

and Harvana side. Police in civil dress, riders and PCRs have been asked to stay on alert and not to ignore any information they receive," the officer said.

The Special Cell of the Delhi Police is in constant touch with intelligence agencies and is taking any input seriously.

Security arrangements are being made at crowded places," the Delhi Police said in a statement. Delhi Police is already on high alert after arrest of terrorists Shahnawaz, Imran, and Yunus who during NIA investigations revealed their plans for a terror strike.

In Mumbai too alert was issued by the police and security agencies given the festival season, and upcoming cricket matches. Security had been tightened at the Chabad House, a Jewish centre in Mumbai. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said that his government is always on alert, adding, "We have to constantly take care that no wrong activities take place." Meanwhile, in Uttar Pradesh, ADG Law and Order Prashant Kumar too ordered all districts

to be on alert. "Orders have been given to keep special surveillance in several districts including Kanpur, Meerut, Varanasi, Aligarh, Lucknow, Hapur, Baghpat, Bareilly, Rampur, Agra," Kumar said. Kerala's neighbouring states Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have heightened the alert level for their police and security agencies, particularly along the borders and important cities of Chennai, Bengaluru am

Random checks will be conducted on vehicles coming from Kerala at all entry points. There are seven major and seven minor entry points from Kerala into Karnataka, and a higher number of police personnel will be deployed at each of these locations, according to

Army, IAF contingent leave for Kazakhstan for exercise KAZIND-2023

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

ndian Army and Indian Air Indian Army and Indian Air Force contingent comprising 120 personnel on Sunday left for Kazakhstan to take part in the 7th edition of Joint Military 'Exercise KAZIND-2023'. The Exercise will be conducted at Otar, Kazakhstan from October 30 to November 11.

Giving details here, officials said the Indian Army contingent comprises 90 personnel led by a battalion from the Dogra Regiment. The Kazakhstan contingent is mainly represented by personnel from Regional Command South of Kazakh Ground Forces. 30 personnel of Air Force from both sides will also participate in the current edition of the Exercise alongside the Army contingents.

The Joint Exercise between India and Kazakhstan was instituted as 'Exercise PRABAL DOSTYK' in the year 2016. After the second edition, the Exercise was upgraded to a company-level exercise and renamed as 'Exercise KAZIND'. The Exercise has been further upgraded as a Bi-service Exercise this year by including the Air Force component. In this edition of the Exercise both sides will practice conduct of counter terrorism operations

in a sub-conventional envi-

ronment under United Nations

mandate. The contingents will

Operations etc. The scope of the Exercise also includes conduct of Counter Unmanned Aerial System Operations. 'Exercise KAZIND-2023' will provide an opportunity for both sides to gain an insight into the tactics, battle drills and procedures of each other, which is a prerequisite while operat-

ing under the ambit of the

jointly rehearse various tactical

drills to include Raid, Search

and Destroy Operations, Small

Team Insertion and Extraction

United Nations. The joint training will develop the necessary skills, resilience and coordination to conduct joint military operations in Semi-Urban and Urban envi-

Jaishankar to visit Portugal, Italy to bolster bilateral ties

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will pay a fourday visit to Portugal and Italy from Tuesday with an aim to further bolster India's bilateral ties with the two key European nations. In the first leg of the trip, Jaishankar will visit Portugal on October 31 and November 1, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The external affairs minister will be in Italy on November 2 and 3.

"During the visit to Portugal, will hold discussions with his counterpart Foreign Minister Joao Gomes Cravinho on the entire range of bilateral relations and on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest," the MEA said. It said the minister is expect-

ed to meet the Portuguese leadership, members of the Portugal-India Parliamentary Friendship Group and the community in Indian

Portugal. From Portugal, Jaishankar will travel to Italy. "The external affairs minister will meet his counterpart Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, Minister of Defence and Minister for 'Made in Italy'. He is also expected to meet the top leadership of the country," the MEA said in a statement.

It said he would be addressing Senate's External Affairs and Defence Commission, and the EU Affairs Commission and India-Italy Parliamentary Friendship Group. Jaishankar is also scheduled to meet the members of the Indian com-

'Mera Yuva Bharat' to be launched to integrate youth power: Modi PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced that a nationwide 'Mera Yuva Bharat' platform will be launched on Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary on October 31 to give the youth an opportunity to play an active role in various nation building events. In his Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast, he said the 'Mera Yuva Bharat' website is also going to be launched and the youth should register on MYBharat.Gov.In.

"MYBharat will provide an India to play an active role in various nation building events. This is a unique effort of integrating the youth power of India in building a developed India," the prime minister said. He also noted

prime minister Indira Gandhi's death anniversary too and paid tributes to her. In his remarks, Modi reiterated his strong pitch for being 'vocal for local' "Like every time, this time too, during festivals, our priority should be 'Vocal for Local'," he said. "I want to reiterate my request that wherever you go on tourism or pilgrimage buy products made by local artisans," he said.

"Today India is becoming the world's biggest manufacturing hub. Many big brands are manufacturing their products here. If we adopt those products, then Make In India being 'Vocal For Local," he said. Modi urged people to insist on using the UPI digital payment system during the transactions, and said buying local products will spread the brightness of the upcoming



Speaking on various issues, Modi said on Gandhi Jayanti, khadi products witnessed record sales, with a store at Connaught Place here alone chalking up a sale of Rs 1.25 crore in a single day. Whereas could barely touch Rs 30,000 crore earlier, it has risen to almost Rs 1.25 lakh crore now, he said.

Noting that Amrit Kalash Yatras were organised to collect soil from across the country, he said these yatras are his birth anniversary on

now reaching Delhi and the collected soil will be used in building Amrit Vatika. "It will remain as a grand legacy of the Amrit Mahotsav in the heart of the country's capital. The Azadi Ka Amrit going on for the last two-anda- half years across the country, will conclude on the 31st of October," he said. The prime minister also paid

tributes to revered tribal figure Birsa Munda, noting that

November 15 is observed as 'Janjaatiya Gaurav Diwas'. "We can learn from his life what true courage is and what it means to stand firm on one's resolve. He never accepted foreign rule. He envisioned a society where there was no room for injustice. He wanted that every person should be entitled to a life of dignity and equality," he said. Modi said India has a rich history of tribal warriors and cited many prominent figures like Tilka Manjhi, Sidhho and Kanhu, and Tantiya Bheel.

The country is currently celebrating the 500th birth anniversary of Rani tribal society, he said, while expressing hope that more youths will come to know about the tribal personalities of their region and derive inspiration from them.

"The country is grateful to its tribal society, which has always held the self-respect and upliftment of the nation paramount," he said. The prime minister referred to a famous pilgrim site, Amba Ji Mandir, in Gujarat and noted that sculptures made from scrap dot the way to the tem-

He said these statues have also become a centre of attraction for devotees and urged the Gujarat government to start a competition and invite people who are proficient in making artefacts from waste.

This will also inspire people for the 'Waste to Wealth' campaign across the country, he

over 200 medals, including 75 gold, at the Olympics World Summer Games in Berlin, he noted that several athletes performed admirably at the event where sportspersons with intellectual disabilities

Young people exposed to e-cigarette ads, despite restrictions: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Despite advertising restrictions in place, at least 85 per cent of respondents of a survey in India, China, Australia and the UK reported being exposed to e-cigarette advertising, especially on social media and in or around shops and other retailers. Health

World Organization (WHO) recommends banning all forms of ecigarette advertising, promotion and sponsorship. India has enacted the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarette Act (PECA) 2019, which prohibits manufacture, sale and advertisements of e-cigarettes and similar devices.

Four thousand people in the age group of 15-30 years participated in the survey conducted by the George Institute of Global Health.

The researchers contend that exposure to e-cigarette advertising can alter people's per-ceptions of the danger and risk involved and further pique their interest, leading to an increase in their propensity

The survey assessed demographic characteristics, e-cigarette and tobacco use, the number of friends and family members who vape, and exposure to multiple forms of e-cigarette advertising. These included various modes of



"In online contexts, exposure was more common for most social media platforms compared to general Internet usage. For example, 50 pc of those from China and 39 pc of those from Australia, India and the UK reported seeing ecigarette advertising on Douyin and Instagram, respectively, compared to 29 pc seeing e-cigarette advertising when using other parts of the Internet," the study

report said. The research findings have been published in the journal 'Tobacco induced diseases". "For 'in real life' contexts, exposure was most common for vape shops (48 pc) and supermarkets, corner stores and petrol stations (42 pc)," it

The report pointed out that despite advertising restrictions in place in all four countries, large majorities of young people reported being exposed to e-cigarette advertising.

Simone Pettigrew, lead author and Program Director of Health Promotion and Behaviour Change at The George Institute said "Digital forms of e-cigarette promotion are particularly difficult to monitor and control, and the vaping industry is exploiting this opportunity to target young people".

Social media and advertising on or around vape shops and other retailers appear to be key exposure locations. Urgent attention is needed to address these forms of exposure given their apparent association with e-cigarette use, it said. The results of the present study signal the critical importance of restricting e-cigarette advertising on the exterior of vape stores and other retailers, as this appears to be a primary mechanism via which e-cigarette marketers can reach young people, the report said.

"As has been found for alcohol retailing, effective use of signage on and around stores can effectively bypass advertising restrictions to reach vulnerable population groups.
"Regulations need to be carefully constructed and vigilantly enforced to prevent this exposure," it said. Exposure to e-cigarette adver-

tising among respondents who had heard of e-cigarettes was assessed across multiple questions, asking them about seeing various ads or promotions, and four options were given as responses.

Congress condemns Kerala church blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Congress on Sunday condemned the blasts at a Christian religious gathering in Kerala with Rahul Gandhi saying that the government must conduct a thorough probe and bring the guilty to justice.

'We strongly condemn the bomb blast attack at a Convention Centre in Ernakulam, Kerala. Hate, divisiveness and terror have zero space in a civilised society," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said. Those who foster violence must be dealt with an iron

hand, he said. In a social media post, the MP from Waynad constituency in Kerala, Rahul Gandhi, said the bomb blasts during a prayer meeting were deeply distressing and condemnable. "My condolences to the bereaved family, and I hope for a quick recovery for those

injured," he said. "There is no place for hatred

and violence in a civilized society. The government must conduct a thorough probe and bring the guilty to justice," the former Congress president

Condemning the blasts,



appealed to the government to ensure strict action against the perpetrators. "The blast that took place during a prayer meeting in Kerala is extremely unfortunate and condemnable. There can be no place for violence and bloodshed in a civilized society. The entire country is united against such cowardly acts," she said. Congress general secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal said the party demands a fair and prompt investigation "to unearth the conspiracy being hatched against Kerala and its tradition of unity in diversity". The atmosphere of Kerala will not and cannot be poisoned by these forces. Congress Party appeals to the people of Kerala to come together and defeat these poisonous elements, he said. Jehovah's Witnesses is a Christian religious group that originated in the United States Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said of America in the 19th centuthe entire country is united

SC to hear Chadha's plea challenging his suspension from RS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a petition filed by Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha challenging his indefinite suspension from the Rajya Sabha.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud had on October 16 sought a response from the Rajya Sabha Secretariat on Chadha's plea. The apex court had also sought assistance of Attorney General R Venkataramani in adjudi-

cating the issue. The bench had taken note of the submissions of senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi and lawyer Shadan Farasat, representing Chadha, that the suspension cannot extend beyond the particular session during which the decision to suspend the member was made.

The top court had also taken note of Dwivedi's submissions that the case raised an "important national issue" and noted as many as seven issues for adjudication.

"Whether by an admixture of a resolution of the House and an order of the Chairperson under Rules 256 and 266, there is any jurisdiction to suspend a Member of Parliament pending an enquiry," read one of the



be passed after the matter was referred to the Committee on Privileges based on the same grounds for examination, investigation and report," the bench had noted.

Another issue the bench noted was whether Rule 256 and Rule 266 (discretionary powers of RS chairman) empower the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha to pass an order of suspension pending an inquiry.

It was alleged that the Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab had moved a motion to refer the Delhi Services Bill to the select committee. He had allegedly named some lawmakers as members of the proposed committee and it was claimed that some of the MPs had not given their consent for it.

Taking note of the complaint, the chairman suspended Chadha, pending inquiry by the Committee of Privileges. In his plea, the AAP leader has said the power to suspend indefinitely is dangerously open to excesses and abuse.

Patkar for intensifying fight 'Kinnar Sabha fully prepared to save democracy

eader of Narmada Bachao L'Andolan Medha Patkar expressed concern over increasing influence of the corporate world who are now dominating the country's resources. She was addressing the two-day conference of National Alliance of People's Movement (NAPM) on the topic 'Desh Bachao, Desh Banao' at Nagepur, a village adopted by the Prime Minister under Adarsh Sansad Gram Yojana, here on Sunday. She said that under the government led by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), corporatisation process has rapidly increased as the government has made arbitrary changes in labour laws.

She called upon the people present in the conference to intensify the fight to save democracy from their respective places. Citing the reference of ongoing Israel-Palestine and Russia-Ukraine wars, she said that even in our country the states like Manipur are in the grip of ethnic violence. In the conference, an appeal for peace was made by passing a goodwill peace resolution.

On the direction and condition of women leadership, social worker Ranju Singh said that today women are being deprived of leadership by accusing them of lack of understanding. "To eliminate inequality, women's reservation needs to be implemented honestly at every level," she

While giving his views on



Social activist Medha Patkar addressing NAPM conference in Varanasi on Sunday.

ical situation in Uttar Pradesh, Father Anand said that only by living together, the atmosphere of hatred can end. "We need to maintain faith in democratic values. There is a need to create dialogue among groups of caste, religious and class identity," he said. While delivering the presidential address, Prof Mahesh Vikram Singh said that there is no other option other than mass movements for major changes.

Social worker Subedar Yadav, gram pradhan Haushila Yadav, Sanjay, Renu etc also addressed the conference, rais-

labourers. The programme was conducted by union leader Arvind Murthy, while the participants were welcomed by Lok Samiti convener Nandlal Master. The vote of thanks was proposed by Rambachan. On the occasion, Rajeev Yadav, Renu Patel, Suresh Rathore, Arvind Murthy, Mahendra Rathore, Rubina, Rambachan, Rambeti, Richa Singh, Arundhati Singh, Prem, Ashok Prakash, Dr RP Gautam, Poonam and Niti got elected for the state Executive Committee of NAPM.

In the conference, Sanjay ing the issue of farmers and Mango, district president of

Lok Samiti Surendra Singh tribal leader Mahendra Rathore, social worker Namo Narayan of Sonbhadra, farmer leader of United Kisan Morcha Tejinder Singh, farmer leader Neelam, Rafiq Ansari of Pasmanda Muslim Society. senior journalist and writer Bhasha Singh, Nasir Bhai, Rajiv Yadav, Neelam, Vallabh Pandey, Urmila, Neeti, Indu, Anup Shramik, Naseeruddin, Ramdheeraj Bhai, Dr RP Gautam, Rajeev Yadav etc also expressed their views. On the occasion, children of Asha Social School presented cultur-

Strengthening govt schemes is our priority: Sandeep Kaur

Director of Women and Child Development Department, Uttar Pradesh, Sandeep Kaur said that the strengthening of government schemes on the ground is the department's priority. She was addressing a divisional level workshop at Circuit House workshop at Circuit House here on Saturday for the effective implementation of Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti schemes launched by the central government with the children safe, secure and self-

She said that keeping in mind the needs of all the districts of the state, a plan has been made to run homes for different categories of children and women at the divisional

"With the aim of promoting non-institutional care, detailed guidelines have been issued in which there is a provision to give Rs 4,000 per month to needy children. Various schemes have been implemented by the government for the safety, protection and empowerment of women and children," said the Director of Women Welfare, adding that it is our job to empower them on the ground.

"Women of the state will become empowered through these schemes. The family will also become stronger," she said, adding that the initiative of 'District Hub for Women' has been started by the state gov-



Women Welfare Director Sandeep Kaur, DC KR Sharma at a workshop in Varanasi on Saturday

and its objective is to disseminate schemes and laws related to women and girls, to facilitate community and women's access to schemes and programmes, to promote financial literacy/ inclusion, skilling, skill development and women and girls empowerment and to collaborate with other departments and stakeholders.

Presiding over the workshop, Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma said that in order to be sensitive towards Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya scheme, workshops are being organised by the Women and Child Development Department in all 18 divisions of the state including Varanasi. "Its main objective is to develop understanding on the implementation of Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti schemes among the officers and personnel of various departments including police, education, health, working at the divisional and district

gence between the departments," he said.

District Magistrate S Rajalingam said that by organising such workshops, important aspects like education, health, employment etc for the safety and protection of women and children were discussed in detail on a single platform. The community as well as the district administration and officials of various departments should be aware about the rights of children under 18 years of age and orphans, sponsorship, destitute pension after the death of husband, Kanya Sumangala Yojana, Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana etc," he said.

Deputy Director of Women Welfare Sudhakar Sharan Pandey gave detailed information on the objective of the workshop and the situation in Varanasi regarding various indicators related to women and children. Dr KA Pandey, associate ers were also present.

Lohia National Law University, Lucknow and Renu Mishra, Director of Aali Sanstha, Lucknow, discussed the laws related to children and women like juvenile justice, POCSO Act, child marriage, child labour, protection of women from domestic violence etc in detail. State advisors of Women and Child Development Department, Neeraj Mishra and Pritesh Kumar Mishra discussed in detail the points of convergence under Mission Vatsalya and Mission Shakti schemes and gave detailed information on the development and progress of districtwise action plan. Chief development officers (CDOs) Himanshu Nagpal (Varanasi), Salim Sai Teja (Jaunpur), SN Srivastava (Chandauli) and Santosh Kumar Vaishya (Ghazipur), Deputy Director of Women Welfare Department Praveen Kumar Tripathi and Puneet Mishra and many oth

ties like health, education, drinking water, roads, community buildings to the villagers and displaced people, so that they can get its benefits," he said, adding that the NTPC Rihand is also providing archery training to the tribal students studying in Seva Kunj Ashram, Chapki and some of whom are flying the national

Before this, Senior Manager (P&S) K Karthik gave information about the perfor-NTPC Rihand through a power presentation. General Manager (O&M) Pankaj Mediratta, GM (Project) PB Paranjape, GM (Maintenance) RN Śinha, GM (Operations) SK Srivastava GM (ADM) SS Pradhan, AGM (Human Resources) Zakir Khan, Senior Manager (EMG) Raghavendra Narayan etc were

for Lok Sabha poll'

The transgenders have been The transgenuers may cheated by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government and no work has been done for them. State President of Samajwadi Party Kinnar Sabha Payal Singh levelled these allegations against the BJP government while addressing a press conference organised at SP's City Unit office on Sunday. She said the number of transenders in the entire state is around 5,000 but unfortunately till now the voter card of only 103

She said that our committees has been formed in 15 districts of UP and where committees have not been formed, preparations are being made to form them soon. The state president alleged that crime has increased under the BJP government and it claims that there has been no crime and corruption under it.

She said 450 transgenders from the entire state have joined the SP Kinnar Sabha. She said that Kinnar Sabha is fully prepared for the Lok

Sabha elections. The participation of transgenders will increase in the elections.

Payal Singh distributed sarees and blankets to women in a programme organised in

Saura village of Pratappur area.
YOUTH ENDS LIFE: A 22-year-old youth from Semri village in the Sarai Mamrej police station area who was an Ape driver, committed suicide by hanging himself at home allegedly due to a love affair. On getting information panic gripped the family members. Later the police reached the

spot, took possession of the body and sent it for the post-

Kailash Kesarwani of Semri village of Sarai Mamrej police station area, hanging himself with a saree in his room late at night and died on the spot. It is alleged he was in love with a woman from Barestakalan village, a mother of two children. When his family members came to know about it they reprimanded him and told him to snap ties with

her due to which he took this

Team to probe plywood factory blast case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE 📕 PRAYAGRAJ

Tn the Manauri plywood fac-**⊥**tory blast incident of Pipri, Kaushambi a case has been registered against BJP leader's son Satish Kesarwani under serious sections. SP Brijesh Srivastava has handed over the investigation to the team of explosives expert FSL Lucknow and Prayagraj MNNIT to investigate the cause of the blast in the

very important for the expert investigation to reveal the fact that such huge blasts were caused by cylinder fire or there is some other reason behind them. BJP leader Shambhulal Kesarwani's house is in New Bazaar Manauri of Pipri. He had built a plywood warehouse in the name of his son Satish Kesarwani in the residential area. Big fire furnaces were used to make sweets.

Due to the explosion in the factory at night, two nearby houses along with the warehouse turned into debris. Police brought the fire under control and sent two injured people to a private hospital for treatment.

On the complaint of outpost in-charge Manoj Tomar, a case was registered against the warehouse owner Satish Kesarwani under serious sections. As soon as the news of registration of the case was

received, he fled from the spot The SP said that it has been decided to conduct an investigation by a team of experts to investigate the reasons behind the Manauri plywood explosion. For this, investigation has been handed over to explosives experts of Lucknow FSL

The investigation team will start its work from Monday. Other legal action will be taken on the basis of the report.

the dignitaries. The cultural

and Prayagraj MNNIT.

'Anusuchit Jati Mahasammelan' today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

¬he 'Anusuchit Jati The Anusucine Mahasammelan' is going to be organized by the BJP here on Monday in which about two lakh people are expected to come from 16 districts of Kashi province. Chief Minister of the state Yogi Adityanath will be the chief guest of this conference. This information was given by UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) of Social Welfare, Scheduled Caste and Tribal Welfare Asim Arun while addressing mediapersons at the Circuit House.

He said this conference will be organised at Mewalal Inter College, Soraon. The CM will also lay the foundation

stone and inaugurate many schemes and address the people attending the conference.

He alleged that when SP national president Akhilesh Yadav and BSP supremo Mayawati were in power both these parties 'exploited' the Scheduled Caste people. He further alleged that Akhilesh changed the names of places like parks etc named after Ambedkar. Now after being removed from power, Akhilesh Yadav is raising slogans of Jai On the question of INDIA

alliance, he said their objective is to remove Narendra Modi but the public knows very well that only Modi will talk about their interests. There is a disputes among themselves in The programme started with the lighting of the lamp by

this alliance.

Mahanagar President Ramchandra Mishra said 20,000 people from the Mahanagar are going to attend this conference. State President of Scheduled Caste Morcha Ramchandra Kanojia called for participation in this confer-CULTURAL EVENING

ORGANISED: Ashirwad Sanstha organised a cultural evening, Ashirwad ki Diwali, at Ramlila Samiti ground for speech and hearing impaired children. The chief guest was Piyush Niranjan Nishad, MLA Karchana and special guest was Vinita Kudesia, president of IFFCO Mahila Chetna Club.

programme was presented by the children of Nav Nirman Basti Ashram. The programme was conducted by Abhijeet. In the end Vinita Kudesia presented a cheque of Rs 21,000 to Ashirwad Sanstha. Apart from this, gifts were given to hundreds of children by Mahila Chetna Club and elderly women and men were honoured by giving them shawls and gifts. The Mahila Chetna Club expressed its desire to participate in such programmes in future also. PRO Sonu Tiwari, club members Rama Vaish, Chandrakanta, Sunita Mishra, Meenu Bhandari, Alka Gupta, Savita Dwivedi, Manju Singh and Rekha Jaiswal were also

Nurse dies after delivery, attendants create ruckus

after the death of a staff nurse Swarooprani Nehru Hospital. Shashi Bharti, a nurse working in the hospital itself, delivered in this hospital. She died 24 hours after delivery. After this the family members created ruckus in the hospital for hours accusing the doctors of negligence. Later, after persuasion by the hospital administration, the body was taken home. Principal of Motilal Nehru Medical College, Dr SP Singh said that the staff nurse had undergone cesarean. She had come back to normal condition but all of a sudden how did she die it is a matter of concern. He said explanation will be sought from staff concerned in this connection. The maternal home of the deceased is in Ihunsi. She was married to Avinash Bharti in Jagdishpur, Meerut. She used to work as a staff nurse in SRN Hospital. She

days ago she had fever and was was admitted to the SRN Hospital. After Shashi's health improved, the doctors got the delivery done through operation. Shashi's health suddenly deteriorated on Friday afternoon and there was no improvement in it. The doctors asked to take her to a private hospital. After this he took his wife to elsewhere. There too, there was no improvement in the condition, so the doctors again called her to SRN. There has been negligence in treat-ment here, he alleged and demanded action against the CASES OF BRAIN

STROKE INCREASE IN **COLD WEATHER:** Every minute is precious during a brain stroke. The first three hours are the golden hours for the treatment of the patient. By getting proper treatment durbrain stroke increase in cold weather. More than 100 cases of brain stroke are received every month in the Neurology Department of Swaroop Rani Neĥru Hospital (SRN). There are many patients who got timely treatment and won the battle of life. These views were expressed by Dr Pankaj Gupta, Neurosurgeon, SRN Hospital while talking to mediapersons here on Sunday. He further a 57-year-old man of Civil Lines was complaining of hypertension. He also had bypass surgery. A week ago he felt a tingling sensation in half of his body and contacted the doctor. His MRI was done and it was revealed he had a brain stroke. After three days of treatment, the patient got relief and became completely healthy. Besides a 47-year-old clerk working in the AG office realised a month ago that there

working. He contacted the doctor and said he took medicine for hypertension. In MRI he was found to have a brain stroke. After five days of treatment, he became completely healthy. Besides four days ago, a 65-year-old woman came to the Neurology Dept of SRN for treatment. During the CT scan, it was revealed that she had a tumour in her brain, due to which she suffered a brain stroke. The woman underwent surgery on Thursday and is now healthy. Currently she is admitted to the SRN Hospital.If one suddenly starts having poor vision, tingling sensation in hands and feet, weakness, headache, dizziness, then a doctor should be contacted without any delay. Because the first three hours are the golden hours, in which it is necessary to start the treatment of the patient, Dr Pankaj added.

NTPC Rihand ready to face challenges: CGM

General Manager and Project Head of NTPC Rihand Sanjeev Kumar said that this leading NTPC plant is ready to face all the challenges and its employees and officers have the ability to accept challenges even in the most difficult situations. He was addressing a press conference at Shivalik Guest House in project premises at Bijpur in Sonbhadra district on Saturday.

While replying to a query, he said that this project started from 500 MW and today it has become a station with a production capacity of 3000 MW. NTPC Rihand has planned generation of 13635 MU at 90.61 per cent PLF in FY 2023-24 till October this year. "To prevent the increasing pollution from plants in the country, NTPC Rihand has taken an innovative initiative and the work of setting up FGD is in

dioxide emitted from the plant from going into the atmosphere," he said. Sanjeev Kumar gave

detailed information about the activities of Rihand and highlighted the achievements of the plant apart from its ment of a 20 MW solar plant at Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and other social activities. He said that Rihand is the power plant with the highest production capacity in Uttar Pradesh, where a total of 3000 MW of electricity is being produced from coal. "NTPC Rihand has maintained its best position in terms of power generation as well as availabil-

ity of 90.61 per cent PLF," he Discussing the efforts to prevent pollution and preserve the environment, the CGM said that Rihand is completely dedicated to environmental

protection and to protect the environment from pollution, Rihand has so far planted more than 18,500 trees using Miyawaki method and due to this, there is greenery in the plant and its surrounding areas. Also, the work of establish-NTPC Rihand is also in progress," he said. Describing the utilisation

of fly ash emitted from the plant as a challenge, the Project Head said that while aiming for 100 per cent utilisation of fly ash for power plants, 71.39 per cent of the ash emitted will be disposed of at various places like cement industry, national construction works etc. He also gave detailed information about the CSR activities and said that Rihand is dedicated to the welfare of villagers and displaced people. "Rihand is com-

mitted to provide basic facili-

flag high at the national level.

mance and achievements of

Thana Samadhan Diwas organised Anupriya Patel while address-

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

s many as 22 cases out of As many as 22 cm. the spot in the district during the Thana Samadhan Diwas organised on Saturday. Divisional Commissioner Dr Muthukumarasamy B heard the grievances of the applicants at Katra Kotwali and directed the officials to dispose of the cases on merit. He said if any report is found false stringent action will be taken against the guilty official.

MEETING: Under Mission Shakti drive phase-4 District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan on Saturday presided over the 'Hak ki baat zilaadhikari ke saath' meeting at Collectorate which was organised by the Probation department. It started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the DM. Nimmi Devi of Badi Mata under City Kotwali police station sought help for treat-

ment of her liver for which the DM directed the official to make Ayushman card available to her and start the process for providing further help through Mukhyamantri Sahayata Yojana. Sanju Sharma of Bhatewra village said her husband had died and she is facing difficulty in taking proper care of her two children. The DM directed the official to start the process for widow pension along with other benefits for which she is eligible. In the meeting Probation Officer Shakti Tripathi threw light on welfare schemes related to women. On the day 12 applicants came with their problems for which instant action was taken. Joint Magistrate Alok Prasad, Project Director (DRDA) Ajay Pratap Singh and other officials were present.

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY: The birth anniversary of Maharshi Valmiki was celebrated across the district on

Saturday. To mark the day a 'bhajan sandhya' was organised at the Sankatmochan temple which was started by DM Priyanka Niranjan by performing the rituals at the temple. MLA (City) Ratnakar Mishra said it is the need of the hour that we learn from the life of Maharshi. Meanwhile addressing a seminar by Gayatri Parivar at Ojhala Dharm Jagaran Pramukh of east UP Abhay Kumar said Valmiki had proved through his deeds he was above the caste and creed. The seminar was addressed by former professor Triveni Prasad Shukla. The welcome speach was delivered by Indrajeet Shukla and the vote of thanks was proposed by Salik Ram Maurya. Tilakdhari, Dharmraj Singh, Sohan Srimali and Jatadhari Sonkar were pre-

SHUKLA'S CONTRIBU-TION: Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry

ing a programme to mark the birth anniversary of Acharya Ram Chandra Shukla as the chief guest at Ramaipatti on Saturday said that it was a matter of pride for the district that Shukla started his literary journey from here and became an icon of Hindi literature. Throwing light over the contribution of Acharya Shukla Dr Anuj Pratap Singh said it is not possible to enumerate his works in a seminar but the Hindi dictionary of 26,000 words prepared by him was a remarkable gift to literature. A renowned litterateur of Bihar Dr Hare Ram Singh also spoke on the occasion. The programme was conducted by Anand Amit while the vote of thanks was proposed by Rakesh Shukla. Bhola Nath Kushwaha, Ravindra Pandey, Sarika Chaurasiya, Dr Anuradha and Dr Ram Lal Tripathi were present.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Volte-face

Despite the just causes of Palestinian suffering, India abstains from UNGA vote for humanitarian truce

ven as Israel makes final-minute checks for its full-force ground assault on Gaza, India inexplicably decided not to back the global call at the UN for an immediate halt to the hostilities. This decision marked India as an outlier in South Asia as all other Governments voted in favour of the UN resolution. The resolution, proposed by Jordan, aimed to establish humanitarian truce and stressed the importance of adhering to international humanitarian law. It called for the unconditional release of captive civilians and the unrestricted supply of essential provisions to Gaza. This proposal had the support of many Arab and Islamic countries, including Egypt, Oman, the UAE and even Russia. India, while supporting an amendment that explicitly condemned Hamas, did not name the organisation in its 'explanation of vote.' The Indian representative expressed deep concern about the loss of civilian lives and the deteriorating security situation but did not specify why India abstained. The statement urged



all parties involved to act responsibly but did not take a stance on the resolution itself. India, in its explanation of the vote, reiterated support for a negotiated two-State solution and urged all parties to de-escalate violence and work toward direct peace negotiations but seemingly it failed to stand behind Palestine. We must introspect and take a stand that we all can be proud of, particularly when we aim to be "Vishwa" Guru" – the teacher/preacher of the world!

India's stand, though unfortunate and indefensible, must be seen in the light of its predicament. Its cherished friendship with Palestine and humanitarian concerns had to be weighed against its growing friend-

ship and reliance on Israel in defence and strategic fields. Having said that, human principles have always been at the core of India's foreign policy and we should not budge from our moral standards. We should have been seen walking the talk but India's West Asia policy now seems shaky and ambiguous. India's initial response to the conflict was to express solidarity with Israel but Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a balancing act, later showed support for the Palestinian cause and the two-state theory. However, India was not the only one to side with Israel. The western bloc and the US defended Israel's action by calling it retaliation for Hamas's attack. During the vote, Jordan's representative criticised Canada's amendment which aimed to name Hamas and was seen as an attempt to whitewash Israel's actions. The UN resolution condemned all acts of violence against Palestinian and Israeli civilians, including terrorism and indiscriminate attacks. It called for compliance to international humanitarian laws, protection of humanitarian personnel and facilities and the release of all captive civilians. The resolution reiterated the need for a just and lasting solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict through peaceful means and in accordance with relevant UN resolutions and international laws.



Devotees carry deites in palanquins during the International Dussehra festival, in Kullu

India's West Asia quandary



Having to still deal with the debilitating impact of Partition, we should clearly have understood and sympathised with the Palestinians

s things stand, the West Asia is poised on the brink of a conflagration that ⊾will leave no corner of this world unscorched. Especially if nuclear-armed Israel makes good its threats and targets Iran, if Syrian and Lebanese militias supported by it, like Hezbollah, join together to attack Israel. The Western Powers are only adding fuel to the fire with their unequivocal support, and total disregard, for Israel's barbaric and utterly disproportionate response to the Hamas attack of 7th October, which clearly borders on genocide and ethnic cleansing. The move of the US Carrier Groups into the theatre and its missile attacks against Pro-Iranian Syrian militias is a clear indication of this.

The hypocrisy of Western Governments is mind-boggling. Mr Karim Khan of the United Kingdom, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court acted with speed to issue arrest warrants against President Putin for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Yet, investigations against Israel for human rights abuses in Gaza and the West Bank that commenced as far back as 2014 remain stalled for one reason or the other, including, ironically enough, objections from Israel and the United States, both of whom are not signatories to the Rome Statute.

While the attack launched by Hamas was undoubtedly brutal in its execution, it did not come in a vacuum, as the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr António Guterres, made clear. The colonial occupation of Gaza and the West Bank by Israel since 1967, and its systematic and brutal dehumanising of Palestinians is what has led to the actions undertaken by Hamas, which many see as an act of resistance, "a revolt of the slaves..... a modern-day Spartacus".

For that matter, even if we were to accept the formation of the Israeli state as legitimate, despite what Israeli Professor Avi Shlaim, St. Anthony's College, University of Oxford, calls an 'invalid claim in the modern era, as a claim that goes back two millennia is legally untenable," the flects to reflect the govern-

roots of the present conflict, lie squarely in Israel's refusal to accept a viable Palestinian State as a neighbour. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Likud Party's actions in negating the Oslo Accord and initiating the grabbing of Palestinian lands on the West Bank, as well as allegedly inciting the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the architect of the accord, cannot escape scrutiny. Nor, for that matter, can the average Israeli citizen who allowed them to get away with it!

What, however, is truly intriguing is the Indian position on the conflict. Clearly, our national interests lie in supporting the Palestinians and their Arab and Iranian allies, since trade, oil, jobs and foreign remittances are at stake. Despite this, we have taken up a position that is broadly supportive of Israel. This can be seen from, Mr. Modi's tweets on Hamas, though, subsequent attempts to be more even-handed were made with the MEA stating that we had taken a 'nuanced approach of differentiating between innocent Palestinian civilians and Hamas terrorists'. However, the fact that our media, which routinely genu-



ONE OF THE

IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF **OUR TILT** TOWARDS ISRAEL, IN ALL PROBABILITY, APPEARS TO BE THE ACTIONS TAKEN BY PRO-**PALESTINIAN QATAR TO** SENTENCE EIGHT FORMER INDIAN NAVY OFFICERS TO

ment's views, has continued with its Hamas bashing tells us which way the government is

It has actively promoted the Western view that the actions of Hamas on 7th October must be seen as a barbaric act of terrorism because it involved the killing and kidnapping of Israeli "civilians" and children.

True, though given that it is mandatory for all Israelis to serve in the IDF and subsequently as reservists till the age of forty, one would like to know how many of the 1400 killed or captured were genuine "civilians"? Even if this view is seen as untenable, then how are the barbaric and indiscriminate attacks against civilian targets in Gaza, that have resulted in the deaths of over 7000 people, including over 2500 children, any different? If Hamas are to be treated as terrorists, so must the Israeli Government and the IDF. Surely what's good for the goose, is also good for the gander!

One of the immediate consequences of our tilt towards israel, in all probability appears to be the actions taken by pro-Palestinian Qatar to sentence eight former Indian Navy officers, working there on a contract, to death on charges of espionage. The fact of the matter is that we really have no influence in the region and given our vulnerabilities would have been best off minding our own business and waiting for tensions to cool. In the circumstances, one cannot help but ask what was the government's reasoning for acting as it has. Indeed a case of fools jumping in where angels fear to

Having been at the receiving end of colonisation and all its consequences for over 200 years, and having to still deal with the debilitating impact of Partition, we should clearly have understood, and sympathised with the Palestinians, for the manner in which Israel and the West have been conspiring to destroy their identity as a people. Instead, we have joined the likes of Britain's Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, and the other Uncle Tom's. Whatever happened to our self-proclaimed championship of the Global South? (The author, a military veter-

an is a Visiting Fellow with tne Observer Kesearch Foundation and a Senior Visiting Fellow with Peninsula Foundation, Chennai, views are personal)

THE EDITOR

Cyber attack: Preparation is the key



The world is grappling with an increased number of cyber attacks and not everyone is prepared for it

The world is grappling with an increased number of cyberattacks and not everyone is prepared for it. The Latitude and MOVEit cyberattacks are among several cybersecurity incidents that have impacted organisations in Asia Pacific. With another Cybersecurity Awareness Month upon us, it is a reminder that organisations must stay ahead of these ever-evolving threats.

According to a Veeam and Think Teal report, 74% of Indian CIOs identify cyberattacks as the primary cause of business disruption, with 70% attributing increased ransomware attacks to IT and Backup team misalignment. We recognize the challenges CIOs face and suggest four crucial steps for an effective post-cyberattack response. Observe

During a ransomware attack, our initial instinct from a security perspective is to eliminate the threat and resolve the issue. However, this isn't

the best approach. Instead, a CIO should prioritise isolating bad actors within the environment. Sequestering them without removal allows for observa-

tion and understanding of the bad actor's actions while preventing further harm to the business. Immediately removing the threat is tempting, but it hampers the ability to analyse the threat actor's behaviour, denying insights into their intent, target and strategy. Understanding the extent of compromise both from a systems and data perspective is vital.

Correct

After gathering crucial attacker data, businesses can take corrective action by removing threats, patching attack vectors, recovering systems and data, and swiftly restoring employee access to minimize disruptions. CIOs must prevent re-attacks through the original point of breach or any other potential vulnerability and should have a robust recovery plan.

Prevent As the next steps, CIOs must initiate preventative measures to avoid future attacks by assessing security measures and identifying immediate gaps or vulnerabilities in their attack surface.

Knowing the attacker's point of entry can help patch the vulnerability and protect against another threat. When reviewing an attacker's criminal profile, a CIO should focus on: the target, the attacker's identity, the actions they took, and the impact they caused. These factors are crucial to determining strategies to minimise future risks and identifying behavioural patterns.

Cyberattacks are often seen as technical issues, but human error, especially through social engineering like phishing scams, is a significant risk. Ongoing employee training, including phishing simulations, is crucial.

Notify Transparency is key to retaining trust and loyalty while keeping the stakeholders informed about emerging threats. Purposeful notification is essential. Sharing information without a strategy risks the company's reputation and leaves the business vulnerable to future attacks.

CIOs must always reach out to key stakeholders including the board, legal team and business stakeholders. It can take days to weeks to address an attack sequentially and thoughtfully. By this time, you can reassure customers of the company's commitment to protecting their data and share actionable steps to prevent more attacks. What Comes Next?

While ransomware attackers don't usually target the same gap twice, they can, and likely will, strike again. Taking a backward approach and securing already-breached

zones is a flawed approach. Instead, CIOs should focus on identifying and addressing potential vulnerabilities to secure the future of the company. Cyber strategy must include employee education, cross-team communication and a robust business continuity plan. Further, regularly maintaining the security of users, networks and data can reduce the chances of getting hacked.

(The writer is MD and VP India & SAARC, Veeam Software and Nate Kurtz, CIO, Veeam Software; views are personal)

ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF GUN VIOLENCE

Sir—There has been minimal improvement in the prevailing situation, and people are apprehensive about gathering in churches and Gurudwaras in America due to the persistent threat of attacks during prayers. This is becoming a recurring tragedy, and human life appears to have lost its significance in the United States. A disgruntled public utilities employee recently went on a rampage, resulting in the loss of many lives among his colleagues. The most alarming consequence of a robust market economy is the increasing frequency of such incidents, which now occur almost every month. It is imperative that the USA acknowledges this growing issue, and those aspiring to lead should take this

matter seriously. American society is undergoing a crisis, characterized by disproportionate progress focused solely on material pursuits, with little emphasis on spiritual education. The value of human life has depreciated in the United States, and it is essential for statesmen, philosophers, academicians, social workers, and the elite to collaborate in finding a solution to assist individuals suffering from mental health issues. These incidents are not mere law and order problems; they are much more profound. Creating the right environment for human existence is a fundamental requirement. Jayanthy Subramaniam | Mumbai

MANDATORY POLITICAL PROPAGATION Sir—First, security forces were instructed to go door-to-door and inform people about the government's programs, achievements, and plans when they return home on leave. Now, this directive has been extended to the esteemed civil service. A circular issued by the Narendra Modi government to all ministries on October 17 stated that officers up to the Gram Panchayat level in all 765 districts of the country will be appointed as "District Rathaprabhari". The goal is not only to showcase and celThis development raises serious concerns. Why hasn't the Election

Battling air pollution in Delhi

he onset of winter in Delhi inevitably brings along the issue of air pollution year after year. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi is currently experiencing its worst air quality in October since 2020, and it is expected to deteriorate further in the coming days. Delhi can learn valuable lessons from countries that have established alert networks to disseminate information about air pollution through television and social media. For instance, in Beijing, sirens are strategically placed to notify the public when the air quality becomes harmful.

Addressing the problem of air pollution in India's capital necessitates collective efforts from the media, educational institutions, civil society, state, and central governments. All stakeholders must collaborate to devise, design, and implement sustainable strategies aimed at achieving positive results in the fight against air pollution in Delhi.

R Sivakumar | Chennai

taken suo motu cognisance of this politicisation? What could be more politically motivated among workers than this?

This constitutes a severe misuse of government machinery and compromises the impartiality and independence of employees who should remain apolitical. It seems to contravene the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, which explicitly prohibit government servants from partic-

ipating in any political activity. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

NAVIGATING INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

Sir-On October 27, Qatar surprised India with the abrupt verdict concerning Indian seamen who were arrested in August 2022 on allegations of spying for Israel. While bail was repeatedly denied to them, the case was proceeding at a slow

Notably, our support for Israel during the recent conflict in Gaza was swift and deci-Commission and the country's top court sive, whereas our support for the long-suffering Palestine took several days to materialise.

Instead of embracing an era of war, we should have aimed to elevate our standing in international affairs.

We must recognise that international diplomacy is a subtle art that should not be overly showcased for domestic political gains. Western nations, including Canada, have raised concerns about Sikh extremism, despite previously applauding our stance on Ukraine. The political narratives we present to our internal audience do not always align with the preferences of external stakeholders.

It is worth considering that the recent harsh verdict from Qatar against the accused Indians may be influenced by their association with Israel in the case. R Narayanan | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN OVERCOMING CONFLICTS AND FRUSTRATION

To achieve a goal, one should undertake a SWOT analysis to prepare the mind for it



wo girls from an estimable school were bosom buddies. They were to appear for the class 12th examination. Renu was exceptionally talented. She was to crack the examination and emerge number one in the school. Renu could only commiserate with the pea in the pod Divya, as the latter's performance was below par. Divya's mind was inundated with negative thoughts and she became covetous of her friend. The performance and results engineered joy, sorrow, hope, love, palpable excitement, anger and even hatred and jealousy among the students.

Life is priceless Human life is so precious that antipathetic emotions like frustration and conflicts should become impediments that subsume the thought process. When demonic thoughts mushroom in the mind, our prana levels plummet and shrink. In such a situation efficiency of an individual

Frustration

Frustration is a mental state of vexation, a stifling feeling which enervates the individual. This invariably occurs when an anticipated desirable objective or goal is not accomplished. This triggers abnormal behavioural and emotional reactions. These can vary from detritus, chaff, aggressive tendencies, mental fixation, voluntary or involuntary attempt to discard the gauntlet, escapism, avoidance of quotidian responsibility, plain crying, worthlessness, and a feeling of rejection, addiction to alcohol, excessive smoking, substance abuse and at the extreme end of the spectrum can even lead to suicidal tendencies.



Conflicting situations or frustration triggers

Conflicts can be termed feuds or schisms. These occur among individuals, sparring factions or organisations. The entity could be a political body. a corporate organization or even a philanthropic agencies. The genesis of approach-approach disputation emerges from choosing between two advantageous and expedient paradigms. The formation of avoidance-avoidance conflicting hostility lies in the choice between two negative alternatives. These are primarily undesirable surrogates. A classic example of such a misadventure is when an individual is faced with a bizarre dilemma to either allow decay of his teeth or to be treated by a dentist

Overcome conflicts and frustrations

The human mind needs to be trained and motivated to grapple with all possible situations. A stock individual, a corporate honcho or a savant all have to plan and organise their behavioural patterns to hit the bull's eye. This requires enormous tapasya. The next step in motivating the mind is to embark upon baby steps and establish short-term goals that target mastering the craft. Upon completion of a few goals, the human mind tends to become enervated. It would be prodigious to stroke oneself with petty rewards; a movie show, a few small gifts or even undertaking a short vacation perhaps. On each occasion, when an objective is accomplished, or a target achieved it is a moment of chutzpah. The mind endorses such positive strokes and is ready to scale the next summit. In case the targets appear exigent it would be sanguine to break them into smaller ones and approach them scientifically. It would be always bankable and salutary for the mind to visualise the outcomes of all the hard work an individual put in to achieve the desired goals. A human or a corporate entity should necessarily undertake a SWOT analysis to set targets and prepare the mind and self to achieve them. "Sometimes, God doesn't send you into a battle to win it, he sends you to end it," writes the inspirational author Shannon L Alder

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

Shaping up India-South Korea relationship



PARULEKAR

South Korea with its pertinent pioneering streak can partake in India's ambitious port modernisation, blue-economy and decarbonised green-shipping initiatives

t's nothing short of truism to say that the global centre of gravity has transitioned away from the Euro-Atlantic vector to the Indo-Pacific expanse, observed in metrics of demographics, trade and investment flows, technological trajectories, etc. This phenomenon is marked no less, by the multitude of resident and non-resident major and middle powers, crafting independent Indo-Pacific strategies and calibrating respective strategic calculus, contextualised, to the mutating balance of power.

The Republic of Korea (ROK), with its unveiled 'Strategy for a Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific' (SFPPIP) in December 2022, is the latest protagonist to the bandwagon, but far from being a laggard, the enunciation represents a refreshing injection of broad-sheet dynamism, to the already pluralising sovereign geostrategic indulgence, of the region.

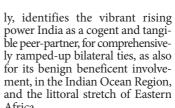
South Korean Embrace of the Indo-Pacific: Above and Beyond the New **Southern Policy (NSP)**

The roll-out of Seoul's marquee 'Indo-Pacific' Vision, though bearing the full-on imprimatur of incumbent President Yoon Suk Yeol and lacking a veritable bipartisan national consensus for now, nevertheless, addresses a trinity of persisting infirmities, which have blighted South Korean foreign policy over the years. Firstly, it attempts to propel the East Asian nation, out of its singular obsessive focus on existentialism visà-vis its neighbour to the North, something that has kept it sub-regionally ensconced, besides, expending an overwhelming extent of its diplomatic oxygen and precious political capital.

Secondly, it endeavours to yank itself, out of the overbearing straitjacket of US-China competition, to which it has remained in-subordinated, for albeit compelling security and economic reasons, consequently remaining circumscribed and dimmed, in its broader aspirations.

Thirdly, through its envisaged proclamation of a potential 'Global Pivotal State' (GPS), it seeks to ameliorate the modest extent of social power that Seoul beholds, by crafting a slew of "economically and technologically replete strategic partnerships", serving to build pan-Asian politico-diplomatic socialisation, growing national salience and sovereign credence as a developmental actor, ensuring sovereign risk-diversification through multi-alignment, and enabling the provisioning of public goods, consonant with the remit of a stellar robust spread-sheet of industrial, technological, infrastructural, innovation core-competen-

This said, the enjoined vision, though perceived in some quarters, as incremental growing-on-the-dial, drawing on predeces-sor president Moon Jae-in's New Southern Policy (NSP), is, however, qualitatively distinct. If the NSP was a deliberate step-out to cultivate traditional partners across South East Asia and Asia-Pacific coordinates in particular, the SFPPIP consciously steps-up ambitions across the Indo-Pacific straddle, even coveting an ostensibly global playfield, described as excessive adventurist by some, but comprehended by the many, as ventilating much-vaunted plausible national ambitions, at long last. Where the NSP, sweepingly lumped eclectic South and South East Asia into one composite mix, the Indo-Pacific vision in vogue, construes as specificity-deferent, in not only recognising South Asia as a separate emerging locale, but more important-



The freshly minted Indo-Pacific strategy is opportune in that it fruc-tifies at a time when a top-ten head-lining economy South Korea, finds itself increasingly incorporated at strategic high-tables, from being a standing invitee to the G-7 constellation, an integral participant in the informal 'MIKTA' cohort, and even averred to being part of a proverbial 'T-10', surmised as requisite, in the wake of predatory Chinese technonationalism.

South Korea's 'Indo-Pacific' Gambit: Nowhere would the impulses conditioning ROK's nascent Indo-Pacific template, converge greater and better, than with India. Akin to Seoul, New Delhi has long grappled with the predicament gated its foreign policy and diplo-macy greatly hemmed in, only for the refreshing pivot to consummate, during the present Modi dispensa-

India, since its economic recast away from erstwhile socialist moorings, has inserted itself within regional and global architectures but has abidingly been shorn of adequate integration within normative and productive institutional structures and processes. And despite its continually proven prowess in dimensions of human tech and innovation, it's been arduous to establish pedigree as a tangible and credible provider of public goods.

While these features meld New Delhi and Seoul, what should fuse them further, is their middle powers-oriented article of faith, reposed in practicing calibrated deterrence and pragmatic engagement with China but practising nifty economic and technological rebalancing, and preferring soft-hedging between Washington and Beijing, sentient of the fact that commercial tie-ins with the Middle Kingdom, aren't structurally reversing course in a hurry.

Forging a South Korea-India Strategic Compact for the Indo-Pacific: South Korean economic equations hark back to the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) 2009-10, however, despite the priority underscoring rhetorical flourish across four successive administrations, has struggled to institutionalise higher-order scope and trajectory in relations. Unlike Japan, South Korea hasn't been a formidable investor in Indian cross-sectional public sector projects, however, Seoul is bullish on the medium to long-term growth horizon of India, keen as mustard to diversify export destinations beyond China, targeting investor penetration into Global South milieus of South Asia, West Asia, and Africa, and evincing interest to proactively shape the five strategic dimensions driving Indo-Pacific geopolitical geo-economics, viz., critical and emerging technologies, benignity of spatial commons, supply chain diversification for resilience, hard and soft wired infrastructure, and peoples' centric globalisation through human comity driven innovation.

These are the strategic commanding heights, the Quad constellation has proclaimed for itself, and ROK's public pronouncement of a desire to join the fold, though spooking many at home, must be viewed as embracing, arguably the Indo-Pacific comity's most influential grouping, manoeuvring to geoeconomics.

With India on an upswing in addressing its gaping deficiencies, whether in winnowing dependencies and vulnerabilities across rudimentary or sophisticated industri-

up scaling of its digital public infrastructure, or instituting a fiscal channel for sustained infra-financing, for that matter it's clear-eyed stake-out in start-up innovation, semiconductor hub creation, renewable energy development, or simply the multi-modal logistics based and urbanisation inducing infrastructure, it procreates opportunities for the broad spectrum of South Korean companies. South Korea can contribute to underwriting a higher-order Indian socioeconomy in financial and operational terms, by leveraging its hard capacity ecosystems South Korea with its pertinent pioneering streak can wittingly partake in India's ambitious port-modernisation, island development, blue-economy, and decarbonised green-shipping initiatives, which augment New Delhi's national power for domestic harness and leverage in the extant, and pitches Seoul, as a veritable stakeholder in the India growth story, much in the mould of Japan and ÚSA and the ilk.

Correspondingly, South Korea must also harness the deep advantages that accrue from a markedly youthful Indian demography and its reservoir of intellectual capital by delimiting migration and tenured mobility possibilities, besides addressing genuine Indian expectations, at extending ostensibly opportunistic market-tapping strategy to developing supply chains.

The ROK's Indo-Pacific orientation proffers a template and platform to amplify its profile, role and visibility. The deliberate identification of relations with India, as primed for substantive and integrated development, augurs well for deepening the bilateral quotient of this engagement, but also to position South Korea-India synergies, as a cornerstone within the rebalancing strategic framework of the region.





MUST ALSO HARNESS THE DEEP **ADVANTAGES** THAT ACCRUE FROM A **MARKEDLY** INDIAN **DEMOGRAPHY** AND ITS RESERVOIR OF INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

(The writer is a faculty at the School of Studies, Goa University. Views expressed are personal)

International and Area

Navigating the unemployment conundrum in rural India Despite the government's efforts to address the issue of unemployment, the focus has shifted towards fostering self-employment dies are being extended to viduals in the country constipaltry wages. Pankaj Melkani, a taxi driver rural areas through various tuting the total labour force. În Almora district, Deewan programs, with young indi-Negi, a young resident of Sirauli village, offers a similar The stories of young individviduals being sensitized to various skills through job uals paint a bleak picture. Pankaj Singh, a young perspective. He notes that

India has made significant strides, becoming a global economic powerhouse with advancements not only in the economic sector but also in science and technology, propelling it to the forefront of innovation worldwide. Despite this remarkable progress, the stark reality is that unemployment continues to be a growing challenge in the country, with rural areas bearing a significant brunt. Young people in rural regions are often left behind in the job market due to a lack of technical skills. Even in the scenic state of Uttarakhand, rural areas are not exempt from this predicament. A substantial portion of the state's youth finds themselves without work, prompting many to

ver the last decade,



(The author is a develop-

mental writer from

Uttarakhand. Views are

personal. Charkha

Features)

opportunities. While the metropolises and urban areas offer a multitude of avenues for livelihood, job opportunities in the hilly regions are exceptionally scarce, making it difficult for the local youth to sustain themselves.In hilly areas, livelihoods are intricately tied to factors like weather, wildlife, agriculture, and the absence of modern technology. Unfortunately, these factors cannot guarantee stable employment, leading to the persistent issue of unemployment. The state is grappling with a severe unemployment crisis, as job opportunities remain limited, forcing thousands of highly educated young individuals to work in menial labour positions.

migrate to larger cities and

urban centres in search of



Despite the government's efforts to address the issue of unemployment at various levels, the focus has increasingly shifted towards fostering self-employment. This includes initiatives such as PM-Daksh, MGNREGA, Prime Minister Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and Startup India. Additionally, subsi-

fairs. In the past two and a half years, around 257 job fairs have been conducted in the state, resulting in employment for approximately 4,429 youths. A significant number of unemployed youths from rural areas actively participated in these fairs.

A concerning report from May of this year indicates that the unemployment rate in India rose to 8.11% in April, up from 7.8% in March. This statistic reveals that more people are entering the labour force than there are available jobs. This issue is particularprevalent among rural youths, with 46.76 crore indi-

tempo driver in Haldwani in Nainital district, is a case in point. Despite passing his 10th-grade exams, he faced numerous setbacks when attempting to secure government jobs. Exams were often marred by paper leaks or other irregularities, leaving him perpetually disillusioned. To make ends meet, he briefly worked in a private company, but the harsh exploitation he faced there led him to leave and become a tempo driver. Many highly educated youngsters, facing limited employment opportunities, either struggle to find work or accept rent landscape.

the wages offered for jobs provided through government schemes are minimal, considering the effort involved. He cites the MGNREGA scheme, revealing that the demand for jobs under this program increased by 43% in 2020-21 compared to the previous year. While some individuals did find work, they were often underpaid. Currently, the scheme offers a daily wage of only 232 rupees, while the average daily wage for labourers is around 450-500 rupees. Clearly, changes are needed in the government programs to adapt to the cur-

in Nainital with a higher education background, stresses the inadequacy of our education system in ensuring full employment for the educated. He suggests that the government should introduce vocational courses geared toward employment so that young people can transition into the workforce without grappling with unemployment post-education. Furthermore, he advocates for the promotion of local small-scale businesses, as rural communities possess the skills required for these endeavours. Such a policy shift would not only create jobs for young individuals at the local level but also present a sustainable solution to the problem of migration.

Trump's drama,

for US: Nikki

chaos dangerous

Washington (PTI): Indian-

American Republican presi-dential aspirant Nikki Haley

has said former president

Donald Trump's victory in the

2024 election would result in

"four years of chaos, vendettas

and drama" that would be dan-

gerous for the US, which needs

a captain who will steady the

a captain who will steady the ship, not capsize it. Haley, 51, launched her strongest criticism of her for-mer boss Trump on Saturday as she addressed an influential group of Jewish Republicans in

Israel reassessing diplomatic relations with Turkey

 \mathbf{I} srael said Saturday that it was recalling its diplomats from Turkey over "increasingly harsh statements" coming from the government in Ankara. The announcement came after Turkey's president told a massive protest crowd in Istanbul that his government was reparing to declare Israel a "war criminal" due to its actions in the Gaza Strip. Israel previously removed its diplomats out of Turkey for security rescores. But Israeli Forgian ty reasons. But Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that they were being ordered to pull out now for a reassessment of the ties between Turkey and Israel.

Cohen's statement suggested a move that could sever the newly restored diplomatic ties between the two countries. There was no immediate response from the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Earlier Saturday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said during the pro-Palestinian rally that attracted hundreds of thousands of participants that his country planned to formally accuse Israel of committing war crimes in the Gaza Strip. "Israel, we will proclaim

you as a war criminal to the world," Erdogan said, without elaborating on the mechanism he intended to employ or what the action would mean. "We are making our preparations, and we will declare Israel to the world as a war criminal." His office would not com-

ment on his statement.

The chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court has said an investigation opened in 2021 into alleged crimes in the Palestinian territories could analyse war crimes allegations from the current Israel-Hamas war.

In his remarks at the Istanbul protest, Erdogan also held Western countries responsible for the more than 7,700 people the Hamas-led Health Ministry in Gaza said have been killed in the last three weeks.He accused the West of failing to stop Israel's intense bombing since militants from Hamas, the group that rules the Palestinian territory, smashed through the border and killed and kidnapped people in southern Israel on Oct 7.

Biden: Mideast leaders must consider two-state solution after war ends

As the 3-week-old Israel-Hamas war enters what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says could be a "long and difficult" new stage, President Joe Biden is calling on Israeli and Arab leaders to think hard about their eventual postwar reality. It's one, he argues, where finally finding agreement on a long-sought two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict should be a priority. "There's no going back to the status quo as it stood on October 6," Biden told reporters, referring to the day before Hamas militants attacked Israel and set off the latest war. The White House says Biden conveyed the same message directly to Netanyahu during a telephone call this past week. "It also means that when this crisis is over, there has to be a vision of what comes next, and in our view it has to be a two-state solution," Biden said.

The push for a two-state solution one in which Israel would co-exist with an independent Palestinian state — has eluded US presidents and Middle East diplomats for decades. It's been put on the back burner since the last American-led effort at peace talks collapsed in 2014 amid disagreements on Israeli settlements, the release of Palestinian prisoners and other issues.

Palestinian statehood is something that Biden rarely addressed in the early going of his administration. During his visit to the West Bank last year, Biden said the "ground is not ripe" for new attempts to reach a permanent peace even as he reiterated to Palestinians the long-held US support for statehood.

Now, at a moment of heightened concern that the Israel-Hamas war could spiral into a broader regional conflict, Biden has begun to emphasize that once the bombing and shooting stop, working toward a Palestinian state should no longer be ignored.

Until recently, Biden had put far more emphasis on what his administration saw as the achievable ambition of normalising relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours than on restarting peace talks. Even his national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, in a lengthy

essay that was written shortly before the October 7 attack and described Biden's global foreign policy efforts made no mention of Palestinian statehood.

In an updated version of the Foreign Affairs essay posted online, Sullivan wrote that the administration was "committed to a two-state solution". White House official also say the

normalisation talks have always included significant proposals to benefit the Palestinians. There is no shortage of obstacles in

the way of Biden's postwar vision. An independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza is viewed as a nonstarter by Israel's far-right government. An ineffectual Palestinian Authority controls the West Bank and has little credibility with the population it governs. Meantime, a looming US presidential election could make Biden a less-than-ideal mediator in 2024.

Aaron David Miller, who served as an adviser on Middle East issues to Democratic and Republican administrations, said Biden's recent emphasis on a two-state solution was an "aspirational

talking point". "The odds are very, very low," he said. "It's essentially mission impossible." The call for a two-state solution arose Saturday at the Republican Jewish Coalition summit in Las Vegas, where GOP presidential contenders criticised Biden's Israel policy and what they saw as a failure by Democrats to sufficiently condemn antisemitism across the United States. One presidential hopeful, biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, said Israel should feel free to abandon "the myth of a two-state solution".

The White House is cognizant that Biden's calls for a two-state solution are ambitious and are perhaps not achievable in the near term, according to a White House official who was not authorised to publicly discuss internal deliberations and spoke on condition of anonymity. There is also a recognition that the Netanyahu government, facing public backlash for failing to prevent the Hamas attack, is focused on its operations against Hamas and is not giving much consideration to Biden's talk of

> character of our nation. It's critical that we give hate no safe har-bour," he said. Before hundreds

> of cheering supporters, Trump also vowed to stand alongside

Israel's mission to destroy Hamas, defend America and

Israel from barbaric terrorists,

and reverse the Biden adminis-

tration's appeasement of Iran. "To

every Israeli and every American

touched by these barbaric activ-

ities: We love you, we're with you,

we grieve with you, we share

your anger and we stand with

you 100 per cent...110 per cent,"

never, ever have happened,"

"To every American who is

Though she gave credit to Trump for pro-Israel, policies, but asked, "The question is, what will he do in the future?" "History will record that

Las Vegas.

Donald Trump was a pro-Israel president. Getting out of the Iran deal was necessary. Recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital was a wrong made right...I'm happy to give President Trump the credit he deserves. And I was honoured to have played a part in those efforts," Haley said in her address to the Republican Jewish Coalition.

This year's Jewish conference comes as Israel is reeling from a terrorist attack from Hamas militants on October 7.

"But as Americans, we need to ask a critical question. We all know what Trump did in the past. The question is... what will he do in the future? We are living through the most dangerous period in our lifetimes," she said.

Referring to the Israel-Hamas and Ukraine wars and violence in other parts of the world, Haley, the former governor of South Carolina and United Nations ambassador in the Trump administration, said

the world is on fire. She said as a military wife whose husband is currently deployed, and as the mom of two children, nothing matters to her more than stopping war, keeping the peace, and protect-

ing the American people. "We must defend our freedom - before it's too late. The stakes couldn't be higher. And given those stakes, we cannot have four years of chaos, vendettas, and drama," she

said, referring to Trump.
"We can't afford to go down that road - not now.



Palestinian supporters march during a demonstration demanding a cease-fire on Saturday in New York.

Trump promises to revive Muslim ban PTI WASHINGTON ty. The spike in Islamophobic incidents is a direct attack on the

Former US President Donald Trump has vowed to revive a controversial travel ban on people from some Muslim-majority countries if he is elected to a second White House term. While speaking at the annual summit of the Republican Jewish Coalition on Saturday, Trump, 77, said: "You remember the travel ban?" On day one, I will restore our travel ban. We had a travel ban because we didn't want people coming into our country who really love the idea of blowing our country up." He said the travel ban

imposed during his administration was an amazing success.

"We didn't have one incident in four years because we kept bad people the hell out of our country. We kept them out. We didn't have one, not one instance," Trump, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination, said.In 2017, at the start of Trump's presidency, he imposed sweeping restrictions on the entry of travellers from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Yemen and, initially, Iraq and Sudan. The White House immediately



campaign event, Saturday in Las Vegas

slammed the former president. "In 2020, President (Joe) Biden decried the 'unconscionable' rise in Islamophobia which he called a 'pernicious disease' - and was proud to overturn the vile, un-American Muslim ban enacted by his predecessor," White House spokesperson Andrew Bates said."The need to come together against rancid hate is more pressing now than ever, as American Muslims and Arab Americans increasingly find themselves the targets of

appalling smears and heartbreaking violence - including the barbaric killing of a 6-year-old child," he said.

In office, President Biden has taken unprecedented action against Islamophobia, and more will follow, Bates said.

"These disgraceful attacks against Arab Americans and the Muslim community are the opposite of what we stand for as a country, and they must be forcefully condemned by all Americans who, like President Biden, believe in human digni-

terrified that Joe Biden's weakness will bring our country to ruin, I make you this promise: As your president, I will restore peace through strength-and yes, I will prevent World War III," he said.He said during four years of his presidency, he kept America, Israel and the world safe. "Today, the world is blowing up all around, no matter where you look. If I were president, the attack on Israel would

Eight years ago, it was good to have a leader who broke things. But right now, we need a leader who also knows how to put things back together," she added.

governance roles for women

Vatican City (AP): Pope Francis' big gathering of Catholic bishops and laypeople said Saturday it was "urgent" to guarantee fuller participation of women in church governance positions and called for research on allowing women to be deacons to be released within a year. But the meeting didn't take decisive action on that issue, and it backed off any specific calls for welcoming LGBTQ+ Catholics despite Francis repeated outreach to the gay community and willingness to consider blessing same-sex cou

After a month of closeddoor debate, Francis' meeting on the future of the Catholic Church ended late Saturday with the approval of a 42-page text on a host of issues that will now be considered at a second session next year. None of the proposals is binding, and they are merely offered for Francis to consider. Each paragraph passed with the necessary twothirds majority, but the ones involving women and questioning the need for priestly celibacy obtained the most "no' votes. Francis called the synod over two years ago as part of his overall reform efforts to make the church a more welcoming place, where lay people have a greater say in the life of the church. The process, and the two-

year canvassing of rank-and-file Catholics that preceded it, sparked both hopes and fears that real change was afoot. Progressives had hoped the gathering would send a message that the church would be more welcoming of LGBTQ+ people and offer women more leadership roles in a hierarchy where they are barred from ordination. Conservatives emphasized the need to stay true to the 2,000year tradition of the church.

Pope: It's urgent to quarantee 'US mass killing suspect had mental health issues'

AP LEWISTON (US)

US Army reservist who Aopened fire at a Maine bowling alley and a bar earlier this week and killed 18 people purchased his weapons legally, authorities said Saturday, adding he likely launched his rampage as a result of underlying mental health issues. The body of Robert Card, a firearms instructor, was found Friday at a recycling centre in Lisbon Falls that police had searched a day earlier. Card died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, authorities said.

The 40-year-old Card of Bowdoin was suspected of also injuring 13 people during the shooting rampage on Wednesday night in Lewiston.

State Department of Public Safety Commissioner Michael Sauschuck said law enforcement scoured the Maine Recycling Corp property, where Card once worked, on Thursday night. Sauschuck said

Britain's largest police force on

Sunday called for "sharper"

laws to deal with extremism on

the streets of the country, a day

after Scotland Yard made nine

arrests including two for

assaults on its officers as thou-

sands marched across the UK

in response to the Israel-Gaza

conflict.Metropolitan Police Commissioner Mark Rowley

told 'Sky News' that his officers

are working "ruthlessly" to

arrest anyone who "steps over

the line" by committing a hate

antisemitic and Islamophobic

hate crimes in the UK since the

conflict in the Middle East

intensified earlier this month.

The Met Police said it has

recorded 408 antisemitic

There has been a surge in

Scotland Yard chief calls for

'sharper' anti-extremism laws

London (PTI): The chief of offences against Britain's Jewish

another state police team returned Friday to the site, which has about 60 trailers, and found Card's body alongside several guns in a trailer that hadn't been searched.

Jim Ferguson, the ATF pecial agent in charge in Boston, told The Associated Press that the weapons used in the shooting had been purchased legally. Many firearms were recovered although he declined to say their make, model or how many exactly.

"There were a lot more

than three," Ferguson said.

At a press conference, Sauschuck said Card had a history of mental illness. As for why Card chose his targets, Sauschuck said it was likely due to paranoia, that "people were talking about him and there may even have been some voices at play".

He did not elaborate. But Sauschuck said there was no evidence that Card had ever been involuntarily committed

communities this month, com-

pared to 28 in the same peri-

od last year, and Islamophobic

this country. The law was never

designed to deal with extrem-

have law to deal with hate

crime, we don't have a body of

law to deal with extremism and

that is creating a gap," he said.

to a mental health facility. A simple evaluation or voluntary commitment would not have triggered a prohibition on owning a gun, he said.

Under Maine's yellow flag law, law enforcement can detain someone they suspect is mentally ill and poses a threat to themselves or others. The law differs from red flag laws in that it requires police first to get a medical practitioner to evaluate the person and find them to be a threat before police can petition a judge to order the person's firearms to be seized.

"Iust because there appears to be a mental health nexus to this scenario, the vast majority of people with mental health diagnosis will never hurt anybody," Sauschuck said. He also said a note found

in Card's home was meant for a loved one with the passcode to his phone and bank account numbers. Sauschuck said he wouldn't describe it as an explicit suicide note but that the tone indicated that was the

Family members of Card told federal investigators that he had recently discussed hearing voices and became more focused on the bowling alley and bar, according to law enforcement officials who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity. When Card was hospitalized in July in New York, Card had told military officials he had been hearing voices and said he wanted to harm other soldiers, the officials said.

Street life returned to Lewiston on Saturday after a dayslong lockdown in the city of 37,000. Joggers took advantage of the warm weather. People walked dogs through downtown and picked up coffee and visited other shops that had been closed since the shooting.

"Right now, we want Maine to be remembered as the community that came together after this tragic event," said Lisbon Police Chief Ryan McGee, recalling how he drove into town Saturday and saw "people walking the streets, people sitting on porches, wav-

ing. Giving the thumbs up". The deadliest shootings in Maine history stunned a state of 1.3 million people that has relatively little violent crime and had only 29 killings in all of 2022. In Lewiston, residents residents and those in surrounding communities had been told to stay in their homes as hundreds of police officers, sheriff's deputies, FBI agents and other law enforcement officials swarmed the area.

The stay at home order was lifted Friday and hours later authorities announced they had found Card's body.

Maine Gov Janet Mills announced Card had been found dead at a Friday night news conference. Then, she called for the healing process to

Macron vows to enshrine women's rights to abortion

President Emmanuel Macron promised on hate crime was up from 65 offences in October 2022 to 174 this month."I think there is Sunday to enshrine a woman's scope to be much sharper in right to an abortion in the how we deal with extremism in French Constitution by next year. The president said on X formerly Twitter, that a bill making this possible would be ism," said Rowley."We have presented to his Cabinet by the law to deal with terrorism, we end of this year so that "in 2024, the freedom of women to have an abortion will be irreversible".

It comes as government ministers, including UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman, Abortion in France was decriminalised under a 1975 law, but there is nothing in the called into question the lack of constitution that would guararrests related to chants of antee abortion rights. It was the "jihad" at a pro-Palestinian rollback of abortion rights in the United States after the US protest last weekend.



50-year-old ruling last year and stripped women's constitutional protections for abortion that propelled France on a path toward unconditionally guaranteeing such rights.

Macron, honouring feminist Gisele Halimi in March, said he wanted to change the constitution in order "to enshrine the freedom of women to have an abortion, to solemnly ensure that nothing can stop or undo what will be irreversible". Amending the constitution is a laborious process, but

the government came up with a shortcut to avoid a referendum on the question.

By presenting its own bill, rather than one originating among lawmakers, Macron can convene a special "congress" of both houses that must adopt the amendment by a three-fifths majority, something that appears doable.

Mike Pence ends campaign for WH

AP WASHINGTON

Former Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday dropped his bid for the Republican presidential nomination, ending his campaign for the White House after struggling to raise money and gain traction in the polls. "After much prayer and deliberation, I have decided to suspend my campaign for president effective today," Pence said at the Republican Jewish Coalition gathering in Las Vegas. "We always knew this would be an uphill battle, but I have no regrets," he said. Pence becomes the first major candidate to leave a race that has been dominated by his former bossturned-rival, Donald Trump.

The decision, more than two months before the Iowa caucuses that he had staked his campaign on, saves Pence from the embarrassment of failing to qualify for the third Republican primary debate, Nov 8 in Miami.

But the withdrawal is a huge blow for a politician who spent years biding his time as Trump's most loyal lieutenant, only to be scapegoated during their final days in office when Trump became convinced that Pence somehow had the power to overturn the results of the 2020 election and keep both men in office — not something a vice president could do. While Pence averted a constitutional crisis by rejecting the scheme, he drew Trump's fury, as well as the wrath of many of Trump's sup-porters who believed his lies and still see Pence as a traitor.

Among Trump critics, meanwhile, Pence was seen as an enabler who defended the former president at every turn and refused to criticise even Trump's most indefensible actions time and again. As a result, an Associated Press-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research from August found that the majority of US adults, 57%, viewed Pence



negatively, with only 28% having a positive view.

Throughout his campaign, the former Indiana governor and congressman had insisted that while he was well-known by voters, he was not "known well" and set out to change that with an aggressive schedule that included numerous stops at diners and Pizza Ranch restau-

Pence had been betting on Iowa, a state with a large white Evangelical population that has a long history of elevating religious and socially conservative candidates such as former Arkansas Gov Mike Huckabee and former Pennsylvania Rick Santorum. Pence often campaigned with his wife, Karen, a Christian school teacher, and emphasised his hard-line views on issues such as abortion, which he opposes even in cases when a pregnancy is unviable. He repeatedly called on his fellow candidates to support a minimum 15-week national ban and he pushed to ban drugs used as alternatives to surgical proce-He tried to confront head-

on his actions on Jan 6, 2021 explaining to voters over and over that he had done his constitutional duty that day, knowing full well the political consequences. It was a strategy that aides believed would help defuse the issue and earn Pence the respect of a majority of Republicans, whom they were were convinced did not agree with Trump's actions.

Russia says it shot down China asks universities to avoid 36 Ukrainian drones

Russian air defence shot down over 30 Ukrainian drones over the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula overnight Saturday, Russia's Defence Ministry said on Sunday. "The air defence systems in place destroyed 36 Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicles over the Black Sea and the northwestern part of the Crimean peninsula," the ministry wrote on Telegram.

Local authorities in the southern Krasnodar region bordering the Black Sea said that a fire broke out at an oil refinery in the early hours of Sunday, but did not specify the cause. "The reasons for the incident are being established," a statement from local authorities said, amid claims in local media outlets that the fire had been caused by a drone strike or debris from a downed drone.

Drone strikes and shelling on the Russian border regions and Moscow-annexed Crimea are a regular occurrence. Ukrainian officials never acknowledge responsibility for attacks on Russian territory or the Crimean peninsula.

In Ukraine, the country's air force said on Sunday it had shot down five Iranian-made Shahed exploding drones launched by Russia overnight.

Close to the front line in the country's east, where Ukrainian and Russian forces are locked in a grinding battle for control, four police officers were wounded when a shell fired by Russian troops exploded by their police car in the city of Siversk, located in the partly occupied Donetsk province.

Talks on peace plan open in Malta with officials from 65 countries

AP ■ VALLETTA

Talks on Ukraine's plan for peace kicked off in Malta on Saturday, with the participation of more than 65 countries - but not Russia, Maltese and Ukrainian officials said.

The two-day meeting of national security delegates is the third round of such talks in recent months. Ukraine sees them as an opportunity to win support for President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's 10point peace plan from countries across the globe, especially as the conflict in the Middle Éast risks shifting the focus away from Ukraine.

Russia has dismissed the initiative as biased and refused to attend the meetings.

British intelligence assessed this weekend that Russia had suffered some of its biggest casualty rates so far this year as a result of continued "heavy but inconclusive" fighting around the town of Avdiivka, also in the Donetsk province.
The UK Ministry of

Defence's regular intelligence update on Saturday morning noted that Russia had committed "elements of up to eight brigades" in the area since it launched its "major offensive effort" in mid-October.

Also on Sunday, a prominent ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that Russia might take action to president of the European

"Ukraine's diplomatic efforts are paying off, as international support for the Ukrainian peace formula is growing," The head of the Ukrainian presidential office, Andriy Yermak, wrote on X formerly known as Twitter ahead of the opening session, stressing the strong interna-

The initial round of talks in Copenhagen in June saw just 15 participants, rising to 43 for the second round in Jeddah in August. In his speech at the conference, Yermak noted that, as more and more states are joining the development of Zelenskyy's plan, "Russia will have to give in to the international community. It will have to accept our common condi-

seize assets of European Union member states it considers

hostile if the EU proceeds with

its plan to "steal" frozen Russian

funds to support Ukraine's post-war reconstruction efforts.

A number of European politi-

cians (...) have once again start-

ed talking about stealing our

country's frozen funds in order

to continue the militarisation of

Kviv," Vyacheslav Volodin, the

Chairman of the State Duma,

the lower house of Russia's

parliament, wrote on Telegram.

ment in response to an

announcement on Friday by

Ursula von der Leyen, the

Volodin made the state-

tional attendance.

five of the 10 points of the plan would be discussed at the weekend talks: nuclear safety, energy security, food security, the release of prisoners of war and deportees, and the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity. In his opening remarks, Malta's foreign minister, Ian Borg, said the high attendance was a "vote of confidence in Malta as a peace broker," reiterating the country's support for Ukraine.
"Although we are a neutral

tions." He then specified that

state, we cannot remain silent in the face of injustice, atrocities and abuse of power in this region," Borg said. "Malta believes in multilateralism under the auspices of international law and the UN Charter."

Commission, on a proposal to use earnings from frozen Russian state assets to support

Ukraine in its rebuilding.

Volodin asserted that Moscow would respond with measures that would inflict significant costs on the EU if it were to take action against Russian assets, a considerable portion of which are in Belgium.

"Such a decision would require a symmetrical response from the Russian Federation. In that case, far more assets belonging to unfriendly countries will be confiscated than our frozen funds in Europe,"

private memorials for ex-premier

ities for Li in an apparent bid

moderate reformist and won

the admiration of the Chinese

people for managing the econ-

omy which was in a slowdown mode during his 10-year tenure. Though ranked num-

ber two in the ruling Chinese

Communist Party hierarchy, Li

was side-lined and mostly

spent his years in the govern-

ment focusing on the manage-

ment of the economy, while Xi

has emerged as the most pow-

erful leader after Party founder

Mao Zedong, heading the party, the military and the

Presidency.

Li's death after his retire-

ment in March this year has

shocked the nation, with many

paying tribute to him online

after the news emerged, the

Post report said. Some univer-

sities have told student coun-

sellors and leaders not to

arrange memorial activities,

fearing that they could poten-

tially turn into protests. One

student counsellor at a top

university in Beijing said they

had been told to work with stu-

Li had a reputation as a

to avoid social turmoil.

In a bid to avoid possible social turmoil, China has reportedly asked student bodies in some universities not to organise private commemoration activities for former pre-mier Li Keqiang whose sudden death shocked the country, according to media reports on Saturday. Li, an acclaimed economist who was once a strong contender against Chinese President Xi Jinping for the country's top leadership. for the country's top leadership role, died on Friday of a heart attack. He was 68.

The Chinese government has not yet announced details of his funeral arrangements.

Hundreds of people are seen lined up near Li's childhood residence with bouquets of flowers to mourn his death in videos emerging on Chinese social media from Hefei, the capital of the eastern Chinese province of Anhui, which is the birthplace of the former premier. Emotional scenes were witnessed as some people cried expressing sorrow over his death. Medical experts tending to Li had done everything in their power to revive him, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported on Saturday.

Quoting two sources based in Shanghai, the report said Li suffered a heart attack on Thursday after swimming at the Dong Jiao State Guest Hotel, where he was staying. He was rushed to nearby Shuguang Hospital by his security and healthcare team, a comprehensive support system provided for former senior leaders.

The Post also reported that some Chinese universities have told students not to organise memorials were held for now, the Post report said.

"It is not that we will not commemorate former premier Li Keqiang. I think we need to wait for the party's central leadership to announce details of the national mourning, so the university can follow this properly," said the counsellor, who requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the

matter.
"We don't want students to organise their own mourning events. They could get overly emotional and cause unnecessary turbulence like what happened 30-plus years ago," the counsellor said.

In the past, the Chinese government had reportedly taken precautionary measures to avoid similar student protests at Tiananmen Square in Beijing in 1989, following the death of popular moderate Communist Party chief Hu Yaobang. Thousands were reportedly killed during the mass protests. The Post report also said the Chinese government was taken by surprise by the sudden death of Li.

State-run Xinhua news agency announced his death early hours on Friday with one-line news, which was only updated after several hours.

Chen Daoyin, a political commentator and former professor at Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, told the Post that Beijing seemed underprepared in its messaging. "I think Li's death was a total surprise to Beijing's top leaders, as the state media obviously did not prepare his full obituary, unlike what they will do in the case of party leaders who are known to be very would not be smooth-sailing'

'Xi-Biden meeting in San Francisco

Beijing (AP): China's foreign minister considers that the road to an expected meeting between President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden would not be "smooth-sailing" and that both sides must work together to achieve results, the foreign ministry said on

Wang Yi met with Biden, as well as secretary of state Antony Blinken and national security advisor Jake Sullivan, during a three-day visit to Washington. Both sides agreed to work toward a bilateral meeting at the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum summit in San Francisco in November. In an statement released by China's foreign ministry summarizing the discussions with members of the "US strategic community," Wang said that the road to the bilateral meeting would not be "smooth sailng" and that they could not rely on "autopilot" to make it happen.

Wang's three-day visit to Washington came at a time when tensions between the two countries remain high, including over US export controls on advanced technology and China's more assertive actions in the East and South China seas. The statement said that although there are still many issues to be resolved, both sides believe that it is both beneficial and necessary for the US and China to maintain dialogue.

The meeting is the latest in a series of high-level contacts between the two countries as they explore the possibility of stabilizing an increasingly tense relationship at a time of conflict in

meet President Ramchandra

Paudel later on Sunday. The

Bangladesh police arrest senior oppn leader

PTI ■ DUBAI

Bangladesh police on Sunday arrested a senior leader of the Opposition BNP, a day after deadly clashes at an antigovernment rally organised by his party claimed two lives, heightening tensions in the country ahead of the general elections expected in January. Bangladesh Nationalist Party Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was arrested from his home in the Gulshan neighbourhood, an official of the party's press wing said.

A Bangladeshi policeman and a BNP activist were killed and more than 200 people, including security personnel, were injured on Saturday as violence erupted during rallies called by the ruling and opposition parties in Dhaka.

The BNP, led by former prime minister Khaleda Zia, organised a grand rally here on Saturday demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to allow free and fair elections under a nonparty interim government. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's party also held a peace rally in response to the Opposition rally. "We have taken him (Alamgir) to our custody for subsequent legal actions," a spokesman of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's detective branch told reporters.

Alamgir's wife Rahat Ara said that the police initially visited their home, and left with a hard disk containing CCTV camera footage from their house and building. They later returned and took Alamgir, 75, into custody.

"He (Fakhrul) is very ill," the wife said. BNP is observing a countrywide strike on Sunday in response to the police action that forced it to abruptly end its grand rally on Sunday.

Prime Minister Hasina's ruling Awami League asked party units to stage simultaneous peace rallies across the country. Meanwhile, violence continued unabated in the coun-

try on Sunday. Fire service officials and

police said a bus driver's assistant was killed as unidentified miscreants set on fire a static bus on Sunday

In another incident, an empty bus was set on fire in front of downtown Baitul Mokarram National Mosque as the BNP-called nationwide stoppage began.

G-7 nations back strong supply chains for energy, food despite tensions

Tokyo (AP): Trade and economy officials from the Group of Seven wealthy democracies strengthened their pledge on Sunday to work together to ensure smooth supply chains for essentials like energy and food despite global uncertainties. The nations promised to maintain "a free and fair trading system based on the rule of law and enhancing economic resilience and ecoin a joint statement. Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa, who co-hosted the two-day event in the western city of Osaka, pointed to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas war as the latest threats to stable energy and food supplies. "We nations that share important values have a position of responsibility amid growing uncertainties," she said in closing the meeting, stressing democracy, inclusiveness and human

rights. Worries are growing among developed nations about maintaining a stable supply of computer chips as well as essential minerals, like lithium, which are critical these days amid the demand for electric vehicles and other green energy. The G-7 includes the US, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Britain. The European Union, Australia, Chile, India, Indonesia and Kenya were invited to take part in the twoday meeting, as were economic organisations such as World

The G-7 nations reiterated their criticism of what they called in their joint state ment "Russia's brutal, unprovoked, unjustifiable and illegal war of aggression against The participants discussed

how trade policy can contribute to tackling climate change, strengthening food security, promoting digital sustainable development.

Trade is one sector where growing political tensions with China have been playing out, although China was not directly mentioned in the meetings.

China, while absent at the meetings, loomed as a focal point. China has imposed export curbs on two metals used in computer chips and solar cells — gallium and germanium — that it said were intended to "safeguard national security."

At the G-7 summit in Hiroshima in southwestern Japan earlier this year, participants referred to "economic coercion" in an oblique reference to China's leveraging some nations' dependence for economic items. That phrase was again used at the Osaka G-7. As the host nation, Japan focused on how China has banned imports of Japanese seafood after the recent massive release of treated wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear plant, which experienced reactor meltdowns in

UN chief Guterres meets Nepal PM, DPM PTI KATHMANDU

Secretary-General UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Sunday called on Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' after arriving here on first official visit to the Himalavan nation.

Guterres also held separate meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Purna Bahadur Khadka and Foreign Minister Narayan Prakash Saud.

In a post on X, Nepal's Prime Minister's office said a meeting was held between PM Prachanda and UN chief cial visit to Nepal at the friendly invitation of the prime minister. Guterres said that the transitional justice process in Nepal

that the government is trying to conclude must help bring peace to victims, families and communities. Addressing the media after meeting Prime Minister Prachanda, the UN chief pledged the world body's support to Nepal to develop a process that meets international standards, the Supreme Court's rulings, and the needs of victims - and to put it into practice, My Republica newspaper reported.

In a joint press briefing with Prime Minister Prachanda, the UN chief urged developed countries to increase support to countries like Nepal that are

"Nepal is also caught in a blizzard of global crises not of its making: the aftermath of the

COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, and the enormous threat posed by climate chaos," he said. He said that much more international action is needed. The developed countries must step up to support sustainable development, and help developing economies, including Nepal, to tackle the climate crisis, he said. Guterres arrived here in the wee hours of Sunday on a fourday official visit. He was received by Foreign Minister Saud and senior foreign ministry officials at the Tribhuvan International Airport. The UN chief was accorded a ceremonial welcome at the airport, said a statement

The UN chief is accompanied by Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Nations to Nepal Hanaa Singer-Hamdy and other officials from the UN Headquarters in New York and the United Nations country team in Nepal.

Coordinator of the United

Guterres, who is visiting Nepal for the first time after assuming the UN Secretary-General post in 2017, will discuss with Nepal's top leadership the matters relating to the peace process, sustainable development and climate change with Nepali authorities, the foreign ministry said earlier. Starting in 2006, the peace process for inclusion of Maoist rebels in mainstream politics, issues relattransitional justice mechanism and truth and reconciliation commission, remains incom-

Secretary-General will have separate meetings with Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN-UML) Chairperson K P Sharma Oli. He will also visit the Patan Durbar Square, a heritage site of historical and archaeological significance. Prachanda will host a banquet reception on

Sunday evening in honour of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General will also visit famous tourist destinations Namche, Pokhara, Annapurna np and Buddha' place Lumbini on Monday.

He would address a joint session of Nepal's Parliament on

S Koreans hold subdued Halloween cele brations

Halloween celebrations in South Korea were subdued on the eve of the first anniversary of the harrowing party crush that killed about 160 people. Many restaurants, bars, department stores and amusement parks are avoiding Halloween-themed events as a sign of respect for the victims.

Few people clad in Halloween costumes were seen Saturday in Seoul's popular Itaewon neighbourhood, the site of last year's deadly surge when a large number of revellers and others packed an alley, causing people to fall on each other like dominos.

The walls of the narrow, sloped alley in Itaewon were plastered with numerous post-



People march together before a to mark the first anniversary of the harrowing crowd surge that killed about 160 people in a Seoul alleyway, in Seoul, South Korea,

sages that read "We won't forget you forever" or "Sorry.

plete. Guterres is scheduled to

Please, rest in peace. A mourning station established in central Seoul received many visitors, who laid white flowers and burned incense in front of photos of the victims.

"I think this kind of incident must never happen again. Our hearts are aching too much," Choi Seul Gi, a 30-yearold office worker, said in

Bereaved families are to hold a formal memorial service on Sunday.

In Seoul's Hongdae area, another entertainment zone, there were only a small number of people wearing Halloween outfits. There were no reports of any safety-related incidents across South Korea by late Saturday night.

bestselling dishes are butter chicken, biryani, cheese naan

and dosa," said chef Kalamuddin

Sheikh who hails from Orissa.

boasts of the renowned people

who have visited the restaurant

be it politicians like Sushma

Swaraj and Rajnath Singh or

Bollywood celebrities like

Mithun Chakraborty, Shibani

Kashyap, Daler Mehandi,

Gulshan Grover, among others.

A wall in the restaurant

Authorities have deployed thousands of police, emergency and other officials since Friday for crowd control and safety of pedestrians in Itaewon and 15 other major nightlife districts in Seoul.

About 200 police officers were separately mobilised to monitor narcotics use and violent crime, according to Seoul police.

In January, a police special investigation team concluded that police and municipal officials failed to work out effective crowd control steps despite correctly anticipating a huge number of people in Itaewon. Investigators also concluded that police had ignored hotline calls by pedestrians who warned of swelling crowds before the surge turned

Tashkent restaurant celebrates Uzbekistan's love for Bollywood

Daler Mehandi and Ravi Kishan.

PTI TASHKENT

In the heart of Tashkent, a city known for its rich history, stands an Indian restaurant celebrating the legacy of legendary Bollywood actor Raj Kapoor and the love of the Uzbeks for him even 35 years after his death.

Styled on the Bollywood theme, the 'Raaj Kapur' restaurant which is one of the three major Indian restaurants in Tashkent, is not new but at least 16 years old and is a hit among not only Indian tourists but also locals for its lip-smacking dishes. Three superstars from the Kapoor family — Randhir Kapoor, Rishi Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor — have also

dined at the restaurant on differ-

ent occasions. "People in Uzbekistan are crazy about Bollywood and generations of people from Uzbekistan and Russia - even the young - are aware of Raj Kapoor and his cinema and regard him as Bollywood's numero uno. The restaurant attracts more crowd for its name and less for Indian food, which most visitors discover after enjoying a meal," Sameer Khan, Resident manager, Raaj Kapur restaurant told PTI.

Housed in the Le Grande Hotel in Tashkent, the restaurant is a definite stopover for tourist groups from India and is popular for its Bollywood nights where Uzbeks also groove on top chartbusters from the 90s.

While Khan, who is origi-

nally from Mumbai, manages the property, the idea of the restaurant was first conceptualised by Jay Al Atas, an Indonesian who fell in love with Indian food during a visit to the country and was also impressed with the craze for Raj Kapoor in Russia and Uzbekistan. "A lot of Indian tourist

groups come here on a regular basis while Uzbeks enjoy the food on occasions and also love clicking pictures here. Whenever a Bollywood celebrity from India comes here, there is a bustling crowd," he added.

The restaurant is also the official caterer for the majority of Indian events—be it the Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit or ones like a recent Bollywood night

Five chefs from different parts of India are behind the variety-loaded menu at the which saw performances by

"We offer all kinds of cuisine that are available in India. Our

"We have placed signed sketches of the celebrities from

India who have visited us. The restaurant is a big hit here," Sohail Khan, Quality Manager at the restaurant told PTI.

Born on December 14, 1924 to Prithviraj Kapoor in Peshawar

his official acting debut with the 1947 film "Neel Kamal" and went on to become "the greatest showman of Indian cinema". He made a mark as an

actor with films like "Shree 420", "Awaara" and "Barsaat". At the age of 24, Kapoor became the youngest filmmaker of his time when he made his directorial debut with "Aag" (1948) featuring himself alongside Nargis, Kamini Kaushal and Premnath.

Kapoor was famous for his Charlie Chaplin-esque style of (now Pakistan), Kapoor made

acting, which garnered attention not only from the Indian audience but also made him a fanfavourite in Russia. Kapoor died of complications related to asthma on June 2, 1988 at the age of 63 in New Delhi.

'Clear definition of e-commerce trade in goods, services must'

India tells WTO members

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has asked the WTO members to work on a clear definition of e-commerce trade in goods and services as it would help provide developing countries a policy space to make decisions on the fastgrowing sector, an official

At present, there is a difference of understanding about the subject between developed and developing member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The issue came up for discussion during a recent meeting of senior officials of WTO

"India stated that the definition should be clear about digital goods and services because customs duties are there on goods and not on services. The Western world wants no customs duties, and on the other hand, developing countries want that policy space to impose the duties," the official Customs duties help protect

domestic industries and provide a policy space to support the growth of MSMEs.

Though certain WTO members have been discussing the e-commerce issue since 1998, there is no clear-cut definition of the subject. A group of 80 countries are discussing an agreement on the subject, but India is not part of that. The US has also recently opted out of those talks to frame global



rules on e-commerce at the

"Now, goods and services are embedded, then there is a definitional problem. For example, Netflix is showing a film in India. So, the film is a product, but the membership that Netflix is taking to show the film is a service. So, it is very difficult to make that distinction between goods and services," the official, who did not wish to be named, said. The WTO members have agreed not to impose customs duties on electronic

transmissions since 1998, and the moratorium has been periodically extended at successive ministerial conferences (MC), the highest decision-making body of the 164-member body. "There is no clarity on ecommerce trade in services. So, because of the lack of clar-

ity, there is an apprehension...To provide a level playing field, you need to impose customs duties," the official said, adding that India will again oppose the continuation of the moratorium on customs duties on e-commerce trade at the 13th ministerial conference of the WTO in Abu Dhabi in February next year. Allowing the moratorium to lapse is important for developing nations to preserve pol-

through customs duties. $Thin\bar{k}\ tank\ Global\ Trade$ Research Initiative (GTRI) said the rapid rise of cryptocurrencies challenges the existing WTO e-commerce framework, necessitating urgent discussions on their classification as electronic

icy space for their digital

advancement to regulate

imports and generate revenue

"Members must prioritise discussions on cryptocurrency and its possible linkages with ongoing e-commerce negotiations before members start taking liberties with interpretation leading to disputes," GTRI cofounder Ajay Srivastava said. Currently, WTO members dis-

cuss e-commerce under a joint initiative on e-commerce and a moratorium on countries from applying customs duties on electronic transmissions. Both these negotiations need to factor in cryptocurrencies as the exchange of these currencies involves digital transmission, which qualifies it as an e-commerce transaction, he said, adding that WTO members must take a view as worldwide

'Government wants India's telecom service to remain most affordable in entire world'

The government wants remain the most affordable in the entire world, union telecom minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

According to the telecom sector industry body Cellular Operators Association of India, telecom operators have not been able to monetise 5G service since its launch last year. "From the government side we are very clear. We would like telecom service to continue to remain the most affordable in the entire world and today among all large economies India's telecom sector is the most affordable telecom sector," Vaishnaw told PTI in an interview at India Mobile Congress

According to analysts, telecom operators need an average revenue per user (ARPU) in the range of Rs 270-300 over next three years to realise the investments they are making in building 5G networks.



At present ARPU in India is in the range of Rs 140-200 compared to global average of Rs 600-850 and about Rs 580 in

Telecom operators have been demanding that 4-5 apps that generate large traffic on their network should pay revenue share based on the business they generate from India to compensate for the network

Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio are the only two out of four

mobile service providers that have rolled out 5G services and their combined investment in 5G network is estimated to be around Rs 3 lakh crore including the cost of spectrum.

Both the companies have not yet started charging for 5G data

While debt ridden Vodafone Idea non-executive additional director Kumar Mangalam Birla at the event announced that the company will make significant investments to roll coverage in the coming quar-

Vaishnaw said that BSNL is rolling out a 4G network which will be ramped up after Diwali and later upgraded to 5G network. In response to a question on India's roadmap towards 6G, Vaishnaw said that the prime minister has set a target for the Indian telecom sector to take leadership in 6G. He said Bharat 6G Vision has

been formed and accepted by the International Telecom Union -- a UN body that finalises global telecom standards. The minister said the Bharat 6G Alliance comprising industry, academia, students and government has been created to work on 6G.

"We have divided the spectrum of things in 5-6 large groups and each of the groups - the antenna group, the waveform group, equipment group, are working very sincerely and devotedly on developing new technology.
"The target and vision that the

India will emerge as a leader in 6G technology," Vaishnaw said. The minister said that a second set of telecom reforms have started with focus on user's pro-

"We are seeing a series of instalments of reforms, one after the other, which are focussed on customer protection like Sanchaar Sathi. These are very strong initiatives which will make sure that cyberworld remains safe and trusted," Vaishnaw said.

In the first set of reforms approved by the Cabinet in September 2021, the government announced several measures to lower financial burden on telecom operators and generate liquidity in the sector.

The move helped telecom players mitigate the impact of Supreme Court judgement on adjusted gross revenue dues that has put liability to the tune of Rs 1.53 lakh crore on old mobile phone service providers like Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, BSNL, MTNL etc.

Delhi-NCR 6th most expensive office rental mkt among APAC's top 23 cities

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi-NCR is the sixth Dmost expensive market among Asia Pacific's prime office markets with an annual occupancy cost of USD 78.4 per square foot during the July-September period, according to Knight Frank. Occupancy cost includes rent, local taxes and other charges. Real estate consultant Knight Frank has released its Asia-Pacific Prime Office Rental Index for Q3 (July-September) 2023.

Hong Kong SAR continued to be APAC's most expensive office market during the quarter with an occupancy cost of USD 164.7 per square foot per

Mumbai was the ninth most expensive commercial market in the APAC region with an annual occupancy cost of USD 70.5 per square foot. Occupancy cost of prime office space in Bengaluru was USD 36.1 per square foot per year and the city was ranked

FPIs withdraw ₹20,300-cr from equities in Oct

ter," the report said. 19th out of 23 cities tracked across the APAC region. Heightened activity by occu-Singapore was the second piers setting up Global most expensive followed by

Sydney, Tokyo and Seoul. Beijing ranked seventh, Ho Chi Minh City eighth and Shanghai 10th. 'Demand for office space in India's largest occupier markets remained strong with

Capability Centres (GCC) constituted the majority of demand, it added. While transaction volumes have grown, the consultant said that rental levels

remained stable across its three largest occupier markets as landlords focused on raising occupancy levels.

Zydex Group eyes 15-20 per cent revenue growth to ₹375 cr in FY24

Specialty chemicals company Zydex Group is eyeing 15-20 Rs 375 crore from all its verticals including road, textile, agro, water proofing and paints in 2023-24 compared to previ-

Talking to PTI, Chairman and Managing Director Zydex Group Ajay Ranka said,"We are expecting 15 to 20 per cent revenue growth in all business verticals during 2023-24 compared to 2022-23."

He said the company gets 35 per cent revenue from road vertical, 35 per cent from textiles, 10-12 per cent agro, 14-15 per cent from waterproofing and 3-4 cent from paints busi-

About the staggering impact of the pandemic (which hit in March 2020) on the businesses, Ranka said though market sentiments have improved, the textile sector is doing poor



sectors are however growing post pandemic. "Organic growth of the com-

pany is expected in the next two years beyond which inorganic growth will be looked into, once business verticals stabilize and justify global expansion," he said.

About high dependency on chemical fertilizers, he said Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana have high dependency on chemical fertilizers usage and need immediate attention to ensure farm soil sustainability in terms of soil fertility. Zydex's bio-farming solutions

have enabled farmers to increase their yields by 15-50 per cent, reduce irrigation by 20 -30 per cent, decrease the use cent and pesticides by 20-40 per cent, he added.

Zydex has also introduced a chemical-free farming project for farm revival (Prakalp Sanjivani). Zydex Industries is the world's first company to produce bio-products that help armers switch from chemical farming to organic farming in one crop cycle that too with increase in profits, he added. About the paint vertical, he said that interior and exterior mineral paints from Zydex are made by using only finest natural earth pigments, which offer a service life of over 15 vears without fading or peeling. With over 200 products, Zydex offers textile solutions that minimize water consumption and move towards a 'zero liquid discharge' goal, he

Invests ₹6,080 cr in debt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F^{\text{oreign Portfolio Investors}}_{\text{(FPIs) have pulled out over}}$ Rs 20,300 crore from Indian equities this month so far, primarily due to a sharp surge in the US treasury yield, and the uncertain environment resulting from the Israel-Hamas conflict.

However, the story takes an intriguing turn on observing FPI activity in Indian debt as they have infused Rs 6,080 crore into the debt market during the period under review, data with the depositories showed.

Going ahead, the future of FPI flows hinges on several factors, including the US Federal Reserve's November 2 meeting



partner at Craving Alpha, said. In the short term, FPIs are expected to remain cautious amid global uncertainty and increasing US interest rates. Nonetheless, India's strong economic growth prospects should maintain its appeal for foreign investors in both equities and debt, he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) sold shares to the tune of Rs 20,356 crore this month (till October 27). This outflow figure might get

broadened as there are two trading sessions left in this

This came after Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) turned net sellers in September and pulled out Rs 14,767 crore. Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and bought equities worth Rs 1.74 lakh crore during the period.

"Sharp surge in the US treasury yield during the week was the primary reason for FPIs pulling out of the Indian equity markets

'The yield on 10-year US trea-

sury bonds crossed the psychological barrier of 5 per cent on Monday for the first time in 16 years," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director

over 7,00,000 square metre of

leases sealed during the quar-

Manager Research, Morningstar Investment

This made investors shift their focus away from emerging markets like India and focus on the safer investment avenues like the US Treasuries, where the risk-reward was

more favourable, he added. Further, the Israel-Hamas conflict in West Asia and the uncertainty surrounding the conflict has added to negative sentiments in the market, V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial

Services, said.

"Global uncertainty has tripled, with recessionary and inflationary pressures being coupled with the geo-political conflict breaking out in the first week of the month," Barat Dhawan, Managing Partner, Mazars, said.

Further, cautiousness prevails as the September quarter earnings growth is expected to be slower than in the previous quarter, possibly disappointing investors, smallcase's Mehraa.

In the current scenario, experts believe that there could be an enhanced focus on safe-US dollars.

Explaining reasons for the huge inflow in the debt market, Geojit's Vijayakumar said this could be attributed to a host of factors such as FPIs are diversifying their investment amidst global uncertainty and weakness in the global economy, Indian bonds are giving good yields and Rupee is expected to be stable given

India's stable macros. Another factor is the inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Global Bond Index, Abhishek Banerjee, Founder & CEO, Lotusdew Wealth & Investment Advisors,

With this, the total investment by FPIs in equity has reached Rs 1 lakh crore and over Rs 35,200 crore in the debt market this year so far.

Australian Opposition leader to attend 4-day summit in India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

ustralia's Opposition ALeader and former Defence Minister, Peter Dutton is visiting India with 20 top Industrialists this week to participate in 4-day Economic Trade Delegation Summit starting November 1. Organised by the India-Australia Strategic Alliance led by its Chairman, Dr Jagvinder Singh Virk to promote strategic trade between India and Australia, is being held on an invitation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Peter Dutton. The purpose of the visit is to establish a Strategic Trade Alliance for mutual investments between India and Australia. This landmark event, the Economic Trade Delegation Summit, is scheduled to take place from



November 1-4, 2023.

The primary focus of this trade delegation, led by Virk and Dutton, is to forge successful trade and business alliances following the Free Trade Agreement signed by the Indian and Australian Governments in year 2022. The overarching theme of this year's Economic Trade Delegation is "Driving Businesses to the Next Effective Levels" in an increasingly interconnected Global Economy often

referred to as 'The Global Village.' The summit seeks to drive growth and productivity in various industries, including Education, Space, Agriculture, Information Technology, Health Care, Financial Technology, Rural Development, Defence, and Renewable Energy.

With India's large population and diverse demographics, social enterprises play a cru-cial role in advancing business outcomes. These enterprises balance profitability with social impact, making them integral to the success of global partnerships. The summit aims to shed light on the path that business leaders and social entrepreneurs follow and emphasize the role of business mentorship, funding assistance, and market understanding in facilitating the success of international col-

Technology to pinpoint mobile locations with 1 m radius accuracy displayed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

A new technology that can pinpoint mobile phone location with an accuracy of a onemetre radius and has the potential to track illegal mobile devices in prisons was displayed at the defence and security exhibition Milipol India 2023.

It has been developed by the security and communication technology major Shyam VNL. The technology can be deployed in prisons and has the ability to block all mobile communications within a periphery, identify mobile devices with precision, and pinpoint the location of mobile devices with an accuracy of one metre, the company

"Criminals and gangsters have

increasingly employed mobile phones to orchestrate illegal activities within the confines of correctional facilities. Notably, several recent high-profile criminal operations have been traced back to mobile network coverage inside prisons and the use of illegal mobile devices," it said. The company claimed to have developed the technology which does away with dependence on telecom service providers, putting control in the hands of authorities to check the menace of criminals using phones in prisons. It said that this multipronged approach promises a comprehensive and effective means of curbing the illicit use of mobile phones in prisons, bolstering security at critical sites, and maintaining order in crowd-

Dhoni now SBI brand ambassador



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

he country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) on Sunday announced its collaboration with cricketing legend Mahendra Singh Dhoni as its official brand ambassador. As the brand ambassador of SBI, Dhoni will play a pivotal role in various marketing and promotional campaigns, the bank said in a statement.

His remarkable capacity to maintain composure in stressful situations and his renowned ability for clear thinking make him the ideal choice, it added.

NHAI awards two highway projects under TOT model for ₹6,584 cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National Highways Authority of India on Sunday said it has awarded two highway projects with a combined length of 400 km under the toll-operate-transfer (TOT) model for Rs 6,584 crore. National Highways Authority

of India (NHAI), in a statement, said the two bundles (11 and 12) consist of Allahabad Bypass on NH19 in Uttar Pradesh and Lalitpur-Sagar-Lakhnadon section in the state of Uttar Pradesh Madhya Pradesh.

According to the statement, the TOT bundle 11 for the 84 km long Allahabad Bypass on NH19 in Uttar Pradesh has been awarded to Cube Highways and Infrastructure Ltd for Rs 2,156 crore

TOT bundle 12 for the 316 km long Lalitpur-Sagar-Lakhnadon section passing through Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh has been awarded to IRB Infrastructure Trust for Rs 4,428 crore, it added. The first round of bids for the

two bundles was called -off and

the bids were re-invited, the statement said, adding that in the second round, NHAI received Rs 553 crore higher bids than in the first round. NHAI Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav said the government has been very supportive and encouraging to achieve the national monetisation

targets. The contract period of TOT is for 20 years in which concessionaires would be required to

maintain and operate the

Boxing champ Fury Narrowly Beats Ngannou in Split Decision

Pormer UFC champion
Francis Ngannou shockingly went the distance in
boxing debut early on Sunday morning, even knocking down reigning WBC heavyweight champion Tyson Fury at one point, but Fury remained undefeated after winning a split decision.

Two judges gave Fury the fight by scores of 96-93 and 95-94, and the other judge favored Ngannou 95-94

Fury remained undefeated at 34-0-1 with 24 knockouts. Ngannou's UFC record was 17-

Fury's championship belt was never on the line in this bout, though it counts as an official fight. Good thing for Fury, because Ngannou showed early in the scheduled 10-round fight that he wasn't going anywhere.

Fury was a prohibitive minus-1,800 favorite, according to FanDuel Sportsbook, though some late money came in on Ngannou.

Fury relied on his jab early and switched to left-handed briefly in the second round when Ngannou made some headway and even opened a cut above Fury's left eye. Then with 43

seconds remaining in the third round, Ngannou sent Fury to the floor with a left hook, the seventh time he has been knocked down in his career. Ngannou staggered Fury early in the fourth, but Fury stayed on his feet and the rest of the round was fairly even after that. Fury appeared to gain control late in the fifth round and carried it over into the sixth, but Ngannou showed in the seventh he wasn't going anywhere as both boxers traded blows. Ngannou delivered three powerful lefts early in the eighth and then staggered Fury with two strong combinations midway through the round. Fury found himself holding on as Ngannou grabbed the momen-

he pioneer

Fans chanted "Francis! Francis!" early in the 10th round, and just the fact the fight went the distance was an upset in itself. Recording artists Kanye West and Eminem also attended, as did soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo, UFC headliner Conor McGregor and current and former boxing greats such as Sugar Ray Leonard and Manny Pacquiao.

Taking on this fight is the latest venture for the 35-year-old Brit, who has appeared in the WWE and been the focal point



money, a reported USD 50 million, to open the country's entertainment festival called Riyadh Season, also likely piqued his interest.

The host country did its part in making Fury-Ngannou a stand-alone event. That fight was inside 26,000-seat Kingdom Arena, and the pre-

liminary bouts were in a nearby outside venue constructed for this night.

Recording artists Lil Baby and Becky G performed in the main arena before both boxers entered. Then each fighter took his place on a throne wearing

robes fit for a king.
If Fury figured to be in his element in a boxing ring, this was

definitely a move out of the comfort zone for Ngannou, the Cameroon native, Las Vegas resident and former UFC heavyweight champion more accustomed to fighting in an octagon cage. Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, who also made the trip to Saudi Arabia, helped Ngannou get ready for his boxing debut.

South Africa hold on to beat New Zealand 12-11

This not only was his first boxing match, but Ngannou hasn't competed at all since beating Ciryl Gane in UFC 270 in January 2022.

Ngannou, 37, had a falling out with the UFC earlier this year. UFC President Dana White stripped him of his belt in January, and in May, Ngannou January, and in May, Ngannou with the rivel signed with the rival Professional Fighters League. His first fight for the PFL is expected to take place early

Fury has the chance to unify the heavyweight division. He has agreed to fight Oleksandr Usyk, a Ukrainian who is in possession of the other three championship belts, on December 23 in Saudi Arabia. In the co-feature between to undefeated British heavyweights, Fabio Wardley knocked down David Adeleye with a right-left combination in the final minute of the seventh round, then finished him off at 2:43 when referee John Latham stopped the fight. Adeleye then shoved Latham, which could draw a suspension.

Wardley, 28, improved to 17-0 with 16 knockouts, and he owns the British, Commonwealth Boxing and WBO European heavyweight championships.

Vaishali downs former world champion **Mariya Muzychuk**

PTI ■ ISLE OF MAN (UK)

Tndia's R Vaishali crashed through the defenses of former world champion Mariya Muzychuk of Ukraine to move to 3.5 points after the fourth round of FIDE women's Grand Swiss, a part of the World

Championship cycle. Vaishali, the sister of the more famous R Praggnanandhaa, had made her third and final Grandmaster norm at the justconcluded Qatar Masters and it was clear that she was ready for the bigger challenges.

On Saturday, the Chennai-based player delivered her best with yet another scintillating performance, thanks to her brilliant attacking skills.

The Sicilian defense by Vaishali was met with the Rossolimo Sicilian but she had some opening ideas that caught Muzychuk off guard, the resulting position was quite complicated but when it comes to calculating the deepest secret out of any position Vaishali has shown that she is the one to be relied upon.

Muzychuk did not stand any chance as she first lost a piece and subsequently walked in to checkmate web. Amazingly it took just 23 moves for Vaishali to seal her third victory in four games.

In the open section, Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi slipped from what looked like



a cruise and was held to a draw by Alexandr Predke of Serbia. Arjuni looked in command and if the analysis engines were anything to go by, he should have converted another full point that would have taken him to 3.5 points.

However, as it happened Predke found some magical trick that helped him salvage a draw through perpetual checks after sacrificing his queen. Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi, meanwhile, continued on his

winning ways and recorded his third win in a row at the expense of former world championship challenger Alexey Shirov of Spain.

Vidit displayed his immaculate technique again with white pieces in a Slav defense game and won two Bishops for a rook. Shirov had no chance thereafter and called it a day



Bobrov eases past Chappell to emerge champion in ITF Davangere Open

PTI ■ DAVANGERE

Second seed Bogdan Bobrov defeated top seed Nick Chappell of USA to emerge champion in the ITF Davangere Open here on Sunday. Bobrov won 6-3, 7-6 (4) to bag the sixth ITF title USD 2160 and 15 ATP points while Chappell settled for USD 1272 at the Davangere Tennis Association Courts. Bobrov, who had lost in the semifinals of the ITF event at Dharwad, demonstrated consistency and a powerful pres-

ence on the court. His ability to control the pace of the game, deliver precise shots and maintain composure in critical moments proved to be deci-

sive on the day. The match began with Bobrov breaking his oppo-

nent's serve in the very first game to wrest the initiative and take a 2-0 lead.

After both the players held their respective serves for the next six games, Bobrov once again achieved a break in the ninth game to win the first set 6-3.

a 3-1 lead in the second set, thanks to a couple of fine passing shots and a few unforced errors by Chappell. However, the left-handed Chappell made a superb comeback, playing some aggressive tennis and levelled the score at 3-3.

With both the players holding their respective serves, the second set went into a tiebreaker where Bobrav prevailed 7-4. Results: Singles (Final): 2-Bogdan Bobrov beat 1-Nick Chappell (USA) 6-3, 7-6 (4).

and win historic fourth Rugby World Cup title **AP** PARIS

 $D_{\text{Africa kicked its way to a}}^{\text{efending champion South}}$ record fourth Rugby World Cup title by beating New Zealand 12-11 after All Blacks captain Sam Cane was the first player to be red-carded in a

Flyhalf Handre Pollard on Saturday scored all the points for a Springboks side which repeated its 1995 success over New Zealand and denied the All Blacks their own chance to win a fourth title in their record fifth

Captain Siya Kolisi held the Webb Ellis Cup aloft, kissed his right sweatband, raised the trophy even higher and roared a victory cry loud enough to rattle windows in Johannesburg, Cape Town and everywhere

"People who are not from South Africa don't understand what it means for our country. It is not just about the game. Our country goes through such a lot,"

"I want to tell the people of South Africa, Thank you so much'. This team just shows what you can do.

As South Africa's players celebrated with laps of honor and prop Trevor Nyakane danced, Kolisi broke off and climbed up the stadium stairs. He headed to see a special friend high up in the stands - tennis great Roger



Federer, whose mother is South African. Federer clenched his fist in celebration as he leaned over to celebrate with Kolisi.

Cane was issued the red card for Kriel. Three other players were sin-binned - two Springboks and one All Black - in a chaotic match.

"I'd like to say well done to South Africa," Cane said. "Back-to-back (champions),

they have been a fantastic team. Fullback Beauden Barrett scored the only try of the game in the left corner, setting up a tense last 20 minutes.

He became the first player to score in two World Cup finals and scored the first try conceded by South Africa in a final. But flyhalf Richie Mo'unga's touchline conversion attempt went wide and ultimately preserved the winning margin.

deliberate knock on. Center Jordie Barrett took the penalty shot from nearly 50 meters wide of the right post but it sailed wide with Kolbe holding his head in his hands, unable to

"It was a real arm wrestle," New Zealand coach Ian Foster said 'Incredibly proud of the way we fought and to get within a whisker of pulling it off is heartbreaking."

Cane was sin-binned but referee Wayne Barnes pulled out the dreaded red after the punishment was upgraded late in the first half following a bunker

The All Blacks had already had Both sides finished with 14 a yellow card after three minutes players as left winger Cheslin to flanker Shannon Frizell. was sin-binned early in the second half, for another high tackle, evening the numbers with the score 12-6 to South Africa. Saturday's 106th showdown

between the gigantic rivals was played on a wet field and pitted the two top-ranked sides. Federer, wearing a South Africa scarf, and fellow tennis great

Novak Djokovic were among the crowd of 80,065 who witnessed a gripping but scrappy

New Zealand scrumhalf Aaron Smith dived over in the left corner early in the second half but

the try was ruled out. Mo'unga made a great break from midfield, dummied inside fullback Damian Willemse and fed Smith to dive over. But yet another TMO decision ruled out the try for a knock on in the

Kolisi's card was not upgraded and he came back on moments later with 25 minutes left to play. New Zealand was on top and a brilliant improvised one-handed looping pass from Jordie Barrett found wing Mark Tele'a, and he slipped two tackles before feeding Beauden Barrett

in the left corner. It gave New Zealand hope, but in the end Kolisi became only the second skipper to lead a team to back-to-back World Cup victories after New Zealand great Richie McCaw.

"There are no ways I can explain Blacks. They took us to the end, they took us to a dark place,' Kolisi said. "It shows what kind of team they

are, to fight with a man down from early in the game. They put us under so much pressure.' When Barnes blew the final whistle, a tearful Kolbe looked up in relief, Kolisi put his hands

on his head in jubilant disbelief, then hugged Kolbe while Cane was sat staring ahead in despair. South Africa coach Jacques Nienaber also looked tearful as his staff grabbed him in celebra-

Jose Ellickal, **Trupti Chavan** emerge winners in Kochi Spice

Coast Marathon

Local long distance runner Jose Ellickal and Trupti Katkar Chavan of Maharashtra won the men's and women's titles respectively at the Ageas Federal Life Insurance Kochi Spice Coast Marathon 2023

here on Sunday. Wayanad's Jose planned his run brilliantly, taking th men's category early in the race and comfortably staving off all challengers to wehin in

03:02:55s. Benson CB (03:05:34s) and Sujith TR (03:14:33s) finished second and third respectively. In the women's full marathon, Maharashtra's Chavan cantered to victory, waging a lone

battle against the clock. She clocked 04:31:55s. Shyma IK (05:02:09s) and

Shinomol Palathana (05:09:33s) finished second and third respectively. "I commend the organisers

and sponsors for taking this initiative. This is easily the most scenic marathon and I am proud to be associated with it. It's amazing that close to 7,000 runners across age-groups are taking part in the event with the determination to Run Ageless, Run Fearless," cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, the brand ambassador of the Ageas Federal Life Insurance, said while flagging off the event. The half-marathons were closer affairs, with Sajith KM (01:21:49s) winning the men's title and Rema AK (02:01:25s)

Juventus Claims a top spot after 3 Years with 1-0 Victory Over Verona

 $E_{\text{atop Serie A for the first time}}^{\text{mbattled Juventus is back}}$ in more than three years.

Substitute Andrea Cambiaso scored seven minutes into stoppage time for his first goal with Juventus to earn the record 36time Italian champion a 1-0 win over visiting Hellas Verona on

Having controlled throughout,

Juventus finally found the target when Cambiaso knocked the ball in from close range after an effort from Arkadiusz Milik hit the post.

Juventus, which won nine straight titles between 2012 and 2020, was last in first place on Aug. 1, 2020 - 1,183 days ago and a run of nearly 125 matches - under Maurizio Sarri.

"These are three important points that add continuity after



the game in Milan," Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said, referring to a 1-0 win at Milan last weekend.

The top of the standings could change on Sunday, however, when both Milan clubs have a chance to move back ahead of

Inter Milan, which is one point behind Juventus, hosts Roma and former Nerazzurri striker Romelu Lukaku. AC Milan, which is two points back, visits defending champion Napoli. but Moise Kean had two goals waved off following VAR Juventus was penalised 10 points for false accounting last season and has had midfielders Nicolò Fagioli and Paul Pogba banned for betting and doping, respectively, this season.

Juventus was also banned by UEFA from the Conference League this season due to the false accounting scandal.

reviews - the first for offside and the second for a foul by the Bianconeri striker.

Besides Kean's efforts, Juventus substitute Federico Chiesa had a dangerous shot tipped over the bar by Verona goalkeeper Lorenzo Montipò and then Verona captain Davide Faraoni cleared another shot from Chiesa off the line.

MILINKOVIC-SAVIC'S

Seventh-place Bologna drew 1-1 at Sassuolo in a regional derby as Joshua Zirkzee and Daniel Boloca traded goals. Bologna has drawn all five of its away matches.

first-half goal from Alessandro Buongiorno as goalkeeper Milinkovic-Savic made six saves for a fifth clean sheet.

Torino won 1-0 at Lecce with a

STONES VS BEATLES

emerging winner in the

women's category.

Rock legend Mick Jagger attended the game at Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium to see Barcelona's players wear special jerseys featuring the Rolling Stones' iconic "hot lips" logo in place of the club's normal shirt sponsor.Madrid had a bit of fun with the alliance between the Stones and Barcelona after the game. It posted an image of Bellingham with the message "The Beatles were always my

"Bellingham's Debut 'Clásico' Winner: Real Madrid 2-1 Barcelona" **AP** ■ BARCELONA stripped the ball from Toni do something great," Bellingham then Bellingham knew where to Hernández put it: "Bellingham be in the final moments: in the is a great player, but he is also in "I've done that and I'm very heart of the box to poach the a state of grace.' happy." Bellingham continued winner when a deflected cross Madrid remained top of the his superb scoring form since joining Madrid this summer fell his way. league, level on points with sec-"I don't know how to explain And neither will Barcelona. ond-place Girona. Barcelona is Already a fan favourite at Madrid, the young England midfielder established himself as with 13 goals in as many games overall and a Spanish leaguewhat Jude is doing," Luka Modric, who played his 500th in third place at four points back. Atletico Madrid can move ahead leading 10 goals after 11 rounds. of Barcelona with a win over game for Madrid, said about his its undisputed leader after he He has blossomed into a clininew teammate. Alayes on Sunday. scored two goals, including an-

> The rival players and coaches agreed that the sizzling equalis-Barcelona had controlled.

dynamic of the game," Madric

coach Carlo Ancelotti said. Bellingham tapped in the stoppage-time winner when a cross by Dani Carvajal deflected by Luka Modric fell to him in front of the goal.

chasing a ball that Madrid appeared to be certain to control or clear paid off with his first goal for $h\bar{i}s$ new club in the sixth

and almost found it when Gavi

Kroos near Madrid's area and set up Fermín López, whose shot hit the post. Barcelona's Íñigo Martínez

They had 25 good minutes and scored twice, and we had a good 60 minutes and only scored

once," Xavi said. The game between the two Spanish powerhouses featured a

fascinating showdown between the 20-year-old Bellingham and Barcelona's 19-year-old Gavi, a rivalry that promises to contin-

"I had watched many clasicos from the sofa with my family, and I told them that today it was my turn to live it firsthand and

injury time winner, to almost single-handedly lead a 2-1

comeback victory at his team's

fiercest rival on Saturday in the

Spanish league.

Tude Bellingham won't forget his first "clasico" match for Real Madrid.

cal finisher since moving to Spain's capital. In all of last season he had 14 goals for former club Borussia Dortmund in Germany.

Some space well outside the area was enough for Bellingham to blast in a superb equaliser in the 68th minute and cancel out Ilkay Gundogan's opener. And

"He just arrived and is playing

like he has been here a long time... I don't think even he can believe the goals he is scoring." Bellingham was kept in check by Barcelona's Gavi Paéz until he found space well outside the box to unleash a strike that swerved past Marc-Andre ter Stegen and hit the corner of the net.

er changed a game that, until shortly before his strike, "The equaliser changed the

As Barcelona coach Xavi

GAVI VS JUDE Barcelona dictated the first half, and Gundogan's insistence on

minute. Barcelona went for a second goal headed off the post in the 51st and Kepa had to turn away Ronald Araújo's attempt to put in the rebound.

ue for years to come.

favorite band" on X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter. Bellingham's fans have sung Beatles hit "Hey Jude" to praise

the player.

Rohit's remarkable innings shines, ordinary batting effort as India restricted to 229/9

Rohit Sharma produced a special effort on a challenging pitch where the majority of Indian batters struggled, as the hosts were restricted to 229 for nine by England in their World Cup game here on Sunday

With India getting to bat first for the first time in the tournament, the batters got a good opportunity to set the target It was, however, only Rohit (87 off 101) and Suryakumar Yadav (49 off 47) who found a way to bat on a two-paced wicket while the others perished trying to force the pace. The 91-run partnership between Rohit and K L Rahul (39 off 58) stabilised the innings after India found themselves at 40 for three in the 12th over

Rohit also added 33 valuable runs with Suryakumar but the skipper's fall led to a clutch of wickets. In his second game of the competition, Suryakumar then batted around the tail to get some much needed runs in the death overs.

England were finally able to put together an effort worthy of defending champions, excelling both with the ball



and in the field.

Woakes (2/33) impressed in his seven-over spell with the new ball while leggie Adil Rashid (2/35) continued to collect wickets in the

middle overs. David Willey (3/45) too was effective. Application was going to be the key on the relaid red soil pitch here and Rohit put up a

in the first over of the game bowled by Willey, the India skipper released the pressure by smashing the left-arm pacer for a couple of sixes

After consuming six dot balls and a four in his following

Rohit used the feet both against the pacers and spinners to manufacture the boundaries but the likes of

Shreyas Iyer (4 off 16) departed while searching for that pressure release shot.

It was a rare duck for Kohli, who tried to step out like Rohit only to mistime his shot to Ben Stokes at mid-off. Shreyas was sent back by Woakes off a perfectly placed short of length ball that got big on the India number four. Clearly, Shreyas needs to fight the demon in his head to improve his short ball play. Woakes had struggled for accuracy thus far in World Cup but delivered on Sunday. With three batters dismissed for 40, the onus was on Rohit to take the innings forward and he did with a lot of class. After stepping out the fast bowlers, Rohit displayed his artistry against the spin trio of Rashid, Liam Livingstone and Moeen Ali.

He swept Rashid, reverseswept Livingstone and came down the track to loft Moeen over mid-off for three of the 10 fours he struck. His pickup shot off Mark Wood that went all the way was also sub-

In Hardik Pandya's absence, India fielded five bowlers again but R Ashwin remained out of the playing eleven.



Tenacious Sri Lanka take on spirited Afghanistan in must-win WC clash

PTI ■ PUNE

mboldened by back-to-Emboluence of the back wins, a tenacious Sri Lanka will need to guard against complacency when they face a spirited Afghanistan in a battle for survival at the World Cup here on Monday.

With two wins from five matches, both Sri Lanka and Afghanistan have kept alive their outside hopes of making it to the semifinals, provided they don't suffer any hiccups and also other results go their way in the showpiece.

However, only one team can emerge victorious from this contest, dashing the slim chances of the other. After three successive defeats, Sri Lanka have revived some hopes with two convincing victories but they will take Afghanistan lightly at their own peril, knowing well that the Afghans are capa-ble of punching above their

weight. Afghanistan have sent shock waves across the world with wins over England and Pakistan and will look to knock the wind out of the sails of Sri Lanka to continue their success story.

For the Islanders, it was the result of some tight bowling, led by pacer Lahiru Kumara, and fielding that saw them dismantle the defending champions in their last game.

The return of experienced all-rounder Angelo Matthews has helped the bowling unit to ace the will hope to continue the trend.

Sri Lanka have been guilty of conceding too many runs in the past but Lahiru's emergence has offered their bowling a fresh lease of life. He has been their main fast bowling weapon and it helped the Lankans to control the game. Dilshan Madushanka and Kusan Rajitha have taken 11 and 7 wickets so far in the event and will need to produce the goods.

Maheesh Theekshana, however, hasn't really set things on fire with his spin. In batting, Pathum

In batting, Pathum Nissanka and Sadeera Samarawickrama have emerged as two of their best ODI batters this year and the duo scripted a superlative chase to outwit England the other day.

Nissanka, with his fourth consecutive fifty of this tournament, Samarawickrama with his

second, have got the job done for the Lankans. Kusal Mendis too have scored a ton. Afghanistan, on the other hand, are coming into the match after recording their highest successful chase in ODIs with a solid top-order display.

Opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz, with 224 runs, has been their best batter but Ibrahim Zadran, Hashmatullah Shahidi,

Rahmat Shah have also came good in the last match and they will look to carry the confidence against the Lankans.

Azmatullah Omarzai too has a fifty to his name.

If Naveen-ul-Haq and Fazalhaq Farooqi can get the Afghans early wickets then they have the quality in their spin rank with Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi and Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who have proved their worth so far, to take care of the rest.

The wicket at the MCA stadium is likely to be another belter and a 300-plus total should be on the cards. Going by records, Afghanistan have won just thrice in 11 ODIs against Sri Lanka but never in the two meetings in the World Cup. But two of those wins came in June this year and November last year at Hambantota and Pallekele respectively and Afghanistan will draw inspi-

ration from that when they

Squad: Sri Lanka: Kusal Mendis (c), Kusal Perera, Pathum Nissanka, Lahiru Kumara, Dimuth Karunaratne, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Charith Asalanka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Wellalage, Kasun Rajitha, Angelo Mathews, Dilshan Madushanka, Hemantha, Dushan Chamika Karunaratne.

Afghanistan: Hashmatullah Shahidi (c), Rahmanullah Gurbaz (wk), Ibrahim Zadran, Riaz Hassan, Rahmat Shah, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Ikram Alikhil (wk), Azmatullah Omarzai, Rashid Khan, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Noor Áhmad, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Abdul Rahman and Naveen ul

Shakib admits 'worst ever' World **Cup performance**

PTI KOLKATA

 $B^{\text{angladesh skipper Shakib}}_{\text{Al Hasan has admitted that}}$ a chaotic buildup could have resulted in their "worst ever' World Cup campaign after they cut a sorry figure with an 87-run defeat to the Netherlands for their fifth loss on the trot. Chasing a small target of 230

runs, Bangladesh folded inside 43 overs, managing a mere 142 to see their World Cup campaign as good as over.

"You can definitely say that (it's Bangladesh's worst World Cup performance). I won't disagree, Shakib said in the post-match media interaction here on Saturday.

"I don't have an answer as to why sloppy in the field. We bowled brilliantly. We haven't batted the way we can bat throughout the tournament.

"It is a big concern. Today was another day when we totally gave the Dutch the two points. It is hard to swallow. It is very difficult to digest.

Faced with persistent questions from Bangladeshi journalists, Shakib made a candid admission that the team was "underprepared" and his fallout with former captain Tamim Iqbal may have "affected" the side. "It could be," Shakib said when asked if Tamim's exclusion had

"It is not unusual. I don't know what's in everyone's heart. I don't disagree with you. It may have had an effect.'

affected the team

Tamim, the only Bangladeshi batter to have centuries in all the three formats, had made a shock retirement in July only to reverse his decision at the request of the country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

The 34-year-old played the opening two matches before taking a break in the final match of their home series against New Zealand in the build-up to the World Cup. Tamim was dropped from the Shakib-led World Cup squad and their fallout was out in the open when the skipper criticised the senior batter's fitness in a televised interview.

"Everyone has a different thinking. We don't know what's wrong and right. It is difficult for me to say why our performance didn't reflect how we played before. "Yes, we were very underprepared. But now actually giving these excuses will not help much. But obviously, we were underprepared," Shakib said.

'We're not this bad team' Shakib, however, firmly believed that Bangladesh's current performance in the World Cup does not reflect their overall capabil-

"We are not this bad a team. It could be the World Cup or this atmosphere, high expectations. It could be a lot of other things. We must find out, but if we work on it, we might find the answers.

Twenty-four years after they made their World Cup debut, Bangladesh are yet to make the semifinals

When posed with this question, Shakib said: "You might be asking the wrong person. If I were to say, there would be a chance if we made a lot of changes. But I don't think it's the right time to say that now.

"It's definitely disappointing. At country like cricket, the way everyone is focused on cricket, we should have done better than this." He further said their World Cup build-up had not been challenging enough.

"Team gets confidence after winning games regardless of conditions. We lost to England and Afghanistan recently. We won two series against Ireland. We haven't done well in the Asia Cup if you leave aside the India win. We have under performed

in this World Cup too.
"We were here with high expectations. We couldn't meet our expectations, and from there on, I thought we are struggling with our confidence in both departments.

'Deserved to be booed by fans' The loss to the Dutch was especially humiliating for Bangladesh as they found themselves at 'home' at Eden Gardens that witnessed thousands of fans from the neighbouring

Shakib got out for five from 14 balls and as he was walking back to the pavillion, the premier allrounder was booed by the fans. The skipper was also jeered at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Dhaka when he went there for a brief training session with his personal mentor Nazmul Abedeen ahead of their match against the Netherlands.

They actually expect something good. So, naturally, if that doesn't happen, they also have the right to say as they like. So, I don't have any complaints about them. I think the way we played, we deserve this."

Cricket Association (JKCA) Bangladesh have just win against Afghanistan in this edition of the chief, said. "He was originally registered by us in 20-21 as U19 player. He has never played for JKCA. He World Cup. They next face Pakistan here on Tuesday, before re-enrolled himself as a player taking on Sri Lanka and Australia in their last two matchof Bihar Cricket Association. He was registered by BCA as

De Leede demands ICC's attention for "bigger nation" status First, it was Wesley Barresi,

Two upset wins in the ongoing World Cup under belt, minnows Netherlands have now called for ICC's attention for "bigger nation" status, batting all-rounder Bas de Leede has

The Dutch, who are the only Associate Nation in the World Cup, first produced the biggest stunner of the global show-piece, defeating South Africa by 38 runs in Dharamsala.

On Saturday, defending a modest 229, the Dutch bowled out Bangladesh for 142 for yet another upset result, this time by a handsome 87-run mar-

Every win we get is going to be big for us and for cricket in the Netherlands. We want to inspire young kids to take up reporters in the post-match interaction at Eden Gardens

'And we also want to try and get the ICC's attention to start looking at us as a potentially bigger nation in the coming years. So definitely every win

It is, however, unclear whether the Dutchman's demand for a Test status for the country and more exposure will be entertained by the world body.Domestic cricket structure is one of the major critreria in awarding a country Test status and the Dutch cricketers mostly play country

cricket for exposure. Their chances of making the semi-finals, however, appear slim as they have to win all their three remaining matches and hope for favourable results from other teams. The Netherlands, who have

Young cricketer Vanshaj Sharma, a resident of Jammu, has been handed a

two-year ban by the BCCI for

submitting multiple birth cer-

tificates with different dates of

Sharma, who belong's to Jammu's 's Bishnah, had

migrated to Bihar and was

presently playing under the

Cricket Association. He is not

a JKCA player," Brigadier Anil

Gupta, Jammu and Kashmir

state association there. "He is presently with Bihar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

four points from six matches, will next take on Afghanistan in Lucknow on November 3 before facing the struggling defending champions England in Pune on November 8.

They will conclude their campaign against hosts India in Bengaluru on November 12. "It depends how other teams do, how big our chances are for the semi-final. But for us the goal is to keep winning as many games as we can," De Leede said.

"There're a couple of games where we haven't played our best, but then again today we did. And if we can do that again for the next three games, who knows where we will finish. After winning the toss, the

Netherlands mastered the

wasn't the easiest track to bat on. It wasn't easy to score runs. And us having runs on the board, I think it was very clear what we needed to do.

ball strategy.

With the pacers, it being a little bit up and down, spin staying a bit low," De Leede "I don't think it was the easiest pitch to bat. So, yeah, a little bit surprised," he added. He further said they were

conditions perfectly, by first

notching up a respectable

total and then restricting their

opposition with clever short-

"It was a tricky pitch and

clear in their thoughts that the Eden pitch won't produce a 350 total so they had to hang in there despite some early

who made an entertaining 41 of as many balls, to help his team tide over the loss of both the openers early on. Later skipper Scott Edwards top-scored with his second fifty in the tournament to take team total past 200.

"Knowing that on a pitch like this we didn't need to score 350 or something like that and you know the way they soaked up the pressure and then ran hard, tried to limit dots put pressure on Bangladesh by doing that was great to see, said De Leede. "I think it started to turn a lot

more. It was a tough wicket to bat on throughout the day. "We bat very deep, which is one of the qualities we have as a team. Aryan Dutt coming in at number 10, who can still hit the ball miles. So, it's been one of the qualities of the middle order, and also rotating strike against spin.

They've helped us get out of some tricky situations a lot. But it's probably disappointing from the top-order point of view that we haven't gotten ourselves off to a good start yet again. So that's something we're trying to fix, but very proud of our middle order and the way we've played so far," he said.

De Leede took the prized-scalps of Mahmudullah and Mehidy Hasan Miraz using the short-ball strategy against the Bangladesh batters.

Yeah, we look at it per player. We try and analyse the players -- for example (Najmul) Shanto is great on the short ball so we try and keep it away from him but to other players we try and use it and take wickets with it," he

J&K cricketer handed two-year ban for submitting multiple birth certificates



U-23 player with a different DOB (date of birth). He has been caught by BCCI and banned for submitting multiple DOB certificates.

In a release, JKCA said that Sharma has been banned from participating in all BCCI tournaments for a period of two years effective from October

...After completing the twoyear ban, the player can only participate in the Senior Men's Tournament conducted by the BCCl and will not be allowed to play in any age group tournaments of the cricket board."

Sharma had migrated to Bihar and applied from there as a member of the U-23 men's

..Since he was first registered by the JKCA in 2021-22, his data was available with the BCCI and despite him having changed the Association, he was caught submitting multiple birth certificates," the release

"JKCA has been informing from time to time that the players should not resort to such acts as the punishment given by the BCCl adversely affects the career of the player."

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