OPINION 6

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AGAINST INDIA, US

WORLD 9

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MONEY 10

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LIVERPOOL BEAT WEST HAM 3-1 IN PL 11 SPORT

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YOGI FLAGS OFF RACE TO 2024

RUSSIAN AIRSTRIKES KILL 2, HURTS DGTR LAUNCHES SUO-MOTU PROBE INTO

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA NOIDA/NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said the State has been fasttracked in terms of holistic development, including infrastructure and economy, turning it into a huge land of opportu-

Yogi said investment opportunities have multiplied in the State due to several reforms effected in recent years such as ease of doing business and improvement in law and order.

Speaking passionately about the State's commitment to promoting sports and with a focus on the youth population, Yogi said Uttar Pradesh currently has a population of 25 crore, with a significant portion falling within the working-age group. He also highlighted that, in

collaboration with the Central Government, the State is actively working on developing sports facilities at various levels, from the gram to block/panchayat level to the district and State levels.

Yogi reminded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday laid the foundation for an international cricket stadium in 'India's cultural and spiritual capital' Varanasi.

By hosting such a largescale international event soon after the successful G20 Summit followed by a trade fair in UP, Yogi has in way demonstrated that he is unwavering in exploring and capitalising on opportunities buoyed by the visionary support of the ruling party at the

The Chief Minister said the UP Government is working with the Centre to develop sports facilities like stadiums and mini-stadiums in every district of the State

There are 58,000 gram panchayats in the State and open gyms are being developed where women and youngsters feel encouraged to pursue sporting avenues and our administration is encouraging every single talent," the Chief Minister said to a huge round of applause from the large gathering in at the Grand Prix venue Budh International Circuit.

The Chief Minister was in the Gautam Budh Nagar district on Sunday to inaugurate the MotoGP event in Greater Noida. This marked his second visit to the area in less than a week, the previous one being when he accompanied President Draupadi Murmu to the trade fair.

In the run up to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and to counter the competition from the Opposition bloc INDIA, the BJP Government in the State is giving an impetus to the infrastructure growth across the State.

Yogi heading the most populous State with 80 Lok Sabha seats is a key BJP leader in securing the prospects of the party in the Parliamentary polls

Ýogi, dubbed as "bulldozer baba" has meticulously pro-



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur during the MotoGP Grand Prix of India at the Buddh International Circuit, Greater Noida, on

jected himself as a tough administrator acting in real time against criminals and gangster on the one hand and pushing mega infrastructure projects to

make Uttar Pradesh a USD 1 trillion economy.

Sources in the Government said Yogi is personally monitor-

immense potential and significance due to its proximity to the national Capital. Additionally, another inter-

ing the developmental progress of the region, which holds

national airport is slated to be built in Greater Noida.

Christoph Schnellman, the

CEO of Yamuna International Airport Private Limited, a subsidiary of Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG which is developing the Noida International Airport, said he was overwhelmed by the size and the diversity of the

"I think it's a real testament to the dynamism and the vibrancy of the economy in UP," Schnellman said.

He said he is now convinced that the Noida International Airport will make "a big, big difference" and will contribute massively to the further growth and development of were also in attendance. Yogi this economy across the entire broad cross-section. "We feel very much at home

and a part of this economic growth in the state of UP," he added. Giving the clarion call to the business community to invest in

the State, Yogi said, "Uttar Pradesh is a State of opportunities. There is good infrastructure in terms of connectivity via rail, road, and waterways. There is a good opportunity in logistics as well and junction of two key freight corridors the Eastern and the Western Freight Corridors too falls at this junction." Early in February 2023, the

Yogi Government organised its first global investor summit in Lucknow, with more than a dozen countries, including the UK, Italy, Australia, Japan, Singapore, Denmark, the Netherlands, the UAE, and Mauritius participating as partner countries.

During this event, the State received investment proposals worth ₹36 lakh crore.

"Uttar Pradesh has taken great strides in the field of technology which resulted in investments coming into the State and it is being monitored through the 'Nivesh Mitr' por-

tal," Yogi said. Several major domestic and multinational companies have participated in the conclave where State's MSME Minister Rakesh Sachan and Industrial, and Exports Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta

took the occasion to offer lucra-tive schemes to the global automobile industry.
As per the details, more

than 275 national and international brands are associated with the MotoGP event which included BMW, Tissot, Michelin, RedBull, Shell, DHL, Oakley, Amazon, Petronas, etc. The race is the first major

India since Formula 1's Indian Grand Prix in 2013, and it is expected to attract a large crowd The MotoGP statement comes amid reports that several riders, including six-time MotoGP champion Marc

motorsport event to be held in

Marquez, and team members, had been struggling to obtain visas for India. In coordination with the UP Government, the Centre and the MEA, the issue was sorted out last week after direct intervention of the Chief

Minister and meeting with the Prime Minister in this regard. The ongoing Uttar Pradesh's first-ever International Trade Show inaugurated by Murmu at the India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida on September 21 in presence of

Yogi has attracted Airport developers and multinational firms. More than 70,000 businessto-business buyers from 70 countries have registered for the trade show, and over 2,000 exhibitors have put up stalls at the ITS which has witnessed

thousands of visitors.

India roars in China

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

In a rollicking start, Indian athletes won a total of five medals, three silver and two bronze on the opening day of the Hangzhou Asian Games on Sunday. Rowers powered their

On a pleasant morning with the conditions just perfect for rowing at the Fuyang Water Sports Centre, Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh opened the country's account with a silver medal in the men's lightweight doubles sculls event.

The Indian duo clocked 6:28.18s to finish behind China's Junjie Fan and Man Sun, who won gold with 6:23.16s.

Indian shooters also made an impressive start to their Asian Games campaign with the experienced trio of Mehuli Ghosh, Ramita Jindal and Ashi Chouksey's bagged the women's team silver while Ramita also clinched an individual bronze in

the 10m air rifle event The Indian men's coxedeight team comprised Neeraj, Nareskh Kalwaniya, Neetish Kumar, Charanjeet Singh, Jaswinder Singh, Bheem Singh,

Puneet Kumar and Ashish. Indonesia, who clocked a



Neeraj, Naresh Kalwaniya, Neetish Kumar, Charanjeet Singh, Jaswinder Singh, Bheem Singh, Punit Kumar and Ashish celebrate at the podium after winning silver medal in Men's Coxed Eight event at the 19th Asian Games, in Hangzhou, China, on Sunday

time of 5:45.51s were third. The achievement is all the

more creditable given that rowers from powerhouse Uzbekistan and Japan finished fourth and fifth respectively.

In the coxless pair event, India Babulal Yadav and Lekh Ram had to settle for a bronze

with a time of 6:50.41 sec. behind gold medallists Hong Kong, China (6:44.20 sec) and Uzbekistan 6:48.11.

Arvind said they were aiming for gold but an injury setback two months back had hampered

his training. "We missed training for 20

to 25 days as I was having lower-back pain two months back. Our aim was to win gold but because of my injury, I wasn't able to push myself as much. Even during the trials, I was battling this injury," said Arvind. "I went to Hyderabad to get treatment and the physio there real-

ly worked on getting me back in good shape. I resumed practice and only because of that have I been able to win this silver medal," he added. "We will now work for the Paris Olympics and then try to win gold at the 2026 Asian Ġames."

His team-mate they had gold medal on their mind. "Gold was the target but we did our best. Our coach told us to just do our best. We could not do our (personal) best of 6:19, which we did at our Army nodal centre in Pune," said

Arjun. On the reason they fell back after taking a sizeable lead around the 500m mark, Arjun said, "We pushed hard and did our best today." Arjun and Arvind have been training together for the last four years and it sowed in the fine coordination the pair forged on

Sunday 'We had been training for this (event) continuously for the past four years. We had made it to the semifinals of the Tokyo Olympics in 2021," said Arjun, crediting the triumph to Rowing Federation of India and the Sports Authority of India, who have provided them with regular training camps and international exposure.



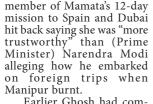
Devotees immerse a Lord Ganesha idol at the Pattinapakkam beach during Ganesh festival in Chennai

TMC, BJP trade barbs over Mamata trip Pulse price

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

KOLKATA Averbal brawl ensued between the ruling Trinamool Congress and the Bengal Opposition parties, including the BJP and the Left, after Mamata Banerjee upon her arrival from an official trip of Spain and Dubai claimed that this was the "most successful trip" in terms of State's business interest during her tenure as Chief Minister.

Hours after Mamata's assertion of her unprecedentedly successful foreign sojourn, Bengal Opposition leader Suvendu Adhikari accused the TMC with "hobnobbing with corruption (read corrupt people)" inviting an immediate backlash from the Bengal ruling outfit. TMC spokesperson and a



Earlier Ghosh had compared the Prime Minister ... let me tell you the differ-



Adhikari had earlier written on the X (earlier Twitter) that "Those who have tried to make an attempt to draw a parallel between Prime Minister ... Narendra Modi's foreign trips with ... Mamata Banerjee's foreign vacation ence ... his strategic trips was aimed 'to enhance the glory of the country' in the world but the other trip of the Chief Minister was tinged with corruption.

Contrasting the Prime Minister's success in the G20 Summit post which India was being regarded as Viswa Mitra (friend of the world), Adhikari said, Mamata's success was limited to her hobnobling with the "G420 Group" (apparently the INDIA alliance).

Former BJP State president Dilip Ghosh too attacked

Mamata for claiming success saying, "In the past too she had made foreign trips ...but what was the result ... a big zero ... let us see what comes this time round."

Hitting back, TMC spokesperson Ghosh said how the Prime Minister toured

the world when Manipur was burning.

He said, "PM Narendra Modi embarked on foreign trips when Manipur was burning. He jetted out to the United States. France and UAE but didn't bother to visit Manipur even once. Spare us the charade! We all know which leader is trustworthy and who is not!"

Taking a jibe at Adhikari for dropping the word "corruption," TMC leader Bratya Basu said "look who is talking about corruption... the man who was seen accepting cash in the Narada scam... the man whose name figures in FIRs is today lecturing

others on corruption". The Left on the other hand stuck to Mamata's foreign trip asking her to make public the details of her meetings and the number of proposals of investments that

she had received. "Every year she hosts mega business summits attended by a galaxy of businessmen but nothing comes up after that ... this time also there will be nothing because she has been identified with among the investors as a person who drives away industries like the one she did at Singur and Nandigram ...

People have not forgotten how she used dynamites to blast off the massive shed at Tata Motors... how she thwarted the attempts to make a chemical hub at Nandigram by inciting a false movement ... all to come to ower ... and this is the same BJP that allied with her and shared the dais with her then, CPI(M) Central said Committee member Sujan Chakrabarty.

may shoot up

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The prices of pulses could shoot up further due to the ongoing stand-off between Canada and India and it may affect the availability and price of masur (red lentil) in the coming

Prices of masur can see a rise if the supply chain is disturbed as India is a major buyer from Canada.

The rise in prices would add to the inflationary pressure on the economy as output in the country is expected to be hit by lower acreage

because of poor rainfall. As per the data released the Ministry of

Agriculture, area under pulses declined 5 per cent to 122.57 Lakh Hectare (LH) from 128.49 LH in the yearago period. Dal traders are also wor-

ried a lot due to the India-Canada tussle despite no retaliatory action was announced on trade sector.

Masur at present is the second cheapest pulse after chana. On an average, masur daal is now retailing in various parts of the country between ₹91-95/kilogram. Chana daal is cheapest at around ₹75-80/kilogram.

Mong and tur daal are on the higher side, retailing between ₹110 and ₹150 /kilogram respectively.

CM inaugurates International Kullu Dussehra Festival's curtain raiser, releases brochure

Participants of 19 countries to perform during weeklong festival commencing on Oct 24

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Sunday inaugurated the curtain raiser and releases a brochure for the upcoming International Kullu Dussehra Festival, marking a significant step in the promotion of tourism in the region. The weeklong festival will be celebrated from October 24 to 30, 2023.

Sukhu, presiding over a meeting of the state-level Kullu Dussehra Committee, also directed the authorities to undertake the repair and restoration work on Mandi-Manali national highway on a war footing to ensure uninterrupted connectivity to the region during the event.

The Chief Minister said that this monsoon season has impacted the tourism sector severely, particularly in Kullu district. However, he com-District mended the Administration, all the departments, and other agencies and people for their remarkable recovery and resilience efforts during the disaster. "Himachal Pradesh is fully prepared to

HUKAM CHAND R/O #1865, st

no.6. near marout road, ashok

nagar karnal declare that my son

Dimple and his wife Anju Rani are

out of my control. So I disown

both of them from all my movable

Anybody dealing with them on

Nirmal Chand R/O Village and P.O

Dhurkara, Tehsil and Distt Ambala

declares that my son Jagtar is out

of my control. So I disown him

from my movable and immovable

properties. Anybody deals with

Singh and Raj Kumari, W/o

Chuhar Singh, R/o village

Bhusthala, Tehsil Pehowa, District

Kurukshetra, have disown our

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I, Daljinder Kaur w/o

Harmanjit Singh Sandhu r/o Vill

Kot Jograj PO Kala Bala Distt

Gurdaspur declare that in my

Passport No L7491827, my

husband name is wrongly written

as Harmanjit Singh without his

Surname Sandhu. His name

should be added as spouse name

HARMANJIT SINGH SANDHU

No 14651797A Rank Nk Vikas

Kumar R/o 734 TPT WKSP COY

EME C/o 56 APO Pin 906734

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स्वर्गीय घनूश्याम दास निवासी वार्ड

नंबर 9 . रतिया.तहसील रतिया जिला

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लड़का मेरी चल, अचल सम्पत्ति का

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Gurmit Singh Sidhu S/o

I, Shuvinder Singh Balu

Gurdev Singh R/o Jaitu (Faridkot)

have changed my name to Gurmit

S/O Bahadur Singh R/O # 14,

Street No. 22, Anand Nagar -B

Patiala Have Changed My Name

Balieet Singh R/o Vill-Kothe

Dashmesh Nagar Po Kotbhai

Teh-Giddarbaha Distt. Sri muktsa

sahib have changed to my name

Kumar Vill Bhadson ,Indri,Karnal

Have Changed My Name

I, Paramjit Kaur W/o Suresh

I. Harinder Kaur Maan D/o

To Shuvinder Singh

Harinder Kaur.

Pramjeet Kaur

मालिक होगा।

बेदखली वापिस: मैं रानी पत्नी

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I, Amita Devi W/o Service

All note.

We, Chuhar Singh, S/o Latur

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I, Gurmeet Singh S/O

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immovable



with the upcoming Kullu Dussehra celebration serving as a significant milestone in this regard," he said.

Highlighting the significance of Kullu Dussehra in boosting tourism and fostering cultural exchange, the Chief Minister said that this year's International Kullu Dussehra Festival was all set to be a truly global event. The celebration will feature cultural groups from different states, along with participants from 19 countries, including Russia, Israel, Romania, Kazakhstan, Croatia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, Panama, Iran,

Maldives, Malaysia, Kenya, South Sudan, Zambia, Ghana, and Ethiopia, adding a diverse and international flair to the

The festival will feature a cultural parade on October 25 and the Kullu Carnival on October 30. Additionally, 13 departments will set up exhibitions in Pagoda tents, showcasing the region's rich heritage," said the Chief Minister, while issuing instructions for the implementation of adequate security measures to ensure the safety of all participants and attendees.

He stressed the importance of promoting traditional sports and local folk artists during the festival to preserve cultural traditions as well.

The Chief Minister said that the fairs and festivals play important role in preserving and celebrating the state's rich cultural heritage. He reiterated the Government's commitment to conserve these cultural treasures, with Kullu Dussehra being a global symbol of religious beliefs and cultural values.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister virtually inaugurated several development projects, worth Rs 12 crore, for Kullu assembly constituency, including four-storey multipurpose

Commissioner Office in Kullu constructed at a cost of Rs 5.49 crore. This impressive structure not only features two conference halls but also provides various rooms and parking facilities.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated the Indoor Badminton Hall in Dhalpur, Rs three crore project set to become a sports hub for enthusiasts and budding athletes and dedicated a Women Police Station in Kullu, constructed at a cost of Rs 3.51 crore as well.

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declare that the entries made by me in the form of Application are true to my knowledge

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This is to inform that Mr. Ashok Kumar S/o Mr. Raj
Kumar (Voter ID no. KXK1766377) R/o Mohalia
Karar Khan, Jalandhar, is owner of the property in
question on House No. NH-378, Land Measuring 2
Marle, Situated at Mohalia Karar Khan, Jalandhar
Tehsil & District Jalandhar Boundaries as per
Transfer Deed East: -Road. West: - House No. NH377. North: -House No. NH-368. South:- Road, Mr.
Ashok Kumar has losted Sale Deeds regarding this
property Vasika No. 15737 Dt. 28.02.2013 in favor
of Mrs. Ram Lubhai, Vasika No. 983 Dt. 26.04.1999
in favor of Mr. Shiv Kant, Vasika No. 2117 Dt.
24.06.1986 in favor of Mrs. Saroj Bala. Now Mrs.
Ashok Kumar is going mortgage the property with 24.06.1986 in favor of Mrs. Saroj Bala. Now Mrs. Ashok Kumar is going mortgage the property with the Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd. (HHFL)Branch Amritsar. Mortgage is going to created only by Transfer Deed Vasika No. 1518 Dated 28.04.2023 in favor of Mr. Ashok Kumar. This is Red-Line area property. If anybody found the deeds or having the deeds or having any objection regarding the above said property or the creation of mortgage over the said property then he should file objections at the below mentioned address. In case no objections are received within 15 days of this nublication then it will ellow mentioned address. In case no objections are ceived within 15 days of this publication then it will be presumed that there is no objection and after that seriod no objection will be entertained.

Vishesh Kumar Advocate, District Courts Gurdaspur:-Ph. M. 80540-77329, 9877478079

And Hinduja Housing Finance Ltd. (HHFL) Branch Jalandhar. Contact Person, Mr. Manish Soni M: 8209382601.

Transfer of ownership in respect of con structed property Shop No 11, New Anaj Mandi Jind property Id No. 3KTD6VO7 and duly registered with Sub RegistrarJind vide sale Deed Vasika no. 7531 dated 11.03.2005. Consequent upon the death of owner Sh.Jagdish Rai. Sh Jagdish Rai who was the owner of 50% share in the who was the owner of 50% share in the subject cited property as per record has died on 01.06.2021 leaving behind following legal heirs:-1 Smt Savitri (Mother),2. Smt Kiran (Wife),3 Smt. Pooja Devi (Daughter), 4. Sh. Naveen Garg (Son), 5. Muskan (Daughter), 6. Love (Son). Now the above mentioned legal heirs R/o Village and post office Pabra Teh. Uklana Distt Hisar, Haryana intends to apply for the transfer of said property in their favor or transfer the share being the legal heirs. or transfer the share being the legal heirs through legal heir certificate and request to insert their name in the property ld in place of deceased Sh Jagdish Rai in the records of Municipal Council Jind Haryana and also intends to get the transfer deed registered in the revnue records of Tehsil Jind.If any person is having any objection against the transfer of ibid Shop/Property, he/she can submit objection in writing to the Sub-Registrar, Tehsil Jind, Municipal Council Jind along-with supporting docu-ments within 30 days from the date of pubication of the notice, otherwise competent authority may do the needful as per the reulations/policy and may not entertain subsequent claim if any.

Legal heirs: Naveen Garg and others mentioned above.On behalf of Registrar, Tehsil Office Jird.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NSS FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATED

Chandigarh: National Service Scheme, Panjab University,

Chandigarh: Panjab University, Chandigarh, on Sunday conducted PhD Entrance Test-2023. "There were two papers, Paper I (Objective Type) and Paper II (Subjective Type). Total four centres were created at Panjab University Campus, Chandigarh. Total 58.33 per cent – 627 out of 1075 – candidates appeared in Paper – I Objective type, and 57.49 per cent — 618 out of 1075 — appeared in Paper II Subjective type. Flying squad and observers were sent to every centre for routine checking and smooth conduct of the test. The

CLS ORGANIZE CREATIVE WRITING

was reported from any of the examination centres.

invaluable insights and expertise with the students.

CHANDIGARH EYE FILM FEST AND QUEST

Chandigarh: Chandigarh Eye Film Fest and Quest was orga-

tal opaque cornea can be made to see after corneal grafting.

दिलबाग सिंह

Notice for Immovable Properties of more than one borrower by the same Authorized Officer (For

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has

property/ies will be subject to the	charge of Punjab National Bank for the	amounts and in	terest thereon	
Name of the Branch Name of the account Borrower (s)/ Guarantor(s)	Description of property Mortgaged	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession Notice	Balance Outstanding
Branch: Sector:13, Urban Estate, Karnal	All part and parcel of Double story Residential House bearing No. 23 (M		18.09.2023	Rs.2,01,867.02 [Rupees two lakhs one thousand eigh
Kumar s/o Sh. Om Parkash &	C No. VIII-499) falling under Scheme Municipal Nagar Nigam Limit Karnal	measuring lar	nd area 200.00	only] including interest charged

any until payment in full

Panchkula: Panchkula Deputy Commissioner Sushil Sarwan on Sunday flagged off 'Drug-Free Haryana Cyclothon' from Tau Devi Lal Sports Stadium, Sector-3, Panchkula, on Sunday morning and encouraged the participants with his address. Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner and other officers planted saplings in the stadium premises. The Cyclothon started to take forward Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's message of drug-free Haryana in every district of the State entered Yamunanagar. Hockey Olympian Harpal Singh, international Taekwondo player Diksha, international boxing player Rudra Dangi and national level boxing player Nidhi Dhull also encouraged the participants with their presence.

STUDENTS OF LORETO CONVENT TARA HALL

Shimla: Two students of Loreto Convent Tara Hall School, Shimla — Aahana Verma of Class VII and Jiya Verma of Class II — contributed Rs 10,229 and Rs 9,806 respectively towards

Aapda Rahat Kosh-2023 by presenting their gullaks (piggy

banks) to Himacal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh

Sukhu on Sunday. Appreciating their gesture, Sukhu said that

it is a matter of happiness that the children were also sharing their responsibility for this noble cause by making con-

tributions to mitigate the sufferings of disaster-affected peo-

ple serving as an inspiring example of solidarity and com-

'DRUG-FREE HARYANA CYCLOTHON' FLAGGED OFF

DONATES TOWARDS AAPDA RAHAT KOSH

CHANDIGARH NSS CELL ORGANIZES STATE NSS AWARD FUNCTION Chandigarh: To mark the NSS Day, Chandigarh NSS Cell

on Sunday organized a programme of NSS Day Celebration and State NSS Award Function. Adviser to UT Administrator, Chandigarh, Dharam Pal was Chief Gust of the function. Harinder Kaur, Regional Director NSS, Chandigarh, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, GOI was Guest of Honor and Harsuhinder Pal Singh Brar, Director, School Education, Chandigarh Administration was Special Guest. The Chief Guest felicitated two NSS Units, 12 NSS Programme officers and 10 NSS volunteers for meritorious community services. Each NSS Unit and Programme officer awarded with shield, Certificate and Cash Award of Rs 10,000. Each NSS volunteer was awarded with a Medal, Certificate and cash award of Rs 5000.

HUNDREDS OF PATIENTS TREATED FREE OF COST AT 6 MEDICAL CAMPS ORGANIZED BY BJP: SOOD Chandigarh: BJP Chandigarh State on Sunday organized free

medical camps under Sewa Pakhwada at six places in Chandigarh. In the camps, specialists' doctors from PGIMER, Chandigarh, GMSH Sector-16, GMCH Sector-32, and other private specialists checked up the patients and gave the free medical advice and medicines. State BJP president Arun Sood said that hundreds of patients were treated free of cost at six medical camps organised by BJP under Sewa

Chandigarh, celebrated NSS Foundation Day by organizing a university level award ceremony and cultural event. The event was graced by Adviser to UT Administrator Dr Dharam Pal as the chief guest. Seven awards were presented in the category of Roll of Honour with other categories, taking the count to more than 150 volunteers. The event was successful due to the efforts of Programme Officers and NSS volunteers under the able guidance of Dr Parveen Goyal (Programme Coordinator, NSS, Panjab University,

PANJAB UNIVERSITY CHANDIGARH CONDUCTED PHD ENTRANCE TEST-2023

test was conducted satisfactorily and no untoward incident

Chandigarh: Xpressions, the Literary Society of the Department of English at Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women, Chandigarh, in collaboration with the Chandigarh Literary Society, conducted a Creative Writing Workshop that provided an opportunity for budding writers to hone their skill set. CLS chairperson and Haryana's IAS officer Dr Sumita Misra, the Chief Guest, highlighted the importance of creative expression in today's world. The workshop, aimed to nurture and encourage student's creative talent, featured two distinguished Resource Persons — Dr Deviyani Singh and Shubhangi Singh— who shared their

nized by Dr Ashok Sharma's Cornea Centre at Hotel Mountview. PGIMER's former director Prof Jagat Ram was the chief guest and Prof MR Dogra, PGI's Advanced Eye Centre's former head was the Guest of Honor. Leading ophthalmologists of the region attended the CME program. Dr Sharma discussed the challenges in performing corneal transplants in neonates and discussed the measures to improve the outcome. He showed that even children born with congeni-

Out o पंजाब नैशनल बेंक punjab national bank .भरोसे का प्रतीक 🚌 🚥🗘

Sector:13, Urban Estate, Karnal [Haryana] + email: bo3267@pnb.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE (SYMBOLIC)

mmovable property) Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice/s on the dates mentioned against each account calling

taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on the day 18.09.2023 (as given below date of possession Notice) The borrower/s in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealing with the

Sh. Rajinder Kumar s/o Sh. sq yards (30 ' x 60') owned by Sh.Suresh Kumar s/o Sh. Om upto 27.02.2023 with further Om Parkash both residents Parkash & Sh. Rajinder Kumar s/o Sh.Om Parkash vide sale deed interest at contracted rate w.e.f. of House No. 23, New no. 584/1 dated 15.05.1996 registered with the office of Sub-28.02.2023 and all incidental Registrar, Karnal. House is bounded as under: (As per sale deed) expenses, costs & misc. Ramesh Nagar, Karnal East-60' Common wall of House No. 22 of Om Parkash, West: 60' House No. 24 of Sh. Om Parkash charges etc., less recovery, i North: 30' Rasta Share-aam, South: 30' House No.18 of Sh. Babu Ram

and shall have no value in the eyes of law

Manoj Chauhan Advocate, Chamber No. 139, Distt. Court Kaithal

Public Notice

It hereby informs to general public at large that Sh. Man Phool son of Sh. Mange Ram resident of Village Dhundwa Tehsil Kalayat, District Kaithal

(Owner) along with Deepak Applicant, as desired by

you, I/We are furnishing hereunder the legal repor with title search in respect of the property has avail

Secured loan on property from SMFG India Home

Finance Company Ltd. Branch Office at Main Market Sector 20 HUDA Kaithal (HRY) for Rs.

7,19,542/--, vide Application No. 6233465 having its

said branch office at Kaithal, Haryana on his

Residential house, measuring area 154.065 Sq. Mtrs. bearing UID No. 058893EP0M0S00DR733A

situated at situated at Village, Dhundwa Tehsil Kalayat and Distt. Kaithal. That the said Sh. Manphool son of Sh. Mange Ram is an owner of

above said land, vide register Vasika/UID/certificate No. 5036/1 dated 13-12-2021 executed by Gram

sachiv issued by SRO Kalayat. Said Sh. Man Phool Singh son of Sh. Mange Ram is a sole owner of above property and there is no co-sharer in this property. Original Swamitwa patter collect BDPO at

time of provide of Said UID/Sale Certificate. anybody have any right/title/litigation/claim or claiming any prior rights or interest in any manner in

above mentioned property as per register sale certificate, then may approach the undersigned with documentary proof and submit objection in written

within 7 days from the date of this public notice. After

the expiry of period of this no claim shall be entertained and such claim shall be deemed to be

false, fake, frivolous, fraudulent and baseless claim

Classifieds I, Devesh S/o Budh Singh I, Sarabjit Kaur W/o Basant Singh R/o Vill: Tharaj Wala Teh-I RAKESH KUMAR S/O

Sarabjeet Kaur. I. Jaswinder Kaur Sran alias Yashwinder Kaur W/o Khushwinder Singh R/o Vill-Sarawan Teh-Jaitu Distt Faridkot

(Punjab) have changed my name

to Jaswinder Kaur Sran

Giddarbaha (Sri Muktsar Sahib)

have changed my name to

- I, Shelza Garg D/o Kulwant Rai Garg (W/o Amandeep Singla) R/o St. No. 5 (L), Basant Nagar, Road, Kotkapura (Faridkot) have changed my name to Shelza Singla After Marriage.
- I, Raminder Singh Sibble S/o Ranjit Singh Sibble R/o H.No.225. Narottam Nagar, (Ludhiana) Khanna changed my name to Raminder
- I, Inderjit Kaur W/o Gurjeet Singh Dhillon R/o Village Mianpur (Fatehgarh Sahib) have changed my minor son's name from Karanyeer Singh to Karanyeer Singh Dhillon
- Kumar R/o Vill: Mavi Sappan Teh & Distt Patiala (Punjab) have changed my name from Soni Bawa to Sony Bawa. I. Rahul Baiotra s/o Ramesh

I, Soni Bawa W/o Pardeep

- Chander r/o 102, New Diamond Avenue, Batala distt Gurdaspur have changed my minor son's name from Nakul Bajotra to Nakul Kumar Bajotra. Concerned note. I. Parveen Kumar s/o
- Subhash Chander r/o Village Sirsal, Distt. Kaithal state that my name wrote Parveen Kumar in all my documents, Whereas in my son Vaibhav 12th marksheet my name wrote Parveen Sharma, my correct name is Parveen Kumar, in future I should be known by this
- I, Santosh Kumari w/o Parveen Kumar r/o Village Sirsal, Distt. Kaithal state that my name wrote Santosh Kumari in all my documents. Whereas in the 12th marksheet of my son Vaibhay my name wrote Santosh, my correct name is Santosh Kumari, in future I should be known by this name.
- I, Ranjit Singh s/o Chanan Singh r/o Village Bahadurpur Rajoa Tehsil Batala Distt Gurdaspur have changed my name from Ranjeet Singh to Ranjit Singh. Concerned note.
- I, Sukhminder Singh Urf Sukhwinder Singh Son of Joginder Singh R/o Chak Ghubai Ferozepur I am Known by Both names as Above One and is Same Person.
- I, Sukhminder Singh Urf Sukhwinder Singh Son of Joginder Singh R/o Chak Ghubai Ferozepur have Changed my name to Sukhminder Singh.
- I, hitherto known as Pardeep Kumar S/o Bhagat Ram R/o H.No.130, Pind Wadala, Kurala, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Kumar

- S/o Sain Dass R/o H.No. B1/784, Ram Nagar, Distt.Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sahil Badhan
- I, Ninderjit S/o Prem Pal R/o H.No.15, Ward No.10, Street No.1, New Joginder Nagar, Rama Mandi, Jalandhar have changed my name from Ninderjit to Ninderjeet Singh.
- I, Sandip Kaur W/o Narinder Singh R/o H.No.34, Near Govt Dispensary, Sidhu Enclave, VPO. Dakoha, Jalandhar have changed my name from Sandeep Kaur to I. Mahinder Pal S/o
- Shankar Das R/o H.No. 9. Pawadra, Part-1, Vill.Pawadra, Jalndhar, Punjab-Phillaur. 144036. I have changed the name of my minor Harshpreet aged about 17 Years and He shall hereafter be known as Harshpreet Kumar. I. Naveen Meet S/o Radha
- aman R/o H.No. B-1 25. Shakti Nagar Dhobi Ghat, Bahadurpur, Hoshiarpur, Punjab- 148001 have changed my name as Naveen Kumar.
- I, Surinder Paul Singh alias S P Singh S/o Joginder Singh R/o H.No.140, Guru Tegh Bahadur Nagar, Jalandhar, Model Town, Punjab- 144003, have changed my name as Surinder Paul Singh Bhatia.
- I, Manoj Kumar S/o Sita Ram R/o Vill. Pachranda, Po. Jhaj, Tehsil Anandpur Sahib Pachranda, Rupnagar, Punjab-140117, have changed my name as Manohar Lal.
- I, Akshita D/o Sudhir Nagpal R/o 1080, New Housing Board Colony, Karnal (Rural) (Part) (1), Karnal, Haryana- 132001. have changed my name as Akshita Nagpal.
- I, Nizami Irshad Khizar Ahmed S/o Nikhat Rana Nizami R/o H.No.1410, Sector-9 Faridabad, Sector-7, Ballabagarh, Faridabad, Haryana- 121006 have changed my name as Irshad
- I, Saanvi D/o Suminder Kumar R/o 1796, Sector-80, Mohali, Sohana, S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali), Punjab- 140308. have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Saanvi
- I, Jaswinder Sukhdev singh Rana S/o Sukhdev Rana R/o Vill.Daulatpur, Bhunga Hoshiarpur, Bhunga, Punjab-144210, have changed my name as Jaswinder Rana.
- I, Pooja Garg D/o Ashok Kumar Garg and w/o Viney Kumar Vohra R/o 59, Baba Enclave, Near Gurudwara Baba Ram Lal, Malwal Road, Ferozepur City hereby declare that I am also known as the name of Puja Garg. Pooja Garg and Puja Garg is one and the same person. Both names are of one

- R/o H.No-7-C, Ashok Vihar, Phase-2, Gurgaon Kty., Gurgaon Haryana- 122001, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Devesh Sharma. I, Aru D/O Raj Kumar, R/o
- Flat No-D-404, Mona Greens-1, VIP Road, Zirakpur, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab- 140603. have changed my name as Aru Bhardwai I, Rakesh Kumar S/o Swarr

Singh, H. No 153, Purana

- Gurdwara, Ward No. 2, Nangal (Rupnagar) declare that in School record the date of birth of my daughter Kashish Chandla writter wrongly by us 8-5-2006, but her correct date of birth is 2-5-2006. I, Geeta W/O Ravinder Kumar R/O #373. Vill Mubarikpur,
- Have Changed My Name Geeta To Geeta Devi. I, Aman Vinay Bhardwaj R /O H No 3045 Sector 46 C 1st Floor Chandigarh Has Change My Daughter Name Akshada To

Tehsil Dera Bassi Distt Sas Nagar

- Akshada Bhardwaj I, Sunny S/o Satish R/o 9/4 DC Colony, Distt. Jind have changed my name from Sunny to
- Sunny Goyat. I, Reetu Bala W/o No 3195904A NK. Sh. Dinesh Kalyan R/o Vill. Kutail Teh & Distt. Karnal Have my Name is Ritu Bala Kalyan in my Husband miltary record But my actul name is Reetu Bala.I want to entered correct name is Reetu Bala in military
- I, Vijay Singh S/o Late Sh Shamsher Singh R/o VPO Mundlana, Teh. Gohana, Distt. Sonipat (Haryana)has changed my name from Vijay Singh to Vijay vide affidavit dated 11 Sep.2023 before Sonipat (Hr) Court. In future I should be known as Vijay.
- I, Amit Kumar S/o Sh. Satbi Singh R/o H.No. - 386, Gali No. 3 Ward No. 6, Chopra Colony Gohana, Teh. -Gohana, Distt. Sonipat (Harvana) has changed my name from Amit Kumar to Amit vide affidavit dated 23 Sep 2023 before Sonipat (Hr) Court. In future future I should be known as Vijay
- I, Neeraj Rani W/o Rahul Saini R/o H.no. 139 Raja Park Ambala Cantt Distt. Ambala state Haryana that I have changed my name from Neeraj Rani to Neera Saini . Concerned note

I,Gurpreet Kaur W/o Surjit Kumar R/o Word No 2 Gandhi Nagar,Pehowa,kurukshetra Have Changed My Son Name Anshmeet To Anshmeet Surname

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DATE: 18.09.2023 + PLACE: Karnal

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Mounting Debt: Opposition parties target AAP led Punjab Govt

Jakhar, Sidhu, Sukhbir lash out at CM Mann, AAP **Govt for pushing Punjab towards** financial crisis

PNS CHANDIGARH

The issue of Punjab's esca-lating debt crisis has intensified as the opposition parties in the State continue to direct sharp criticism at the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government. The controversy erupted following a letter from Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit to the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, in which he raised concerns about the state's mounting debt and sought clarification on its utilization.

Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar on Sunday took aim at Bhagwant Mann Government, accusing it of pushing the state to the brink of a "financial calamity". Jakhar emphasized that Punjab's debt had surged by a staggering Rs 50,000 crore since the AAP Government came to power a year and a half ago. He argued that the unprecedented increase in debt had raised serious questions about the government's fiscal management.

Also weighing in on the issue, senior Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu asserted that Punjab's debt had reached an "unsustainable level". Sidhu attributed the rapid growth in the state's debt to what he described as the "continued corruption and vote bank politics of the AAP". His remarks echoed the sentiment that the state's financial situation had been adversely affected by the government's populist poli-

Only a day before, the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader and the Leader of Opposition in Vidhan Sabha Partap Singh Bajwa had hit out at the Bhagwant Mann dispensation demanding a special audit of the borrowings. At the same time, the Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal had also asked if the money was spent only on "selfpromotion" and paying the air travel and hotel bills" of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

Notably, Purohit, in a letter to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday, had said that he learnt that "the debt of Punjab rose by about Rs 50,000 crore during your regime".
"Details of utilization of this huge amount may be furnished so that I will be able to convince the Prime Minister that money has been properly utilized," he wrote in response to the Chief Minister's letter seeking

up the issue of pending RDF with the Prime Minister and

the President. The continuous critique of the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann follows his recent appeal to the Governor for assistance in securing pending RDF funds amounting to Rs 5,637 crore from the Centre. The Governor advised patience in the "subjudice" matter, pending a Supreme Court decision on the

Punjab's mounting debt-to-GDP ratio — nearing 50 per cent, far exceeding the national average — has become a central point of concern for both opposition parties and the public. The state's financial stability has come under scrutiny, with questions raised about the utilization of borrowed funds and the long-term consequences of the debt accumula-

The controversy surrounding Punjab's rising debt has dominated the political discourse in the State, with opposition parties positioning themselves as guardians of fiscal responsibility. AAP government, which came to power with promises of badlav (change) and transparency, now faces growing pressure to provide a detailed account of how the borrowed funds have been allocated.

As the opposition parties continue their critique and

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and his administration are under increasing scrutiny to navigate the challenging financial landscape and reassure the public about Punjab's economic stability. The issue of Punjab's debt is expected to remain a critical point of contention in the state's political arena, with far-reaching implications for its financial well-

Jakhar Warns of

'Financial Calamity'
Slamming the AAP
Government, Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar on Sunday accused it of pushing the state on the brink of "financial calamity" with an addition of Rs 50,000 crore debt since coming to power year-and-a-

"In just last four months, from April till July-end this year, the AAP (Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab) has already taken Rs 11,718 crore as loan," he said, claiming that if unchecked, AAP government's "misrule" would crush Punjab with another burdensome Rs 1.75 lakh crore of debt till the end of its term. The total debt of the state at present stands at Rs 2.82 lakh crore, he

Citing a report of the office of the principal accountantgeneral, he claimed that out of the Rs 11,718 crore, just Rs 900 and the "rest has gone up in smoke at the whims and fancies of the incumbent dispensa-

The present government, Jakhar alleged, "thrives on fake propaganda, advertisements

and personal aggrandizement."
"I thank Governor Sahib for setting the proverbial cat amongst the pigeon by asking from Bhagwant Mann ji about the utilization details of about Rs 50,000 crore which this present government has bur-dened Punjabis with," Jakhar

"Given the track record, I am not very hopeful of a genuine response by the AAP leadership to very apt queries raised by the Governor," he said, adding that "thanks to the Governor's missive, Punjabis of all hues have started asking where is the money, Mann

Jakhar alleged that both the Chief Ministers of Delhi and Punjab befooled the people by their tact of lying unabashedly.

Targeting Delhi Chief Minister and AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal, the BJP leader asked, "Where are those Rs 40,000 crore additional revenue to be generated from transparent auctioning of sand pits and sale of alcohol which Kejriwal ji used to scream about during the (Punjab) assembly elections."

Sidhu Sounds Alarm, **Accuses AAP Govt of Economic** Mismanagement

In a scathing critique of the financial state of Punjab, Punjab congress' former president Navjot Singh Sidhu on Sundav raised concerns over the state's growing debt crisis. Sidhu directed his criticism towards Bhagwant Mann, the stand-up comic turned Chief Minister of Punjab, highlighting the key issues in his seven-point assess-

In his post on 'X', Sidhu pointed out that Punjab's debtto-GDP ratio has soared to nearly 50 per cent, signaling a perilous economic situation for the state. Citing Governor's letter, he said that the debt is expected to rise by Rs 70,000 crores in two years indicating that "the economic crisis".

Sidhu attributed the mounting debt to systemic corruption and the populist policies of the AAP government, accusing them of promoting freebies. He highlighted the Punjab State Power Corporation Limited's (PSPCL) substantial borrowings from banks, which exceed Rs 18,000 crores, along with significant loans for digital meter installations, amounting Rs 9,641 crore. "In addition to this, arrears of subsidy and outstanding bills from the Punjab Government are at Rs 9,020

tively. PSPCL today is mortgaged and sold out," he said.

The former cricketer also questioned the lack of action against those illegally occupying over 25,000 acres of land around Chandigarh, suggesting a continued monopoly by the cable mafia and other influential figures. He called for accountability and transparency in these matters.

Sidhu also accused the AAP government of undermining revenue generation through its handling of excise policies and sand mining. He alleged that certain individuals had exclusive access to licenses, resulting in rampant illegal mining. Also citing a report from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) in March 2023, which warned of impending financial instability in Punjab if current governance practices persist, Sidhu expressed concern that the situation could deteriorate even further.

Sidhu decried the burden placed on the people of Punjab, with each Punjabi carrying a debt of Rs 1.20 lakhs. He argued that this figure continues to rise daily, placing significant pressure on the state's residents.

The Congress leader challenged the Government's revenue model, questioning whether the state would be sustained through borrowings or income. He emphasized that

seemingly allows revenue to be siphoned off by corrupt individuals, could lead to a cata-

strophic situation. **CM Lacks** Transparency in Utilization of Rs 50k cr

Loan: Sukhbir

Meanwhile, SAD president Sukbhir Singh Badal expressed concern over the lack of transparency in the utilization of a Rs 50,000 crore loan taken by the AAP-led Punjab Government in the past 18 months, accusing the Chief Minister and AAP of diverting funds for its nationwide political expansion.

"Pained to see how the State exchequer is being looted to expand the wings of @AamAadmiParty and its leader @ArvindKejriwal across the country. Punjab CM @BhagwantMann should tell why he is not disclosing how the Rs 50,000 crore loan taken by the @AAPPunjab govt in the past 18 months was "utilised". Since he has outrightly refused to give the details of the same to the Punjab Governor, it's clear that he doesn't want Punjabis to know how his govt has stopped all development and even stopped social welfare schemes so that it can release hundreds of crores for advertisements in other States," said

Repair of link roads to be Zila Parishads' responsibility in 6 more districts: Haryana CM

PNS CHANDIGARH

o enhance the capabilities of Zila Parishads (ZPs), Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday said that the responsibility for the repair of link roads in six additional districts -Kaithal, Mahendergarh, Rohtak, Jhajjar, and Rewari — will be transferred to Zila Parishads by the end of this year. Previously, this responsibility was overseen by the Haryana State Agriculture Marketing Board (HSAMB).

Earlier, the link road repair responsibility had been transferred from HSAMB to Zila Parishads in five districts

Yamunangar, Karnal, Palwal, Bhiwani, and Fatehabad — with the process of repair work already underway. With the addition of these six districts, ZPs will be responsible for road repair in a total of 11 districts. This move reflects the State Government's commitment to empowering Zila Parishads to undertake rural development projects more efficiently.

hattar, during a mee with the chairpersons of Zila Parishads and Chief Executive Officers of Zila Parishads to review various developmental initiatives, directed the CEOs to initiate the tendering process for the pavement of



village phirnis in villages with a population of 5,000 or more September 30, 2023.
The Chief Minister

emphasized the importance of respecting and honoring the ZPs' chairpersons, who play a crucial role as public representatives in the democratic setup. He clearly instructed the CEOs to relocate their offices from district Secretariats to ZP offices. In districts where ZP office buildings have already been erected, this directive should be promptly implemented. However, in cases where such infrastructure is instructed to identify suitable land and submit proposals to the Head Office.

He also sought budget year from the CEOs of ZPs. The Chief Minister under-

Khattar to perform bhumi pujan of Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib GMC in Y'nagar

Chandigarh: In another event, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar will perform the bhumi pujan ceremony of Shri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib Government Medical College, Panjupur, in Yamunanagar district on Monday.

The state Health and Medical Education Minister Anil Vii will preside over the event, with the presence of the School Education Minister Kanwar Pal Gujjar to grace the occasion. This milestone event marks a significant step forward in advancing healthcare and education infrastructure within the state, reaffirming the commitment of the Haryana Government to enhance the well-being and educational opportunities for its residents, said the spokesperson..

chairman to formulate their budgets; and subsequently forward them to the government after gaining approval within estimates for the current fiscal the ZP House. This ensures that sufficient funds will be accessible to drive develop-

scored that it falls within the mental initiatives in rural areas

At the same time, he also encouraged them to construct Anganwari buildings wherever necessary and establish a dedicated unit in each district responsible for overseeing Anganwari Centers throughout

Khattar directed the instal-lation of street lights in 750 villages with the highest population across the state. The budget has already been allocated to Zila Parishads for this initiative. Under this program, the five villages with the highest population in each block will soon receive street lights.

Pointing out that there are 144 blocks in the State, he urged the CEO Zila Parishads to identify the block where even 10 e-libraries have not started. Requests for this purpose have been received through Jan Samvad, and we already have sanction to open 750 e-İibraries.

During the review of Chaupals' construction, Khattar instructed the CEOs to conduct need-based surveys in their respective areas. He also directed them to initiate the process of beautifying or constructing walls for village ponds through the Zila Parishads. The Chairman and CEOs of Zila Parishads should collaborate to plan development activities in rural areas.

The state's Development Devender Singh Babli urged the CEOs to monitor the progress of development projects in their respective areas. He also expressed his intention to visit the entire state for this

12 kg narcotics, Rs 19L cash seized; Two arrested

PNS CHANDIGARH

In a significant operation near the International Border in Punjab's Gurdaspur sector, security agencies have apprehended two individuals suspected of being involved in drug smuggling. The operation led to the discovery and confiscation of 12 kilograms of narcotics and a substantial amount of currency totaling Rs 19.3 lakh.

According to a Border Security Force (BSF) official, the operation began on the morning of September 24 (Sunday) when the BSF detected the intrusion of a drone near Chaura Kalan village in Gurdaspur district. Following this discovery, a joint search operation was conducted by the BSF and Punjab Police in the surrounding area. During the operation, security personnel observed suspicious movements involving two individuals on a motorcycle. Upon realizing they were being pursued, the suspects attempted to flee but were successfully apprehended. Based on the information

provided by the arrested individuals, law enforcement recovweighing approximately 12 kilograms, and Rs 19.30 lakh in cash. It is believed that these items were dropped by the drone and were found near Chaura Kalan village.

In a separate incident, the BSF thwarted another attempt at

smuggling narcotics via a drone near Mahawa village in the Amritsar sector. On the evening of September 23, the BSF detected the movement of a drone and intercepted it by shooting it down. Following the interception, a joint search operation involv-

ing the BSF, counter-intelligence

teams, and the Punjab Police was launched in the surrounding area. The downed drone was subsequently discovered in the paddy fields on the outskirts of the village. Officials have identified the recovered drone as a China-made Quadcopter DJI

Sukhbir in his post on 'X'.

Chandigarh Welfare Trust organizes free mega health camp, over 20k avail benefit



PNS ■ CHANDIGARH:

More than 20,000 people from Chandigarh and its adjacent areas availed the benvided by Chandigarh Welfare Trust (CWT) during its mega multispecialty health camp organized on Sunday (September 24) at Sector 39 Grain Market in Chandigarh. The camp was a part of CWT's

'Sewa Pakhwada' which commenced from September 17 the 73rd birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, espousing his vision of 'self-serespecially the poor section of the society. During the mega health camp, inaugurated by Punjab Governor and UT Administrator Banwarilal Purohit, needy patients were benefited in large numbers.

momentum over the past

decade, there remains a lack of

awareness among the public.

Myths and superstitions are

also widespread, posing chal-

lenges in obtaining consent

from families. A common myth

associated with cornea dona-

tion is that the deceased will be

On an average, how many

While over the years, the

born blind in their next life.

eyes are donated each year?

number of eye donations has

increased steadily, the COVID

years saw a sharp decline in

donations owing mainly as

there were several contraindi-

Make eye donation a family tradition, says Dr Parul Chawla

"Eyesight checkups should be done in case of any changes in the vision. People must avoid watching screens for a very long time"

Pioneer **Interview**

MANOJ KUMAR CHANDIGARH

Dr Parul Chawla, Associate Professor, (Cornea, Lens and Refractive Services), Advanced Eye Centre, PGIMER, Chandigarh, says that corneal blindness is a fourth leading cause of blindness globally. It is a visual impairment that occurs from the cornea becoming clouded, scarred or any other infection that ultimately affects the transparency of cornea, making a person blind. Early treatment is critically-important to prevent some common eye diseases from causing permanent vision loss or blindness. Eyesight checkups should be done in case of any changes in the vision. People must avoid watching screens for a very long period of time and also must eat food rich in vitamins that promote eye health, she

Dr Chawla further says that organ donation is the biggest contribution to humanity. It not only saves lives but also touches and changes other lives associated with the one

who receives the organ. Usually brain-dead patients are most suitable for organ donation and if harvested within the critical time. Anybody can donate organs irrespective of caste, religion and medical conditions. However, persons suffering from Metastatic Cancer, HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis, Rabies, Brain fever can't be a donor, she adds. In an exclusive interview

with 'The Pioneer', Dr Chawla talks about tips for eye care, corneal blindness, who can or can't donate eye, and Eye Donation campaigns at PGIMER, Chandigarh, among others. Excerpts: What advice would you

give to the people to take care of their eyes? Eyes are one of the most

vital organs in the human body and it is very important to take care of them. People should eat a healthy, balanced diet, do regular exercise, wear protective eye wear among others. They must get an eye sight check-up done at least once in six months. Eye strain, dry eyes, and other similar disorders can lead to severe ailments if they aren't cured on time. Early treatment is critically important to prevent some common eye diseases from causing perma-

nent vision loss or blindness.



PGIMER's Advanced Eye Centre

We must get eyesight check-ups done in case of any changes in the vision. We must avoid watching screens for a very long period of time. We must eat food rich in vitamins that promote eye health.

How many minutes should the eyes have breaks when

using a computer?
Follow the 20-20-20 rule. One of the most popular tips for minimizing eye strain is to take a break from the screen every 20 minutes and look at an object at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds or longer. People blink less frequently when working on computers and smart devices. Every 20 minutes, blink 10-15 times

What is corneal blind-

Corneal blindness, a condition where the cornea — the clear front part of the eye becomes damaged or opaque, can severely impair one's vision or even lead to total blindness. One ray of hope for those afflicted by corneal blindness is corneal transplant, a procedure that can restore vision in many cases. However, there lies a significant challenge — the discrepancy between the number of patients in need and the availability of donor corneas.

What are the causes of corneal damage? When to get help right away?

Corneal blindness is a fourth leading cause of blindness globally. It is a visual impairment that occurs from the cornea becoming clouded, scarred, or any other infection that ultimately affects the transparency of cornea, making a person blind. Some of the common causes are deficiency of Vitamin A, some viral, fungal or bacterial infections, congenital disease or any eye trauma. The causes of corneal damage include injuries to the outermost layer of the cornea,

damage or scars from other eye

surgeries, infections, hereditary corneal defects, and inflammation from chronic dry eye. One can consult an eye doctor if you have symptoms like intense eye pain; change in vision; blurry vision; very red, watery eyes, an object stuck in eye; a serious eye injury or trauma — like getting hit hard in the eye among others. Eye doctors can check for corneal conditions as part of a comprehensive eye exam. The exam is simple and painless.

Can cornea damage be

Many corneal conditions can be treated with prescription eye drops or pills. If anyone has advanced corneal disease, they may need a different treatment like laser treatment, corneal transplant surgery and artificial cornea.

Who can or can't donate

Anyone can be a donor, irrespective of age, sex, blood group or religion. Anyone with cataract or spectacles can donate eyes. People suffering from hypertension, diabetes can also donate eyes. Eyes should be donated within sixeight hours of death. However, persons suffering from Metastatic Cancer, HIV,

Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Syphilis, Rabies, Brain fever can't be a donor. The donated corneas are transplanted to the patient's eve who are on the waiting list in accordance with the priority based on guidelines to avoid malpractices.

Can eye donation be done after death? What happens after eye donation?

Since eye donation is performed after death, people can pledge their eyes and register as a donor before they pass away. If the next of kin was willing for eye donation, a written consent was obtained. Eyes have to be removed within four to six hours after death. The donor need not be taken to the eye bank. The eye bank officials will visit the home of the donor for no extra charges. The age and gender of deceased potential donors, cause and time of death are noted. The entire procedure of eye removal does not delay the funeral, as it takes only 20-30 minutes.

What is the latest data on corneal blindness?

Corneal blindness has emerged as a significant healthcare challenge in India. At present, around 1.2 million people are corneal blind in India and current annual transplant number in the country is 25000-

What is the current status of gap between demand and supply of cornea at PGIMER?

In PGIMER, around 2200

patients are waiting for their corneal transplantation but the hospital gets only 400-500 corneas every year. At PGIMER, Chandigarh, eye donation campaign is being organized for mass public awareness. Recently, during 38th national eye donation fortnight, a lecture series was organized for eye donation in schools, colleges and public places to promote eye donation. In addition, painting competition, article writing competition and other activities were organized in schools on eye donation and the winners were felicitated at Advanced Eye Centre, PGIMER, Chandigarh. Besides, messages of eye donation were displayed at prominent places including religious places with collaboration of Club Central, Lions Chandigarh, for sensitization of the general public regarding

Do you think myths are a major barrier in eye donation? Although the organ transplant programme has gained

this noble cause.

cations involved in the process of both collection and transplantations. In 2022-23, the eye bank collected 440 eyes and transplanted 355. In 2021-22, the eye bank collected 488 eyes and transplanted 333, while the number 132 eyes in 2020-21 against 113 transplants. In 2019-20, the eye

bank collected 600 eyes and transplanted 384, in 2018-19, the eye bank collected 806 eyes and transplanted 471. In 2012-13, the eye bank collected 306 eyes and transplanted 251. Eye donations can be enhanced by increasing public awareness or, by understanding and overcoming the barriers to

'India-West Asia corridor pivotal for future trade'

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday emphasised the potential of the India-Middle East-Europe corridor, announced during the New Delhi G20 summit, as a pivotal trade route for the world's future economic exchanges as he also recalled world recognition to Indian heritage and cited individual examples of enterprise, service and good deeds in the country

Addressing the 105th episode of his monthly radio programme, 'Mann Ki Baat', Prime Minister spoke about the success of India's Moon mission Chandrayan-3 and New Delhi's presidency of the prestigious G20 Summit.

Modi emphasised the potential of the India-Middle announced during the New Delhi G20 summit, as a pivotal trade route for the world's

future economic exchanges. "India-Middle East-Europe Economic corridor proposed during the Summit will become a basis of world trade for hundreds of years," the Prime Minister said.

He also lauded India's role

a full member of the G20 bloc, highlighting the country's commitment to enhancing its global partnerships

"India showcased its leadership by making the African Union a full member of the G20 bloc," he said.

Throughout the year, programmes related to G20 were held at numerous universities of the country. Now in this series, another exciting programme is about to take place in Delhi, which is G20 University connect programme," Modi said.

The Prime Minister expressed "immense pride" in India's cultural and historical heritage by celebrating o significant achievement Firstly, he mentioned

Santiniketan's recognition as a World Heritage Site.
Besides, the Prime

Minister expressed happiness over the inclusion of the Hoysala Temples of Karnataka in the list of World Heritage

"It is India's endeavor that our historical and cultural places get recognized as World Heritage Sites," he said and underscoed the nation's commitment to preserving and showcasing its diverse heritage



song also sung by the German

girl saying "I wholeheartedly

appreciate Germany's Kasmi's

passion for Indian culture

and music. Her efforts are

going to overwhelm every

Indian." The Prime Minister,

thereafter, mentioned some

youth in Nainital district hav-

ing started unique'Ghoda

this library is that books are

"The biggest feature of

Library' for children.

The Prime Minister cited cases of individual talent, deeds of kindness and welfare including the one related to a foreign girl. He played a video of a Sanskrit prayer sung by a blind German girl who has never visited India. Modi said the girl Kasmi also sings in Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Kannada, Assamese, Bengali, Marathi, Urdu.

reaching children even in the Modi shared a Kannada

most remote areas and not only this, the service is absolutely free",he said.

Modi then spoke about a oung girl Akarsĥana Satish in . Hyderabad opening a library having 6000 books for children cancer patients as also

Sukhdev Bhatt of Rajasthan and his team named 'Cobra' -working together to save " 30000 venomous snakes "which in turn,

Modi also lauded Auto Driver M Rajendra Prasad who he said "is also doing a unique work" in his Chennai house by saving and serving food, water and health care to 200 pigeons for last 25-30

"He spends quite a lot of money on this, but he is stead-fast in his work. Friends, seeing people doing such work with good intentions really gives a lot of satisfaction and a lot of joy. If you also get information about some such unique efforts, do share it", the Prime Minister said to his lis-

The Prime Minister while wishing his radio audience on the coming festival season asked them to remember "the mantra of Vocal for Local."

As far as possible, you should buy goods made in India, use Indian products and gift only Made in India goods. Your little joy will become the cause of immense happiness for someone else's family. Whatever Indian goods you buy, our laborers, workers, craftspersons and other Vishwakarma brothers and sisters will directly benefit from it", Modi said.

Rajnath approves hike in funeral expenditure of BRO casual labourers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

In a crucial welfare move to benefit casual paid labourers (CPL) of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the extension of existing provisions of 'Preservation and Transportation of the Mortal Remains, to them and okayed an increase in funeral expenditure to ₹10,000 from ₹1,000. Till now, the benefit was applicable to personnel of the BRO and General Reserve Engineer Force(GREF).

Giving details here on Sunday, defence ministry officials said the funeral expenditure will be borne by the government in the event of a death of any CPL while on government bona fide duty at BRO projects, whose last rites are being performed at the worksite.

The CPLs are employed by the BRO for construction of roads in forward/border areas. They work hand-in-hand with the BRO personnel in adverse climate and tough working



conditions, which sometimes results in casualties.

Until now, the facility of preservation and transportation of mortal remains to the native place at government expense was available only for the GREF personnel. The CPLs working in similar conditions were deprived of this facility. In case of their death, the burden of the transportation falls on the bereaved families.

Due to lack of financial resources, the family of the deceased are unable to bear the expenditure of airfare or even transportation by road in most

Navy Chief reviews bilateral ties with US during visit

Discussed situation in Indo-Pacific region with US, other countries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties with the US and situation in the strategically important Indo-Pacific region during his visit to US from September 19-23 to attend the 25th International Sea Power Symposium(ISS).

Giving details of his visit, navy officials said here on Sunday the ISS is conducted by the US Navy at US Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island and provides the opportunity to engage with the Friendly Foreign vision of enhancing maritime cooperation in the Indo-

Admiral Kumar also held bilateral engagements on the sidelines of the ISS with his

counterparts from various countries including the USA,

Australia, Egypt, Fiji, Israel, Italy Japan, Kenya, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and The extensive engage-

ments during the visit are a demonstration of the Indian Navy's steadfastness towards realising the vision for a Free Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific and International Rules-Based Order. During the visit extensive

deliberations were also held towards exploring greater operational engagements bilateral and multilateral exercises such as the Malabar, RIMPAC, Sea Dragon and Tiger Triumph. Regular Subject Matter

Expert exchange also

takes place between both the Navies to institutionalise interoperability in various

At the ISS, the Navy chief

spoke extensively about the challenges of Human Resource Management, with specific reference to recruitment and retention of trained personnel and India's initiatives towards addressing these through the Agnipath_ Scheme, empowering women driving Indian Navy into a genderneutral force.

His visit to the US pronity for Apex Level Navy to Navy engagements for deepening bilateral cooperation as well as engaging with diverse partners across the Indo-Pacific, officials said.

Modi flags off 9 Vande Bharat Express trains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the speed and scale of infrastructure development matched the aspirations of 140 crore Indians as he flagged off nine Vande Bharat Express trains connecting religious and tourist destinations across 11 States. Flagging off the Vande

Bharat Express trains via video conferencing, Modi also slammed the previous governments for not paying adequate attention for modernisation of railways and assured that the "day is not far when Vande Bharat will connect every part of the country". Governors, chief ministers, Union ministers and elected representatives were present at the nine railway stations from where the indigenously built semi-high speed trains were flagged off. The trains stopped at various stations where they were welcomed by enthusiastic school children and hoards of people with elected representatives addressing functions en route.

In his address, the prime Vande Bharat trains was rising constantly and more than 1.11 travelled in them.

He said 25 Vande Bharat Express trains were already



functional and nine more were being added on Sunday.

This speed and scale of infrastructure development in the country is exactly matching the aspirations of 140 crore Indians," Modi said.

The nine trains will provide faster connectivity across 11 states -- Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, West Bengal, Kerala, Odisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat.

"Indian Railways is the India's poor and middle-class people. The number of people who travel in the railways in one day is more than the population of many countries. It is unfortunate that not much

attention was given to mod-ernise Indian Railways. But now our government is work ing for the transformation of Indian Railways," Modi said.
"I am confident that the

changes taking place at every level in Indian Railways and society will prove to be an important step towards a developed India," the prime minister said. Indo-PacificHe said that to achieve the goal of a developed India by 2047, the development of every state and

Modi said that selfish thinking of concentrating railway development in the state of the railway minister has damaged the country a lot and "now

we simply can not afford to keep any state backwards".

"We have to move ahead

with a vision of sabka saath, sabka vikas," he added. The new Vande Bharat

trains flagged off by the prime minister will run on these Udaipur-Jaipur; routes: Tirunelveli-Madurai-Chennai; Hyderabad-Bengaluru; Vijayawada-Chennai (via Renigunta); Patna-Howrah; Kasaragod-Thiruvananthapuram; Ranchi-Howrah; Jamnagar-Ahmedabad.

These trains are a step towards realising the prime minister's vision of improving connectivity across the country

and providing world-class facilities to rail passengers, according to an official statement. 'The Vande Bharat trains will be the fastest train along the routes of their operation and will help save considerable

time of the passengers," it said. The introduction of these Vande Bharat trains will herald a new standard of rail service in the country, the statement said. These trains, equipped with world-class amenities and advanced safety features, will be a key step towards providing modern, speedy and comfortable means of travel to common people, professionals, businessmen, student community and tourists, it added.

INDIA fight is to save idea of India: Rahul

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said the BJP will be in for a big surprise in 2024 general elections, suggesting that the party was bound to get defeated at the hands of INDIA, which is coalition of several Opposition parties.

was complete unanimity among the Indian National Democratic Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) partners that their fight was not against a political party, but for "saving the idea of India".

Rahul also said that there

Replying to a question at the media conclave from Assam, Rahul said there was a great deal of flexibility among the opposition leaders and he was very much impressed with

"The opposition is thinking about this election in a fundamentally different way than it though about any other election before", he said, while adding, opposition believes that the idea of India is under attack, concept of India is under attack, concept of free election, concept of free speech are now under mortal threat as far as BJP is concerned".

Maintaining that this was something that was unanimous, Rahul said, "which means our behaviour has to change and our flexibility has to increase and that we are now



fighting for the soul of India". On the issue of certain differences in some states, he said in bulk of places there are no differences and in some places where these exist, the differences are being ironed

The former Congress president expressed confidence that his party was certain to win the forthcoming assembly elec-tions in all the four states including Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. There is no way that we are not going to win in all these states, he asserted, while adding, even the BJP believed it internally that the Congress

was winning all in these states.
He said the opposition was
up against the financial and
media power as the BJP had created a single monopoly in Adani who not only owns media, but controls huge wealth as it had been concentrated in one gentleman. But, he added, the Congress has now learnt its lessons and it does not get distracted by the BJP's distracting and diversionary tactics.





PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ **NEW DELHI**

The 19th edition of "Exercise **▲** Yudh Abhyas" will be conducted from September 25-October 8 in Fort Wainwright, Alaska, USA. It is an annual exercise conducted jointly by the Indian Army and the United States Army. The previous edition of the Exercise was conducted in Auli, Uttarakhand, India in November 2022.

Indian Army contingent comprising of 350 personnel will participate in this edition of the exercise. The lead battalion from Indian side is affiliated to Maratha Light Infantry Regiment. 1-24 Infantry Battalion of 1st Brigade Combat Team will participate from the US side, army officials said here on Sunday.

Both sides will practice a series of tactical drills to enhance interoperability in conducting UN peacekeeping operations. Personnel from both sides will also hold detailed discussions to share their experiences and best prac-

The theme of the Exercise is 'Employment of an Integrated Battle Group in Mountain/ Extreme Climatic Conditions' under Chapter VII of United Nations mandate. A Command Post Exercise

and Expert Academic Discussions on selected topics will also form part of the schedule. The scope of the Field

Training Exercise includes val-

idation of Integrated Battle

Groups against hostile forces at

the Brigade level, Integrated Surveillance Grid at the Brigade/ Battalion level, employment of Heliborne/ Airborne elements and Force Multipliers, validation of logistics and casualty management during operations, evacuation and combat medical aid and other aspects as applicable to High Altitude Areas and Extreme Climatic Conditions.

The Exercise will also involve exchange of views and best practices in drills on a wide spectrum of combat skills including combat engineering, obstruction clearance, mine and Improvised Explosive

Devices warfare.
"EX YUDH ABHYAS-23" will facilitate both Armies to mutually learn from each other and further strengthen the bonds between the two armies.

3 proposed criminal laws people-centric, says Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Tnion Home Minister Amit Union Florie Williams and the three proposed criminal laws are people-centric, have the flavour of Indian soil and their main purpose is to protect the constitutional, human and personal rights of citizens. Addressing the International Lawyers' Conference organised by the Bar Council of India here, Shah also said the approach of the three bills is also to provide justice rather than mete out punishment.

He appealed to all lawyers in the country to provide their suggestions to the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS-2023), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS-2023) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA-2023) so that the country can have the best laws that benefit all. The three bills, which were introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 11, will replace the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Criminal Procedure Act, 1898, and the Indian Evidence

Act, 1872 respectively.

"India's criminal justice system was imprinted with colonial law. All three new bills do not have colonial imprint but have the flavour of Indian soil. The central point of these three proposed laws is to protect the constitutional and human rights of citizens as well as their personal rights," he said, adding that the initiative



has been taken to comprehensively change the criminal laws keeping in mind the presentday demands.

"These laws are coming after almost 160 years with a completely new approach and new system. Along with new initiatives, three initiatives have also been taken by the government to create a law-friendly ecosystem," he said. The first is e-courts, the second interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)and the third is adding new technology to these three proposed laws, Shah said.

"With the introduction of three laws and three systems, we will be able to remove the delays in our criminal justice system in less than a decade," he said. Shah said the basic objective of the old laws was to strengthen the British rule and the purpose was to punish, not to do justice. "The purpose of these three new laws is to provide justice, not punishment. Here is a step to deliver crim-

He said many changes have been made in the new laws to promote technology and the definition of documents has been greatly expanded. "Legal recognition has been given to electronic and digital records, messages available on digital devices have been recognised and summons will also be considered valid in all types of electronic modes — from SMS to email," he said.

The Home Minister said a new provision has been added with regard to mob lynching and the section related to sedition has been abolished and legalising the communi-ty service will also be done under these new laws. "I want to make an appeal to all the lawyers across the country to look at all these bills in detail. Your suggestions are very valuable. Send your suggestions to the Union Home Secretary and we will definitely consider those suggestions before finalising the laws," he said.

Roadshow in Varanasi today

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) announced a roadshow in Varanasi, paving the way for the highly-anticipated 3rd Global Maritime India Summit 2023 (GMIS). The event is scheduled on Monday at the Trade Facilitation Centre (TFC) here to bring together government officials, bureaucrats, industry players to discuss and deliberate on various facets of maritime infrastructure, trade, and development.

The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal will grace the occasion, joined by representatives from Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Anchored by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), the Varanasi roadshow will be a platform to explore the maritime sector's growth, foster collaboration and unlock opportunities for stakeholders in this vital sector.

witness presence of Prakash Jwala, Minister, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure & Transport, Nepal, Daya Shankar Singh, Minister of Transport, Govt of UP, Lakko Venkateshwarlu, Principal Secretary, Transport, Govt of UP, Kripa Nand Jha, Secretary (Transport), Government of Jharkhand, Dr Saumitra Mohan, Secretary (Transport), Government of West Bengal, and Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, Secretary (Transport), overnment of Bihar.

Sarbananda Sonowal expressed his enthusiasm for the roadshow by stating, 'With an unwavering commitment to fortify our logistics framework and the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is poised for remarkable transformation." He further added, "Our focus on waterways, from the Gati Shakti Initiative to the ambitious Jal Marg Vikas Project, signifies unlocking the vast potential of a course towards a brighter

transformative era is not only about strengthening our industry but also about embracing sustainability and environmental stewardship. The GMIS-2023 is where these aspirations will converge, partnerships will flourish, and our shared vision will materialise." Sanjay IWAI Bandopadhyay Chairman, stated, "As we look

ahead to the GMIS-2023, we envision a future where waterways are not just lifelines but also the catalysts for sustainable growth, innovation, and prosperity. Our commitment to harnessing the potential of waterways goes beyond mere trade; it is about building a future where hinterland communities thrive, where environmental preservation and cultural heritage are safeguarded, and where economic opportunities abound." He further added, "At the GMIS-2023, we will converge to explore groundbreaking ideas, a resolute dedication to forge collaborations and chart

ate a legacy that transcends generations, one that defines a new era of waterway development in India and beyond Ioin us on this transformative journey, and let's shape a future where waterways are not just a source of life and culture but also the driving force behind a thriving and

sustainable nation." GMIS-2023 is a premier maritime sector focused event to bring together pivotal figures from the industry to explore opportunities, understand challenges, and stimulate investment within India's maritime sector. Building upon the legacy of its preceding editions of 2016 and 2021, this third edition of the summit aims to unveil broader prospects for domestic and international maritime stakeholders and investors. More than 100 countries and several delegates from them are expected to participate in the Summit with exhibitors and investors from various domains of the maritime sector.

18th UPRTOU convocation tomorrow

The 18th convocation of Uttar Pradesh Rajarshi Tandon Open University (UPRTOU), will be held on September 26 at 10 am in the Atal auditorium located in Saraswati campus. The convocation will be presided over by Governor and Chancellor Anandiben Patel.

Chief guest Professor Shashi Kala Vanjari, Vice-Chancellor, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi, will deliver the convocation address. UP Minister of Higher Education Yogendra Upadhyay and UP Minister of State of Higher Education, Rajni Tiwari, will attend the convocation as a special guest.

At the convocation 26 gold medals will be given to students, of these nine gold medals will given to male students and 17 gold medals to female students. Besides, 20,734 students who have passed the session December 2022 and June 2023 will be awarded degrees. This information was given by Vice-Chancellor Prof Seema Singh in a press conference held on Sunday. Prof Singh said all been completed for organising the convocation in the Atal auditorium. The convocation will be held in Indian traditional dress. In the convocation Chancellor Gold Medal will be given to Neelam, a student of Baba Sadhav Ram College



Azamgarh Studies Centre. Neelam passed the MA Home Science examination in first class. The Vice-Chancellor said that this time on the instructions of the governor programmes of the 'Dikshatsav' were organised before the convocation in which seminars, poetry writing, patriotic songs, essay writing, speech competition, traditional sports, women conference, health awareness programme and sports competition were held. On the occasion of the convocation 10 Anganwadi centres will be presented a kit by the Chancellor on behalf of the university. In addition, 30 other Anganwadi centres will also be provided kits. On the occasion the outstanding teachers of the university and group dances will be performed by visuallyimpaired children of special school. Registrar Colonel Vinay Kumar, Professor Satyapal Tiwari, Dr Satish Chandra Jaisal and Dr. Prabhat Chandra

Mishra etc. were present in the

press conference. PREPARATIONS BEGIN: As 'pitra paksh' is starting from September 29, people have started making preparations for rituals for peace and salvation of their ancestors' souls. While many have planned trips to Prayagraj, Varanasi and Gaya, there are many others, especially those from abroad, who could not visit India to perform 'pind daan' of their loved ones. For these people, priests of the city are offering to perform the rituals in an online mode after bookings. In the Hindu culture, every year during the 'pitra paksh' period, people perform 'shradh' and offer prayers for some cities are considered important and ideal for these rituals, like Prayagraj, Varanasi and Gaya. In Prayagraj, the ritual begins with performing 'pind daan' and 'shradh' of ancestors with Kshar Karma. Because of the importance the

city holds in terms of these rituals, every year, large numbers of people visit Sangam during 'pitru paksha'. This year, the priests are anticipating an increase in the number of people after a lull of two years because of the pandemic. Their 'jajman' (customers) abroad are making online bookings through websites and applications. According to Shambhunath Tripathi 'Anshul', former principal of Triveni Sanskrit college, three duties of man have been specifically mentioned in the scriptures —duty towards Dev (God), Rishi (seer) and Pitra (parents).

"During 'pitra paksh', gratitude is expressed towards parents, ancestors and elders of the family as if one is not free from ancestral debt, his birth is considered meaningless," explained Tripathi. "Therefore, during 'pitra paksh', reverence is paid to ancestors by doing 'pind' daan in Sangam. It is believed that Lord Vishnu and all gods and goddesses residing in Tirthraj Prayag free the soul from the cycle of birth and death by providing salvation," he added. Abhishek Pandey, a priest, said that people from America, Holland, Canada, and Mauritius have made bookings for 'pind daan'. Online booking facility is available on social platforms too. Around 200 priests of Prayagraj are active on such platforms and have made arrangements to perform rituals online.

BJP workers listen to 'Mann Ki Baat' at 30,386 booths

The 105th episode of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' was heard by BJP workers at 30,286 booths of all 16 organisational districts of Kashi region, including Varanasi district and city units on Sunday. They resolved to imbibe the message given by the PM in his programme during the day. This time in the episode, the PM started by congratulating the live-streaming video of Chandrayaan-3's successful 'soft landing' on the Moon's south pole for achieving more than 80 lakh views. The prime minister also mentioned the two-day G20 Leaders' Summit organised by India. In his address the PM also spoke on India-Middle East-East Europe Economic Corridor, World Tourism Day on September 27, some youth in Nainital district created a unique horse library for children, a unique effort for animal conservation in Pushkar, Rajasthan, a 21-year-old girl from Germany Qasmi's passion for Indian music and her successful effort to revive a river named 'Soat' which was flowing decades ago and set a wonderful example of public participation and collectivity in Sambhal, UP, were explained in detail. The PM also spoke in detail about the special cleanliness campaign to be run on



Sunday (October 1) and Gandhi Jayanti (October 2). In this sequence, regional president (Kashi Region) Dilip Singh Patel listened to PM Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme at booth number 113 of Ravidas Mandal under Varanasi Cantt assembly constituency. After the programme, Patel, while addressing the workers, said that the successful organisation of G20 and the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon have increased India's respect and pride in the world under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi. "Today, the PM is known all over the world as a global leader," he said, adding that not only the BJP workers but the entire countrymen wait for PM's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme to be aired on the last Sunday of every month. This is

an encyclopedia, especially for the youth. Through this programme, he said that information not only increases but we also come face to face with every important work going on in the country and the world. Anil Srivastava, Nagendra,

Mandal president Shatrughan Patel, Surendra Patel, regional media in-charge Navratan Rathi, Santosh Solapurkar etc were prominently present among those who listened to 'Mann Ki Baat'. Elsewhere, Mahila Morcha's regional president Namrata Chaurasia listened to the prime minister's event with the party's women workers of the minority community at booth number 399 in the Cantonment area.

Uzma, Shabia Bano, Taslima, Muskaan, Rabia and others were also present on the

2-day seminar from today PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The GB Pant Social Science Institute (GBPSSI), Jhunsi, is organising a two-day national seminar titled, Political economy of Indias development challenges: Celebrating 75 years of India's Independence. Sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New

Delhi, the seminar will com-

mence on September 25.

According to director of the institute, Prof Badri Narayan, "The seminar aims to shed light on the relationship between politics and economics in India's developmental journey. It promises to be a gathering of some of the brightest minds in the field of social sciences, economics, and political studies". He said the seminar will encompass a wide range of themes, including economic reforms, social sector performance, India's developmental challenges, employment and labour issues, geopolitical conflicts and its implications among others. Scholars, researchers, policymakers and experts from various domains will present their research paper and insights during the event. The inaugural session and plenary session will be held on September 25 wherein eminent economists like Prof Praveen Jha of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi,

Prof Arup Mitra of South

Asian University, New Delhi,

Prof Minaketan Behra of JNU

and other academicians will

deliver lectures.

Global Maritime India Summit: Businessman's 13-yr-old son, kidnapped, murdered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In a shocking incident, a 13-Lyear-old son of a businessman was kidnapped and murdered in Shankargarh area here. His body was found in the forest of Chitrakoot on Sunday morning. On Saturday evening five hours after the kidnapping of his child a call from miscreants came on the father's mobile and the caller demanded ₹15 lakh from him and asked him to come to the forest of Dabhura of Rewa otherwise he would shoot his son. The father gave this information to the police. The police started the investigation by putting the number on surveillance. However, before the police reached the kidnappers, the body of the child was found in the forest around 8 am on Sunday. Prayagraj Commissioner Ramit Sharma in a press conference about four hours after the child's body was found said that a police encounter took place in Shankargarh with the miscreants. A constable was also injured. The commissioner said the accused knew the family of the child. The accused Sukhdev's brother Loknath used to drive the truck of the child's father.

About 40 km from Prayagraj district headquarters, Pushpraj Kesarwani alias Vicky family lives in Shakargarh. He has a transport business. Apart from his wife there was a 13-year-old son Shubh and 11-year -old daughter Shubhi in the family. According to family members, Shubh was playing around the shop in Shankargarh at 4 pm on Saturday and suddenly went missing from there. When he was not seen for a long time, the family searched for him but could not be trace him. Father Pushpraj informed the Shankargarh police about his

son being being missing.
About five hours after complaining to the police, the call was received on father's mobile phone at 9 pm which said "come to the forest with ₹15 lakh, otherwise we will shoot your son". Tension prevailed in the house as soon as the ransom call was received. The father informed the relatives about it. Then they told Shankargarh police about the ransom call.

The police then filed a kidnapping report against unknown persons. The police swung into action and the number from which the ransom call came in was put on

surveillance. Yamunanagar Abhinav Tyagi took details from family members. The police team was despatched on the basis of mobile location. On the other hand, a child's body was found in the forest of Arwara Mod on Sunday morning and people informed the police. When the police reached the spot, the body was identified as that of Shubh. The forest in which the body has been found is about 250 metres from the Ihansi-Mirzapur national highway.

The body of the child was tied and his mouth was gagged with some cloth. The Bargarh police station incharge Anjani Kumar Singh said on the basis of initial investigation, it seems that the child has been killed by hitting heavy stone on his head. There are serious injury marks on the head and ears.. The body has been sent for postmortem. Police Commissioner Ramit Sharma told mediapersons that Shubh Sanjay. Loknath drives Pushparaj's truck. Sukhdev is the brother of Loknath and had to come to his house. Shubh knew Loknath and Sukhdev. Shubh was playing at the shop at 4 pm on Saturday. Then Sukhdev went to Pushparaj's shop with his friend Sanjay. There he asked Shubh if he wanted to see rabbits in the forest. Since Shubh knew Sukhdev he went with him.

Sukhdev made a call on Pushpraj's phone around quarter to 9 which call was not received. After about 15 minutes, Pushpraj saw the missed call from unknown number and called back. The call receiver said that his son was kidnapped and asked him to come to the forest with ₹15 lakh. Pushpraj informed the Shankargarh police. When the police started calling on that number, it was found switched off. On checking its WhatsApp number the photo of Sukhdev was found which was recognised by Pushpraj. After this, the numbers were put on surveillance. Sharma claimed that Sukhdev, along with Sanjay and Ganesh, had hatched a conspiracy of kidnapping. When the police put the numbers on surveillance, the third person Ganesh, nephew of Sukhdey, was found Ganesh. When the police picked up Ganesh, he said Shubh has been taken to the forest of Bargarh and murdered. He told the police that Sukhdev and Sanjay were hiding in the Shankargarh forests. After the force of several police stations and SOG teams surrounded Sukhdev and Sanjay in the forest of Shankargarh, both of them opened fire on the police team. Both were shot in the leg. A constable was also injured in the firing. All of them had been admitted to Swaroop Rani Nehru Hospital. Ganesh, Sukhdev and Sanjay are being questioned to find out the reasons behind the kidnapping. The reason behind the kidnapping is not clear. **COMPLAINT:** UP Board

secretary Dibyakant Shukla lodged a complaint with the Prayagraj police after a fake appointment letter issued for the post of clerk at Public Inter College in Kerakat of Jaunpur bearing his forged signature came to light. Shukla clarified that Secondary Education Board, commonly known as UP Board, does not appoint clerks or any other post in the schools of the state of its own and asked all to be vary of such unscrupulous elements who issue such fake letters.

The letter, shared by the secretary, was issued in the name of Rajeev Ratan Singh of Virampur village of Jaunpur.

The fraudster had used the scanned signature of the secretary on a fake letter head of the Secondary Education Council Board. "The appointment letter that has been printed on the letterhead of the Secondary Education Council Board, Uttar Pradesh is fake as this is not one used by the office. Also, the letter number, UPS 821 printed in the appointment letter, is not the letter number of the council's office," Shukla said. He added that some unscrupulous elements are tarnishing the image of the council and the state government by misleading the public and are giving rise to a cognizable crime in the society. He has sent an application to the Civil Lines police incharge to immediately file a first information report (FIR)

Week-long Ganeshotsav ends

dhe 115th week-long The 115th week 10.18
Ganeshotsav celebrated under the auspices of Nutan Balak Ganeshotsav Samaj Seva Mandal ended with the 'aarti' amidst the chanting of mantras here on Sunday. Respecting the High Court's decision not to immerse the idols in Ganga river and in view of the Supreme Court's orders not to immerse idols in ponds, a resolution was taken to keep the festival idol safe in view of consame. Before this a procession of Lord Ganesha was taken out in a 'palki' (palanquin) accompanied by musical instruments, which started from Ganesh Bhawan and reached Panchganga Ghat via Dudhvinayak, Rangiladas, Thatheri Bazar, Sudia, Bulanala, Golghar, Bhairavnath, Jatanbar, Bibihatiya, Rajmandir, Brahmaghat and Durga Ghat. The students were walking on the route singing the traditional verse 'Nutan Balak



Mel Chalo Hai, Mag Mein Roko Mat Bhai.... On the way devotees performed 'aarti' of Lord Ganesha at various places. In the morning Ganesh Atharvashirsha Sahastravartan took place under the guidance of Vedamurthy Veereshwar Narayan Datar in which Pandit Praveen Vasant Patwardhan, Pt Soumitra Prabhakar Shukla, Pt Sanidhya Srinidhi Bapat, Pt Amit Nath Tiwari, Pt Abhishek Pandey, Pt

Ratate, Pt Sudarshan Pathak, Pt Utkarsh Madhav Ratate, Pt Lakshit Vikas Hoshing etc were present. Sahastranamarchan of Lord Ganesha was also done with Sahastra modaks, raisins and makhanas. The main hosts were Purushottam Mahajan, Prakhar Praveen Patwardhan and Lakshit Vikas Hoshing. On the occasion Lord Ganesha was beautifully

Hemant Joshi, Pt Gaurav Gopal

Earlier on the penultimate day, the swing and waterfall of Lord Ganesha were decorated. On the occasion the festival venue was decorated with attractive flowers and leaves. Under the guidance of Veereshwar Narayan Datar, Ritwik Ramkrishna Bapat performed Sahasrana march with cashew nuts. Shodashopachara worship of Lord Ganesha was done under the guidance of Ved Murti Hemant Joshi. The Jagannath Telang. The award distribution programme was held under the chairmanship of Shruti Deshpande. The chief guest was Devendra Pandya in which Vedic scholar Srinivas Laxmikant Puranik was honoured in the programme. The participants of various competitions were also awarded in the programme. At night in the music conference in memory of Pt Pundalik Krishna Bhagwat, the artistes presented shehnai.

decorated with kamini leaves,

bela, rose and juhi flowers.

Peace committee meeting held Goddess Vindhyavasini. Now

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

In view of the festivals the Legister peace committee meeting was held at all police stations on Saturday. Circle Officer (CO/city) Anjay Singh, CO (Sadar) Shailendra Tripathi, CO (Chunar) Uma Shankar Singh, CO (Lalganj) Manjary Rao and CO (Operation) Anil Kumar Pandey held the meetings in their respective circle at every police station. The people were requested to cooperate with the administration. The administration was committed to conduct the programmes peacefully. The police officers appealed to people to inform the police directly in case of any confusion but not to take the law into their own hands.

DIRECTIVE: District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan has asked the officials concerned to take a clear stand based on facts instead of uploading ambiguous reports in cases registered on Jansunwai portal. Such direction was issued by her in view of the serious attitude of the government on the issue of the people's problems. She directed the officials that in cases related to measurement of land disputes should be dispose on merit and signature of two independent witnesses should be done and uploaded. She

directed for regular review by

the officials to sit in their offices from 10 am to 12 noon and solve the problems of people on merit. The officials were directed to upload the disposal report only after the satisfaction of the aggrieved and in the closed cases supervising officers were directed to examine them on a random basis. Moreover, in a month minimum 30 cases are to be examined. She warned to take action against those who were found guilty of false reporting. Moreover, those officials will be punished whose related cases were brought for disposal repeatedly. Regarding public land as well as government land the officials were directed to take strict action against encroachers. She directed the officials to dispose of cases on merit and without inordinate delay. **ELECTION:** State secre-

tary of Bharativa Janata Party (BJP) and district incharge of the party affairs Anamika Chaudhary told the party workers that strengthening of the polling booths is the best way to win the election. These views were expressed by her while addressing the party workers on Saturday. Giving tips to the workers to win the 2024 election she said the ongoing drive will prove to be

tehsil and block level officials, the factor for victory so no laxity was acceptable at all. She COs and SOs related to the Jansunvai portal. She directed said that the Ayushman Bhav drive launched by the government was an effective way to connect people with the party so it was the need of the hour that we cooperate with the government machinery for its grand success. She asked the workers to find out eligible persons for different welfare schemes and make them available properly. She said under the drive each worker should be connected with the people directly whether the person is a beneficiary or not. To strengthen the booth she asked the workers to hold meetings, be well acquainted with each worker and train them so that they can effectively publicise the achievements the government. The meeting was also attended by Brij Bhushan Singh, Uttar Maurya, Gyan Prakash Dubey and others. PROGRAMME:

Renowned literature and lecturer in GD Binani PG College Dr Dhruvji Pandey while delivering the welcome speech in a cultural programme organised under the aegis of Vindhya Kalakar Manch Trust Mirzapur on Saturday said Kajali was not merely a song but an art which can teach the society. He threw light over the journey of the song which was first sung as prayer of

grammes are being organised abroad too, he added. Veteran Kajali singer Urmila Srivastava said as the guest of honour that it is the time to promote the art for the next generation. The evening started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and garlanding of the portrait of goddess Vindhyavasini by Urmila Srivastava and a prayer of the goddess was presented with a Kajali song. Thereafter Mantoo Mishra who mesmerised the gathering. The other performers were Shiv Lal Gupta, Umesh Kanaujiya, Sanjay Sureela, Suresh Maurya and Samrat who regaled the gathering throughout the night. Proposing vote of thanks the president of the organisation Amar Nath Shukla thanked the family members of former minister late Bhagwat Pal who made available most of the arrangements for the programme and other members of the organisation whose hard labour led to the success of the event. Prominent among those present were veteran journalist Bhola Nath Pandey, DIO Om Prakash Upadhyay, Assistant

Tourism Officer Rajesh Bharti,

Vijay, Hukum Maurya, Umesh

Kanaujiya, Pancham Ram, Ajit

Upadhyay and Bankelal.

the folk song has become so

popular that Kajali pro-

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Make believe?

India must put the lid on US' Canada envoy's allegation on Nijjar's killing

he killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a pro-Khalistan Canadian of Indian descent, by alleged Indian agents has taken the India-Canada relations to their lowest ebb. As the situation unravelled, Canada expelled a senior Indian diplomat and India reciprocated. The visa services to Canada in New Delhi have been suspended. Though Nijjar's killing is the trigger for the current spat, the relationship between India and Canada has remained strained for quite some time now. Canada has a sizeable Indian population from Punjab and many of them are vocal Khalistan supporters. India has repeatedly asked Canada to rein in such rogue elements but the demand has fallen on deaf ears. This is an unfortunate situation as both countries have historically enjoyed friendly ties. Now, yet another episode has exacerbated the situation. The allegations made by the US Ambassador to Canada regarding India's involvement in Nijjar's killing have indeed harmed India's image. While these allegations have not been substantiated, they



have cast a shadow over India's international standing and strained its relations with Canada. Allegedly, the said report prompted Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to make in the Canadian Parliament his controversial accusation of a "potential" connection between the Indian Government and Nijjar's murder on June 18. India has vehemently rejected Trudeau's claims, labelling them "absurd" and "motivated".

However, recent allegations by US' Canada Ambassador David Cohen, quoting the Five Eyes network, have put India in a precarious position. The Five Eyes intelligence network, comprising the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, has been

a cornerstone of global intelligence sharing. But David Cohen's comment marks the first acknowledgement by a US Administration official of intelligence sharing with Canada within the Five Eyes alliance. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has expressed deep concern over Prime Minister Trudeau's allegations against India and emphasised that the US is closely coordinating with Canada on the matter, aiming for accountability through a thorough investigation. It is indeed a serious situation for India. Our Government must counter it most vigorously as the onus now lies on India to prove its innocence. It must let the world know that though Nijjar --- officially designated as a terrorist by India in 2020 --- was a proclaimed offender who celebrated Beant Singh's assassination and openly advocated armed struggle against India, our nation does not support extrajudicial killing and had asked the Canadian Government on several occasions to check anti-India activities on its soil but with no luck. While Trudeau desperately tries to resurrect his falling ratings by playing in the hands of Khalistan supporters in Canada who wield certain influence and power there, he must realise that it would be counterproductive in the long run as history is replete with examples where extremists have bitten the very hand that fed them.



Tribal youth perform a cultural programme on the eve of Karma, a harvest festival, in Ranchi

China's Afghan plan against India, US



KS TOMAR

In case China succeeds in cultivating relations with the Taliban regime, it will be easier to exert its authority in these troubled areas

hina is at it again. Nothing can deter it from indulging in Anti India and Anti US grandiloquence besides projecting itself as a certain replacement of America as 'Super Power' hence making relentless efforts to enhance its relevance and area of influence in Asia as well as other countries in the world.

Against this backdrop, undaunted by the image of the Taliban infamous for its medieval mindset, anti-women dictate, tendency to harbour terrorists etc. China is poised to adopt a new strategy and long-term plan to create trouble for India and the United States which is evident from its recent decision to open a new mission in Kabul with immediate effect.

recently China has announced the appointment of Zhao Zhaohui as full-time ambassador to Afghanistan which makes it the first country in the world to establish a direct relationship. Several nations including India had embassies in Kabul but the volatile situation changed after the Taliban took over this troubled country.

China is eyeing mineral wealth Experts say that China has

ignored world opinion to have any official diplomatic relations with the Taliban but posting of a full-time ambassador amounts to indirect recognition and such a step could not be taken even by neighbouring Pakistan which used to claim the 'Savior' of the Kabul regime. China has been adopting a Soft policy towards the Taliban which was aimed at alluring the new regime in its debt trap to exploit immense mineral wealth. China's company Gochin expressed its willingness on April 13, 2023, to invest 10 billion USD in Afghanistan's Lithium deposits which had been confirmed by the Taliban's Ministry of Mines and petroleum.

The Chinese company has assured the Taliban regime that it will create 10 lakhs indirect and 120,000 airect jobs in this country. Similarly, Xinjiang Central an impression of subsequent-Asia Petroleum and Gas Co ly benefiting the people of (CAPEIC) signed a \$540 million Afghanistan in the job sector deal to extract oil from northern besides earning huge revenues.

Afghanistan's Amu Darya basin In January 2023 which is under the plan to go for a bigger kill of vast mineral wealth valuing about one trillion. As per calculations of a joint team from the Pentagon, US Geological Service and USAID, Afghanistan's mineral deposits are worth at least \$900bn. As per data, vast mineral wealth in Afghanistan is untapped so far which includes Gold, Copper, Iron, Graphite.

China targets the US China is keen to send the

message to the world that it can spread its influence in other nations like the United States which is under its ambition to become a superpower. It intends to expand its China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor through Afghanistan which may create security concerns for several neighbors. China may soon start oil exploration.

Analysts opine that it will not be easy to succeed in Afghanistan which is known as the "graveyard of empires" and witnessed defeats of several nations including the United States. The Soviet Union was defeated in the 20th century though China's entry was based on its policy to exploit minerals hence it is trying to create ly benefiting the people of



CHINESE

MUSLIMS ARE FLEEING OWING TO PERSECUTION IN THEIR HOME **PROVINCE** XINJIANG TO **SEEK SANCTUARY** IN AFGHANISTAN

China has abandoned Pakistan and is directly trapping the Taliban regime which has already fallen to its prey. Taliban's desperate effort to survive is also a contributory factor in developing close ties with China which has pounced upon this rare opportunity. China will target Afghanistan to expand its Belt and Road initiative which involves an investment of billions of USD and the Taliban may accept it as a possible methodology for generating employment and a path of development that may prove to be a Mirage.

Given a wishful thinking of Pakistan, efforts were made to sell to the world that it would dictate the Taliban regime hence it manipulated to keep India out of the Doha dialogue which prepared a roadmap of US troops withdrawal from Afghanistan. But turmoil and strained ties between Pakistan and the Taliban have changed the entire scenario. Pakistan has been at the forefront since 2021 when the Taliban assumed the reign of power in Kabul but its 'joy-ride' to needle India proved to be 'short-lived' as the former has accused the latter of promoting and supporting Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan(TTP) which killed 179 people in Pakistan in 2022. Piqued over the grand

Taliban who desperately need dome protector following their failure to get international recognition though two years have elapsed since they took over the reign of power in Kabul on August 15, 2021. Xi's absence at the G20 did not make much difference and India produced the Delhi declaration which was unanimity thereby enhancing its stature in the world diplomatic arena. Due to a huge investment of about Rs 22,350 crore in various projects, education and social sectors, India faces the unimaginable challenge of dealing with the Taliban if they walk into the trap laid by China. Second, India's northsouth corridor may be affected after the active involvement of China in Afghanistan. Taliban have appreciated India's investment in Afghanistan in the past but nothing is certain about future investment. Chinese Muslims are fleeing owing to persecution in their home province Xinjiang to seek sanctuary in Afghanistan. In case, China succeeds in cultivating relations with the Taliban regime then it will make it easier for

success of G20 in New Delhi,

China may like to capture the

(The writer is political analyst and senior journalist; views are personal)

China to exert its authority in

these troubled areas.

New school education for emerging new India



New India faces new challenges, especially in the field of education and skill development, which must be addressed

n a rapidly evolving global landscape, the education sector is experiencing a profound transformation. This transformation is especially critical for a country like India, where education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of its burgeoning population. Burlington English, in collaboration with ScooNews, recently released a groundbreaking report titled 'Unlocking Success: Turning Policy and Frameworks into Real-World Action.' The report presents a compelling roadmap for the implementation of the National Curriculum Framework in India. By drawing insights from educators across the nation and offering practical toolkits, it has the potential to transform the school education landscape in India, making it more inclusive, innovative, and future-ready.

This report sheds light on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) implementation roadmap, drawing insights from the experiences and perspectives of over 1000 school teachers across six states in India. The key findings of this report discuss how it has the potential to revolutionise school education in India. One of the report's most compelling insights is its emphasis on embracing the 'Scope for Failure' as a crucial

element of the learning journey. This perspective encourages a shift in the way educators and students perceive failure, turning it into an opportunity. This mindset shift is fundamental in preparing students for the challenges of the future. Besides, it acknowledges the importance of English and treats it as a skill that helps employability in India and abroad. The report suggests a two-language set up to take load off the students. One of the strengths of the report lies in the extensive research con-

ducted. The insights gathered

from over 1000 teachers,

provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the Indian education system. This diverse sample size ensures that the report's recommendations are grounded in the realities faced by educators at all levels. The report addresses several key themes that are crucial to shaping the future of education in India:

The concept of 'Future Schools' explores the need for educational institutions to adapt to the rapidly changing technological landscape. It emphasises the importance of incorporating innovative teaching methods and cutting-edge technologies to prepare students for a world that is vastly different from what it was a decade ago.

Recognising that teachers are the backbone of any educational system, the report delves into the importance of providing teachers with the necessary resources, training, and professional development opportunities. Empowering teachers is key to improving the quality of education. To translate these key themes into actionable spanning the K-12 domain, steps, the report provides

eight essential action points and three project toolkits designed for classroom implementation. These practical tools equip educators with the resources and strategies needed to transform their classrooms into dynamic learning environments. This hands-on approach bridges the gap between policy and practice, ensuring that the NCF is implemented effectively.

The report is particularly well-suited for the educational landscape of 'New India,' which is characterized by its aspiration for innovation, inclusivity, and excellence. The report aligns with NCF as the report directly addresses the NCF, aligning its recommendations with the national education policy framework. This ensures that its insights can be seamlessly integrated into the existing educational structure. The emphasis on adaptive assessments and teacher empowerment promotes inclusivity in education, catering to the diverse needs of students in a

country as diverse as India. (The writer is CEO of Burlington Group, India & Asia-Pacific; views are personal)

ARE SENIOR CITIZENS A BURDEN?

Sir — Senior citizens possess the potential to influence government policies and should, therefore, be respected for their wealth of life experience. To support seniors, numerous schemes should be implemented. While the government allocates substantial funds for welfare programs, senior citizens face dwindling incomes due to declining bank interest rates. Some may receive meager pensions, which are still subject to income tax. Hence, senior citizens deserve certain privileges, including concessions in train and air travel, as well as essential medical assistance. It's disheartening that Indian senior citizens are ineligible for medical insurance after the age of 75, denied loans on EMI terms, and even refused driving licenses. They have faithfully paid taxes and insurance premiums throughout their working years, and it is unjust that they have now become a burden on society.

Jayanthy CK Maniam | Chennai

UNPARLIAMENTARY BEHAVIOR

Sir —In response to the obscene communal statements made by BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri, a prominent political figure issued a statement, expressing remorse "if" the Opposition felt hurt by the member's remarks. The use of the word "if" distinctly implies that the BJP/NDA feels no regret for Bidhuri's offensive comments, suggesting they find nothing objectionable about them. This stance is framed as an act of magnanimity and liberalism on the part of the party and government, conditional upon the Opposition's feelings. It reflects the divisive philosophy of "Hindi Hindu Hindustan" that has firmly rooted itself in national politics.

This attitude indicates that, within Parliament, the ruling party MP's offensive words should concern only the Opposition, along with the targeted religious community outside Parliament. It appears that there is no expectation of shame or concern from the MPs of the ruling party, the NDA government, the BJP,

Row with Canada

THE EDITOR



he world is currently experiencing severe tension due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and China's contentious policies. This has instilled fear of an impending economic recession. In this delicate situation, the Trudeau government of Canada has exacerbat-

ed tensions by levying unjustified accusations against the Indian government. Canada, known for being a hub of Khalistani activities, not only supports these organizations for political gain but also justifies their reprehensible actions as a form of freedom of expression. In light of these developments, it is advisable for India to reconsider its political and commercial ties with Canada. Just two months ago, Khalistani supporters demonstrated their autocratic tendencies by displaying the assassination of former PM Indira Gandhi in Canada, an act that was shockingly labeled as an expression of freedom. Consequently, India should adopt a firm stance

in its dealings with Canada. Jahangir Shaikh | Mumbai

in response to the worst possible comments made within the legislative body. The onus of protest is unfairly placed solely on the Opposition and Muslims. This demonstrates a moral failing on the part of the heavyweight politician and his party/government.

Kajal Chatterje | Kolkata

OBC'S STRUGGLE FOR FAIR DEAL

Sir — As we analyse the available data, it becomes evident that there is a significant underrepresentation of individuals from Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the leadership positions of our country's central universities. To illustrate, out of all the Vice-Chancellors in these universities, merely five belong to the OBC category. Similarly, when we examine the position of registrars, only three are from backward

Shockingly, a mere 4.5 percent of the reserved professorial positions in central universities have been occupied by individuals from OBCs. This trend is not unique to professors but extends to associate and assistant professors as well.

Furthermore, the situation is exacerbated by the misuse of the "creamy layer" or even Hindus and Indians as a whole, concept, which has led to the unjust depri-

vation of caste certificates for OBC individuals. This arbitrary restriction of rights with a nominal income limit of Rs 6 or 8 lakhs severely hampers the prospects of future generations. Curiously, no such creamy layer or similar restrictions apply to other reserved categories, allowing the children of senior officers from these categories to enjoy reservation benefits for generations.

It is imperative to emphasise that we cannot progress as a nation by leaving behind a significant portion of our society. To illustrate the magnitude of the issue, if we tally the vacant teaching positions in central government institutions, we find that a staggering forty to sixty percent of OBC posts remain unfilled.

The loss of 16,000 medical seats allocated for OBCs is nothing short of a grave injustice. The responsibility for finding a solution to this issue lies squarely with the government. We must not neglect the wellbeing and empowerment of a substantial part of our population, especially when the facts clearly indicate disparities.

Satyavan Saurabh | Bhiwani

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FIRST COLUMN ZEN BUDDHISM: LAW OF ATTRACTION

A robust mind can develop the qualities to manifest the 'Law of Attraction'



eons ago a strapping youngster gained admission into an estimable Temple of Knowledge. He was fortunate to be imparted precious pearls of wisdom of Zen Buddhism by sagacious and knowledgeable masters. Over some time, he attained a reasonable degree of compassion and insight into the human mind. During his tutelage what struck him most was the simplicity, humility and truthfulness of his teachers who practiced Zen Buddhism.

What is Zen Buddhism?

As per Norman Fischer Zen Buddhism is: "A special transmission outside the scriptures.

No dependency on words and letters.

Pointing directly to the human mind. Seeing into one's nature and attaining Buddhahood."

The cornerstone of the practice is that over some time, through unflinching practice of the appropriate techniques, a postulant becomes aware and awakened. The mind of such a person becomes pristine and gains clarity in the thought process. However, it is well-nigh impossible to effectuate such a state without the grace of a Guru, who can be thought of as the doorway to the ambrosia of divinity. The young monk was directed by the Masters of the monastery to spread the knowledge of Zen Buddhism. Significantly, the now more spiritually aware monk uttered only the truth and never denounced anyone.

Powers of the Human Mind

Exhausted and weary after relentless travel, one day he sat under a majestic blossoming tree. The monk was feeling ravenous and wished that his hunger would be satiated. Quite unexpectedly a maiden walking that way offered him a bowl filled with food, and no sooner did the monk express his desire. He was taken aback at the turn of events and expressed his gratitude to the damsel.



After the hearty meal, the monk felt extremely thirsty. He pined for a glass of water and sure enough, a stripling youngster offered him juices to quench his thirst. The monk was extremely beholden and appreciative of this serendipitous act of kindness. The mind of the monk was now suffused with joy as his twin desires of food and liquid were satiated with remarkable ease. He now wished to sleep. Suddenly it darkened and there was a cloud cover across the sky. The weather which was arid and hot turned salubrious. After sleeping for hours together he felt reinvigorated. The monk, when hungry was satiated with food, when thirsty was provided with drinks and was comforted by angels when he felt worn out. The Law of Attraction

His thoughts and words were resonating in the universe and the mind became a unique springboard wherein whatever he wished for, eventuated. Once trained, the mind develops a few qualities. It becomes luminous and radiant, light as a feather and not weighed down by the baggage of negative thoughts. The monk was hungry, thirsty and deprived of rest. He meant it; there was no dubiety or incertitude in his mind. The mind was not wavering and his desires did not oscillate between "hope to be fed" or "if provided will partake of food." A robust and radiant mind that can authentically develop the qualities of the Law of Attraction knows the art of letting go, dropping all affectation. The unique mantra of this success is when an individual genuinely believes in the production of dreams and corrals thoughts to be efficacious ones. Pre-eminently for an individual blessed with these attributes, the Law of Attraction operates and resounds quite amazingly. "All that we are is a result of what we have thought," said Gautama Buddha the Enlightened One.

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

Simultaneous polls are the way forward



Frequent elections impose enormous social and economic costs on the nation, which leads to corruption and disruption

he Union Government has set up a committee under the chairmanship of the former President of India, Ramnath Govind to examine holding simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha (LS), state assemblies, panchayats and other local bodies. Even as the committee has kicked off the deliberations (its first meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2023) the idea is being staunchly opposed by many political parties. The opposition isn't new as in 2019 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi convened a meeting on June 19 that year to discuss 'One Nation, One Election' (ONOE), it was boycotted by about 50 per cent of the parties who were invit-

What are the grounds for opposition? A major ground for their opposition

is that this will be an onslaught on the federal polity. hence, unconstitutional. The parties argue that in a scenario of simultaneous poll to both the LS and all the state assemblies, the national issues will dominate over the state-specific subjects. This may yield fortuitous benefits to the dominant national party as the voter won't be able to clearly articulate his/her choice while casting a vote for electing members of the assembly.

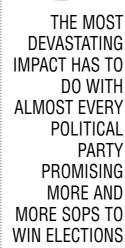
The national party getting a clear majority in the LS who does not enjoy the confidence of the state subjects on local issues will thus get to rule the states as well. Most opposition parties fear that BJP which enjoys a clear edge at the national level will be able to install its governments across the country. This will violate the federal character of the constitution which envisages running the affairs of the state in sync with local needs and aspirations.

The above line of argument is completely flawed. It presumes that while voting at the same time for the Parliament and the Assembly, the choice of the voter will get obliterated to favour the dominant national party (read: BJP). How could a mere act of asking her to press the button for choosing candidates for two entirely different elections - one for the LS and the other for the state Assembly - around the same time lead to obliteration? It grossly underestimates the ability of the voter to make 'educated and informed choices on national and local issues. That this isn't the case; that the voter is intelligent enough to make the right choice is amply corroborated by the results of LS polls in 2019 when elections to some State Assemblies, viz Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, were held co-terminus.

Despite an overriding national narrative favouring Prime Minister Modi, voters in these States showed clear preference for regional parties, namely the YSR Congress and the Biju Janata Dal, who got an absolute majority in the assembly. Just because the voters exercised franchise at the same time for both the LS and the State did not deter them from giving overrid-ing importance to local issues. The fallacy of the opposition's argument may be seen from another angle.

In the above example, apart from securing a clear majority in the state Assembly, the YSR Congress and the Biju Janata Dal also cornered a major chunk of seats from the state in the LS. Now, if one were to believe opposition that vot-





(The writer is a policy

the same timing) then are we to say 'local issues are dominating over the national issues'?

The crux of the matter is: that the voter is intelligent enough to make a distinction. While voting for a candidate in the LS election, she is guided by national issues whereas, in the Assembly election local issues dominate her mind. She won't mix up things just because she has to press the relevant buttons around the same time. There is nothing unconstitutional in holding simultaneous elections.

The founding fathers of the Indian constitution had contemonly. Indeed, things were on the right track till the mid-60s, when the then ruling dispensation disturbed the apple-cart by the 'premature' dissolution of some state assemblies (1968/1969) and LS (1970). Over time, the mismatch got aggravated with the dissolution of many more assemblies. If, during the initial phase (from 1952 to 1967) when elections to both the LS and state assemblies were held concurrently, everything was hunky dory, how come now, restoration of that very dispensation be construed as an assault on federalism.

The existing system wherein a State Assembly goes to polls almost every other year imposes unprecedented social and economic costs on the nation. It is not just the official expense of conducting elections (in a big state like Maharashtra, it can go up to Rs 1,000 crores) but also

several thousand crores being spent by political parties. In turn, this gives a boost to corruption and other unethical practices even as parties seek to raise funds to support the mammoth expenditure.

Then, there is a continuous distraction from issues of governance even as the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) - each time an election exercise is taken up - leads to the stoppage of all major policy decisions that impede development work. The delay in project implementation and resulting cost escalation (a case in point, the delay in completion of the dediplated simultaneous elections cated freight corridor' project) imposes an unsustainable fiscal burden.

A third indeed the most devastating impact has to do with almost every political party promising more and more sops to win elections. After the five guarantees promised by the grand old party in Karnataka did the trick, it is giving guarantees in almost all state elections due this year. Others such as AAP are following suit. Such sops have the potential of denuding the state exchequer.

Finally, given the political parties in election mode year after year, no incumbent Government at the Centre has the gumption to implement hard reforms, particularly considering that the party at the helm has stakes in the states as well. A case in point is fertilizer subsidy which the then finance minister Arun Jaitley promised to prune drastically; yet

ues but has increased by leaps and bounds (during 2022-23, it was Rs 255,000 crore). To end these maladies, the subsisting system has to go and the ONOE restored in sync with the intent of the authors of the Indian Constitution. This will enable both the Centre and States to focus on governance for a full five years without any distraction. This will help save thousands of crores in election expenses, ensure continuity of policy decisions enabling unhindered project execution and development work, drastically curtail election-oriented populist sops and give a boost to the implementation of hard reforms. Opposition parties have pointed towards uncertainties that could arise if the ruling party loses the vote of confidence before its mandated term. But they need to recognise that this can at best be a rare situation and not a matter of routine (the public gives a mandate to a government to run its fullterm and all stakeholders should ensure that this is honoured). Still, such a scenario (albeit rare) can be addressed by either electing a new leader (who enjoys the confidence of the House) or holding a fresh election for the "residual" term.

fertiliser subsidy not only contin-

Apart from required constitutional amendments, the switchover to ONOE will entail some increase in expenses on procuring extra EVM and VVPAT. But that is a very small price for achieving monumental



Clean drinking water through taps has brought about a radical change in the lives of the residents of Bundelkhand, but challenges remain

Bundelkhand has been traditionally a drought-prone area with frequent droughts; the people had to work hard, and travel several kilometres in some cases to get clean drinking water. The Bundelkhand region of India grapples with several issues, including heavy reliance on rainfall, inadequate irrigation, and susceptibility to climate change and droughts. This area, encompassing thirteen economically disadvantaged and less-developed districts, heavily depends on agriculture for both employment and economic progress. While agriculture is pivotal for the region's economic advancement, it frequently faces disruptions due to recurring droughts. In this situation, clean drinking water is nothing short of a luxury.



(The writer is a social

activist, based in Uttar Pradesh; views are personal)

Access to clean drinking water is a fundamental right that has long eluded many rural households in India. Recognising this dire need, the 'Jal Jeevan Mission' scheme was launched with a singular goal: to provide clean drinking water to every rural family through taps. In Uttar Pradesh, the 'Har Ghar Jal Yojana', a part of the 'Jal Jeevan Mission', has witnessed remarkable success in the Bundelkhand region, fundamentally changing the lives of its residents. The Jal Jeevan Mission has transformed the Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions, which have suffered from water scarcity for decades. It has turned the dream of having pure drinking water in every household into a reality. The mission has saved these regions from major

drinking water crises, providing clean water to thousands of

villages. The mission has involved laying pipelines, constructing water tanks, establishing water treatment plants, increasing water sources, and providing tap water connections at an impressive pace. This initiative has prioritized drought-affected areas, villages with water quality issues, aspirational districts, and those affected by diseases like Japanese **Encephalitis and Encephalitis** Syndrome.

The Jal Jeevan Mission aimed to provide 'domestic tap connections' to 2,62,29,815 families by 2024 in Uttar Pradesh. Under the 'Har Ghar Jal Yojana', a daily supply of 55 litres of water per villager was promised. As of September 14, 2023, this mission has already made significant strides, with tap water facilities reaching 1,60,20,616 families and benapproximately

9,61,23,696 people. The Jal Jeevan Mission is not just about providing clean drinking water but also about creating employment opportunities. Training programs have been initiated, with 13 youths being trained under each Gram Panchayat. These efforts have empowered rural youth by providing training in various trades, including plumbing, electrical work, motor mechanics, fitting, masonry, and pump operation. "We wish to ensure people's participation so that they become aware and stakeholders. After ten years it is the people who

ating these facilities" says Anurag Srivastava, the principal secretary of Uttar Pradesh.

In addition to employment opportunities, the mission focuses on making rural women self-reliant by training five women from each village in water testing for clean drinking water. These women use field test kits to check the water quality in their villages, assessing 11 different parameters in sources such as taps, wells, hand pumps, and tube wells. So far, more than 4,87,955 women have been trained in water testing, ensuring the quality of water supplied. The provision of clean drinking water has had a profound impact on public health. It has reduced the prevalence of waterborne diseases such as would be managing and operdiarrhoea, cholera, typhoid, Hamirpur, Banda, Chitrakoot,

and malaria. "There has been a marked fall in diseases in our village after the water plant started operating six months back," says Hasmukh Parihar,

Gram Pradhan. The Bundelkhand region has seen remarkable progress under the Har Ghar Jal Yojana. As of now, 1,280,292 functional household tap connections (FHTCs) have been provided out of a total of 1,419,730 FHTCs in the region. This means that 7,681,752 villagers in Bundelkhand have access to clean drinking water through

The Bundelkhand Piped Drinking Water Project is a significant part of the Jal Jeevan Mission. Work on this project is underway in seven cities: Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalaun, 35 projects in the Bundelkhand region. These projects include intake wells, water treatment plants, clear water reservoirs, and overhead tanks, all aimed at ensuring a steady supply of clean drinking water. Indeed, Har Ghar Jal Yojana is changing lives but there is a long way to go till total coverage is secured. Besides, issues of the quality of water and its perennial supply must be ensured. While the project is providing the drinking water it has yet to seep into the psyche of the people as a lot of it is still wasted and often people do not use it at all for different reasons. Thus creating awareness must be an integral part of the project and be given priority.

and Mahoba. There are a total

of 71 schemes operating under

US provided Canada intelligence on Nijjar's killing: NYT

The US provided Canada with intelligence after the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, but communications intercepted by Ottawa were more definitive and led it to accuse India of orchestrating the plot, The New York Times has reported citing sources.

The report came on Saturday as the top US diplomat in Canada confirmed that there was "shared intelligence among Five Eyes partners' that had prompted Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's offensive allegation against India in the killing of a Khalistani extremist on Canadian soil.

The allegations have infuriated India, which rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case. India also accused Canada of being a safe



Nijjar, the chief of the banned Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF), was killed in Surrey in British Columbia on June 18. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

The United States has urged India to cooperate with Canada in its investigations.

"In the aftermath of the

killing, US intelligence agencies offered their Canadian counterparts context that helped Canada conclude that India had been involved," the NYT reported, quoting unnamed allied officials as

Yet what appears to be the "smoking gun," intercepted communications of Indian diplomats in Canada indicating involvement in the plot, was gathered by Canadian officials, allied officials said.

David Cohen, US Ambassador to Canada, in an interview with CTV News said that "shared intelligence among Five Eyes partners" had informed Trudeau of the agents in the murder of a Canadian citizen in June.

"I will say this was a matter of shared intelligence information. There was a lot of communication between Canada and the United States about this, and I think that's as far as I'm comfortable going," Cohen told CTV News.

After Nijjar's death, American officials told their Canadian counterparts that Washington had not had any advance information about the plot, and that if US officials had they would have immediately informed Ottawa under the intelligence agencies' "duty to warn" doctrine, according to two allied officials, the newspaper reported.

The officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss what has become a diplomatic firestorm, said Canadian officials had offered a general warning to Nijjar but had not told him that he was the target of an Indian government plot, according to the

Cohen told CTV that said that the US takes very seriously these allegations. "And, you know, if they prove to be true, it is a potentially very serious breach of the rules-based international order in which we like to function," he said in response to a question.

While Secretary of State Antony Blinken has called on India to cooperate with the Canadian investigation, American officials have largely tried to avoid triggering any diplomatic blowback from India, the paper said.

But the disclosure of the involvement of US intelligence risks ensnaring Washington in the diplomatic battle between Canada and India at a time when it is keen to develop New Delhi as a closer partner, it

Blinken said the US is "deeply concerned" about the allegations raised by Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau against India and Washington was "closely coordinating"

wants to see "accountability' in the case.

Speaking at a press conference in New York on Friday, Blinken said the US has engaged directly with the Indian government on the issue and the most productive thing would be the completion

of this investigation. Trudeau on Friday said that Canada shared with India "many weeks ago" evidence on the killing of Nijjar and wants New Delhi to commit constructively with Ottawa to establish the facts in the "very serious matter."

When asked about Canada sharing any information in the case with India, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi said: "No specific information has been shared by Canada on this case, either then or before or after. We have, you know, as we have said, or I think we have made very clear, we are willing to look at any specific informa-

Taiwanese factory fire death toll rises to 10

Taipei (Taiwan): Search teams found the bodies of the last three missing people on Sunday at the site of a golf ball factory fire in southern Taiwan, bringing the death toll to 10, according ing to Taiwanese media reports. Launch Technologies, the operator of the plant, is a major global supplier of golf balls.

Four of the victims were firefighters. Taiwan's Central News Agency, quoting a Pingtung County fire official, said an explosion caused part of the building to collapse about 6:10 pm on Friday, trapping firefighters and workers under rubble, A second explosion folowed 20 minutes later. Two bodies were found on

Sunday morning and the final one was recovered in the afternoon. About 100 people were injured in the blaze at Pingtung Téchnology Industrial Park. The fire was not extinguished until the next day. The cause remained unclear. Taiwan is a major manufacturer of golf balls with factories supplying major brands including Callaway, TaylorMade, Bridgestone, Mizuno and Wilson, according to the 2021 annual report of Launch Technologies Co.

Launch Technologies, which is listed on the Taipei Exchange, shipped about 260 million golf balls last year, accounting for one-fifth of the global total, the Central News global total, the Central News Agency said. About 80 per cent of its sales are in the United States. The Ministry of Labour said on Saturday it would open an occupational safety investiinto Launch Technologies and its parent company. The factory, which is in an export processing zone, has been fined in the past for violations found during inspections, the Central News Agency

allow Israeli citizens **US** travel without visa

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Biden administration is poised to admit Israel this week into an exclusive club that will allow its citizens to travel to the United States without a U.S. visa despite Washington's ongoing concerns about the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinian Americans. US officials say an announcement of Israel's entry into the Visa Waiver Program is planned for late in the week, just before the end of the federal budget year on Saturday, which is the deadline for Israel's admission without having to requalify for eligibility next year.

The Department of Homeland Security administers the program, which currently allows citizens of 40 mostly European and Asian countries to travel to the U.S. for three months without visas.

Security Homeland Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas is set to make the announcement Thursday, shortly after receiving a recommendation from Secretary of State Antony Blinken that Israel be admitted, according to five officials familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity because

publicly announced. Blinken's recommendation is expected to be delivered no later than Tuesday, the officials said, and the final announcement will come just eight days after President Joe Biden met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in New York on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly. The leaders did not raise the issue in their brief remarks to reporters at that meeting but it has been a subject of intense negotiation and debate for months. Israel's admission into the program has been a priority for successive Israeli leaders and will be a major accomplishment for Netanyahu, who has sparred frequently with the Biden administration over Iran, the Palestinian conflict and most recently a proposed remake of Israel's judicial system that critics say will make the country less

Netanyahu's far-right government has drawn repeated US criticism over its treatment of Palestinians, including its aggressive construction of West Bank settlements, its opposition to Palestinian statehood and incendiary anti-Palestinian comments senior Cabinet ministers.

The US move will give a welcome boost at home to Netanyahu. He has faced months of mass protests against his judicial plan and is likely to come under criticism from the Palestinians, who say the U.S. should not be rewarding the Israeli government at a time when peace efforts are at a

Israel met two of the three most critical criteria over the past two years - a low percentage of visa application rejections and a low visa overstay rate to join the U.S. program. It had struggled to meet the third, which is a requirement for reciprocity that means all U.S. citizens, including Palestinian Americans, must be treated equally when traveling to or through Israel. Claiming national security

reasons, Israel has long had screening processes for Palestinian Americans. Many complained that the procedures were onerous and discriminatory. Americans with Palestinian residency documents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were largely barred from using Israel's international airport. Instead, like other Palestinians, they were forced to travel through either Jordan or Egypt to reach their destinations. In recent months, Israel has moved to adjust its entry requirements for Palestinian Americans, including allowing them to fly in and out of Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv and going directly to the West Bank and Israel proper, according to the officials. Israel also has pledged ease movement for Palestinian Americans traveling in and out of the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

Biden admn poised to | Israeli military raid kills 2 Palestinians

REFUGEE BANK CAMP

 $T^{\text{wo Palestinians were killed}}_{\text{during an Israeli military raid on Sunday in the northern}}$ West Bank, Palestinian health officials said, the latest bloodshed in a surge of violence during a sensitive Jewish holiday period. The Israeli military said it

moved into the Nour Shams refugee camp, near the town of Tulkarem, to destroy what it described as a militant command centre and bomb-storage facility in a building. It said that engineering

units detonated a number of bombs planted under roads and that militants opened fire and hurled explosives, as troops responded with live fire. The Palestinian Health

killed, one hurt

raising tensions

Union-facilitated dialogue to

said "masked professionals

armed with heavy weapons"

opened fire on a police patrol

in the village of Banjska,

Leposavic, 55 kilometers (35

miles) north of the capital

Pristina at 3 am (01:00 GMT),

killing one officer. Another

officer was injured but his

condition is not life-threaten-

ing. Kosovo police said two

trucks with no license plates

had blocked a bridge at the

entrance of the village. Three

police units were sent to

unblock it but came under fire

from different positions with

different weapons, hand

grenades and bombs. Police

managed to push back the

attack and take two injured

police officers at the hospital in

southern Mitrovica.

Prime Minister Albin Kurti

normalize ties.

Kosovo cop

Ministry said two men — Asid Abu Ali, 21, and Abdulrahman Abu Daghash, 32 — were killed by Israeli fire.

The raid caused heavy damage to the camp's main road, severing water pipes and flooding parts of the street. The ground floor of the targeted building was heavily damaged, while part of the exterior wall of the second floor collapsed.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, Birzeit University, a major Palestinian institution, said the Israeli army carried out a rare raid on its campus near the city of Ramallah and arrested nine students, including the head of the student coun-

It said the students were all supporters of the Hamas militant group. The university denounced the raid, which it

said caused damage to university property.

The Israeli military claimed

the suspects were plotting an attack on Israeli targets.

Israel has been carrying out stepped-up military raids, pri-marily in the northern West Bank, for the past year and a half in what it says is a campaign to root out Palestinian militants and thwart future

But Palestinians say the raids entrench Israel's 56-year occupation over the West Bank. The raids have shown little sign of slowing the fighting and contributed to the weakening of the Palestinian Authority, the self-rule government that administers parts of the Israelioccupied West Bank.

Some 190 Palestinians have

since the start of the year, according to a tally by The Associated Press. Israel says most of those killed have been militants, but youths protesting the incursions and others not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

At least 31 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis this year.

The tensions have begun to spread over the past week to the Gaza Strip, where hundreds of Palestinians have been holding daily demonstrations along the fence separating the territory from Israel.

On Saturday, Israeli airstrikes hit a militant site for the second time in as many days, after Palestinians sent incendiary balloons into Israeli farmland and Palestinian prosives at soldiers at the separation fence The spike in violence comes during the Jewish New

Year holiday season. Jews are set to mark Yom Kippur, the holiest day on their calendar, on Sunday night followed by the weeklong Sukkot festival later in the month. During Sukkot, large numbers of Jews are expected to visit Jerusalem's most sensitive

holy site, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount and Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary. The compound, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, is often a focal point for violence. Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and the

Gaza Strip in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians seek those territories for their hoped-for independent state.

US prez hosts a Pacific leaders summit their top elected official or

President Joe Biden is set to announce the opening of with Serbia new US embassies on Cook Pristina (AP): Kosovo's prime Islands and Niue on Monday as minister on Sunday said one police officer was killed and the Democratic administration aims to demonstrate to another wounded in an attack Pacific Island leaders that it he blamed on support from remains committed to increasneighbouring Serbia, increasing tensions between the two ing American presence in the The announcement about former war foes at a delicate

the South Pacific comes as Biden prepares to welcome leaders to Washington for the two-day US-Pacific Island Forum Summit. Talks are expected to heavily focus on the impact of climate change in the region. Biden has put a premium on improving relations in the Pacific amid rising US concern about China's growing military and economic influence. Plans about the embassies were confirmed by two senior administration officials who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity before the formal announcement.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden would use the summit to strengthen "ties with the Pacific Islands and discuss how we address complex global challenges, like tackling the existential threat of climate change,

advancing economic growth, and promoting sustainable

The leaders were scheduled be feted on Sunday at a Baltimore Ravens football game and to visit a Coast Guard cutter in Baltimore Harbour for a briefing by the commandant of the US Coast Guard on combatting illegal fishing and other maritime

Pacific Island leaders have been critical of rich countries for not doing enough to control climate change despite being responsible for much of the problem, and for profiting from loans provided to vulnerable nations to mitigate the

At last year's summit, the White House unveiled its

Pacific strategy, an outline of its plan to assist the region's leaders on pressing issues like climate change, maritime security and protecting the region from overfishing.

administration The ledged the US would add USD 810 million in new aid for Pacific Island nations over the next decade, including USD 130 million on efforts to stymie the impacts of climate change. The forum includes Australia, Cook Islands, Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea. Republic of Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

Biden will welcome the leaders to the White House on

Monday morning for talks and a working lunch. They also will meet on Monday with Biden's special envoy on climate, John Kerry, for talks focused on climate change. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and UN Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield will host the leaders at the State Department for a Kerry and USAID admin-

istrator Samantha Power will climate talks with members of the philanthropic community. The leaders also are slated to meet with members of Congress and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is to host a roundtable with the leaders and members of the business community.

Power last month travelled to Fiji to open a new USAID mission that will manage agency programs in nine Pacific Island countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau.

The US this year has opened embassies in Solomon Islands and Tonga, and is on track to open an embassy in

Vanuatu early next year. The White House said most members of the 18-member forum were dispatching

foreign minister to the summit. But the administration was

very disappointed" that Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, who was in New York last week for the UN General Assembly, opted not to stick around for the White House summit, according to an administration official. The Solomon Islands last year

Prime Minister Meltek Sato Kilman Livtuvanu of Vanuatu also is expected to miss the summit. He was elected by lawmakers earlier this month to replace Ishmael Kalsakau, who lost a no-confidence vote in parliament.

Biden earlier this year had to cut short a planned visit to the Indo-Pacific, scrapping what was to be a historic stop in Papua New Guinea, as well as a visit to Australia for a gathering with fellow leaders of the so-called Quad partnership so he could focus on debt limit talks in Washington. He would have been the first sitting US president to visit Papua new

Guinea The US president is set to honour Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese with a state visit next month.



Some UK cops put down guns after an officer gets charged with Black man's murder

AP ■ LONDON

ondon's police force said on LSunday that some officers are refusing to conduct armed patrols after a colleague was charged with murder in the fatal shooting of an unarmed Black man.A Metropolitan Police marksman was charged on Wednesday over the September 2022 death of Chris

Kaba, 24. Kaba was killed after officers in an unmarked vehicle pursued and stopped the car he was driving. He was struck by a single bullet fired through the windshield as he sat in the Audi

The case renewed allegations of institutional racism within the London police department. Kaba's family welcomed the murder charge against the officer, who has not



been publicly named.

He was granted conditional bail and is expected to stand trial next year.

Only about one in 10 of London's police officers carry firearms, and the ones that do undergo special training.
The Metropolitan Police

force said on Sunday that "a number of officers have taken armed duties while they con-

the decision to step back from sider their position." It said officers were con-

cerned that the murder charge

signals a shift in the way the

decisions they make in the

most challenging circumstances will be judged."

The BBC said more than 100 officers had turned in their firearm permits and that police from neighbouring forces were called in to help patrol London on Saturday night.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman, who is in charge of policing for the UK's Conservative government, said she would review armed policing to ensure that armed officers "have the confidence to do their jobs?

"Ín the interest of public safety, they have to make splitsecond decisions under extraordinary pressures," Braverman posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. "They mustn't fear ending up in the dock for carrying out their duties. Officers risking their lives to keep us safe have my full backing, and

I will do everything in my power to support them. Fatal shootings by police in

March 2022, armed officers in England and Wales fired weapons at people four times, according to official statistics. It is also extremely rare for British police officers to be

the UK are rare. In the year to

charged with murder or manslaughter over actions performed while they were on In one of the few cases in recent years, a police constable

was sentenced in 2021 to eight years in prison for the killing of . Dalian Åtkinson, a former professional soccer player who died after being shot by a stun gun and kicked in the head during an altercation. The officer, Benjamin Monk, was cleared of murder but convicted of manslaughter.

will join Catholic bishops from the Mediterranean region on discussions that will largely focus on migration.

kill 2, hurts 3 in southern Ukraine War enters 20th month

 R^{ussian} airstrikes on Sunday killed two people and wounded three others in southern Ukraine's Kherson province, the region's governor reported on Sunday as the war in Ukraine entered a 20th month. According to Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, Russian forces struck the city of Beryslav, destroying an unspecified number of private houses. A woman was killed and three people were wounded, including a police officer, he

Another airstrike also killed a 67-year-old man in the village of Lvove, Prokudin said without specifying the type of weapons used in the attack.

The communities hit both are located in the Ukrainiancontrolled part of the Kherson region, where the Dnieper River that bisects the province has marked a battle line since Russian troops withdrew across it in November 2022, a retreat that boosted the invaded country's morale.

The Russians regrouped on the river's eastern bank and regularly shell cities and villages across the river, including the city of Kherson, the regional capital that was occupied early on in the war but retaken by Ukrainian forces more than 10

In Russia, a Ukrainian drone hit an administrative building in the city of Kursk and "insignificantly damaged" the roof, regional Gov. Roman Starovoit reported. He didn't report any casualties or say what the building housed.

Unconfirmed media reports both in Russia and Ukraine said it was the offices of the Kursk branch of Russia's main security agency, the Federal Security Service, also known as the FSB.

The Kursk region of Russia borders Ukraine and also is a frequent target of attacks. The drone strike on Sunday took place as residents commemorated the anniversary of the

regional capital's founding.

There was no immediate comment from the Ukrainian authorities, who usually don't acknowledge responsibility for attacks on Russian territory.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was traveling home from North America, where he addressed the UN General Assembly and paid his first wartime visit to

In a social media statement n Saturday, Zelenskyy said he stopped in Poland on his way back to Ukraine to give state awards to two Polish volun-

Zelenskyy apparently did-n't meet with any Polish officials, but in a post on X, previously known as Twitter, he thanked Poland for "its invaluable support and solidarity that helps defend freedom of

our entire Europe".

Poland has taken in large numbers of Ukrainian refugees and been a fierce supporter of neighbouring Ukraine since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into the Putin sent troops into the country on February 24, 2022. However, a trade dispute has recently tested the relationship between Kyiv and Warsaw.

The Ukrainian government is month filed a com-

ment this month filed a complaint with the World Trade Organisation against Poland, Hungary and Slovakia for banning imports of Ukrainian farm products, which are important for the war-weary country's battered economy.

The three European Union member nations bristled at the

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki responded by saying his country was "no longer transferring any weapons to Ukraine because we are now arming ourselves with the most modern weapons".

His remarks left many wondering if the Western resolve to support Ukraine in the war with Russia is waning. such attacks in Somalia.

Russian airstrikes | Russian foreign min lambasts West

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

Russia's top diplomat denounced the United States and the West on Saturday as self-interested defenders of a fading international power structure, but he didn't discuss his country's war in Ukraine in his speech to the UN General Assembly. "The US and its subordinate Western collective are continuing to fuel conflicts which artificially divide humanity into hostile blocks and hamper the achievement of overall aims. They're doing everything they can to prevent the formation of a genuine multipolar world order," Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said.

"They are trying to force the world to play according to their own self-centered rules," he said.

As for the 19-month war in Ukraine, he recapped some historical complaints going back to the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union, and alluded to the billions of dollars that the US and Western allies have spent in supporting Ukraine. But he didn't delve into the

place with no end to the war in sight. A three-month-long Ukrainian counteroffensive has gone slower than Kyiv hoped, making modest advances but no major break-

Ukraine's seats in the assembly hall were empty for at least part of Lavrov's speech. An American diplomat wrote on a notepad in her country's section of the audience during Lavrov's speech.

The speech accused the US of, among other things, "whipping up hysteria on the Korean Peninsula." North Korean leader Kim Long Un and Indiana in the speech accused the US of the US o leader Kim Jong Un made a rare foray out of his country last week by train to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin, an unsettling development for South Korea and allies including the United

Later, in a press conference, Lavrov said the U.S. was "effectively engaged in hostilities with us, using the Jkrainians as fodder."

"You can call this whatever you want to call this, but they are directly at war with current fighting.

For a second year in a row,

hybrid war. But that doesn't us," he said. "We call this a

Under assembly procedures that give the microphone to presidents ahead of cabinet-level officials, Lavrov spoke four days after Ukrainian President Volodomyr Zelenskyy and U.S. President Joe Biden.

Zelenskyy accused Russia of "weaponising" food, energy and even children against Ukraine and "the international rules-based order" at large. Biden sounded a similar

note in pressing world leaders to keep up support for Ukraine: "If we allow Ukraine to be carved up, is the independence of any nation secure?" On North Korea, he reiterated criticism of the North's violations of Security Council resolutions regarding its nuclear and ballistic missile programs but said Washington is "committed to diplomacy that would bring about the denuclearization of the Korean

Since invading Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has offered a number of explanations for what it calls the "special military operation" in

Among them: claims that to join next year.

Kyiv was oppressing Russian speakers in Ukraine's east and so Moscow had to help them, that Ukraine's growing ties with the West in recent years pose a risk to Russia, and that it's also threatened by NATO's eastward expansion over the decades.

Lavrov hammered on those themes in his General Assembly speech last year, and he alluded again Saturday to what Russia perceives as NATO's improper encroach-But his address looked at it

through a wide-angle lens, surveying a landscape, as Russia sees it, of Western countries' efforts to cling to outsized influence in global affairs. He portrayed the effort as doomed. The rest of the planet is sick of it, Lavrov argued: They don't want to live under anybody's yoke anymore." That shows, he said, in the growth of such groups as BRICS - the developing-economies coalition that currently includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa and recently invited Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

shaped by a struggle, a strug-gle between the global major-ity in favor of a fairer distribution of global benefits and civilized diversity and between the few who wield neocolonial methods of subjugation in order to maintain their domination which is slipping through their hands," Lavrov said, adding that the United Nations needs to change to have "a fair balance of interests. Both Lavrov and Zelenskyy also addressed the UN Security Council on Wednesday but didn't actually face off. Zelenskyy left the room before Lavrov came in. Lavrov also sat out Zelenskyy's speech at the General Assembly, but rejected the Ukrainian president's 10-point peace plan as "not feasible" and "not realistic" during the press conference following his speech."I had my own affairs to attend to. We know what he's going to say. Why waste time?" the Russian said to explain his absence. Nonetheless, he said he'd watched video of the Ukrainian president's remarks there and in the Security

Jailed Kremlin critic transferred to Siberia prison

Tallinn (Estonia) (AP) An mprisoned Russian opposition figure has been transferred to a maximum security prison in Siberia and placed in a tiny "punishment cell", his lawyer said on Sunday. Vladimir Kara-Murza Jr.,

12, earlier this year was convicted of treason for publicly denouncing Russia's war in Ukraine and sentenced to 25 years in prison as part of the Kremlin's relentless crackdown on critics. On Thursday, he arrived at IK-6 — a maximum security penal colony in the Siberian city of Omsk, his lawyer Vadim Prokhorov said in a Facebook post on Sunday.

Prokhorov said the transfer from a detention centre in Moscow, where Kara-Murza was being held pending trial and appeals, took less than three weeks. Russian prison transfers, usually done by train, are notorious for taking a long time, sometimes weeks, during which there's no access to prisoners, and information about their whereabouts is limited. Kara-Murza, a journalist

and an opposition activist, was jailed in April 2022. The charges against him stemmed from a speech he gave weeks prior to the arrest to the Arizona House of Representatives in which he denounced Russia's invasion of Ukraine. An associate of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was killed near the Kremlin in 2015, Kara-Murza survived poisonings in 2015 and 2017 that he blamed on the Kremlin. Russian officials have denied responsibility. Kara-Murza rejected the charges against him and called them punishment for standing up to President Vladimir Putin. He likened the proceedings to the show trials under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin. Prokhorov said on Sunday that upon arrival to the penal colony in Omsk, Kara-Murza was immediately placed in a "punishment cell" 🗕 a tiny concrete cell where convicts are held in isolation for violating prison regulations. Prison authorities have regularly sent imprisoned dissidents to such cells in recent months over alleged minor infractions, a practice that is widely considered designed to put additional pressure on Kremlin critics behind bars.

Death toll from Somalia bombing rises to 21

Mogadishu (AP): The death toll from a bombing attack at a government checkpoint in central Somalia has reached 21, authorities said Sunday.

The number of wounded in Saturday's truck bombing in Beledweyne stood at 52, said Abdifatah Mohamed Yusuf, director general of the Hirshabelle ministry of humanitarian and disaster management.

He told The Associated Press that 17 of those critically wounded were airlifted to the capital, Mogadishu, for treat-

There has been no immediate claim of responsibility. East Africa's al-Qaeda affiliate al-Shabab often carries out

31 hurt as train collides in Pak's Punjab province

At least 31 people were injured when a passenger train collided on Sunday with a freight train parked on the main railway line in Pakistan's Punjab province, according to a media report. The accident took place near the Qila Sattar Shah Station in Sheikhupura district. The Lahore-bound passenger train coming from Mianwali was travelling on the same track where a freight train was already parked, resulting in the crash, Geo News reported. The train driver attempted to avoid the crash but to no avail, it said.

According to the rescue personnel, 31 passengers were injured in the accident. Five injured passengers have been transferred to the district headquarters hospital, they added.

The railway officials said an investigation into the crash had been launched. A railways spokesperson said in a statement that train operations are running smoothly in the Lahore division following the crash. The track was cleared after the accident, the spokesperson added.

According to the spokesperson, four railways officials including train driver Imran Sarwar and his assistant Muhammad Bilal have been suspended. An inquiry commission led by a deputy principal officer has been formed, which will submit its report on the incident in 24 hours, the spokesper-The railways chairman said

legal action will be taken against those responsible for the incident. CEO Railways Shahid Aziz said no compromise will be made on the safety of passengers. Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President Shehbaz Sharif expressed sorrow over the incident and demanded action against those responsible for the crash.

'Nearly 75 Ahmadi graves desecrated by police' before the Partition by Sir

Lahore (PTI): Nearly 75 graves and minarets of two worship places belonging to the Ahmadi minority community have been demolished by police and radical Islamists in Pakistan's Punjab province, a member of an organisation representing the minority community said on Sunday.Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya Pakistan officer Amir Mahmood told PTI, "Police under the pressure of Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) desecrated 74 graves of Ahmadis by destroying their tombstones in Daska city of Sialkot district of Punjab, some 100kms from Lahore."

Tension still gripped Daska as the TLP threatened to raze the minarets of a historic worship place of the Ahmadi community. The worship place, located in the old Daska city, was built Zafarullah Khan, a member of the Pakistan Movement and the first foreign minister of the independent nation.

Council and thought "he

seemed rather grim.'

The TLP also demanded the demolition of the gravestones of Ahmadis graveyard in the old

"The authorities giving in to the pressure of TLP made sure that no Ahmadi was near to the graveyard and destroyed the tombstones of 74 graves," Mahmood said and apprehended either the police or TLP activists might demolish the minarets of Ahmadi worship places of the area built before partition. In the other two separate incidents, minarets of Ahmadi worship places were destroyed by TLP and police in the Sheikhupura.

'Fire at building in Benin's capital killed at least 35'

Porto Novo (Benin): A fire started during the unloading south of Benin's capital has killed at least 35 people, authorities said, as they started an investigation.

The gutted and burned ruins of a building in Seme-Podji, 10 kilometers (6 miles) south of the capital Porto-Novo, and the charred remains of cars and motorcycles was all that could be seen in the aftermath of the fire in footage by Benin's public broadcaster.

A fire official told broadcaster ORTB that the accident happened at a site known for the storage and handling of gasoline. Passersby rescued three people before firefighters arrived, the official, Dallys Ahouangbegnon, added. The fire broke out on Saturday morning and was "probably

prosecutor Adam-Bongle Abdoubaki said in a statement published on local outlet enin-news.com. The dead included one

people were injured, he said. Abdoubakí added that a crisis unit was set up to keep the victims' families informed, collect informa-

child while more than a dozen

tion to establish the cause of the fire, and determine criminal liability. "I am 'dismayed," local

prefecture representative Marie Akpotrossou told the public broadcaster.

She blamed the deaths of so many people on the sale of contraband gasoline and said it was high time to take another look at the illegal

Masked gunmen attack

An activist from the climate protection group "Last Generation" is carried away by police officers during a protest prior to the

start of the Berlin marathon, in Berlin, Sunday. Largest Hindu temple NASA's asteroid samples land on to be inaugurated in New Jersey on Oct 8

Robbinsville (New Jersey) (PTI): The world's largest Hindu temple constructed outside India in the modern era is all set to be inaugurated in New Jersey on October 8.

About 60 miles (90 km) south of Times Square, New York, or about 180 miles (289 km) north of Washington DC, the BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in the little Robbinsville Township of New Jersey has been built by an army of more than 12,500 volunteers from across the US in over 12 years from 2011 to 2023. Being currently visited by thousands of Hindus and people of other faiths every day from across the country ahead of its formal inauguration, the temple popular as Akshardham measures 255 ft x 345 ft x 191 ft and spans over 183 acres. It has been designed according to ancient Hindu scriptures and includes design elements from ancient Indian culture including 10,000 statues and statuettes, carvings of Indian musical instruments and dance forms. The temple is possibly the second largest after Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

told PTI in an interview.

The 12th-century Angkor Wat Temple Complex, the largest Hindu temple in the World, is spread over 500 acres and is now asteroid. a UNESCO World Heritage site. The Akshardham temple in New Delhi which was opened for the public in November 2005 is spread over 100 acres. "Our spiritual leader (Pramukh Swami Maharaj) had a vision that in the Western hemisphere there should be a place which can be a place for all people of the world, not only for Hindus, Aksharvatsaldas Swami from BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha

Earth after release from spacecraft spoon in a pair of asteroid mis-

AP ■ WASHINGTON

 $N_{\rm ASA}$'s first asteroid samples fetched from deep space parachuted into the Utah desert Sunday to cap a seven-year journey. In a flyby of Earth, the Osiris-Rex spacecraft released the sample capsule from 63,000 miles (100,000 kilometers) out. The small capsule landed four hours later on a remote expanse of military land, as the mothership set off after another

Scientists estimate the capsule holds at least a cup of rubble from the carbon-rich asteroid known as Bennu, but won't know for sure until the container is opened. Some spilled and floated away when the spacecraft scooped up too much and rocks jammed the container's lid during collection three years

Japan, the only other country to bring back asteroid samples, gathered about a tea-

The pebbles and dust delivered Sunday represent the biggest haul from beyond the moon. Preserved building blocks from the dawn of our solar system 4.5 billion years ago, the samples will help scientists better understand how Earth and life formed.

Osiris-Rex, the mothership, rocketed away on the \$1 billion mission in 2016. It reached Bennu two years later and, using a long stick vacuum, grabbed rubble from the small roundish space rock in 2020. By the time it returned, the spacecraft had logged 4 billion miles (6.2 billion kilometers).

NASA's recovery effort in Utah included helicopters as well as a temporary clean room set up at the Defense Department's Utah Test and Training Range. The samples will be flown Monday morning to a new lab at NASA's Johnson

Space Center in Houston. The building already houses the hundreds of pounds (kilograms) of moon rocks gathered by the Apollo astronauts more than a half-century ago.

The mission's lead scientist, Dante Lauretta of the University of Arizona, will accompany the samples to Texas. The opening of the container in Houston in the next day or two will be "the real moment of truth," given the uncertainty over the amount inside, he said ahead of the landing. Engineers estimate the can-

ister holds 250 grams (8.82 ounces) of material from Bennu, plus or minus 100 grams (plus or minus 3.53 ounces). Even at the low end, it will easily surpass the minimum requirement of the mission, Lauretta said. It will take a few weeks to get a precise measurement, said NASA's lead curator Nicole Lunning.

Kosovo police, 1 killed Tensions with Serbia escalate Orthodox Church — which oversees the monasteries in the dent as saying. osovo's prime minister on

Kosovos prinic inimates officer was killed and another wounded in an attack he blamed on support from neighbouring Serbia, increasing tensions between the two former war foes at a delicate moment in their European Union-facilitated dialogue to

Prime Minister Albin Kurti said "masked professionals armed with heavy weapons" opened fire on a police patrol in the village of Banjska, in Leposavic municipality, 55 kilometers (35 miles) north of the capital Pristina at 3 am (01:00 GMT).

normalize ties.

Kosovo police said two trucks without license plates blocked a bridge at the entrance to the village. Three police units were sent to unblock it but came under fire from different positions with various weapons, including hand grenades and bombs.

Police managed to push back the attack and take two injured police officers to the hospital in southern Mitrovica. One of them was dead on

arrival, doctors said. The condition of the other is not lifethreatening.

Kosovo Police said on Facebook that one of the attackers was killed. More than 12 hours after

the attack began, police say there are still sporadic exchanges of gunfire and local roads remain closed, including two border crossings with The temple of the Serbian

Orthodox monastery in Banjska is currently locked down. A group of pilgrims from the city of Novi Sad, in northern Serbia, is inside, along with an abbot, the Rev.

In a statement, the Kosovo Diocese of the Serbian

former Serbian province said a group of masked men in an armored vehicle stormed the monastery, breaking down

the locked gate. "Armed, masked men move around the courtyard and occasional gunshots are heard," the diocese said.

Serbia and its former province, Kosovo, have been at odds for decades. Their 1998-99 war left more than 10,000 people dead, mostly Kosovo Albanians. Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008 but Belgrade has refused to recognize the move.

Speaking after a meeting of the country's Security Council Sunday, Kurti said it was a "sad day" for Kosovo and named the dead police officer as Afrim The prime minister dis-

played a set of photos which showed a number of fourwheel drive vehicles without license plates and an armoured personnel carrier "which does not belong to the Kosovo police," near the monastery in

There was ongoing gunfire from what he described as a group of at least 30 military professionals, masked and heavily armed. "It is clear that these uniformed persons, at least 30, are

who have come to fight in Kosovo," he said, calling on them to hand themselves over to the Kosovar authorities. Most of Kosovo's ethnic Serb minority lives in four

an organised professional unit

municipalities around Mitrovica, in the north. Reports in Kosovo Serb media said residents of Banjska were woken by shootings and explosions in the night.

"It was a real little war: first some gunfire, then silence, shootings, detonations," Serbian Kossev news agency

quoted an unidentified resi-

Serbian media said both local roads and crossings with Serbia were blocked.

"Organized crime, which is olitically, financially and logistically supported from Belgrade, is attacking our state," Kurti wrote on his

Facebook page. Kosovar President Viosa Osmani, who is in New York at the United Nations General Assembly, denounced the

killing.
"Such attacks testify once again to the destabilizing power of the criminal bands organized from Serbia which for a long time ... are destabilizing Kosovo and the region, she said. EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell condemned "the hideous attack by an armed gang against Kosovo Police officers" and asked that "all facts about the attack need to be established. The responsible perpetrators must face

He added that "these attacks must stop immediately," adding that the EU's rule of law mission, or EULEX, as second security responder, is on the ground and in close contact with the authorities and KFOR. Miroslav Lajcak, EU's envoy for the talks, also condemned the "horrific attack" and repeated the call "to return to dialogue immediately" In a statement, the US ambassador in Pristina "strongly" condemned the orchestrated, violent attacks on the Kosovo Police this morning," adding that "the Kosovo Police has full and legitimate responsibility for enforcing the rule of law according to the constitution and laws of Kosovo.

Serbia's parliamentary peaker Vladimir Orlic said Kurti "was quick to blame the Serbs," adding that Kurti was the one who wanted an "esca-

Probe against dumping of cheap Chinese goods

PTI NEW DELHI

The Commerce Ministry's investigation arm DGTR has "suo-motu" initiated probes against alleged dumping of three products, including unframed glass mirrors and fasteners, by Chinese companies as the authority seeks to guard MSME units against cheap imports from the neighbouring country.

Usually, anti-dumping investigations are initiated based on an application filed by domestic producers, but since the fragmented industries did not have the know-how of the procedures involved in the trade remedy probe, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has undertaken the exercise to investigate the mat-

According to three separate notifications, the DGTR said that it is probing alleged dumping of telescopic channel drawer, unframed glass mirror and

'G20 declaration should

spur Government to give

ter on its own initiative.

The move is aimed at granting much-needed protection to the MSME (micro, small and medium enterprises) producers against dumped goods from

'This is a giant leap forward from DGTR's first suo-motu investigation in 2000 on dry batteries from China wherein the duties were imposed for five years. This is also the first occaśion where India's anti-dumping watchdog has initiated three suo-motu investigations at one go against China," a senior government official said.

The directorate had received information that Indian producers of these three products were facing stiff competition from unfairly priced Chinese imports.

According to one of the

was received from Highhope Manufacturers Associates Pvt Ltd consisting of 25 manufactur-

notifications, a representation representation was received from All India Mirror Fittings

in dumped imports from China. It has been estimated that the import value is Rs 356 crore. On unframed glass mirror,

ers of telescopic channel draw-

er stating that there has been a

steep decline in Indian produc-

tion due to a significant increase

import value of Rs 183 crore. Similarly, Apt Tools and

Machinery along with Northern Screw Association filed a representation before the DGTR requesting anti-dumping duty on the imports of nuts, bolts, screws from China.

The imports of these nuts and bolts were Rs 137 crore during the last financial year. The producers of the product are SME which is estimated to be around 179 with an investment of more than Rs 1,200 crore catering to an employment of more than 15,000 people.

The imports from China in the last financial year for this product has been around 16,168 metric tonnes. In 2022-23, India had imported close to USD 100 billion worth of merchandise from China. India's merchandise trade deficit with China stood at

tervailing duties, earlier the DGTR had simplified procedural requirements to facilitate their participation in seeking protection against unfair trade practices of imports.

DGTR had issued trade notices allowing for a sampled analysis of the condition of these industries.

This has made remedies against unfairly priced imports more accessible to domestic producers. If it is established that the

dumping of these products has caused material injury to domestic players, DGTR would recommend the imposition of antidumping duty on these imports.

The finance ministry takes the final decision to impose

Anti-dumping probes are conducted by countries to determine whether domestic industries have been hurt because of

mated around 1,10,904 metric Manufacturers Association. tonnes in which the imports USD 83 billion in that fiscal. The maximum producers of from China were 80,178 metric To help fragmented indusunframed glass mirrors are tries avail benefits of trade remetonnes almost catering to 72 per **RBI** likely to keep interest rate unchanged as retail inflation high

big push to MSMEs'

The declaration of G20 nations under India's presidency should spur the Government to give a big push to the MSME sector by simplifying the regulatory process and enhancing their access to affordable capital, say experts.

The commitments made in the G20's New Delhi declaration with regard to the MSMEs ought to be followed by the member nations as the sector has the potential to generate employment and promote sustained growth.

The New Delhi Declaration adopted early this month said the G20 recognise that startups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are natural engines of growth. They are key to socio-economic transformation by driving innovation and creating employment.

"We welcome the establishment of the Start-up 20 Engagement Group during India's G20 Presidency and its continuation," it said.

Chairman of CII Delhi State Council and MD and CEO of Samtel Avionics Limited Puneet Kaura said the MSME is considered important the world over and the G20 declaration has

s many as 412 infrastructure

Aprojects, each entailing an

investment of Rs 150 crore or

more, have been hit by cost over-

runs of more than Rs 4.77 lakh

crore in August this year, an offi-

According to the Ministry of

Statistics and Programme

Implementation, which moni-

tors infrastructure projects

once again underlined the need for extending financial and nonfinancial support by the governments to this sector.

"It was heartening for the MSME to have received the due recognition by the G20 under India's presidency. These promises, however, should not remain on paper but must result in action on the ground as the sector has immense potential to generate quality employment across the country and contribute to the country's exports which have been suffering on account of global problems," he

Bhagyashree Bhansali, CEO of The Disposal Company (TDC), said that to further promote startups/MSMEs, the government should simplify regulatory processes, enhance access to affordable capital, foster industry-academia collaborations for innovation, and provide targeted skill development programmes. "Startup/MSMEs are at the forefront of promoting digital technology and sustainable growth. They drive innovation in AI adoption, enhancing efficiency and reducing environmental footprints. By creating tech-driven solutions, they enable businesses to operate

out of 1,762 projects, 412 report-

ed cost overruns and as many as

implementation of the 1,762

projects was Rs 25,01,400.62

crore and their anticipated com-

pletion cost is likely to be Rs

29,78,681.31 crore, which

reflects overall cost overruns of

Rs 4,77,280.69 crore (19.08 per

cent of original cost)," the min-

The total original cost of

830 projects were delayed.

412 infra projects show

PTI ■ NEW DELHI The Reserve Bank is likely to

I maintain status quo on policv rates for the fourth time in a row at its bi-monthly monetary policy review meeting early next month, as retail inflation continues to remain high and the US Federal Reserve has decided to keep a hawkish stance for some more time, according to experts.

The Reserve Bank had raised the benchmark repo rate to 6.5 per cent on February 8, 2023 and since then it has retained the rates at the same

level in view of the stubbornly high retail inflation and certain global factors including elevated crude oil prices in the international market. Reserve Bank

medium, small and micro enter-

prises. Some have already shut

down their production as they

were unable to survive the com-

petition faced from the dumped

imports from Chinese produc-

for the product has been esti-

In 2022-2023, the demand

ers/exporters.

Governor-headed six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting is scheduled for October 4-6, 2023. The last meeting of the MPC, the highest rating-setting panel, was in August.
"We do expect the RBI to

hold on to a status quo position this time as inflation is still high and liquidity tight. In fact, going by RBI forecast on inflation, it would be above 5 per cent in Q3 too, which will ensure that the status quo prevails for the calendar year for sure and probably Q4 too," said Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda. Sabnavis further said there

are uncertainties relating to Kharif crop, especially on pulses, which can increase prices.

"The comfort is that there is less concern on growth

which is on target," he added. Although the Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based retail inflation eased a bit to 6.83 per cent in August from 7.44 per

cent in the preceding month in July, it remained above the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent.

It may be mentioned that the government has mandated the RBI to keep inflation at 4 per cent with 2 per cent margin on either side.

Aditi Nayar, Economist, ICRA Limited said the headline CPI inflation is expected to ease to 5.3-5.5 per cent in September 2023 from 6.8 per cent in August 2023, benefitting from the halving of the average price of tomatoes as well as a favourable base.

FPIs outflow in equities crosses ₹10,000 cr

cost overruns of ₹4.77 lakh crore in August

36.96 months

 $F_{(\text{FPIs})}^{\text{oreign Portfolio Investors}}$ Rs 10,000 crore from Indian equities in the first three weeks of September, primarily due to rising US interest rates, recessionary fears, and overvalued domestic stocks.

Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and brought in Rs 1.74 lakh crore during the period.

Mayank Mehra, smallcase, manager and principal partner at Craving Alpha, believes that

According to the report,

the expenditure incurred on

these projects till August 2023,

is Rs 15,57,188.10 crore, which

is 52.28 per cent of the anticipat-

number of delayed projects

decreased to 624, if delay is cal-

culated on the basis of the latest

However, it stated that the

ed cost of the projects.

schedule of completion.



strong economic growth prospects, attractive valuations, and government reforms could support foreign investment flows in the next month.

"Since valuations remain high even after the recent pull-

Further, it stated that for 339

Out of the 830 delayed pro-

projects, neither the year of

commissioning nor the tentative

gestation period has been

jects, 194 have overall delays in

the range of 1-12 months, 190

have been delayed for 13-24

months, 323 projects for 25-60

months and 123 projects have

been delayed for more than 60

back and US bond yields are attractive (the US 10-year bond yield is around 4.49 per cent) FPIs are likely to press sales so long as this trend persists," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

According to the data with depositories, in the 15 trading days, so far in September, FPIs were sellers in 11 days with a net withdrawal of Rs 10,164 crore. This figure includes bulk

deals and investments through the primary market. Of the total pullout of Rs

10,164 crore so far this month (till September 22), over Rs

these 830 delayed projects is

as reported by various project

implementing agencies include

delay in land acquisition, delay

in obtaining forest and environ-

ment clearances, and lack of

infrastructure support and link-

financing, finalisation of detailed

Delay in tie-up for project

Reasons for time overruns

4,700 crore was withdrawn in the last week alone. The latest outflow came after FPI investment in equities hit a fourmonth low of Rs 12,262 crore in August. FPI flows have displayed a subdued pattern over the past few weeks. This hesitancy among investors can be attributed to growing apprehensions about inflation.

and the interest rate landscape, particularly in the US, coupled with uncertainties regarding global economic growth, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India,

engineering, change in scope,

tendering, ordering and equip-

ment supply, and law and order

problems were among the other

reasons. The report also cited

state-wise lockdowns due to

COVID-19 (imposed in 2020

and 2021) as a reason for the

delay in implementation of these

projects.,It has also been

observed that project executing

After BPCL, ONGC signs up HPCL for

agencies are not reporting

USD 1.63 billion or close to Rs 14,000 crore over the past few months, taking advantage of the attractive valuations post the short-

GQG Partners has taken a 6.8 per cent stake in AGEL while QIA picked up 2.7 per cent. IHC International Holding Company has another 1.3

nale of the investments,

Everyone wants a pie of India's largest renewable power sector

PTI NEW DELHI

French energy giant TotalEnergies SE's USD 300 million investment in clean energy projects of Adani Green Energy Ltd has taken the total investments poured in by global investors in India's largest renewable power producer to USD 1.63 billion or about Rs 14,000 crore, sources close to the company said.

Last week, Total announced it will hold a 50 per cent stake in the new joint venture firm where Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) will hold the rest. The joint venture will hold a portfolio of 1,050 MW, including 300 MW of already operational capacity, 500 MW under construction and 250 MW under-development assets with a blend of solar and wind power.

Total already has a 19.7 per cent stake in AGEL. It also has an equal joint venture with AGEL, called AGE23L that holds a portfolio of 2,353 MW.

The USD 300 million investment Total is making in the joint venture is the first since the Hindenburg report in January highlighted Adani Group's debt pile and alleged accounting fraud and stock manipulation, which Adani denies. Sources said AGEL is

one company within the Adani Portfolio, which has attracted a range of investors over the past few months including repeat strategic investor Total, one of the largest emerging market funds GQG Capital Partners and one of the world's largest sovereign funds Qatar Investment

seller report, they said.

per cent stake. Explaining the ratio-

sources said India is now a leader in the renewable energy space, with dozens of solar and wind projects in the pipeline. Adani being the largest renewable power producer in India, with its strong execution ability and superior track record, is in an extremely sweet spot. This has made Adani

the largest solar power producer in India as well as one of the lowest cost renewable power producers in the world. Average portfolio tariff is as low as Rs 3.02 per unit as against average procurement price of the country of Rs 3.75 per unit.

It already has a portfo-lio of 20.4 GW across operational, under-construction, awarded and acquired

Sources said the firm has given a capex guidance of Rs 14,000 crore for this year for around 3 GW of projects. Next year, it is likely to do at least 5 GW, which would mean another Rs 23,000-24,000 crore.

The management attributes its ability to produce lowest cost power to its execution, which includes site identification acquisition, concession and regulatory agreements, investment case development, engineering and design, sourcing and quality checks, equity and debt funding for the project and

highly tech-enabled O&M. The company has built most of the portfolio dur-ing the post-Covid era and has a track record of delivering each of its projects before time. As against, 18 months period permitted from the effective scheduling of the PPA to commissioning, the company has a track record of executing Together these three this in less than a year,

> With its capacity target to reach 45 GW, it has the potential to deliver 6x growth from FY23 and FY30, they said, adding around 40 GW worth resource assessment has already been done - sites, geotechnical studies, sourcing equipment etc. With constantly upgrading technology, there are chances that there could be an upside surprise in terms of

KRIBHCO investing ₹1,100 cr to set up 3 grain-based ethanol plants in Gujarat, Telangana, Andhra

worth Rs 150 crore and above, istry's latest report for August

2023 said.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

cial report said.

Fertiliser cooperative Krishak Bharati Cooperative Ltd (KRIBHCO) is investing around Rs 1,100 crore to set up three ethanol manufacturing plants using maize and broken rice as feedstock. These three plants are being set up in Gujarat, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh with a capacity of 250 kilo litre

"We are setting up three bio ethanol plants as part of our KRIBHCO's Chairman Chandra Pal Singh said.

Rajan Chowdhry, Managing Director, KRIBHCO, said these plants are expected to be operational by end of the next year.

We are investing around Rs 1,100 crore on setting up these three plants. We will be using grains like maize and broken rice as feedstock," Chowdhry told

The investment is being met through a combination of internal accruals and debt, he said. Chowdhry said the cooperative will supply ethanol to oil marketing companies (OMCs) for blending with petrol.

At present, the ethanol

blending with petrol is at 12 per cent and the target is to reach 20

per cent by 2025.

KRIBHCO has formed a 100 per cent owned Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) 'KRIB-HCO Green Energy Private Limited' for setting up three bio ethanol projects at Hazira in Gujarat, Nellore in Andhra Pradesh and Jagtial in Telangana.

According to its latest annual report, the SPV has received environment clearance as well as in principle approval from Department of Food and Public Distribution for interest subvention scheme for all the three projects. The SPV has awarded the Lump Sum Turn Key (LSTK) contracts for all the three bio ethanol projects to Excel Engineers and Consultants.

KRIBHCO's total income jumped 95 per cent to Rs 25,715.07 crore during last fiscal on better sales, and it declared a dividend of 20 per cent. Total income stood at Rs 13,194.50 crore in the previous year. Addressing its 43rd annual general meeting (AGM) here recently, KRIBHCO's Chairman Singh said the cooperative earned a pre-tax profit of Rs 763.16 crore in 2022-23.

sale of oil from Mumbai offshore fields crude oil to Hindustan Ctate-owned Oil and Natural

revised cost estimates.

● Gas Corporation (ONGC) has signed an agreement to sell crude oil it produces from Mumbai offshore fields to HPCL — the second such agreement in as many months, as India's top oil and gas producer prefers term contracts over auctions where refiners hammer deep discounts.

In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, ONGC said it has inked "term agreement with HPCL for sale of crude oil



While it did not give details, sources aware of the matter

said the pact for sale of about 4.5 million tonnes per annum of Petroleum Corporation Ltd's (HPCL) Mumbai refinery. 'This is the second term

agreement sealed for sale of Mumbai Offshore crude oil post marketing freedom," ONGC said. Last month, ONGC had

signed a similar pact to sell 4 million tonnes per annum plus an optional 0.5 million tonnes of crude oil to Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL).

ONGC produces 13-14 million tonnes per annum of crude oil from its fields in the Arabian

In June last year, the government abolished a rule that said oil from blocks awarded prior to 1999 must be sold to govern-

ment-nominated customers,

Sea, off the Mumbai coast.

The old rule had led to producers such as ONGC and Oil India not getting the best mar-

mostly state refiners.

Subsequent to that rule change, ONGC started quarterly auctions of crude oil produced from Mumbai High and Panna/Mukta fields in the west-

Appliances, electronics sales to grow 20 per cent in festivals backed by cricket

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $B^{\text{uoyed by a good start with}}_{\text{festivals in the southern}}$ markets, the appliances and consumer electronics industry expects around 18-20 per cent value-driven growth this festive season which is coinciding with the ICC Men's Cricket World

Cup.
The cricket World Cup tournament is coinciding with the festival season in India for the first time after 1987, and the most popular sport to act as a catalyst, leading to growth in sales of TV, especially with bigger screen sizes as well as audio products such as battery-powered party speakers, soundbars, wireless headphones and ear

industry expects the country's

TV makers, including LG Electronic, Panasonic and Thomson, expect increased number of replacements of conventional and small-size TV screens with large-size smart TV

Premium and ultra-premium ranges of QLED and OLED TVs are also expected to be in much demand during the World Cup from October 5 to November 19. The industry expects over-

panels above 55 inch screen size.

all sales growth of 18 to 20 per cent, and in continuation of the previous year a higher growth of over 30 per cent from premium products such as large screen TVs, higher capacity refrigerators and washing



Like in earlier season, the industry is gearing up with offers and interest-free finance schemes to woo customers with new launches along with highdecibel 360 degree campaigns. However, there are also concerns about sales of value-based opening price point (OPP) mass segment products.

Godrej Appliances Business Head and Executive Vice President Kamal Nandi said again this festive season would be price-led, where the volume

would be similar to last year but both will play on the mass seghigh-priced premium products would grow over 30 per cent. "Mass segment will be

under pressure, as we have been experiencing throughout this year right from Q1 because the inflationary trend is still continuing and as a result, there is pressure on the discretionary spends. Moreover, variation in monsoon, with some states not getting adequate ranis, could impact agricultural income. So, I think this ment and therefore, we do not expect the mass segment really to do well," Nandi told PTI.

The appliance and consumer electronics industry is expected to cross Rs 70,000 crore sales this year and the festive season sales, which start from Onam in the south and cover Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja and Deepawali, contribute around 25-27 per cent.

Companies also expect pent-up demand for aircondi-

due to weather-related uncertainties this summer. 'There is demand even during the monsoon as there has

tioners which faced challenged

been lesser rainfall. Therefore, temperatures were high. We see that trend very clearly in the southern, northern and parts of western and eastern markets also. In the north temperatures are high and with with little rainfall, humidity levels are also high. So AC demand will be there," he

5 WINS IN A ROW

Liverpool beat West Ham 3-1 to go 2nd in Premier League

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

on Heung-min's double earned Tottenham a point from a pulsating 2-2 draw against Arsenal, as Liverpool moved into second in the Premier League with a 3-1 win over West Ham on Sunday.

Brighton climb up to third after beating Bournemouth 3-1, but Chelsea still cannot buy a goal as Mauricio Pochettino's men lost 1-0 at home to Aston

Spurs have still won just once in their last 31 away league meetings with Arsenal but the optimism garnered under Ange Postecoglou's early weeks in charge was not punc-tured at the Emirates despite twice falling behind in the north London derby

Arsenal's bright start was rewarded when Bukayo Saka's strike was deflected into his own net by Cristian Romero.

But for the fifth time in seven games under Postecoglou, Tottenham fought back from a goal down.

David Raya has displaced Aaron Ramsdale as Arsenal's number one goalkeeper as he was selected for the third consecutive game by Mikel Arteta.

The Spaniard justified that decision with a stunning save to deny Brennan Johnson his



first Tottenham goal. However, the visitors were

not denied for long as James Maddison's cross was swept home by Son at the near post three minutes before half-time.

Romero's afternoon went from bad to worse when he was harshly penalised for handball and Saka stroked home the resulting penalty to restore Arsenal's lead.

But the Gunners lost record signing Declan Rice at half-time to injury and that

proved costly as an error from his replacement Jorginho gifted Tottenham an equaliser just a minute later.

Maddison was again the creator as he robbed the Italian midfielder and teed up Son for a cool finish into the far corner.

Liverpool cut Manchester City's lead at the top to two points as Jurgen Klopp's men showed more promising signs of getting back to their best.

The Reds sank to fifth last season, but have the firepower

Rashford unhurt in car crash

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United forward Marcus Rashford escaped unhurt after being involved in a car crash following his participation in a 1-0 win at Burnley on

United's Carrington training ground in his white Rolls

Erik ten Hag's squad had returned on the team coach from Burnley before leaving the training base in their personal cars.

Pictures and video The incident happened when Rashford had left emerged online showing aftermath of the incident. emerged online showing the that could make them the biggest threat to City's throne as champions.

Mohamed Salah opened the scoring from the penalty spot after he was upended in the box by Nayef Aguerd. West Ham's only previous

defeat this season came at home to City last weekend and they bounced back to fully merit their equaliser before half-time when Jarrod Bowen's diving header found the far

However, the Hammers were undone by a moment of magic when Alexis Mac Allister's inch-perfect chip picked out Darwin Nunez, who volleyed into the far corner. Diogo Jota then came off the bench to make it 3-1 five minutes from time.

Brighton took advantage of dropped points for both north London sides to move up to third after coming from behind to beat Bournemouth 3-1. Roberto De Zerbi made

nine changes from the side that started the Seagulls' first ever European game in a 3-2 defeat by AEK Athens and paid the price in a slow start.

Chelsea's disastrous start to Pochettino's reign goes on as the toothless Blues failed to score for a third consecutive



Man Utd secure 1-0 win over Burnley

AP ■ MANCHESTER

 $E_{\text{Manchester United's 1-0}}^{\text{rik ten Hag believes}}$ win at Burnley can prove a turning point in a troubled season as Bruno Fernandes' stunning strike snapped a three-game losing streak on Saturday.

The United captain produced a match-winning moment of quality when he connected sweetly on the volley from Jonny Evans' long pass just before half-time.

Victory hauls the Red Devils up to eighth in the Premier League table and eases the mounting pressure on manager Ten Hag.

"This is only one win but

what we have seen is that there is togetherness and fight - a

real good spirit in the dress-ing room," said Ten Hag.

"What we have seen is when you have to defend with 11 and do it together, it is very difficult to play against this Manchester United."

Zeki Amdouni hit the

Zeki Amdouni hit the post for Burnley and forced the under-fire Andre Onana into a fine save in the first-half, but the Clarets remain without a win on their return to the Premier League and sink to the bottom of the table.

"We're very calm. We knew we had a very tough start in terms of the fixtures," said Burnley boss Vincent



Team World one win away from **Laver Cup title**

AP ■ VANCOUVER

rances Tiafoe powered past Hubert Hurkacz and Taylor Fritz beat Andrey Rublev in straight sets on Saturday as defending champions Team World built a commanding 10-2 lead over Team Europe in the Laver

Felix Auger-Aliassime and Ben Shelton added a doubles win for Team World, who take a 10-2 lead into the final day.

With each match win worth three points on Sunday, Team World will need just one victory to lift the trophy for a second time -- after Europe claimed the first four editions of the event that began in

2017.
"We're just going to keep doing what we're doing," Team World captain John McEnroe said. "Felix said the job's not done -- but we're pretty close." Tiafoe had lost his last

three matches against Poland's Hurkacz, but the 11th-ranked American turned the tables with a 7-5, 6-3 victory that thwarted Team Europe's hopes of building momentum in the wake of Casper Ruud's 7-6 (8/6), 6-2 victory over Tommy

Ruud's win gave Europe their first points of the event,

after Team World swept Fritz opened day two with a 6-2, $7-\hat{6}$ (7/3) victory over Europe's highest-ranked player, world number six Andrey Rublev. Norway's Ruud, ranked

ninth in the world, admitted he felt some pressure taking the court with his team trailing 6-0 -- and he acknowledged that he got away with "a bit of a steal" in the first-set tiebreaker, saving a set point at 6-5 before pocketing the set.

He was dominant in the second set, however, breaking Paul to open the set and breaking the American again with a blistering service return a 5-2 lead.

Ruud served it out with a love game, but his hopes that it would be "a momentum shift" were dashed when Tiafoe opened the night session at Rogers Arena with a crowd-pleasing win over Hurkacz

World number 16 Hurkacz got off to a strong start and had a set point against Tiafoe's serve at 5-4 in the first

Tiafoe worked out of the jam, then grabbed the first break of the match in the next game before sealing the set with a hold at love.



Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez praised his side's "winning character" after a sensational 3-2 come-back to beat Celta Vigo on Saturday and move top of La

The coach, who signed a new deal until 2025 this week, celebrated with his 50th victory in La Liga, as Robert Lewandowski's brace and Joao Cancelo's late winner helped his team triumph despite entering the final 10 minutes two goals behind.

Jorgen Strand Larsen and Anastasios Douvikas struck on course for a surprise win against the champions, but Barcelona produced a comeback which Xavi called "epic"

"We didn't play well (but) came up with the epic, showing winning character," Xavi told reporters.



Vinicius returns to Brazil squad

AP ■ RIO DE JANERIO

the next set of 2026 World Cup qualifiers after being

sidelined with injury.
The 23-year-old has been out since suffering a ham-

string injury against Celta Real Madrid winger recovered quicker than expected. Vinicius missed the expected. Vinicius missed the recent international window but Brazil coach Fernando Diniz on Saturday recalled him to the squad for the games with Venezuela and Uruguay five on October 18. that ... this shows the genera-tional change we have, they didn't give up, two nil down at

"I think this generation fights until the end ... what happened today is a tremendous turning point of winning character, we didn't play well but it's about character, faith, the epic.

Wily Celta coach Rafa Benitez set up in his typically defensive fashion, unlike Barcelona's recent visitors Real Betis and Royal Antwerp, whose attacking intent made them lambs to the slaughter.

Barcelona hit 10 goals in their previous two matches, they had played in his reign, but this performance was largely at the other end of the spectrum.

"(Winning) tastes good, but is it better than the day against Betis or Antwerp? No, because this is not our path,' said Xavi.

Inter stay perfect with 1-0 win at Empoli

AP ■ MILAN

Inter Milan's perfect start to the Serie A season continued with a 1-0 win at Empoli on Sunday but the Nerazzurri found it harder than they perhaps expected against a side that has yet to register a point or score a goal after five matches.

It needed a special strike from Federico Dimarco in the second half to break down Empoli's resolute defense, which had conceded 12 goals

in its previous four matches.

More than half of those came in last weekend's 7-0 defeat at Roma, which led to the dismissal of coach Paolo Zanetti and the hiring of Aurelio Andreazzoli for his third spell at the club.

Inter has now won all five of its Serie A matches, conceding just one goal, and moved three points ahead of secondplace AC Milan.

The Nerazzurri piled on the pressure from the start and had two good opportuni-

ties in the opening two minutes, while a Matteo Darmian header had to be headed off the line by Empoli defender Ardian

Inter thought it had broken the deadlock in the 35th but Marcus Thuram's goal was

Ismaili in the 10th minute.

The visitors did finally make the breakthrough six minutes into the second half. An Inter corner was headed out but only as far as Dimarco on the edge of the area and he unleashed a precise shot on the half-volley into

the top far corner.

Assefa smashes women's marathon world record

AP ■ BERLIN

Ethiopia's Tigist Assefa the women's marathon world record in Berlin on Sunday, winning in 2hr 11min 53sec, more than two minutes ahead of the previous mark. The 29-year-old Assefa

bettered the record of 2:14:04 set by Kenyan Brigid Kosgei in Chicago in 2019. Assefa crossed the line just

after Kenyan men's world record holder Eliud Kipchoge won a record fifth Berlin marathon.



minutes ahead of Kenyan Sheila Chepkirui (+5:56), while Tanzanian Magdalena Shauri finished third (+6:48)

Cecond-seeded Maria Sakkari

Sended her four-year wait for a second WTA title on Saturday, beating Caroline Dolehide 7-5, 6-3 to win the 1000 level Guadalajara Open. Greece's Sakkari, ranked

ninth in the world, had come up empty in six finals since her breakthrough victory in Rabat in 2019.

included That Guadalajara final last year, when she lost to American Jessica Pegula, and a loss to Coco Gauff in the final at Washington this year.

. An emotional Sakkari thanked her coach of five years, noting they'd waited "more than four years for a second title.



"We've heard so many bad things - that I will never win a title, that I'm a top-five player with only winning one title, that was very hard for me to over-come," she said. "I'm so happy that I did it here this week.

The victory came less than a month after Sakkari unceremoniously dumped from the first round of the US Open, her third straight first-round exit at a Grand Slam.

Bezzecchi wins Indian MotoGP

Meadows she was "suffering on the court" and was "uncertain"

about what to do about it. This week, however, Sakkari has looked in total command. becoming the first player this year to reach the final of a WTA 1000 event without dropping a

Sakkari ended a fairytale week for Dolehide, ranked 111th in the world and playing in her first career final.

Dolehide, who will rise to inside the top 50, came from a set down to beat Peyton Stearns in three tiebreaks in the first round, she beat eighth-seeded Ekaterina Alexandrova in the third round and saved four match points in her quarter-final win over Martina Trevisan.

Verstappen wins Japanese GP, Red Bull clinch title

Max Verstappen helped Red Bull clinch the Formula One constructors' championship and took a giant step towards his third straight drivers' title by winning the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday.

Runaway championship leader Verstappen finished ahead of McLaren pair Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri and can lift the title at next month's Oatar Grand Prix. He holds a 177-point lead

over teammate and nearest challenger Sergio Perez.

Verstappen's win helped Red Bull clinch their second



straight constructors' title even though Perez retired from the

'You have built a rocket ship of a car," he told his team over the radio after crossing the

Nearest Mercedes were unable to stay in contention, with Lewis Hamilton finishing fifth and George Russell placing seventh. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc

Carlos Sainz was sixth. Verstappen was back to his breathtaking best after a disappointing fifth-place finish at ast week's Singapore Grand

was fourth, while teammate

Prix.
"Unbelievable weekend, to win here is great," said Verstappen.

"The car was working very well on every compound but the most important thing was to win the constructors.

Repeating Red Bull success 'almost impossible': Honner

AP ■ SUZUKA

Red Bull chief Christian Horner said it would be "almost impossible" for his team to better this season's performance after they won Formula One's constructors' championship on Sunday.

Defeat at last week's

Bull's hopes of an

Singapore Grand Prix ended

unprecedented unbeaten season and Horner thinks what they have achieved may never be repeated. Ît's a golden moment --

for the team to do better than we're doing I think it's almost impossible," he said. We're riding a wave and of course we want to try and

ride that wave as long as we

can, but Formula One is a

fast-moving business.

AP ■ GREATER NOIDA

Pole-starter Marco Bezzecchi

won India's inaugural MotoGP in a near-flawless race on Sunday, but world champion Francesco Bagnaia crashed out

after slipping on a turn.
Jorge Martin, who won Saturday's sprint race, just held on for second spot with Fabio Quartararo a close third at the Buddh International Circuit.

Italy's Bezzecchi, on a Ducati-VR46, won his third race of the season in 36 minutes, 59.157 seconds and punched the air in celebration in front of a raucous grandstand. somersault.



But it was heartbreak for Bagnaia, who lost control of his Ducati and the bike went for a

The Italian still leads the world championship with 292 points but saw his lead cut in the 13th race of the 20-race season. Martin is on 279 points followed by Bezzecchi on 248. Wasn't easy for sure because of the heat and every-

thing. But I felt good on the bike," Bezzecchi told reporters. Bezzecchi crashed out in the first lap of Saturday's sprint race

before finishing fifth and said the incident motivated him to come up trumps. "After yesterday I was really motivated to bounce back because I think, yesterday also I could have done a bit better than fifth," he said.

lyer, Gill, Sky fire India to 399/5

hubman Gill continued his sensational run with a fifth ODI hundred of the year while Shreyas Iyer hit a timely ton under pressure to fire India to a record 399 for five against Australia in the

second game here on Sunday. Gill (104 off 97 balls) and Iyer (105 off 90 balls) shared a stroke-filled 200-run stand off 164 balls after Ruturaj Gaikwad (8) missed out on a batting beauty.

Suryakumar Yadav (72 not out off 37 balls) and skipper K L Rahul (52 off 38 balls) plundered a pedestrian looking Australian attack in the death overs to provide the final flourish for India.

The last 10 overs yielded 103 runs as India racked up their highest-ever total against Australīa in ODIs.

The Holkar Stadium tends to produce high-scoring games and Sunday's game proved no exception.

Gill's peerless form is an ominous reminder to rivals

ahead of next month's World

It was a second consecutive ODI hundred for the 24year-old at this venue, having hammered 112 off 78 balls against New Zealand earlier this year when India ended

with a match-winning 395. Unlike Iyer, Gill began slowly on Sunday, collecting nine off his first 19 balls before going after the Aussie bowlers with disdain.

He was unstoppable after his first strike which was a straight six off pacer Sean Abbott in the ninth over.

Cameron Green tried a short one against Gill who was happy to pull him away for a six over fine leg. But the rain caused a 40-minute delay, putting a temporary halt to the entertainment.

Both Gill and Iyer, who struggled with cramps towards the end of his innings, continued to find boundaries after resumption.

The highlight of Gill's knock was how frequently he danced down the track against



SHREYAS IYER WAS THE FIRST TO COMPLETE THE CENTURY, WHICH IS ALSO HIS THIRD IN ODIS. WHILE SHUBMAN GILL GOT TO THE MILESTONE, HIS SIXTH IN THE FORMAT, 19 BALLS LATER.

the fast bowlers while Iyer's aggressive intent from ball one stood out in a scenario where he was desperately

searching for runs.

Both Iyer and Gill got their half-centuries with straight sixes, off debutant Spencer Johnson and Green respectively.

Conditions were ideal for the batters but Australian attack, missing the likes of Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins, looked short on ideas. Lead spinner Adam Zampa too could not stem the

flow of runs.

Iyer was the first to complete the century, his third in ODIs, while Gill got to the milestone, his sixth in the for-

mat, 19 balls later. When both the batters departed, Rahul and Kishan (31 off 18) played some bold

strokes to up the scoring rate. Suryakumar, who had to change his game in the previous match to adapt to the needs of ODI cricket, came out to bat in the 41st over.

In the T20 context, it was an ideal time for him to come and explore his 360 range from ball one. He did just that to power India to a formidable total.

His innings included four sixes in a row off Green in the 44th over. The towering pacer conceded 103 runs in his 10 overs, so symbolic of their wretched outing with the ball on the day.

lyer settles middleorder debate with timely hundred

PTI ■ INDORE

 \mathbf{I} ndia might be treating the ongoing ODIs against Australia as a warm-up exercise before the World Cup but Shreyas Iyer had all to play for going into the threematch series.

The 28-year-old has had to deal with his share of injuries since making his international debut

The Asia Cup that India won marked his comeback from a back surgery after six months but a back spasm in the middle of the tournament meant he only got to bat once over the course of two weeks.

Considering what he has gone through the year, especially the range of emotions in the last one month, a third ODI hundred could not have come at a better time for

Iyer was India's designated number four before the injury pegged him back and a virtual no show in the Asia Cup meant his place in the playing eleven was far from secure.

In the meantime, Ishan Kishan dle-order spot with a few good

Iyer had a lot to prove in the Australia series and a run-out in the first ODI showed that luck too was not on his side. However, he made his own luck at the highscoring Holkar Stadium on

Sunday.
When he walked out to bat at number three, he had Gill at the other end like he had on Friday when got run out attempting a sin-

The mix up might have played on his mind but in a high-pressure scenario, Iyer oozed confidence from the start and showed the same faith in Gill while taking a quick single to get off the mark.

Iyer is known for his belligerent play against the spinners but he was equally effective against the

He began with a lofted hit off debutant Spencer Johnson before producing a couple of crisp cover drives off Josh Hazlewood. As Gill took his time to get going in ter of a track and against an ordithe powerplay, Iyer found the gaps with ease

An odd short ball was directed at Iyer deliberately but he was



quick to put it away.

An aerial strike over cover off Sean Abbott pretty much confirmed that Iver was in his elements. The 45-minute rain delay did not disturb his rhythm and he returned to do what he does best: take the attack to the spinners.

After slapping left-arm pacer Johnson for a straight six to bring up his fifty, Iyer punished leg-spinner Adam Zampa for bowling a half-tracker and his third six came in the following over from offie Matthew Short, a massive hit over wide long-on.

Strike rotation was also a key part of his innings comprising 39

Iver completed a memorable hundred with a single off Zampa in the 30th over. The roar from him after reaching the milestone was understandable considering the series of events over the past six months.

The much needed runs from his bat might have come on a belnary looking Australian attack.

But it might just be enough to settle the middle-order debate going into the World Cup at home.

Indian women to face SL for gold

 $P^{\text{ooja Vastrakar bowled a sharp}}_{\text{and incisive spell to take the Indian}}$ women's cricket team to its maiden Asian Games final, crushing Bangladesh by eight wickets in a lop-sided semi-final here on Sunday.

Right arm seamer Vastrakar, who replaced Anjali Sarvani in the squad just before leaving India, had career-best figures of 4/17 in four overs as Bangladesh were bowled out for 51 in 17.5 overs -- their lowest ever T20 score against the neighbours.

India will face Sri Lanka in the final on Monday. Lankans defeated defending champions Pakistan, who had won the gold at Incheon Games

The Indian men's team missed out on an Asian Games bronze medal in

table tennis after a second-string South

Korea blanked them 3-0 in the quarter-

put up a fight, but it was not enough to

get past Park Ganghyeon as India

Kamal to bring India back into the con-

However, things did not quite unfold in the manner the Indians

would have liked as the veteran from

Chennai went down 2-3 to Oh Junsung.

more hurting for the Indians as South

Korea's top three players did not even

The defeat would have been even

The onus was on Achantha Sharath

trailed 0-2 after the first two ties.

Harmeet Desai lost the first match

finals here on Sunday.



2014, by six wickets in the semifinals. Against Bangladesh, Vastrakar and her young new-ball partner Titas Sadhu (1/10 in 4 overs) extracted all

Indian men lose to South Korea 0-3

TT quarterfinals; women bow out

Earlier in the day, Sharath raised his

But the women's table tennis team

Star Indian paddler Manika Batra

game just in time to help India escape

imploded against a resilient Thailand to

failed in both her singles matches as the

unscathed against Kazakhstan.

bow out of the Games.

the juice available from the deck as they bowled quick, with the bounce on offer also helping.

Only skipper Nigar Sultana (12) was able to reach double figures for Bangladesh. The chase of 52 was a cakewalk as

it was achieved in only 8.2 overs. Kanika Ahuja (1 not out) and Jemimah Rodrigues (20 not out) took India home despite losing skipper Smriti Mandhana (7) and Shafali (17) cheaply.

It was also sweet revenge for the women's team, who were forced to play the second game on the trot without their regular skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who is serving a two-match sus-

The match against Kazakhstan was

Sharath had lost the opening sin-

The world No. 78 started briskly

Sathiyan accounted for Aidos

locked 2-2 when Sharath Kamal pro-

duced a face-saving win in the decisive

gles tamely 1-3 (11-8, 9-11, 11-6, 11-8) to Krill Gerassimenko, the top-

and ended in the same vein, despite

Kenzhigulov 14-12 11-8 11-5 to level the

scores before Harmeet put India ahead.

The world No. 69 Indian beat Alan

tance from Krill in their reverse singles,

but the world No. 107 struggled, even-

However, Sathiyan faced stiff resis

Kurumangaliyev 11-7, 12-10, 11-5.

Sharath winning the second game.

ranked player from Kazakhstan.



India enter round of 16 in men's football

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

 $R^{\text{iding on a Sunil Chhetri}}_{\text{strike, the Indian men's}}$ football team held Myanmar to a 1-1 draw and progressed to the round of 16 in the Asian

Games here on Sunday.

They will play Saudi
Arabia in the pre-quarters.

Chhetri scored from the

spot in the 23rd minute but it was Rahim Ali who earned the penalty when he was brought down inside the box Zevar Lin

While Lin was shown a yellow card for his sliding tackle, the peerless Chhetri made no mistake in finding the back of the net, in what was a repeat of the act he performed against Bangladesh in the second group game two

Coming off the bench, Kyaw Htwe found the equaliser for Myanmar when he headed the ball past Dheeraj Singh in the 74th minute at tually losing 5-11, 11-9, 9-11, 11-5, 5-

However, despite the two teams having same points,

the Xiaoshan Sports Center

India progressed as the runner-up from Group A, as the Chhetri-led side has scored more goals than Myanmar in the tournament. All in all, it was a cred-

itable performance from the Indians who were thrashed 5-0 by hosts China in their opener, before getting their act together to eke out a scrappy over Bano China topped the pool. India showed intent from

the beginning but seemed to struggle in the final third. However, they still managed to take the lead in the game thanks to Chhetri's goal.

However, they could not end the group stage on a win-

The last time the two teams met, earlier this year in Imphal, India beat Myanmar

Nikhat begins Asiad campaign with dominant win

PTI HANGZHOU

play in the match

a rematch of World boxer Nikhat Zareen outclassed Vietnam's Thi Tam Nguyen 5-0 to move to the women's 50kg pre-quarterfinals while Preeti Pawar (54kg) sealed a place in the quarterfinals of the Asian Games here on Sunday.

Two-time world champion Zareen defeated the two-time Asian Champion Nguyen by unanimous

One of only four boxers to not get a first round bye in the 50kg event despite being the reigning world champion, Zareen controlled the proceedings from the word go.

"I had not expected it (to be a one-sided bout) but my plan was to make it one because it's happening in another country and I didn't want to give any chance to her. My plan was to win the first two round unanimously and then relax in the third,



Zareen said after the win.

In the opening two rounds Zareen landed accurate punches, rattling her opponent.

Such was her power that the referee was forced to give Nguyen the eight count twice in 30 seconds in the opening round.

Nguyen tried to attack in the second round but Zareen retaliated with strong combination punches, forcing a third eight count upon the Vietnamese boxer.

After rejections, Arvind sings redemption song

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tndian rower Arvind Singh was a ■worried man after four failed attempts at cracking the army entrance exam. The son of a farmer didn't wish to follow in his father's

But then, having taken in his strides the rejections, he cleared the test in his fifth attempt and joined the Indian Army. Then rowing hap-pened, and things changed for the

On Sunday, Singh opened the country's account at the Asian Games with a silver medal in men's lightweight doubles sculls event along with Arjun Lal Jat.

"For a farmer's son, joining Army was the only option I had...
Otherwise I would have been forced Singh managed to get into the Indian Army in his fifth attempt,

to do farming to make ends meet," Singh remembered his days of struggle while talking to PTI from the Hangzhou Games Village.

With a sturdy six-foot, one-inch frame, the young athlete also tried his hands in his "favourite" sports, cricket and athletics, but couldn't make much progress there.

'So, this medal is dedicated to my father, (Vijay Singh) who faced so many hardships but ensured that I keep on trying to get into Indian Army. Despite our financial constraints, there was little pressure

on me, and I didn't give up 'Whatever I'm today is because of my dad, he has made so many sacrifices. I'm sure they would be so



in 2013, and was picked for the rowing team because of his "tall" 184-centimetre frame, in 2016.

"Forget about knowing the sport, till then, I didn't even hear the word rowing but I learnt the sport and made rapid progress," he said giving credit to his Indian coach Ismail Bag.

The best thing that happened to him was in 2018 when he got his partner Arjun Jat, also a son of a farmer and the duo showed a fine chemistry to make a formidable lightweight Indian double sculls

In the next year, the duo won a silver at the Asian Rowing Championship in South Korea, and they also competed together in the Tokyo Olympics where they finished Last year, the duo won the National Games gold in Gujarat and also the Asian Championship. "But this medal is on top of

I will get a new cabinet just for this," he said. At the Fuyang Water Sports Centre on Sunday, the duo had a timing of 6:28.18s to finish behind

China's Junjie Fan and Man Sun,

everything. When I go back home

who won gold with 6:23.16s.

The Uzbekistan pair of Shakhzod Nurmatov and Sobirjon Safaroliyev bagged the bronze clock-

ing 6:33.42s. "It was a tough race and we could have won a gold, but missed it. But we are not disappointed, it's a learning curve and we hope to

turn this into a gold in the next edition in 2026," he said.