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ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

# INDIA WELCOMES THE WORLD

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

As the two-day G20 summit is set to commence on Saturday in the decked up national Capital, India is welcoming the world with heads of states and delegations arriving on Friday. They were given rousing welcome with traditional dance and cultural performances at the airport.

India holds the presidency of the G20 for this year and is hosting the mega event in that capacity. More than 41 heads of states and delegations will congregate here for two days to dwell on various issues. The main theme of India's presidency of the G20 is "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — One Earth, One Family, One Future".

US President Joe Biden, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other leaders of the G20 grouping as well as chiefs of many leading world bodies like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have arrived for the summit.

The G20 member countries represent around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade and about two-thirds of the world population. The grouping comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France,

Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU).

Given the magnitude of the high-profile event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold more than 15 bilateral meetings with world leaders in three days starting Friday.

Setting the tone for the summit, Prime Minister Modi on Friday expressed confidence that it will chart a new path in the human-centric and inclusive development.

Invoking Mahatma Gandhi, Modi said on 'X' it is important to emulate his mission of serving the underprivileged, the very last person in the queue, as he underlined India's great emphasis on a human-centric way of furthering progress.

"We seek to accelerate progress of SDGs, Green Development Pact for a Sustainable Future and strengthen Multilateral Institutions for the 21st Century. We attach immense priority to futuristic sectors such as technological transformation and digital public infrastructure. We will also collectively work to further gender equality, women empowerment and ensure world peace," he said.

Rooted in our cultural ethos, India's G20 presidency theme "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — One Earth, One Family, One Future",



Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomes US President Joe Biden in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

deeply resonates with our world view that the whole world is one family, said Modi.

"India's G20 presidency has been inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented. We actively voiced the developmental concerns of the Global South," Modi added.

Noting that it is the first-

ever G20 summit being hosted by India, he said India is delighted to host the 18th summit on the weekend at the iconic Bharat Mandapam.

"It is my firm belief that the New Delhi G20 Summit will chart a new path in the human-centric and inclusive development," he said.

Modi said he will be chairing sessions on "One Earth", "One Family" and "One Future", covering a range of issues of prime concern to the world community. These include furthering strong, sustainable, inclusive and balanced growth, he added.

The PM noted that he will

also be holding bilateral meetings with several leaders and heads of delegations to further deepen bonds of friendship and cooperation.

"I am confident that our guests will enjoy the warmth of the Indian hospitality," he said, adding that President Droupadi Murmu will be hosting a din-

ner on Saturday.

"On the 10th (September), the leaders will pay homage to Gandhi Ji at Rajghat. At the closing ceremony, on the same day, G20 leaders will share their collective vision for a sustainable and equitable 'One Future', together like 'One Family', for a healthier 'One Earth', Modi said.

Meanwhile, India on Friday said the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration was "almost ready" and the negotiators were moving towards a consensus.

Refraining from getting into the specifics of sticking points such as the Russia-Ukraine war and climate-related issues, India's top G20 officials told a pre-summit press conference here that they were hopeful of clinching a joint communique by consensus.

"India's expectation is that all G20 members will move towards a consensus and we are hopeful of a consensus on the communique," Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra said in response to a question on the Ukraine conflict holding up an agreement on the New Delhi Declaration.

On the inclusion of the African Union in the G20 bloc, Kwatra said he expected that Summit proceedings starting Saturday would take a "suitable decision" on it.

India's G20 sherpa Amitabh Kant said Prime Minister Modi is a great believer in the Global South and had written to all the leaders on the

inclusion of the African Union in the G20. He said there has been a very positive response and formally that will come before the Summit.

India also said its presidency of the G20 has lived up to Modi's vision of being inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented and very decisive.

Kant said the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration will be the voice of the global south and developing countries.

"These are the four principles on which we have worked. We have lived up to his vision of being inclusive, action-oriented, ambitious and very decisive during our presidency," Kant said.

"Our New Delhi Leaders' Declaration is almost ready, I would not like to dwell on it because this declaration will be recommended to the leaders during the Summit and the leaders will then accept it and only after it is accepted by the leaders, we will be able to talk about the actual achievements of this declaration," he said.

Over 220 G20-related meetings were held in 60 cities across the country, showcasing India's diversity and federal structure, Kant said.

India is set to make a dash for the goal line at the summit in addressing some of the complex global challenges such as concerns of the Global South, consequences of the Ukraine conflict, gloomy economic scenario, and fostering inclusive growth amid a fragmented geopolitical environment.

## Opposition of a Democracy denied invite to G20 high table

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

With the former Prime Ministers and incumbent Chief Ministers all invited for the gala dinner at G20 venue for world leaders scheduled on Saturday, the leader of the principal Opposition party of country, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge have been "bypassed" in the list of protocol as he has not been extended the honour by "President of Bharat" Draupadi Murmu.

Kharge also holds the important position in terms of protocol as the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha — the upper house of Parliament — which is equivalent to a Union Cabinet Minister rank and holds a constitutional position.

Congress leaders said that Opposition not being extended invite for a summit is attack on democratic fabric of the

country. Kharge meanwhile was in Chhattisgarh for election related rallies.

Kharge not being in the list of invitees resonated outside the country with former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, in an interaction with international media at Brussels in Belgium, accusing the Modi Government of disrespecting the leaders of 60 per cent of India's population.

The G20 dinner has sparked controversy since day one after the invitation of the dinner described Murmu as "President of Bharat" instead of the customary "President of India".

Murmu will host the dinner on Saturday at Bharat Mandapam, the venue for the G20 summit of world leaders.

The Chief Ministers of all States, along with all Union Ministers, have been invited to the dinner.

The heads of other

Opposition parties as well as floor leaders in both Houses of Parliament have also not received invitations.

Though invited, former Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda will not attend the G20 dinner due to "health reasons". TMC supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has confirmed his presence at the event.

According to sources, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann are also likely to attend the G20 dinner. Besides the CMs of the BJP-ruled States, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his Tamil Nadu counterpart MK Stalin will attend the G20 dinner.

The grand old party has taken exception to Kharge's exclusion from the dinner and it is likely the Chief Ministers of the Congress-ruled States of

Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, would avoid being part of the dinner at Bharat Mandapam.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said when Delhi is a no flying zone for G20 security then how can he attend the dinner.

While Rahul said G20 is a "good thing" happening but lack of an invitation to the largest Opposition party is reflective of the "type of thinking" of the Government. Rahul is currently on a three-nation European tour to Belgium, France and Norway.

Continuing with his barb at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Waynad Lok Sabha member said there is a "full-scale assault" on the democratic institutions of India and there are concerns in the European Union (EU) quarters over this attempt to "stifle" the country's democratic structures.

Rahul addressed a broad range of topics, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, to say that the Opposition agrees with the Government's current position on the issue.

The BJP previously dubbed Rahul as the "present-day Mir Jafar of Indian polity" who went overseas seeking help from foreign forces to become a "nawab" in India.

The ruling party had also said that the Gandhi scion has insulted and defamed India with his comments about India overseas, saying, "People have not given this right to him."

Asked about the reaction of the European parliamentarians to some of these issues, Rahul replied, "They were very concerned and they felt that there is an attempt to stifle the democratic structures of India, for sure. I mean, they were very, very clear with us." He held closed-door meetings with some members of the



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge addresses during the party's 'Bharose Ka Sammelan' in Chhattisgarh on Friday

PTI

European Parliament (MEPs) in Brussels on Thursday.

When the media asked Rahul about the India-Bharat name row, he said he is perfectly happy with the name in the Constitution — India that is Bharat.

"These to me in a sense are panic reactions. There is a little bit of fear in the Government.

These are distraction tactics. We of course came up with the name INDIA for our (Opposition) coalition and it's a fantastic idea. This represents who we are. We consider ourselves to be the voice of India. So the name works very well," Rahul Gandhi said.

"But it surely disturbed the Prime Minister enough

that he wants to change the name of the country which is absurd. But that's what it is," he added.

He went on further to say that Prime Minister Modi comes up with some "dramatic, new" diversion tactic every time the opposition raises the issue of Adani, crony capitalism.



Connaught Place Outer Circle wears deserted look due to restricted traffic owing to tight security arrangements for the G20 Summit in New Delhi on Friday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

## Delhi wears a deserted look

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As stringent traffic regulations came into force in view of the G20 Summit, the areas under the New Delhi district on Friday wore a deserted look with empty roads and even key landmarks such as Bengali Market, Khan Market, Connaught Place were without visitors. The impact of the New Delhi district shutdown was visible in the entire Delhi as roads were empty.

The New Delhi district has been placed under a lockdown of sorts with all markets closed, roads deserted and police barricades all around, along with heavy deployment of security. The official closure came into effect at midnight on Thursday with leaders of the G20 group scheduled to begin arriving from Friday morning.

Stores, restaurants, shops as well as even essential/grocery

shops in places such as Bengali Market, Connaught Place, Central Secretariat, Diplomatic Enclave, Shanti Niketan and Khan Market remained closed. Restrictions came into full force in its area from Friday morning till Sunday night when the Summit ends.

The New Delhi district was heavily barricaded with police checking vehicles and IDs of those entering the area around the summit venue and hotels where the delegates will be staying.

The exits of the metro stations falling under Lutyens' periphery were highly regulated. At one instance a correspondent of *The Pioneer* had to intervene when there was a fracas between the Delhi Police and a French woman at the exit gate of Central Secretariat Metro Station. While the journalist was being frisked and his ID cards verified, policemen

were inquisitive about the foreigner and struggling to decipher what she was saying in English. *The Pioneer* correspondent pitched in and explained the restrictions in the wake of G20 security concerns which shall also witness the visit of the French President.

"It's quite normal for visiting dignitaries to visit a city landmark like Khan Market," said Sanjeev Mehra, president of the Khan Market Traders' Association.

"For G20 delegates, we were preparing mementos, but the Government has asked us to shut down our shops. We have decided to concede to the Government's request, but for a growing economy, it would have been nice to let business operations run normally."

According to Atul Bhargava, of the New Delhi Traders' Association, opening a few shops would have been a

futile exercise when the entire area is shut. "It is not practical. As far as we know, the market is 100 per cent closed," he added.

The Residents' Welfare Association (RWA) said while they understood that curbs were necessary in view of a large-scale event, better communication should have been ensured with market associations and RWAs.

At the exit point of Patel Chowk metro station, which is close to some of the hotels accommodating the delegates, commuters' IDs were being checked. Those who were not bonafide residents of the area or could not provide any valid reason for their presence in the area, were asked to return.

The Hanuman Mandir in New Delhi, which is thronged by devotees, was also empty. Connaught Place market and

other markets were shut owing to the security arrangements for the summit.

Ashok Randhawa of Sarojini Nagar mini market association said the market is completely open and traders have arranged flowers and Tilak-thalis to welcome foreign tourists.

Stringent traffic regulations were put in place in New Delhi on Friday morning while online delivery services, except for medicines, have been barred in the area where the G20 Summit venue and hotels for delegates are located, officials said.

The movement of vehicles is being regulated in the district but ambulances, locals and tourists staying in the area are being permitted to travel by presenting proper identification documents, the police said.

Continued on Page 2

# G20 SUMMIT

NEW DELHI, INDIA  
8-10 SEPTEMBER

# 2023

भारत 2023 INDIA  
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्  
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## Bypolls see BJP, INDIA bloc evenly-matched

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

A head of the assembly election in five states and Lok Sabha polls, the BJP and the Opposition INDIA alliance have evenly matched each other in the by-elections to the seven seats that took place on Tuesday with BJP winning three seats - two in Tripura, one in Uttarakhand-but losing its seats in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.



Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha with BJP Tripura President Rajib Bhattacharjee and newly elected party MLAs Taffajal Hossain and Bindu Debnath during a press conference after the party's victory in the by-elections to Boxanagar and Dhanpur assembly seats, in Agartala on Friday

Congress won its lone seat in Puthuppally bypoll in Kerala under the banner of United Democratic Front (UDF) vis-a-vis the nominee of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) led by the CPM.

While the BJP has won the Dhanpur and Boxanagar assembly seats in Tripura and Bageswar in Uttarakhand, the Opposition bloc has won in Jharkhand's Dumri, Puthuppally in Kerala and Dhugguri in West Bengal. The Dhanpur bypoll in Tripura had been necessitated due to the resignation of the BJP's Pratima Bhoumik from the seat, after she chose to continue as an MP and Union Minister of State. The Boxanagar bypoll had to be held due to the death of its sitting MLA, the CPI(M)'s Samsul Haque. The BJP victories in Tripura bypoll has consolidated saffron hold over

**Form No. 3**  
[See Regulation-15 (1)(a)]/16(3)  
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL  
CHANDIGARH (DRT 2)  
1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also)

**Case No.: OA/1555/2021**  
[Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]  
Exh. No.: 19193  
**ICICI BANK LIMITED**  
VS  
**DURGA DASS**

To,  
**(1) DURGA DASS**  
D/W/S/O-SUBHASH CHAND MR. DURGA DASS S/O MR. SUBHASH CHAND, R/O FLAT NO. F-005, GROUND FLOOR, TOWER-E, VILLAGE - KHERKI DAULA, NINEX CITY, SECTOR-76, GURGAON - 122001 HARYANA. (BORROWER)  
Gurgaon, HARYANA  
Also At: MR. DURGA DASS S/O. MR. SUBHASH CHAND, R/O. HOUSE NO. 192, DHUDIAL CGHS LTD., PITAMPURA, NORTH WEST, NEW DELHI-110034. WEST, DELHI-110034  
**(2) MRS. SIMARJEET KAUR**  
WIFE OF MR. DURGA DASS R/O. FLAT NO. F-005, GROUND FLOOR, TOWER-E, VILLAGE - KHERKI DAULA, NINEX CITY, SECTOR-76, GURGAON - 122001 HARYANA. (CO-APPLICANT)  
Also At: MRS. SIMARJEET KAUR W/O OF MR. DURGA DASS, R/O HOUSE NO. 192, DHUDIAL CGHS LTD., PITAMPURA, NORTH WEST, NEW DELHI-110034. WEST, DELHI-110034  
**(3) M/S. NINEX DEVELOPERS LIMITED**  
R/O. GOPI RAM BUILDING, KH. NO. 300, SULTANPUR VILLAGE, NEW DELHI-110 030 THROUGH ITS AUTHORIZED OFFICER. (BUILDER)

**SUMMONS**  
WHEREAS, OA/1555/2021 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 11/07/2023. WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 13227168/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed). In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:- (i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted; (ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application; (iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties; (iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal; (v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by way of sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets. You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 04/10/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence. Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 13/07/2023.

**Form No. 3**  
[See Regulation-15 (1)(a)]/16(3)  
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL  
CHANDIGARH (DRT 2)  
1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also)

**Case No.: OA/645/2020**  
[Summons under sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, read with sub-rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]  
Exh. No.: 18856  
**ICICI BANK LIMITED**  
VS  
**PIYUSH SHARMA**

To,  
**(1) PIYUSH SHARMA**  
D/W/S/O- MR. SHANKER SHARMA MR. PIYUSH SHARMA S/O SH. SHANKER SHARMA, R/O H. NO. 13/14, DLF CITY, PHASE-I BLOCK-G GURGAON HARYANA- 122001. (MORTGAGOR/BORROWER)  
2ND ADDRESS:- RESIDENT OF FLAT NO. 0102, 1ST FLOOR, TOWER NO. 7, SPIRE WOODS, SECTOR 103, GURGAON - 122001, HARYANA. GURGAON, HARYANA- 122001  
Also At : R/O FLAT NO. 0102, 1ST FLOOR, TOWER NO. 7, SPIRE WOODS, SECTOR-103, GURGAON- 122001 HARYANA  
**(2) M/S. A.N. BULIDWELL PVT. LTD.**  
R/O CP NO.4, SECTOR -8 IMT, MANESAR, GURGAON 122050 THROUGH ITS AUTHORIZED OFFICER

**SUMMONS**  
WHEREAS, OA/645/2020 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 29/05/2023. WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 13406234/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed). In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:- (i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted; (ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other than properties and assets specified by the applicant under serial number 3A of the original application; (iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of secured assets or such other assets and properties disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application, pending hearing and disposal of the application for attachment of properties; (iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business any of the assets over which security interest is created and/or other assets and properties specified or disclosed under serial number 3A of the original application without the prior approval of the Tribunal; (v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds realised by way of sale of secured assets or other assets and properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the bank or financial institutions holding security interest over such assets. You are also directed to file the written statement with a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear before Registrar on 19/09/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence. Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this date: 26/06/2023.

Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue summons.

## Puthuppalli win proof of love for Chandi: Son

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Chandi Oommen, the Congress candidate and son of late Oommen Chandi, the former chief minister, walked all over the CPI-M candidate Jaik C Thomas and won the by-poll from Puthuppalli assembly constituency with a record margin of 37, 719 votes. While Chandi Oommen bagged 80, 144 votes, his nearest rival Thomas had to content with 42, 425 votes. The by-poll was necessitated following the death of Oommen Chandi who has been representing the constituency continuously for the last 53 years. Though Chandi Oommen's victory was not in doubt at any point of time from the word go in the by-election, the humongous majority with which he won has literally baffled the CPI-M. What adds to the beauty of the victory is the timing. The result of the poll was announced a day after the first anniversary of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra. "This is the 13th win of my father and is proof of the love and affection with which the people of



Puthuppalli hold him in their hearts," Chandi Oommen told journalists after paying homage at the tomb of his late father. This is the third defeat suffered by Jaik C Thomas in a row. "Chandi Oommen's win is a befitting reply by the people's court to the CPI-M which had been on a witch hunting mission against Oommen Chandi," said A K Antony, Congress working Committee member and a close confidante of the late leader. But the CPI-M blamed the sympathy wave for Oommen Chandi as one of the reasons for the defeat of the party candidate.

## TMC SNATCHES DHUPGURI FROM BJP Hail INDIA, down with bigots: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Moments after the Trinamool Congress wrested back from the BJP the Dhupguri Assembly seat in a keenly contested by-election trouncing the saffron party by about 4,500 votes Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called the Friday's development a prelude to "BJP's fall and INDIA's rise in the coming Lok Sabha elections." INDIA stands for the newly forged anti-BJP Indian National Developmental and Inclusive Alliance of 23 parties. "I dedicate this fantastic victory to people of Dhupguri and also congratulate constituent parties of INDIA alliance who have defeated the BJP particularly in UP... I am told that out of 7 seats where, by-polls were held INDIA has won 4 which is fantastic," Banerjee said dismissing Tripura party's victory in two Taffra seats as a product of large-scale manipulations where "no supporters of other

parties are allowed to vote." "Out of the three victories two are in Tripura where elections are a farce... The BJP gets 90 percent votes there by rigging," she said adding "this is a prelude to what is going to come (in 2024)." Curiously Banerjee would not spend a word (let alone attack) for Left or Congress — what experts said — in an apparent bid to humour the two parties ahead of general elections. Her nephew and TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's too said the TMC's victory represented the victory of secular, democratic and development loving forces. Saying that the people of Dhupguri embraced politics of development to that of hatred and bigotry junior Banerjee who is also an MP from Diamond Harbour constituency wrote, "saluting every AITC worker for their tireless efforts in connecting with the people."



Connaught Place wears a deserted look as the market was closed due to the G20 Summit in New Delhi on Friday

## G20 nations should show leadership: UN chief

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

G20 countries should show leadership by keeping the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal alive, rebuilding trust based on climate justice and advancing just and equitable transition through a green economy, United Nations General Secretary Antonio Guterres said on Friday.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addresses a press conference ahead of the G20 Summit, in New Delhi on Friday

At the Paris climate talks in 2015, countries agreed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius as compared to pre-industrial levels (1850-1900) to avoid extreme, destructive and likely irreversible effects of climate change. "We have no time to lose, challenges stretch as far as I can see. The climate crisis is worsening dramatically but the collective response is lacking in ambition, credibility and urgency," Guterres told a press conference on the eve of the G20 Summit here. He urged the G20 countries — responsible for 85 per cent of the

world's GDP and 80 per cent of the emissions — to demonstrate leadership in two priority areas: preventing a climate breakdown and saving the sustainable development goals. "The climate crisis is spiralling out of control, but G20 countries are in control. Together, G20 countries are responsible for 80 per cent of global emissions. Half measures will not prevent full cli-

mate breakdown," he said. Guterres urged the G20 leaders to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal alive, rebuild trust based on climate justice and advance just and equitable transition through a green economy. He urged big emitters to make extra efforts to cut emissions and support emerging economies to achieve these. He said developed countries should reach net zero by 2040 and the emerging economies by 2050. OECD countries should phase out coal by 2030 and the others by 2040, he added. The UN chief said the developed countries within the G20 should show leadership by delivering on commitments to developing countries, by meeting the USD 100 billion goal, doubling adaptation finance, replenishing Green Climate Fund and operationalising loss and damage fund created in last Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

## Delhi wears... FROM PAGE 1

The Delhi Metro started its services from 4 am from the terminal stations on all lines of the network on Friday and the same will continue on Saturday and Sunday. Officials said over 50,000 personnel along with dog squads and mounted police have been deployed to keep a hawk-eye vigil during the summit.

Manoj Tyagi, a doctor, said, "I drove from Noida Extension to New Delhi for some work. Usually, it would have taken me over an hour to reach the area since there is traffic, but (today) I reached in 40 minutes since the roads were empty. There was checking but no inconvenience." New Delhi district has been designated as Controlled Zone-1 from Friday 5 am till Sunday 11.59 pm because of the Summit. Police have urged people not to visit India Gate and Kartavya Path for walking, cycling or picnicking. The movement of vehicles is being regulated in the district but ambulances, locals and tourists staying in the area are being permitted to travel by presenting proper identification documents, police said.

## RSS, affiliate outfits to meet Shah, Nadda

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A head of the forthcoming Assembly polls in four major states and the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, top functionaries of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its affiliate organisations are holding a three-day annual meeting in Pune for three days beginning September 14.

Being seen as a crucial get-together, the RSS' annual meeting will be attended by RSS chief Dr Mohan Bhagwat, General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale, his deputy Arun Kumar, four other joint secretaries and key functionaries of the affiliate Sangh Parivar organisations.

Union Home Minister and BJP's strategist Amit Shah and party president J P Nadda will also attend the three-day meeting which will be held at the SP College campus along Tilak Road in Pune. Representatives of as many as 26 affiliate organisations including the

BJP, Vishva Hindu Parishad, Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Vidya Bharati, iBharatiya Kisan Sangh, Sanskar Bharati, Seva Bharati and Sanskrit Bharati will take part in the meeting. Leaders of the RSS and its affiliate organisations will deliberate upon issues like social harmony, environment, family values, social service, economy and national security.

## MAN SPRAYS TURMERIC POWDER ON MAHA MIN

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid ongoing protests over reservations in jobs and education for Maratha community, a man sprayed turmeric powder on Maharashtra's Revenue Minister and senior BJP leader Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil at a government guest house at Solapur in Western Maharashtra on Friday, demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the Dhargar community. Vikhe-Patil's aides immediately grabbed the person and overpowered him, even as he shouted slogans for reservations to the Dhargar community. They handed him over to the police.

## Air hostess' murder accused found dead in Powai lock up

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a shocking impediment to the ongoing investigations into the ghastly murder of trainee air-hostess Rupal Grey in her flat at Andheri on Monday, the accused in the case Vikram Atwal was found dead in the lock-up of the Powai police station in north-east Mumbai, in a suspected case of suicide.

The body of 40-year-old Atwal was sent for post-mortem. As of now, no foul play has been suspected in Atwal's death. Though the case is being treated as custodial death as of now, the police may register a case of suicide after the receipt of the post-mortem report. It may be recalled that on September 5, a trainee flight attendant with Air India, Rupal Ogrey (24), was found dead in a flat in N G Complex At Andheri with her throat slit. Within hours of crime.

## Indict Stalin, Raja: Hindu group to Shah

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The unabated attacks on Sanatana Dharma by persons holding Constitutional positions and membership in legislative bodies should be seen seriously and prompt action be taken against them, demanded Hindu Janajagruiti Samiti, an umbrella organisation of Sanatanis across the world. Ramesh Shinde, national spokesman, HJS, in a statement released to the media on Friday called for the immediate prosecution of Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil Nadu minister for Sports and Youth Affairs, A Raja, MP,

and Priyank Kharge, Karnataka Minister for Rural Development for their diatribes against Sanatana Dharma. The HJS demanded that the trio be booked under Sections 153(A), 153(B), 295(A), 298 and 505 of Indian Penal Code and also called for the imposition of National Security Act against them. While Udhayanidhi Stalin called for the eradication and abolition of Sanatana Dharma which was more dangerous than dengue, cholera, corona and malaria, Raja went one step further and described the Sanatana Dharma as a stigma like HIV and leprosy. The HJS

said in the statement that if no action was taken against the trio, it would launch a nationwide agitation. "We have written to the Hon'ble Home Minister of the country expressing our concern and fear over the ever increasing attacks on Sanatana Dharma. "The I.N.D.I.A. alliance that met at Mumbai recently have intensified their attacks on Sanatana Dharma for reasons best known to them only. The unity, integrity, and peace of the country are being threatened by these persons. These statements are sure to pose threat to democracy. Do these political

parties and their leaders have the courage to make such statements against Islam or Christianity? Such representatives of the people who repeatedly target Hindus with inflammatory statements should be sacked not only from their official positions but from the legislature and parliament as well," said Shinde in the release. "The peace, unity and integrity of the country will be threatened if leaders who create such religious discord are not prosecuted and punished. Besides, the purpose of the said accused to create chaos and riots in the country will be successful," cautioned the HJS.

# G20 SUMMIT

NEW DELHI, INDIA  
8-10 SEPTEMBER

# 2023

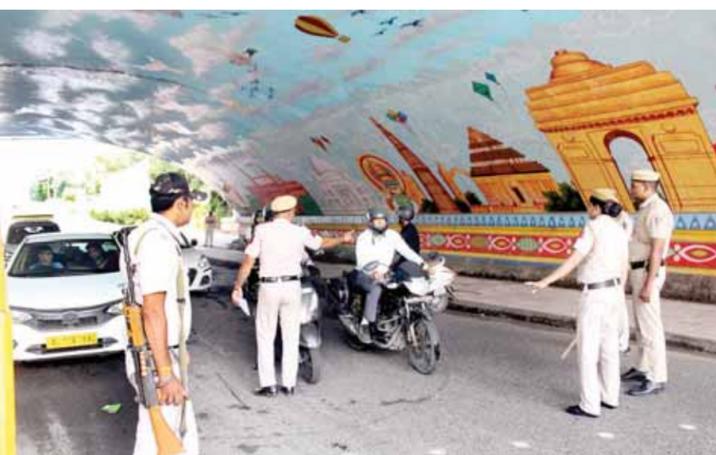
भारत 2023 INDIA  
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्  
ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE



Nearly empty roads ahead of the G20 Summit, at ISBT in New Delhi, Friday.



Security forces on guard in New Delhi area



Police personnel check vehicles ahead of the G20 Summit, at Minto Road in New Delhi, Friday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

## Curated menu for Prez's dinner

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu's grand dinner for the heads of state and other top delegates at the G20 Summit venue here on Saturday will be a culinary delight for the guests who will be greeted with a "specially-curated menu" in line with the delicacies consumed during the Indian monsoon.

The dinner tables at Bharat Mandapam, the venue for the Summit, are being decked up by senior managers and staffers of a luxury hotel group. The ceremonial dinner will be served in bespoke silverware crafted exclusively for the mega event, sources said.

"We have prepared a specially-curated menu consummating the culinary delicacies consumed during the monsoons in India with the right flavours to fuse with the occasion and gastronomical appeal of the VVIPs," a source linked to the preparations said, adding millet-based dishes will also be on the menu. While officials remained tight-lipped on the



exact menu but it is expected to reflect India's culinary diversity from across the country. President Droupadi Murmu will host the grand dinner at Bharat Mandapam after the end of the Summit's first day of the two-day mega event.

While the menu remains wrapped in secrecy, the VVIP guests are all set to be greeted with an "Indian delight" that will leave a "pleasant and unforgettable taste" in their mouths, another source said. Sweets of a wide variety like gulab jamun, rasmalai, imarti and jalebi among others are planned to be served, the source said, adding

that the serving staff will wear a special attire to match the occasion.

A Jaipur-based metalware firm on Tuesday said several luxury hotels commissioned made-to-order tableware and silverware that would be used by the foreign delegates staying at their establishments and at the special dinner.

Most of the tableware have a steel or brass base or a mix of both with a coating of silver while some of the plates that will be used to serve the welcome drinks have a gold plating, Laksh Pabuwal of Iris Jaipur had told a news agency.

The company held a media preview on Tuesday of some of the silverware. About 15,000 silverware crafted by 200 artisans have been made for the summit, it had said. The designs of the tableware are reflective of India's rich heritage and its global prominence, said Rajeev Pabuwal of Iris Jaipur.

"The tableware depict the glorious cultural heritage of India, motifs of flowers, the peacock — our national animal — graces the plates, and other items. The silverware will dazzle the heads of state with their cultural sparkle," he had said. Some of the tableware will be sent to the luxury hotel group responsible for arranging Saturday's grand dinner.

The group will cater the lunch and the dinner menus at the G20 Summit venue, the sources said. The G20 Leaders' Summit will be held at the newly-commissioned international convention and exhibition centre — Bharat Mandapam — at Pragati Maidan on Saturday and Sunday.

## G20 delegates will be welcomed in multiple languages

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

From 'Bienvenue' in French to 'Hosgeldiniz' in Turkish, G20 delegates and other international guests will be greeted in multiple languages when they enter the delegation centre at the Bharat Mandapam complex.

In a spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', 'welcome' has been printed in languages of all G20 member nations and invited countries, on an official welcome backdrop installed in the Delegation Offices set up at Hall no. 14 of the Bharat Mandapam complex.

From 'Willkommen' in German to 'Selamat Datang' in Indonesian and 'Bienvenido' in Spanish to 'Hosgeldiniz' in Turkish, the backdrop wears a colourful look. In a late Thursday night post on 'X', G20 India shared glimpses of the

'RBI Innovation Hub Pavillion', 'Digital India Experience Zone' and other facilities which have been created for delegates and others, in a video of the Bharat Mandapam.

In the short video, G20 Chief Coordinator Harsh Vardhan Shringla also gave a sneak peek into dedicated office spaces which have been built for delegates of all G20 members nations and invited countries, besides a common spacious lounge area.

The welcome backdrop was also shown in the video. From greetings in Bangla to German and Russian to Mandarin, the massive backdrop fronted by flags of all G20 members and invited countries and international organisations, paints a picture of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' — One Earth, One Family, One Future.

## MCD help sought to curb monkey, dog menace

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After installing huge langur cutouts, the Delhi Police has sought the help of civic agencies to curb the menace of monkeys and dogs in and around central Delhi's Rajghat ahead of G20 delegates' visit to the Mahatma Gandhi memorial. Police have also asked the agencies to rope in snake catchers. The delegates will visit Rajghat on Sunday. Proper security arrangements are being made and traffic police personnel will ensure their visit goes smoothly.

The agency concerned has been asked to deploy people to catch monkeys and dogs during the delegates' visit to Rajghat. There is a jungle nearby by so they have also been asked to press snake catchers into service, a senior police officer said.

These people will keep checking the area and update the security personnel. Besides, they are patrolling the Yamuna Khadar area in a tractor, the officer said. Officer said they conducted a safety audit of Rajghat, after which they requested civic agencies to deploy men.

"One agency said snakes might come through nearby drains. So, it became imperative to deploy catchers," the officer said. Cops have been patrolling the area to ensure monkeys



don't disrupt the floral arrangements. They are also using tractors to patrol Khadar area to watch out for anti-social elements. Apart from placing the cutouts of langurs along major roads and in locations the monkeys tend to frequent, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has deployed "30 to 40 monkey wallahs or monkey-men" who mimic the hoots and screams of the aggressive langur monkey to create the impression that the animals are alive and moving. In addition, the authority has started providing food to monkeys in forested areas to ensure they do not wander beyond the boundaries.

The unchecked population of monkeys has led to instances of the primates attacking and biting bystanders in Delhi. Monkeys have also been known to trash gardens and rooftops, and chase people for food. Recently, Hundreds of stray dogs in the national capital are being rounded up by authorities and moved to shelters in the run-up to the G20 summit this weekend.

## Youth arrested over hoax alert on social media

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi police arrested a 21-year-old man from north Delhi's Bhalswa Dairy area on Friday for allegedly making a hoax alert on social media on the G20 Summit.

The accused claimed on social media that an auto-rickshaw carrying guns and explosives was on its way towards the Pragati Maidan area where the G20 Summit is being held, police said. Taking swift action, Bhalswa Dairy police team traced the accused and arrested him for spreading false information in public.

The official 'X' handle of DCP Outer North was on Friday tagged on a post by the handle of one Kuldeep Sah in which he said that "an auto-rickshaw driver was going towards Pragati Maidan with guns and explosive" and a photo of the auto was also uploaded with the post, said a senior police officer.

Considering the sensitivity of the post, the police checked and found the auto registered in the name of Gurmeet Singh (50), a resident of SSN Park, an official said.

"The address was visited where auto driver Harcharan Singh (48) was found who stated that the vehicle was registered in his brother's name and he was using it for carrying material of clothes in Chandani Chowk area. He further stated that he was having dispute with one Kuldeep Sah who reside in same street over parking of his auto," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Ravi Kumar Singh said.

All facts were verified and the auto was checked thoroughly in which no suspicious thing was found, he added. Sah was found present at his home, said police, adding he said that he posted on 'X' by his handle @Kuldeep Sah as the auto driver parked the vehicle outside his house. He had warned the auto driver several times not to park his vehicle there, police said. Legal action is being taken against Sah, who spread false rumours regarding G20 Summit security, police said.

## Marigold touch: Trees decorated with garlands to welcome leaders for G20

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a riot of brown, green and shades of vivid orange, hundreds of trees lining roads through which heads of states and foreign delegates will travel during the G20 Summit have been adorned with garlands of marigold. Tree trunks wrapped with marigold can be seen in the Palam technical area, Sardar Patel Marg, Rajghat and other important intersections. This has been carried out on the directions of Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena.

"This is the Gujarati tradition of welcoming guests. This is an eco-friendly way and marigold flowers also add aesthetic value," Saxena stated last week. Various agencies have pitched in for decorating trees with marigold garlands, the work for which started in the intervening night of September 7 and 8, officials said. The trees will remain decorated throughout the event.

This kind of eco-friendly decoration of important roads



in Delhi has been done for the first time, an official said. "The marigold flowers used for decorating the trees can remain fresh for long durations and even after they wilt and dry up, they can be used as compost around the trees, apart from being used for seeding of new plants at chosen locations," he added.

While the Delhi Cantonment Board has decorated about 400 trees around the Palam technical area (Thimayya Marg and Parade

Road), the Public Works Department has done the job for around 200 trees and 100 poles near Rajghat, according to officials. Besides, about 1,200 trees on Sardar Patel Marg and important intersections have been decorated by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and 300 trees by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

"The marigold flowers used for decorating the trees can remain fresh for long durations and even after they wilt and dry up, they can be used as compost around the trees, apart from being used for seeding of new plants at chosen locations," he added.

"All the flowers being used for this purpose have been sourced from local flower mandis and the garlands will be replaced as per local requirements and taking into account security concerns," said officials. The G20 Summit will be held in the national capital over the weekend.

## LG keeping an eye on security

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena will remain in constant touch with the city police commissioner and will monitor the security situation in the national capital during the G20 Summit. According to Raj Niwas officials, Saxena will be in constant touch with the command room of the Delhi Police control room at the police headquarters.

"He will remain in touch with the police commissioner, and will keep an eye on every road and hotel detailed for G20 requirements, apart from taking live updates of the development in the city, through the hi-tech gadgets installed at the control room," they said.

Saxena had recently visited the control room where he was informed that live visuals would be captured by more than 5,000 CCTVs installed in different parts of the city and sent to the control room round the clock. Two teams comprising 25 security personnel will be monitoring them in different shifts.

The control room receives district-wise visuals and a special command room has been set up for 30 senior police officials to monitor the minutest of developments in the city and its roads, officials said. Two giant screens in which images can be magnified have been also installed at the control room, which also has other regular-sized monitors. The control room is also manned by technical experts to ensure that everything goes without any glitch.

The police commissioner apprised the LG that they are collecting information from each district round the clock and that there has been adequate deployment of police personnel, officials said.

Saxena visited areas that are likely to be visited by delegates of the summit, and inquired about the security arrangements at highly sensitive places, they said. Apart from VVIP areas, high-resolution CCTVs have also been installed in sensitive parts of the city that have previously witnessed trouble.

## Digital India Experience Zone set up at G20

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

From introducing UPI to national telemedicine service e-Sanjeevani, from AI-based language platform Bhashini to Aadhar-to showcase some of India's key digital public infrastructure projects, a thematic zone namely 'Digital India Experience Zone' has been set up at the venue of the G20 summit.

The zone, which the government said is a "key attraction" at the summit venue, has been set up in halls number 4 and 14. A number of exhibitions at Bharat Mandapam, the convention centre which will host during G20 summit meetings, will showcase India's technological prowess and innovation, and offer a multitude of unique experiences to the visitors. The 'Culture



Corridor - G20 Digital Museum' will represent and celebrate the shared heritage of G20 members and invitee countries, sources said, adding it will incorporate iconic and notable cultural objects and heritage of participating countries and nine invitee nations. This corridor will serve as a powerful platform for promoting understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural expressions, for knowledge sharing, inclusivity, and equality, and for fostering a sense of shared identity, they said. The 'Digital India Experience Zone', being set up in hall 4 and 14, will offer visitors a unique opportunity to experience the power of technology

being implemented by India. It will provide key insights into the crucial initiatives of Digital India programme and highlight initiatives like Aadhaar, DigiLocker, UPI, eSanjeevani, DIKSHA, Bhashini, ONDC, Ask GITA, they said. Ask GITA (Guidance, Inspiration, Transformation, and Action) combines the ancient wisdom of Bhagavad Gita with cutting-edge AI technology, they noted.

The zone will also include MyGov, CoWIN, UMANG, JanDhan, e NAM, GSTN, FastTag and other such initiatives of the government. The 'RBI's Innovation Pavilion' will display cutting-edge financial technologies at the G20 Summit, showcasing their potential to revolutionise the financial landscape. It will include products demonstrating unique facets of

India's innovation in the financial sector. These include Central Bank Digital Currency, Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit, using technology to provide loan in digitised paperless manner, and Unique Payment System products such as UPI One World, Rupaya on the GO and cross border bill payment through Bharat Bill payments. The UPI One World is designed for inbound foreign travellers who do not have bank accounts in India.

Foreign nationals can open a prepaid payment instrument linked to UPI to experience hassle-free and secure payments during their stay in India, sources said. Delegates after getting UPI One World will have it pre-funded with Rs 2,000, which they can utilise as they desire.

## Tibetans in exile protest Chinese Govt for excesses



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Tibetan community on Friday held a demonstration near Majnu Ka Tilla in north Delhi against the Chinese government over their 'illegal occupation of Tibet' ahead of G20 New Delhi Leaders' summit amidst the deployment of heavy security near Majnu Ka Tilla in the national capital.

The protest was led by the members of the Tibetan Youth Congress. Armed with banners and placards, the protesters raised slogans against the Chinese government. Some of the slogans on their banners read— 'G20 Talk Tibet', 'Tibet Matters', and 'China's diplomatic assurances not to be trusted'. Protesters had "Free Tibet" slogans painted on their face and body. Heavy security forces have been deployed near Majnu Ka Tilla area after Tibetan Youth Congress President Gonpo

Tibetan Youth Congress members shout slogans as they participate in a protest against China's participation in G20 Summit at Majnu Ka Tilla in New Delhi on Friday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Dhundup on Thursday said that a protest will take place in Delhi on Friday against China over the illegal occupation of Tibet.

Dhundup said, "This protest is not against India or India hosting the G20 Summit. We are raising these slogans against the Chinese participation in the G20 Summit."

Asserting that the Tibetan community felt honoured that India is hosting the G20 Summit, Dhundup said the demonstration was aimed at raising their voice against the alleged illegal occupation of Tibet by the Chinese government. "The current situation in Tibet is very critical. We have asked protesters to keep the protest peaceful.

# G20 SUMMIT

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वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्  
ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

## World leaders arrive for Summit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

World leaders, including British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres arrived here on Friday to attend the G20 summit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he looks forward to productive discussions with them over the next two days.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) with other world leaders at the summit.

ciates the affection she has shown for India's culture when she landed here. Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and Hasina were received at the airport by Union Ministers Shobha Karandlaje and Darshana Jardosh respectively. Sunak was received by Union Minister Ashwini Choubey while Argentine President Alberto Fernández was welcomed by Union Minister Fagga Singh Kulaste. Comoros President Azali Assoumani also arrived here to a rousing welcome. He is also the chairperson of the African Union. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov also

arrived for the summit. On his arrival, Deputy Prime Minister of Oman Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said was received by Ashwini Choubey and he witnessed dance performance by cultural troupes. The G20 leaders will deliberate on pressing global issues at the grouping's annual summit here on September 9 and 10. India is hosting the summit in its capacity as the current G20 chair. In its G20 presidency, India has been focusing on various issues such as inclusive growth, digital innovation, climate resilience and equitable global health access.

## Modi, Biden reaffirm to further boost relations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and the US on Friday reviewed the entire gamut of their robust bilateral ties during talks here between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden. The two sides reaffirmed their resolve to further strengthen the relations. Prime Minister Modi later hosted a private dinner for President Biden who arrived earlier in the day to take part in the two-day G20 summit beginning Saturday.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) and President Joe Biden (left) shaking hands.

Prime Minister Modi took to social media after the talks and said "Happy to have welcomed @POTUS @JoeBiden to 7, Lok Kalyan Marg. Our meeting was very productive. We were able to discuss numerous topics which will further economic and people-to-people linkages between India and USA." He also said "The friendship between our nations will continue to play a great role in furthering global good," he adds. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Modi will hold 15 bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the summit in the next three days. On Friday, he also held parleys with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth. On Saturday, Modi will hold bilateral talks with British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, German Chancellor and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Modi will have a luncheon meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday besides a pull aside with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

ology, purchase of armed MQ-9B drones and trade issues. High technology cooperation under the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET) was also reviewed following up on the announcements from Prime Minister Modi's state visit to Washington in June, sources said. Incidentally, reports suggest India may invite Quad leaders as chief guests for Republic Day parade next year. The Quad combine includes India, Japan, US and Australia. The two leaders also discussed the situation in Ukraine, US-China relations, as well as India-China relations and the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The India-US nuclear deal and civil nuclear liability agreement was also discussed. Modi and Biden also discussed trade issues as the US has dropped most World Trade Organisation (WTO) cases against India. Meanwhile, the Indian defence ministry (MOD) is reportedly all set to issue a Letter of Request (LOR) for the purchase of 31 General Atomic MQ-9B armed drones, 15 for the Navy and eight each for the Army and Air Force. The cost of the proposed deal is estimated at \$3,072 million and the deal will happen through the U.S. Foreign Military Sales route. Based on the LOR, the U.S. Government and MoD will

finalise the Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) where details of equipment and terms of the procurement would be negotiated and finalised. Eight years since the civil nuclear deal which brought India into the global civil nuclear energy fold, cooperation between the two countries remains stuck over U.S. concerns on India's nuclear liability law. Keeping this in mind, the two countries recently announced cooperation on Small Modular Reactors. During Modi's visit to the U.S. in June, General Electric (GE) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) signed a memorandum of understanding to license manufacture the jet engine in India which has been chosen to power India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-MK2. The jet engine deal would see 80% technology transfer for manufacturing including some critical technologies by GE to HAL and the first engine is expected to be ready three years after the contract conclusion. In August, the proposal to license manufacture the General Electric F-414 jet engine cleared the U.S. Congress as there were no objections raised. Officials explained that since Congress has been already notified, which happened end July, and since there have been no objections inside 30 days, the deal is considered cleared.

## Pregnant women exposed to air pollution give birth to smaller babies, says study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A study has suggested that pregnant women exposed to air pollution, even at relatively low levels, give birth to smaller babies and can be vulnerable to asthma and higher rates of chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD) as they grow older. But those living in a greener area could help counteract this effect, it said, emphasizing that green areas tend to have lower traffic or that plants help to clear the air of pollution, or green areas may mean it's easier for pregnant women to be physically active. The study will be presented at the European Respiratory Society International Congress in Milan, Italy. The research also shows that women living in greener areas give birth to bigger babies and this may help counteract the effects of pollution. The study was based on

data from the Respiratory Health in Northern Europe (RHINE) study and presented by Robin Mzati Sinsamala, a researcher in the Department of Global Public Health and Primary Care at the University of Bergen (UiB), Norway. It included 4286 children and their mothers living in five European countries (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and Estonia). The researchers found that higher levels of air pollution were linked with lower birth weights, with PM2.5, PM10, NO2 and BC associated with average reductions in birth weight of 56g, 46g, 48g and 48g, respectively. When researchers took greenness into account, the effect of air pollution on birth weight was reduced. Women who lived in greener areas had babies with slightly higher birth weight (27g heavier on average) than mothers living in less green areas.

## ED attaches ₹3.4 crore assets in crypto currency cheating case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached movable and immovable assets worth Rs 3,43,68,376 in the Morris Coin Crypto Currency Case (a cheating case) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The attached assets include balance in bank accounts of Flywithme Mobile LLP (a partnership firm of Nishad K and Hasif K) and immovable property of Ansari P, an associate of Nishad K. The ED initiated investigations on the basis of FIRs registered in various police stations against Nishad K and others for cheating people on the pretext of giving high returns of 2-3 percent per day to the investors. The PMLA probe revealed that Nishad K collected deposits from the investors through his various



firms such as Long Rich Global, Long Rich Technologies and Morris Trading Solutions in the guise of Initial Coin Offer for the launch of Morris Coin Crypto Currency. "The money was redistributed to the investors in the guise of profits under a ponzi scheme initially and later the payments to investors were stopped. The profits generated by the accused out of the illegal activity were identified as Rs 54 crore," the ED said in a statement. Earlier, the ED had conducted multiple searches across the country on the premises of Nishad K and his associates, and had seized Rs.21 lakh approximately along with various incriminating documents. Abdul Gafoor, Managing Director of Stoxglobal Brokers Pvt. Ltd and an associate of Nishad K was arrested on March 24, 2022. Movable and immovable properties pertaining to the firms and associates of Nishad K to the tune of about Rs 50.72 crore were provisionally attached and subsequently confirmed by the Adjudicating Authority. The ED had also filed a Prosecution Complaint or chargesheet against six accused persons in this case before the Special Court, PMLA, Kozhikode on May 21, 2022. Further investigation is under progress, the agency added.

### Office of The Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone) P.W.D. Bhopal (M.P.) Tender Notice

NIT No. 43/G/1/Mis/Bpl.Z./2019 (Year 2023) Bhopal, Date 02.09.2023

Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the e-Procurement system of Public Works Department on the Portal <https://mptenders.gov.in> Tender details are as below:-

S. No.	Tender No.	District	Nature of Work	Name of Work	Call No.	Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. In lack)	Remarks
1	2023_PWDRB_304126_1	Sehore (Division Budhni)	Plan	Construction of Road from Piplani to Khajoorpani Road Length 7.50 Km.	1st Call	720.34	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
						720.34	

The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on line is Dated 16.09.2023 up to (17:30). Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone) P.W.D. Bhopal Madhya Pradesh G-19421/23

कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री लोक निर्माण विभाग ( भ/स ) दमोह संभाग दमोह Email - [espwddamoh@mp.nic.in](mailto:espwddamoh@mp.nic.in) Phone 07812-221405 निविदा प्रपत्र आमंत्रण सूचना

निविदा सूचना क्रमांक 10/2023-24/ निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उल्लेखित कार्य का विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाइट [www.mptenders.gov.in](http://www.mptenders.gov.in) पर देखा जा सकता है। दमोह दिनांक :- 04.09.2023

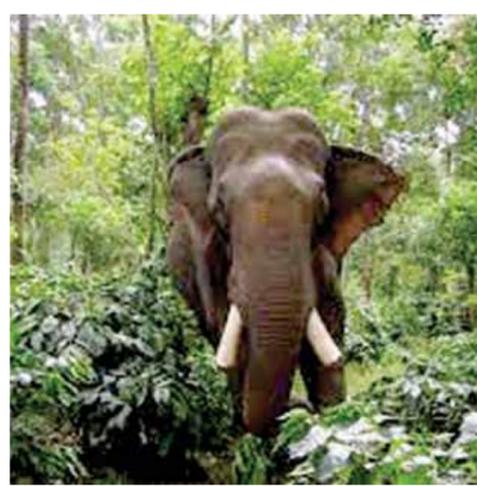
क्र.	पोर्टल टेंडर क्रमांक	कार्य का नाम	जिला	टेके की अनुमानित राशि (लाख में)	अमानत (रु. में)	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने का समय (वर्षांकाल सहित)
1	2023-24 PWDRB 304861	मार्ग उपसंभाग दमोह के अंतर्गत विभिन्न मार्गों पर बी.टी. रियुक्ल कार्य। (1) ओवरब्रिज कालेज से बाहोरी छपट मार्ग किमी. 1/2 से 5/2-4 (2) पुंजी तोतपानी मार्ग किमी. 1/2 से 6/2-4-6	दमोह	95.10	95100.00	12500.00	02 माह वर्षांकाल सहित
2	2023-24 PWDRB 304862	हटा उपसंभाग के अंतर्गत विभिन्न मार्गों पर बी.टी. रियुक्ल कार्य (1) बरो कनेरा सादपुर मार्ग किमी. 1.00 से 4.00 (2) हारट बढगांव बरतलाई चिकरवा देवरी डोली मार्ग किमी. 1.00 से 15.00 (3) काईखेड़ा से हरिजनटोला विपार मार्ग किमी. 1.00 से 7.00 (4) गैसाबाद अदनावा बलेह भैसा मार्ग किमी. 16.00 से 23.00 (5) महरावा पतोल से इटवा सेमरा सतोष मार्ग किमी. 1/2 से 5/2-4-6	दमोह	378.87	378870.00	15000.00	03 माह वर्षांकाल सहित
3	2023-24 PWDRB 304866	रेंदुखेडा उपसंभाग के अंतर्गत विभिन्न मार्गों पर बी.टी. रियुक्ल कार्य (1) हयनी ज्ञानपार मार्ग किमी. 13,25,26,27,29,31,32,33, 34,35 (2) रेंदुखेडा तापदेवी मार्ग किमी. 6,7,9,10,12,14,17,18,20,22,23	दमोह	415.94	415940.00	15000.00	03 माह वर्षांकाल सहित

1. निविदा से संबंधित बिड डाक्यूमेंट वेबसाइट <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर बिना भुगतान के देखे एवं डाउनलोड किये जा सकेंगे।  
2. निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य ऑन-लाईन पोर्टल पर क्रेडिट/डेबिट/कैशकार्ड/इंस्टैंट बैंकिंग के माध्यम से भुगतान कर निविदा प्रपत्र खरीदा जा सकेगा।  
3. निविदा प्रपत्र केवल ऑन-लाईन दिनांक 06.09.2023 समय 10:30 बजे से दिनांक 18.09.2023 समय 5:30 बजे तक खरीदा जा सकेगा। सूचना व अन्य जानकारी वेबसाइट पर देखी जा सकती है।  
4. निविदा से संबंधित समस्त आवश्यक संशोधन उपरोक्त वेबसाइट पर ही दर्ज किये जायेंगे, प्रथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नहीं कि जायेगा।  
कार्यपालन यंत्री, लोक निर्माण विभाग ( भ/स ) दमोह संभाग दमोह, मो. नं. 9826503561

## 'Big wild herbivores can protect nature'

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Big wild herbivores like jumbos, bison and rhinos can protect local nature by eating and trampling on biodiversity-threatening invasive plant species, researchers from the Uttarakhand-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and Aarhus University in Denmark have concluded after assessing huge data gathered from the world's largest wildlife survey conducted in India. Regarding native plants, they said, that these have evolved in such a way that they can withstand brutal treatment from species of herbivores they have co-existed with for millennia, while invasive plants usually cannot. Their study is published in the scientific journal, Nature Ecology & Evolution. The researchers used a battery of 26,838 camera stations and 158,979 vegetation plots to assess the relationships between megaherbivores, native plants and alien plants across India sprawling over 121,330 km2 of area. However, the researchers



The study is based on what the researchers call mega-herbivores, i.e. animals weighing more than one ton. In India, these are elephants, rhinos, wild water buffalo and Indian bison (the largest and heaviest bovine in the world).

species: Where there are many mega-herbivores, there are also many native plants and fewer invasive plants. Because their large size means that they have to eat a lot. And they are used to eating many different plant species, even species with less nutritional value, because they simple cannot afford to be picky. Therefore, they are more likely to include unfamiliar plants in their diet. The study's lead author, Ninad Avinash Mungi from Aarhus University, however, stressed that "You can easily use a mixture of large, medium and small herbivores. Deer, buffalo, cattle and horses work well together in rewilding projects, and together they can also target different invasive plant species. This also makes efforts more flexible and resilient," he said. "Megaherbivores, with broad dietary tolerances, could remove large biomass of established plants, facilitating new plant growth... This relationship was strongest in protected areas with midproductive ecosystem and high megaher-

bivore density but it was lost in areas where thicket-forming alien plants predominated (>40% cover)," said Qamar Qureshi, co-author and senior wildlife expert from the WII. His colleague from WII and also co-author of the study, Yadvendradev V Jhala added, "by incorporating the role of ecosystem productivity, plants traits and densities of megaherbivores on megaherbivore-vegetation relationships, our study highlights a function of megaherbivores in controlling alien plant proliferation and facilitating diverse native plants in invaded ecosystems." The study holds importance for biodiversity rich countries like India where unchecked growth of the invasive plant species are threatening native flora and fauna. The United Nation has designated invasive species as one of the five most important threats to global biodiversity. Invasive species are animals, plants and fungi that are introduced to areas to which they could not spread themselves, and that also harm native biodiversity.

## Keep vigil on falsified cancer drug: DCGI to drug controllers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Following an alert by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the DCGI has asked the drug controllers of all States and Union Territories (UTs) to keep a vigil on the sale and distribution of falsified versions of Japanese drug major Takeda's cancer drug Adcetris injection 50 mg (brentuximab vedotin) in the country. Adcetris is a CD30-directed antibody-drug conjugate indicated for treatment of patients with Hodgkin lymphoma after failure of autologous stem cell transplant and systemic anaplastic large cell lymphoma. The Drugs Controller General (India) (DCGI) Dr Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi, in a drug alert issued on September 5, said that the

WHO has informed about a safety alert identified with multiple falsified versions of Adcetris injection 50 mg manufactured by Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Ltd, identified in four different countries including India. The WHO has reported that there are at least eight different batch numbers of falsified versions in circulation. "These products are most often available at patient level and distributed in the unregulated supply chains (mainly online). The products have been identified in both regulated and illicit supply chains, sometimes at patient levels as well," it said. Based on the WHO's safety alert, the DCGI advised the State and regional regulatory offices to instruct their officers to keep a strict vigil on the movement, sale, distribution, stock of the mentioned

drug products in the market. They should also draw samples and initiate necessary action as per the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules made thereunder, added the DCGI. Doctors and healthcare professionals have also been advised that they should carefully prescribe and educate their patients for reporting of any Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs). Takeda in a statement said, "Takeda has been authorized by the Drug Controller General of India to import, sell and distribute Adcetris in India, and we make it available to our patients here through well-established supply chain networks. We strongly recommend that Adcetris should be procured from Takeda authorized distribution sources only."

## 1st global meet in Delhi was held even before independence: Jairam

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday took a swipe at the Government, saying the first international conference in New Delhi was held even before independence but only External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in the current dispensation would understand its significance even if he "chooses to devalue" it. A day before the G20 Summit here, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that between March 23 and April 2, 1947, the Asian Relations Conference was held here with 28 countries participating in it. "The very first international conference in New Delhi was held even before our independence, between March 23 and April 2, 1947. It is known as the Asian Relations Conference and many books have been written on it. 28

countries participated," Ramesh said in a post on X. "In the current ruling dispensation, the External Affairs Minister would alone understand its significance and impact — even if he chooses to devalue it today," he said. "It was held publicly under a big pandal in Purana Qila, and also had Australia, USA, USSR, UK and the UN as observers. Mahatma Gandhi spoke at the closing and his speech is available on Youtube," Ramesh said and shared a video of the speech. The Congress had earlier accused the Government of running an "election campaign" using the upcoming G20 meeting in India and said this was being done to divert people's attention from real issues. The Congress on Thursday took a jibe at the Government over the heads of state of Russia and China not coming for the G20 Summit.

# 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign launched

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The nationwide programme 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign was launched on Friday in all the 100 wards of the city areas. Under the leadership of Kashi Region president of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Dilip Singh Patel, along with city chief Vidya Sagar Rai, a group of BJP workers collected sacred soil in Amrit Kalash from the houses in Shivpurwa Ward located in Sigra area. The party workers were waving tri-colour and shouting slogans of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram'. Patel said with the inspiration of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, every village of the country will come together to pay humble tribute to all the brave sons of Bharat Mata who sacrificed everything in the freedom struggle and later on Amrit Vatika will be built in Delhi in their memory with the sacred soil collected from every ward of the cities and villages. He said under this programme, through mass participation we will make India a developed country, eliminate mentality of slavery so that we can feel proud of our rich heritage, maintain unity and solidarity and fulfil our duties as citizens. He appealed to all to take the 'Panch Pran' pledge focusing on fulfilling the duty and honouring those who protect the



Regional BJP chief DS Patel launching 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign in Varanasi on Friday.

nation. The regional BJP president said that the 'Meri Mati, Mera Desh' campaign was announced by the PM in the 103rd episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast on July 30 last. The aim of this campaign is to honour the brave freedom fighters and heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country. Under this campaign programmes will be organised across the country in the memory of brave fighters. Also, an Amrit Vatiya will be built in the memory of the brave fighters in every gram panchayat, which has been named 'Shilafalakam' on which the names of all the fighters of that area will be recorded. The city chief said the PM has announced the campaign in honour of brave sons of the country under which on Friday a group of party workers collected soil from every house in Shivpurwa ward. He

said this 'Amrit Kalash Yatra' will reach the country's capital (Delhi) carrying soil in 7,500 urns from every corner of the country. This Yatra will also take with it saplings from different parts of the country to Delhi. By mixing the soil and plants in these 7,500 urns, 'Amrit Vatika' will be created near the National War Memorial. This 'Amrit Vatika' will become a grand symbol of 'Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat'. Ashok Rai, Rajesh Trivedi, Shalini Yadav, Navratan Rathi, Madhup Singh, Namrata Chaurasia, Shobhanath Maurya, Kusum Patel, Shailendra Mishra, Abhishek Verma, Pankaj Patel, Indra Rani, Ajay Bind, Sindhu Sonkar, Rahul Kanojia, Pooja Pandey, Pragya Pandey, Hilmlil Rai, Ved Mishra, Kushagra Srivastava, Hritik Mishra and many others were also present.

# KVT creates new records during Shrawan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

One of the Dwadasa Jyotirlingas, Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) has set several new records during the recent two-month-long (due to extra month) auspicious Shrawan, thanks to the construction of grandeur Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham (corridor). It not only collected record collection of ₹18.89 crore as 'daan' (donation) but also saw the highest ever visit of devotees during Shrawan as over 1.63 crore devotees visited there during this period for offering prayers.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sunil Kumar Verma said after the inauguration of the corridor by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December



13,2021, continuous efforts have been made by the temple trust to improve the facilities for devotees. "It was the result of excellent arrangements made by the Yogi government to provide easy and safe 'darshan' to the devotees which helped the KVT set new paradigm of religious tourism in the entire country," he said, adding that Kashi has emerged as the most

favourite destination in the country in terms of religious tourism. "This is the reason why all records were broken here this year in the month of Shrawan, dedicated to the worship of Lord Shiva. This year, a total of 1,63,17,000 devotees visited the KVT, which is a record in itself. Not only this, the devotees made huge offerings to Baba Vishwanath Baba

which was five times more than last year in the same auspicious month," said the CEO.

According to him, special attention has been paid to drinking water, arrangements for shade, mats and other basic facilities as well as cleanliness. The Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust has 50 employees working in the 'Sugam Darshan System' to make better arrangements for visitors and tourists. Apart from this, 200 personnel have been deployed in the cleaning system and 100 others to provide better security and facilities to visitors. Lockers and help desks have been set up at various places in the corridor for the convenience of visitors. For the convenience of old and disabled devotees visiting the temple, arrangements for

free wheelchairs have also been made. Apart from this, the temple trust is making various other arrangements for the convenience of visitors, Verma added.

He further said that a total of ₹16.89 crore has been offered during Shrawan this year which was five times more than last year when the total collection was ₹3,40,71,065 crore during this auspicious month.

"Ever since the corridor has expanded from 3,000 square feet to five lakh square feet it has become easier to have Baba's darshan along with basic facilities in the premises. As a result, the number of devotees in the corridor has increased manifold due to which treasury of the temple has also increased," he said.

# Krishna Janmashtami ends at ISKCON

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The three-day grand Shri Krishna Janmashtami concluded with religious fervour and traditional gaiety at the local temple of International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) on Bheulpur-Durgakund road here on Friday. Heavy rush of people was seen at the temple during the last three days to see the attractive tableaux. Kirtan, bhajan and other programmes were also organised.

Similarly, three-day-long



Shri Krishna Prakatya Mahotsav also ended at Annapurna Nagar colony which was organised under the auspices of Hare Rama Hare Krishna Sankirtan Society. During the festival religious discourses and other programmes were organised apart from taking out a grand Shobha Yatra on the first day.

The festival was also celebrated with traditional gaiety and religious fervour at Gopal temple (Chaukhambha), Shri Shyam temple (Luxa), Tulsi Manas Mandir, Trivedi Mandir,

Police Lines, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and some other places. Majority of famous temples of Lord Krishna as well as the local residents celebrated the festival during the last two days as there were confusions over the dates. Besides, the festival was celebrated at Mani Temple located in Durgakund during the last two days. The Mani Mandir premises were decorated with the colours of Nandotsav on Thursday. The entire temple complex resounded with the singing

and songs of many local artistes who enthralled the devotees present in the temple with melodious presentation of 'Nand Ke Anand Bhayo, Jai Kanhaiya Lal Ki', 'ChaaP Tilak Moose Chhini Naina Milaiki', 'Gokul Me Bajela Badhaa' etc. After this, Rasleela was staged emotionally by the local artistes. The Nandotsav was celebrated in the presence of Dharmasangh Peethadhiswar Swami Shankardev Chaitanya Brahmachari Ji Maharaj and the artistes were honoured by Pandit Jagitan Pandey.

# CLW GM visits BLW



CLW GM DP Dash holding a meeting with BLW officers in Varanasi on Friday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

General Manager (GM) of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) Debi Prasad Dash visited Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) here on Friday. At a meeting held at the Hall of Fame before the workshop visit, BLW GM Basudev Panda felicitated his counterpart of CLW by giving him a bouquet and a souvenir loco model. Both BLW and CLW are leading production units of the Indian Railways.

In the meeting organised with all the major department heads and senior officers of BLW, important technical aspects related to railway locomotive manufacturing were

discussed and through a power-point presentation, Principal Chief Electrical Engineer (PCEE) SK Srivastava discussed BLW from its inception till now. He also gave detailed information about the achievements of BLW. Along with the production activities, other activities of BLW, loco production as well as various ongoing projects and future plans were discussed in detail.

After the meeting, CLW GM inspected the workshop area. On the occasion, Dash conducted a thorough inspection of Loco Frame Shop, Loco Assembly Shop, Loco Test Shop and New Block Shop of BLW. During the inspection, BLW GM and

PCEE, along with Principal Chief Material Manager (BLW) Rajneesh Gupta, Chief Electrical Engineer (Loco) CLW MK Gupta, Chief Engineer (CLW) Abhijeet Chakraborty, Senior Deputy General Manager (BLW) Vijay and Chief Electrical Engineer (Loco) Arun Sharma and other officers of various departments were also present. During the visit, Debi Prasad Dash took information from the officials concerned about the production activities of electric railway locomotives, manufacturing facilities, ongoing projects in BLW as well as the production process and other technical subjects.

# IIIT-A convocation: 615 students to be awarded degrees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

As many as 615 students will be awarded degrees at the 18th convocation of Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad (IIIT-A), to be held in the main auditorium on Saturday at 4 pm. Harish S Mehta, founder Chairman, NASSCOM will deliver the convocation address as the chief guest while Prof Sunil S Bhagwat, Director, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, will be the guest of honour. Dr Anand Deshpande, Chairman, Board of Governors, IIIT-A, will preside over the convocation ceremony. Talking to media-persons Prof Mukul Sharad Sutaone, Director, IIIT-A said on Friday besides 615 degrees, the institute will award 18 different medals to merit scholars. The director said Harish Mehta, a doyen of Indian IT, is known to be the driving force behind galvanising the IT industry in India by co-founding NASSCOM in 1988. He was elected as the first Chairman of NASSCOM and continues to be the Convener of NASSCOM's Chairman's Council. Mehta is also the award-winning author of the 2022 national bestseller 'The Maverick Effect' which has

cemented his reputation as a master storyteller. Soon the message of 'The Maverick Effect' is slated to reach the masses through several translated versions in Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and even a low-cost English special edition. Through NASSCOM, Mehta played an instrumental role in building an independent, neutral, trustworthy and consensus-driven platform, where diverse stakeholders and fierce competitors could come together and harness the true potential of the Indian IT industry, he added. Dr Sunil S Bhagwat is the Director, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune and Professor of Chemical Engineering at the Institute of Chemical Technology. His area of specialisation is Interfacial Science, Artificial Neural Networks, Energy and Exergy Engineering. Elaborating the details, Prof Sutaone said as many as 387 undergraduate students, 206 post graduate, one dual degree B Tech and M Tech, seven dual degree M Tech and PhD and 14 research scholars will be awarded at the 18th convocation on Saturday. A total of 130 girls will receive their degrees this time. As many as 236 B.Tech (IT), 112 B. Tech

(Electronic Communication Engineering) and 39 students of B Tech (Business Informatics) will get their respective undergraduate degrees for the session 2023. Vishesh Mittal (IEC2019057) will be awarded the Chairman's Gold Medal for the Year -2023 for his overall academic performance. The Institute Gold Medal for B.Tech IT will be given to Prince Kumar, silver to Aditya Agarwal and bronze to Divy Agrwal while for B.Tech. ECE Gold medal to Vishesh Mittal, silver to Mohit Garg and Bronze to Chaitnya Joshi. Bonny Thomas K will be awarded gold, Meghal Sethi - silver and Ayesha Shamim bronze for getting the highest marks in MBA. Akanksha Lal will be given gold, Riya Kalara - silver and Neha Vishwanath Sarma bronze for securing top positions in MTech Information Technology. In MTech (ECE) gold medal will be given to Pawan Sahu, silver to Manoj Kumar Singh and bronze to Aayushi Bansal. Besides, six endowment medals will be awarded to Jyotsna Srivastava, Sanjana Sharma, Gajjala Deepak, Muskun Deep Kaur Maini, Aditya Agarwal and Garvit Suri. Six students will be given merit certificates. The institute since its inception in 1999, has been catering to

excellence in the field of academics specially IT and related science. It is expected that the pass-out with their various degrees on the 18th Convocation will join their predecessors and will earn wide recognition and acclaim to their alma mater," said the director.

**MESSAGING GROUPS**

CREATED: The men-in-khaki in Sangam city have created messaging groups to reach out to citizens directly ahead of the festive season. The groups are to be used to spread advisories and information on crime trends as well as to collect information on local criminal activity. "Area-specific crimes and common modus operandi are also being discussed on the groups," said a cop, adding that photos of habitual offenders could be shared. The groups can also be used to dispel rumours in real time. Advisories on avoiding cyber fraud (by keeping credit/debit card details safe) and chain or purse-snatching (taking safe route and not deserted streets while walking) will be shared with instances of such offences. The messaging groups have been formed at the beat level. Personnel from beat are normally well acquainted with activists, traders' associations, prime market locations, and citizens in their area.

A list of prominent and effective locals has been compiled thana wise and added to the respective Whatsapp group. Group members have been instructed to not post offensive messages. They are, however, allowed to forward the police's messages to other groups.

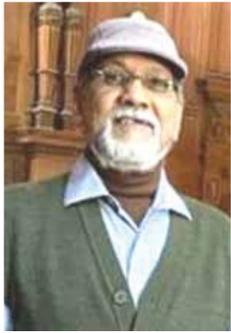
Through the messaging groups, the police also intend to encourage citizens to come forward and lodge complaints since they realize that many crimes are going unreported. The aim behind creating groups was to create awareness and gather feedback. Popular messaging app was chosen because it is available across mobile phone platforms. On the other hand, cops have also geared to ensure safety and security in forthcoming festive season and decided to use drones to keep a strict surveillance on religious processions and shobha yatra. Cops also made it clear that there should be no new traditions to be emerged and thana cops must act on public grievances promptly. They have also been asked to hold regular meet with local traders and ex-police men and also ensure safety to prominent personalities and witnesses of important cases. Meanwhile, city cops have also taken up an extensive exercise to keep a strict eye on the movements of nomads, known as 'Ghulantu' tribe, and taking up their verification promptly.

# India was rich in science & technology even in ancient times, says historian

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A senior historian has expressed his surprise over non-inclusion of vast scientific and technical knowledge of the ancient period in our school and higher education curriculums though India was rich in science and technology (S&T) even in ancient times. Expressing these views while talking to 'The Pioneer', the Fellow of Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) and a retired teacher of Palahipatti Government Post Graduate (PG) College (Varanasi) Dr Jai Ram Singh said the historians have probably forgotten the great scholar Krushnaji Vinayak Vaze born on December 16, 1869.

Giving a reference of an article of Krushnaji published in the 'Vedic Magazine' published from Lahore, prior to the Independence, Dr Singh, an alumnus of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) said Krushnaji had expressed his surprise that there was no reference to the scientific and technical prowess of ancient India in the entire engineering curriculum at that time. "Krushnaji clearly wrote in his article that the technological prowess of cities ranging from the pyramids of



Dr. Jai Ram Singh

Egypt to the Taj Mahal and Konark, to Barbados in Java, Abu Simbel site of Nile in Egypt, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, Bamiyan in Afghanistan, Ellora and Ajanta in India," said Dr Singh, adding that Krushnaji also recalled the closed drain system, ghat construction, temples, forts, palaces, bridges etc using structural science skills in India and expressed regret that surprising indifference has been shown on this aspect in Indian history.

Not only this a speech of Krushnaji was broadcast on AIR, Madras (February 17, 1945). The eminent scholar

had said that in all the research done so far the 'soul of the subject' was missing and the same speech broadcast on AIR was also published in Indian Concrete Journal, Dr Singh informed. The Bamiyan Buddhist site built in 2nd century AD in Afghanistan when it was a part of ancient Gandhara state was destroyed in 1980 by the Taliban during Afghan Civil War. Dr Singh further said that Krushnaji had made a list of about 400 ancient Sanskrit texts, which is available on pages 16 to 20 of 'Hindi Shilpashastra' (Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, Pune). "Some of the texts mentioned in that publication are Vishwamedini Kosh, Shankasmriti, Shilp Deepika, Vasturaj Vallabh, Bhrihasanahita, Mayamat, Manasar, Aparajit Pritchha, Samarangan Sutradhar, Kashyap Samhita, Vrihat Parashariya Krishi, Nissarah Shigru, Saurasutra, Aaram Rachna, Manushalaya, Chandrika, Rajgriha Nirjan, Durgvidhan, Vastuvidya, Yudhjayarnava etc are especially noteworthy," he said.

According to a senior historian, among these 'Kashyapa Shilpam' appears to be the oldest and its edited version was published by

Krushnaji from Anandashram, Pune, in which there are a total of 88 chapters spread over 278 pages. "Another publication 'Arya Shilp' is from Balshastri Kshir Sagar, Kalika Prasad Press, Pune in which the description of Yantra Shastra is available in 46 pages. Earth Yantra, Water Yantra, Vayu Yantra, Tejo Yantra and Aakash Yantra are mentioned in it. Manasar Vastushastra has been published in English in seven parts by Dr Prasannakumar Acharya. It was published by Government Press, Allahabad apart from Chakradhar's 'Mantra Chintamani' (published from Muthura and Varanasi)," he said.

He said the information in this direction mentioned in the book entitled 'Yantras or Mechanical Contrivances in Ancient India' written by Dr V Raghavan and published by the Indian Institute of Culture, Bengaluru, also seems appropriate. Not only this, 'Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol 14, 5th Edition, 1915) clearly mentions that an Indian was manufactured by a needle in 1545 AD which itself denies the claims of many European scholars themselves about the S&T skills and knowledge of Indians even prior to the arrival of the Europeans, especially the Britishers.

# Orientation programme held at SMS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The new session (2023-2025) of the MBA course conducted at the School of Management Sciences (SMS) began with a three-day orientation programme. Addressing the inaugural session of the programme here on Friday, SMS Director Prof PN Jha said today in the changing global environment, rapid changes are taking place in the fields of education, management and technology, hence it is important for students to keep themselves abreast of these changes.

Referring to the highest standards set in management and technical education at SMS, Prof Jha said the institute has developed many resources to promote the practical knowledge of the students in the era of Education 4.0. On the occasion, he called upon the newcomers that along with learning the qualities of management, they should also use these qualities in the interest of the society.

Head (Human Resources) of JK Organisation Prem Singh was present as the chief guest in the inaugural session. Addressing the students, Singh said there has always been a demand for professionals in the field of management but today, along with being professional, multitasking young professionals are being given preference by many big organisations



A speaker addressing an orientation programme at SMS in Varanasi on Friday.

across the world. He said that new advanced technology like Artificial Intelligence (AI) has given a new dimension to management. With the help of AI, work like 3D printing, model generation, developing other applications can be done in a very short time. This method not only saves time but is also user friendly. He called upon the students to remain updated with new technology. The guest of honour Himanshu Kumar, General Manager, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) appealed to the management students to lay emphasis on self-management and said that a good administrator or leader can be made only by making management qualities an integral part of

one's lifestyle. The other special guest, Sanjay Ramdas Kambekar, GM of Prism Johnson Ltd emphasised on importance of time in the field of management. He said that the ability to take the right decision at the right time is one of the key qualities of management. Therefore, it is imperative for future management leaders to develop quick yet efficient decision making abilities. On the occasion Ashwan Kumar, Managing Director and CEO, Utkarsh Core Invest Limited, as a special guest, gave the basic mantra of coordination of purposefulness, patience and enthusiasm to the future managers. He said that today India's position in the global market competition

is much stronger than other developed countries, because of purposeful demand and supply coordination.

Another special guest MI, Dev Mani Pandey, Hipo (Human Resource) of Hippo Stores of Dalmia Group, while informing the newly arrived students about the preparations for future said with the implementation of a useful scheme like start-up, many employment resources are available today. He said that young management students are expected to come forward with new creative plans and contribute constructively to the development of the country through self-employment ventures. Kartikeya Singh informed the guests and new students about the introduction of SMS (Varanasi). Prof Sandeep Singh, Head of Department, Department of Management and Mass Communication introduced the MBA course. The inaugural session was conducted by Prof Pallavi Pathak and vote of thanks was given by Prof Amitabh Pandey. The other two sessions of the first day of the orientation programme were conducted by Dr Bhavana Singh and Dr Anjana Singh respectively. On the occasion SMS Executive Secretary Dr MP Singh, Registrar Sanjay Gupta, Prof Sarjaya Saxena and other teachers and employees were also present.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## A mixed bag

The bypoll results across six States offer several pertinent lessons for both NDA and INDIA blocs

In its maiden outing as one cohesive force gearing up to take on the ruling NDA in next year's Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition-forged INDIA bloc has failed to make a deep impression on voters, if results to seven Assembly bypolls in six States are anything to go by. The results are significant because though the INDIA grouping is only a couple of months old, when byelections are held months before general elections, these act as potent indicators to gauge voter sentiment. Besides, Assembly elections in five important States are due; the respective sides can now recalibrate their message to the voters. What made this round of bypolls even more interesting to watch was that of these seven seats, three were previously held by the BJP, and one each by the Samajwadi Party, CPI(M), JMM and Congress. The byelection results signal the undercurrent of potential shifts in voting patterns. These bypolls were being seen as a litmus test for the Opposition's INDIA bloc against the ruling BJP-led NDA. In encouraging news for the INDIA bloc, these byelections showed the newborn grouping presenting a united front. The not-so-encouraging facet was that this bonding was limited only to certain constituencies, most noticeably Ghosi in Uttar Pradesh and Dumri in Jharkhand. The results paint a vividly diverse picture that challenges preconceived notions. While it would be unwise to generalise the outcome, these contests provide valuable insights on the evolving voter mindset, regional dynamics and election strategies.



The growing importance of regional parties and the need for national parties to strike a balance between projecting a strong central leadership and catering to regional sensibilities cannot be overstated. The bypolls reveal that strategic alliances, even with ideologically incompatible partners, can yield dividends. In some constituencies, the byelections reflect voter dissatisfaction with the incumbent party. A case in point: The landslide for former Kerala CM and Congress candidate Oommen Chandy in Puthuppalli should not be seen as mere sympathy wave. More than that, it is a reflection of public resentment against the CPI(M)-led Government over corruption, poor law and order, narcotics and murders. This highlights the importance of good governance, transparency and accountability. The voter turnout was encouraging which demonstrates that citizens continue to value their right to vote, and parties need to make extra efforts in 2024 to mobilise the electorate. However, it is important to remember that the dynamics on the ground can quickly change. The 2024 elections will be influenced by a variety of factors, including economic conditions, national security concerns and other unforeseen events. If anything, these results simply reinforce the electoral maths that the INDIA bloc can just about pull itself together to offer a semblance of a fight to the BJP-led NDA poll machinery, but only if it fights one-on-one. Meanwhile, the NDA would have to defend its turf by wooing more social groups. As of now, the field is wide open.

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### PICTALK



Artisans give final touches to idols of Lord Ganesha ahead of the 'Ganesh Chaturthi' festival, in Karad.

# Democracy under attack in Bangladesh



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

There were sustained, murderous attacks on not only Awami League leaders and activists but on all secular and democratic public figures

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has whipped up a frenzy in some quarters with its claim that the Awami League government has paralysed the Opposition and is set to rig the country's forthcoming parliamentary elections. One needs to examine its own record when it was in power from 2001 to 2006 in coalition with Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (Jamaat), known as Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh prior to its banning on August 1, 2013, by Bangladesh's High Court on the ground that its ideology conflicted with the secular nature of the country's Constitution. Bangladesh's Supreme Court had rejected the party's appeal on August 5.



The party had aided the Pakistani army's atrocities during the 1971 liberation war. Given space constraints, I would restrict my focus on the efforts by the coalition government, under the prime ministership of Begum Khaleda Zia, to "paralyse" the Opposition during their stint in power. There were sustained, murderous attacks on not only Awami League leaders and activists but on all secular and democratic public figures and intellectuals. Muhammad Yunus of Rajshahi University, a distinguished scholar, was killed on December 24, 2004. According to a report in *The Daily Star* (March 20, 2005), the investigation virtually stalled after the police found that one of the accused was an activist of the Islami Chhatra Shibir, Jamaat's students' front organization.

his murder, Azad was viciously attacked by fundamentalist Islamists in Bangladesh for his latest book. Begum Khaleda Zia, however, blamed the Awami League for the attack at a public meeting in Savar in the outskirts of Dhaka on February 29. Significantly, while not questioning any of the fundamentalists who had lashed out against Azad, the police arrested an Awami League student leader. A grenade attack on an Awami League rally at Baidyer Bazar in Habiganj in Sylhet district killed one of Bangladesh's most respected public figures, diplomat-turned-scholar and finance minister in Sheikh Hasina's first government (1996-2001), SAMS Kibria, along with four others, on January 27, 2005. All the ten arrested were linked to the BNP, one of them being a local leader. The slain former minister's widow, Asma Kibria, said that the nation needed to know the names of those who ordered the killing. The absence of a free hand prevented the investigations from reaching the level at which it could name them. She demanded an investigation by the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation.



THE HIGHLY RESPECTED WRITER, CRITIC AND SCHOLAR, PROFESSOR HUMAYUN AZAD OF DHAKA UNIVERSITY WAS NEAR-FATALLY ATTACKED WITH CHOPPERS IN DHAKA

The highly respected writer, critic and scholar, Professor Humayun Azad of Dhaka University was near-fatally attacked with choppers on February 27, 2004, in Dhaka. He survived and travelled to Munich on a PEN fellowship on August 9, 2004. He died there on August 12 following a heart attack. An editorial in *The Daily Star* (February 29, 2004) stated that political intolerance was the driving force behind the attack, and added that the "victim must have exposed himself to the fury of obscurantism and fundamentalism through his write-ups." Before

Ahsanullah Master, an Awami League MP and president of the party's labour front organisation, Shramik

League, was murdered on May 7, 2004. The most shocking attack, which caused international furore, was, however, the grenade blast on an Awami League rally in Dhaka's Bangabandhu Avenue on August 21, 2004. The aim was to cripple the Awami League by murdering Sheikh Hasina and the entire top leadership of the party which was present on the occasion. Sheikh Hasina survived with injuries whose effects she feels even now. At least 24 persons were killed and around 300 persons injured. Among those killed was Ivy Rehman, president of Bangladesh Mahila Awami League and wife of Zillur Rehman, then the party's general secretary and subsequently Bangladesh's president. Those injured included frontline Awami League leaders Abdul Razzak, Amir Hussain Amu, Suranjit Sengupta, Kazi Zafrullah, Mohammad Nasim, Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, Sahara Khatun and Dhaka city mayor, Mohammad Hanif.

some senior officials of Bangladesh's Home Ministry, police, the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, the National Security Intelligence, and the Prime Minister's Office. The judge sentenced 19 persons, including former state Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar, to death and 19 others, including BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, to life imprisonment.

The grenade attack was a part of a wider campaign. According to a report in *The Daily Star* (April 3, 2004), Sheikh Hasina said at two public rallies on April 2 that 26,000 workers were killed across Bangladesh since the BNP-Jamaat government came into power. She said, that "to hang on to power", the government was trying to "strangle the Opposition by killing our leaders and workers." One can argue that the figure she sighted is very high and exaggerated. But the violence unleashed even on academics and civil society activists during the BNP-Jamaat regime and the attempt to eliminate the Awami League as a political party through the grenade attack on April 21, 2004, lends her words an undeniable ring of plausibility.

(The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### PEACE NOBEL AWARD 2023

Sir —September has arrived, and we respectfully request the Nobel Awards Committee to present the Peace Nobel Award for 2023 to Bill Gates (Foundation), Greta Thunberg, and posthumously to Mahatma Gandhi (by amendment). Their selfless service to humanity needs no introduction. It's important to note that the Nobel Award can be shared by up to three individuals at a time.

Bill Gates initiated a charitable foundation, collaborating with numerous billionaires, to effectively serve the world's needy. Greta Thunberg, a remarkable climate change activist, timely sounded the alarm on reducing carbon emissions and pollution to combat global warming-related weather extremities, which have resulted in significant loss of lives and property. Mahatma Gandhi's principles of non-violence, harmlessness, freedom, and the pursuit of peace, prosperity, and progress remain relevant across all eras.

Madhu Nivriti PS | Secunderabad

#### INDIA IS BHARAT, THAT IS INDIA

Sir — "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet." These are the words of William Shakespeare in his play 'Romeo and Juliet.' However, a name can carry significant meaning, sparking discussions across our nation, despite the government's silence. In 1977, the Indira Gandhi government introduced three changes. The words 'secular' and 'socialist' were added, along with 'integrity' alongside 'unity.' The term 'India' is mentioned 265 times, and the preamble states, "We the people of India." These additions were arguably unnecessary, as these three concepts (socialism, secularism, and integrity) are integral and unchangeable aspects of our nation's foundation.

An invitation card has created a storm, sparking speculation about the government's intentions regarding nomenclature changes. Critics question both the context and timing. Opposition parties argue that the Narendra Modi government

### Prevent man-made catastrophes



Collective action is imperative to avert man-made catastrophes, with governments, businesses, and individuals all playing pivotal roles. Government policies like the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana promote sustainability. Businesses should invest in renewables and sustainable technology, while individuals can reduce energy consumption and minimize food waste. Collaborative efforts will pave the way for a sustainable future in India.

To prevent man-made catastrophes, key actions include reducing deforestation, increasing tree cover, implementing efficient water management, adopting sustainable agricultural practices such as zero-budget natural farming, and reducing pollution across air, water, and land. Equally crucial is raising awareness, educating on causes and consequences, and holding entities accountable for their environmental footprint. Together, we can forge a sustainable future for India and the world.

Sabita | Hazaribagh

accepted by people within and outside the country, representing a broader idea that transcends politics. Let us refrain from politicizing this issue.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

#### SHEER ARROGANCE

Sir — It's a shame that nationalism holds no significance to some of us, leading to a lack of national pride. As a Tamilian or Malayalee, we may feel a strong connection to our respective states, but where does India fit into our identity? When someone from China proudly declares their nationality, it highlights our own hesitancy. We should take pride in being a part of Bharat. However, there is a fine line between tolerance and shamelessness among many Hindus, some of whom expect others to protect dharma while they enjoy temporary perks and freebies. This is the crux of the problem.

Abhishek Ramaswamy | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Russia, China are forging new military alliance

The West and the world must engage with Russia to curtail its military alliance with China



ISHAAN SAXENA

Lately, there has been a lot of brouhaha over Chinese President Xi Jinping's decision to skip the G20 in New Delhi this week. This news came weeks after the Kremlin announced that President Vladimir Putin would not be attending the summit.



Political commentators have viewed this development as an indication of turbulent times ahead. The Russia-China alliance is strengthening and this is a clear indicator that there appears to be a stumbling block to democratic values which much of the free world cherishes. Essentially, relations between countries are fluid and they hinge on ongoing developments. The Western alliance must realise that isolating Russia will have ramifications and the only prudent way ahead is to negotiate firmly and, in the process, make concessions to weaken the Russia-China alliance. What the West urgently requires is a paradigm shift.

Recent reports about China's ambition to establish a blue-water navy have been dismissed. China, today has the world's largest navy and is surreptitiously seeking to expand its sphere of influence. It is undoubtedly an economic behemoth for the time being, but a more pertinent question that arises is why is Putin veering towards China. Putin is an elusive leader who has his quirks. A man described by many as indifferent, hard-hearted and a brilliant strategist. In all, he has dealt with several American Presidents. When he assumed office, former President Clinton was serving his last term in office. It was the late 90's. When the two leaders met for bilateral talks, Clinton intuitively sensed that Putin did not have democracy in his agenda. The former KGB officer viewed the West as a formidable adversary.

Putin desires to reignite the glory of the former Soviet Union. He does not recognise Ukraine to be a sovereign nation; a viewpoint he expressed to the next US President, George W Bush, in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) in 2008. This striking perspective was articulated when Bush hinted that NATO was open to admitting Georgia and Ukraine into the alliance. By now, Putin had reached his patience threshold. Bush had already declared the 'war on terror' which in Putin's view was America's way of exporting democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq. Putin's response was brutal. He invaded Georgia the same year to reinforce the message to the US. America did not interfere. The Putin-Obama bilateral meeting has been described by many observers as fruitless. By now, Putin was engaging with a third President. When then-Vice President Joe Biden met Putin to chart the way ahead, the meeting was uncomfortable and tense. They exchanged reproachful looks in the back doors. Biden publicly propagated the importance of strengthening democratic values in Russia. This was viewed by Putin as a direct and ver-

itable threat to his hold on Russia. What ensued were anti-Putin protests. His response- invade Ukraine and annex Crimea in 2014. When Biden insisted that America send military aid to Ukraine, Obama disregarded his opinion.

Putin was now emboldened. He felt he could employ his military apparatus to achieve political ends and the West would not interfere. But when Putin decided to launch a special military operation in February last year, NATO was quick to send military aid. Putin wrongly believed that just like on previous occasions he would have his way. It was a miscalculation of monumental proportions. It is vitally important for the West and for the world to engage with Russia to curtail this new military alliance. The US must make overtures and be ready to negotiate. Its intransigence is only going to make Russia a more belligerent nation and lead to further escalation; something the world cannot afford at this juncture.

(The writer is a commentator on foreign affairs; views are personal)



## FIRST COLUMN

## OUR BREATH HOLDS THE SECRET TO HAPPINESS

Our breath is the key to our very existence; it creates ripples of joy



RAVI VALLURI

"It is a blast," was the refrain of a techie at Hyderabad while sharing his experience with fellow participants after experiencing the "Sudarshan Kriya" breathing technique during the Happiness Programme of the Art of Living. On account of excessive drinking my wife in sheer desperation enrolled me for the Part 1 Course (now called the Happiness Programme) at Jaipur where I was introduced to this breathing process. By the grace of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya, I have now been sober for over 16 years.

There were around 40 alcoholics and drug addicts at a rehabilitation centre in Gorakhpur and there were three. Some looked menacing, others disenchanted with life and a few enveloped by ennui attempting to derail the course. But in our arsenal was Gurudev's cassette of "Sudarshan Kriya" to help them.

## Meaning of Sudarshan Kriya

"Su" means proper, "Darshan" implies vision and "Kriya" is a purifying action. Through the action of our breath, we appreciate a proper vision of what we truly are. Everything in nature runs on rhythm. Enlightenment is nothing but being in sync with the rhythm of the universe. During the breathing process participants experience varied sensations, emotions, tingling feelings, laughter, and weeping among others. But the objective is to keep breathing to the syllable of SOHAM in Gurudev's voice. Finally, all the accumulated stress is extricated and a person is deeply relaxed.



The breathing technique was developed by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar after being in silence for 10 days on the banks of the Bhadravati River at Shimoga, a small town in Karnataka. Prophets of doom have questioned the salutatory benefit of the course and the breathing technique. Researchers at NIMHANS and AIIMS have zeroed in on the impact of the breathing technique on Vagus nerve stimulation which improves the heart rate, benefits cognition, improves breathing patterns, restores calmness in the mind and body, works positively on the endocrine system, releases endorphins like prolactin, vasopressin and oxytocin which increases prana levels in the human body to become achievers.

This technique has been successfully used on victims of trauma, terrorists and Naxalites. It has produced remarkable results as this wonderful knowledge and wisdom has triggered humanness to blossom in them. Every cell and article of the body overflows with happiness and life is abundant with the glow of love where the body becomes the wick of a candle. Love and belongingness become a natural process of our inner being if practised regularly with faith and devotion.

Several practitioners feel they can practice the breathing technique at home. But that is only traversing half the path. It is indispensable and paramount that one must practice the technique daily and attend the follow-up once a week where a certified Art of Living teacher plays the instructions in Gurudev's voice which reinvigorates the body and mind to be fresh like dew. One should not fall prey to imitations as these days fakes are available on YouTube. The gift of Sudarshan Kriya has been given to humanity by Gurudev and can be passed on only through the qualified faculty of the foundation. The entire voyage is to nothing but to spread waves of happiness across the universe as our breath is the key to our very existence.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living)

## UP expressways as pathways to progress

Uttar Pradesh's expressway network signifies more than just roads; it symbolises progress, development and transformation



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

Last week, I had the chance to experience the Purvanchal Expressway, a marvel of modern infrastructure connecting central and eastern Uttar Pradesh. This experience was a revelation, starkly contrasting with my previous road trip to Varanasi five years ago via the National Highway. Back then, the arduous 8-hour journey from Lucknow to Varanasi was a test of patience. However, this time, the Purvanchal Expressway took me to Varanasi in just 5 hours, thanks to its remarkable construction and efficiency, which is a testament to Uttar Pradesh's rapid development.

The extensive network of highways, expressways, and greenways coursing through Uttar Pradesh is not merely changing how people move from one place to another; it's igniting economic growth and fostering social development on an unprecedented scale.

One example of this transformative infrastructure is the Lucknow-Agra Expressway, which has reduced the travel time between Lucknow and Delhi to a mere 6 hours. This reduction has made car travel not only quicker but also more cost-effective than train journeys, especially for families. The Bundelkhand Expressway has further bridged the gap between the rugged terrain of Bundelkhand and Delhi, chopping travel time from 12 hours to 8 hours.

Uttar Pradesh's moniker 'Expressway Pradesh' is well-earned, with the promise of boosting the state's economic prospects. With infrastructure projects like the Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway, Gorakhpur Link Expressway, Ballia Link Expressway, and Ganga Expressway, the state has set up a new era of development. Once considered one of the 'BIMARU' states, Uttar Pradesh is now firmly on the radar of investors. These expressways are living proof of the saying, "Double the speed, triple the economy."

To bolster the state's road infrastructure and elevate Uttar Pradesh to an 'Expressway Pradesh,' the government has set forth ambitious plans. It aims to complete the Ganga Expressway before Mahakumbh-2025 and is concurrently working to enhance passenger facilities along the Bundelkhand Expressway. The government has allocated Rs 100 crore for the Ganga Expressway and Rs 40 crore for the Bundelkhand Expressway.

Currently, seven expressways are operational in the state, with an additional six under construction. Among these, the Ganga Expressway and the Bundelkhand Expressway take centre stage, connecting numerous prominent cities. The Ganga Expressway, spanning a remarkable 594 kilometres, is being constructed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, with an estimated cost of Rs 36,230 crore. Currently, Rs 4,775 crore has been released for the project, with completion expected by 2024.

As per the report, the land-related works for the main carriageway have been completed up to 41 per cent, while the process of clearing and grubbing of the carriageway has been completed 100 per cent so far. The government report claims that 513 structures out of the total 1348 have been completed.



EXPRESSWAYS SERVE AS A TESTAMENT TO THE INCREDIBLE OUTCOMES ACHIEVABLE WITH VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

(The writer is Political Editor, The Pioneer, Lucknow. The views expressed are personal)

These accomplishments collectively indicate that the ongoing tasks associated with the Ganga Expressway project are currently advancing at a pace of 21 per cent. The government's focus is on the Ganga Expressway as his greenfield expressway connecting Meerut to Prayagraj will be special in many ways.

The Expressways are not just the roads but it carries the aspirations of millions of people who live along these highways. Take the case of Bundelkhand Expressway, connecting Chitrakoot to Prayagraj via Agra, which carries the hope of job opportunities for the youth in this historically impoverished region, which is witness to a spate of suicides because of poverty. In summer families after families migrate to cities leaving behind aged, sick, and divyangs. The Bundelkhand Expressway has kindled hope as the scenario is set to change with the development of the Defence Corridor across this Expressway. The industries are ready to set up their shops. Once it happens people from around the world will come to work in Jhansi and Bundelkhand and this region could be transformed into a new hub of jobs and employment.

The Bundelkhand Expressway, a pivotal 4-lane highway connecting various regions, holds immense promise as a trailblazing model for the seamless integration of renewable energy into essential infrastructure. As the nation strives to meet its energy goals and reduce its carbon footprint, this visionary initiative by the Yogi Government stands as a testament to the

power of innovation, collaboration, and environmental stewardship.

With the expressway stretching an impressive 296 kilometres, the Yogi Government envisions a holistic transformation of the roadway, powered by renewable solar energy. The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) has unveiled plans to transform the Bundelkhand Expressway into a cutting-edge 'Solar Expressway.' The initiative aims to seamlessly integrate solar panels into the expressway's infrastructure, aligning with the principles of sustainability and innovation.

The ambitious plan entails the installation of solar panels across the expansive median, spanning approximately 15 to 20 meters, which currently serves as a demarcation zone between the main carriageway and the service lane. "This vacant expanse, previously delineated by fencing, is now slated to house an array of solar panels that will generate clean and sustainable energy," the official said.

These expressways are not just improving connectivity; they are also fueling tourism in Uttar Pradesh. The state, once weighed down by negative perceptions, is undergoing a remarkable metamorphosis. It has evolved into a sought-after investment destination, attracting domestic tourists and securing substantial funds for industrial growth. Recent reports from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) validate this transformation.

This metamorphosis is a product of well-planned efforts, with due credit accorded to the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's unwavering dedication, and the state government's inclusive approach. Initiatives like the Geographic Information System (GIS) and the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme have played pivotal roles in rejuvenating neglected sectors and Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) clusters, leading to a threefold surge in exports.

Even in the face of the daunting challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Uttar Pradesh is steadfastly progressing towards its goal of becoming a trillion-dollar economy within the next five years. It has firmly established itself as a major investment hub, offering a thriving banking sector and a burgeoning tourism industry. The state's systematic efforts across sectors are now bearing fruit, propelling Uttar Pradesh into the national and global limelight.

In conclusion, Uttar Pradesh's expressway network signifies more than just roads; it symbolises progress, development, and transformation. These expressways are not only reducing travel time; they are reducing the disparity between aspirations and accomplishments for the people of Uttar Pradesh. As the state strides towards a brighter future, its expressways serve as a testament to the incredible outcomes achievable with visionary leadership and strategic infrastructure development.

## China must shun the policy of domination

China is expanding its global footprint through sea power. There are concerns that Chinese carrier strike forces may start patrolling the Indo-Pacific

A lot of geopolitical changes are taking place in the world as China is trying to flex its muscles to make the world bipolar. There may be nothing wrong with the world being bipolar however China is willing to compromise all established norms of peaceful co-existence and human dignity to stake its claim for the other pole in this so-called bi-polarity. China after having been emboldened at BRICS by its expansion has released a map that is not only unilateral but downright offensive. Xi Jinping's reluctance to attend the G20 summit in Delhi is another sign that China is uncomfortable with the rise of India as a global player. China seems to be reluctant to con-



UMANG KOHLI

(The writer is an expert on geopolitics and international affairs. The views expressed are personal)

fer influence on its southern neighbour, one that is the fastest-growing major economy in the world.

Xi Jinping's not attending G20 and being reluctant to meet US President Joe Biden is a clear indication that China is uncomfortable with ties between India and the US. As China's economy slows, its geo-political ambition to make the world bipolar has only increased. China has issued a 'ten dash line' map which shows the bulk of the Indo-China Sea under its area of influence and Taiwan as part of 'One China', this clearly shows how desperate China is to expand and assert itself.

The Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam have rejected the

map that denotes China's claim to sovereignty including in the South China Sea, India has objected to Arunachal being shown as Chinese territory. China under the garb of the 'One Belt One Road Project' has established Naval bases across multiple nations. It has hence brought forward a strategy of using economic might to further its geo-political aims. This is what China is doing to make the world Bipolar.

Why is China so uncomfortable with a multipolar world and what could be its game plan to make it Bipolar? Is China an outright expansionist power that wants to extend its boundaries? Is China threatened by the growth of India? Is the West

using India to counter China? Is the West decoupling from China? Is China resorting to an expansionist policy to boost its sagging economy? Is China using its military power to boost its economy? Is China going to use its military might against Taiwan? Is the Dragon going to breathe fire on the borders with India? These are some of the questions that the diplomats and military leaders across the world must ponder.

Purely from a strategic military perspective, China has increased its presence in the Indo-Pacific region significantly in the last three years. It has enhanced its Naval presence in at least seven ports across five countries. PLA Navy is now the biggest naval force on the planet.

China has a fleet of amphibious vessels which enables it to conduct operations globally. China's amphibious platforms include Yuzhao Type 071 amphibious ship and the Yushen-class Type 075 amphibious assault ship which not only pose a threat to Taiwan but also to India's islands, particularly Nicobar and Andaman islands. China is keeping at least one nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine constantly at sea. The PLA Navy has increased its submarine strength considerably in the last three years and is using it for patrolling the South China Sea.

In its effort to make the world bipolar China is planning to control most of the sea routes for trade. It is either developing ports in other

countries or developing capabilities for dedicated passage of its ships with impunity along the trade routes. Control of trade routes and thereby controlling economies of smaller countries in Africa, Asia and South America is China's first step towards global geopolitical domination and apparent bi-polarity of the world. The second step is to keep controlling the manufacturing industry by dominating the semiconductor industry. The third step is to use Russia and its allies to its advantage and thereby emerge as the only viable option to counter American influence on the world.

So, while China may not directly confront India militarily shortly, for it to try and take Taiwan is plausible. India

must coordinate and identify areas of economic and military cooperation with the QUAD nations not only to keep its islands safe but also to launch a counter-amphibious operation if warranted. India also needs a major boost in its ship-building capabilities. The recent upgrading of Mazagon Shipyard to boost the production of the Naval fleet is a step in the right direction and many such steps are required. To address the issue of domination of manufacturing by China, India must develop its semiconductor industry at the earliest. We have already been late towards this effort. It is time China realised that expansionism will not give it any dividends and it must cooperate and coexist.

# Russia holds elections in occupied Ukrainian areas

AP ■ TALINN

Russian authorities are holding local elections this weekend in occupied parts of Ukraine in an effort to tighten their grip on territories Moscow illegally annexed a year ago and still does not fully control. The voting for Russian-installed legislatures in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions begins Friday and concludes Sunday. It has already been denounced by Kyiv and the West. "It constitutes a flagrant violation of international law, which Russia continues to disregard," the Council of Europe, the continent's foremost human rights body, said this week.

Kyiv echoed that sentiment, with the parliament saying in a statement that the balloting in areas where Russia "conducts active hostilities" poses a threat to Ukrainian lives. Lawmakers urged other countries not to recognize the results of the vote.

For Russia, it is important to go on with the voting to maintain the illusion of normalcy, despite the fact that the Kremlin does not have full control over the annexed regions, political analyst Abbas Gallyamov said.

"The Russian authorities are trying hard to pretend that everything is going according to plan, everything is fine. And if everything is going according to plan, then the political process should go according to plan," said Gallyamov, who worked as a speechwriter for Russian President Vladimir Putin when Putin served as prime minister.

Voters are supposed to elect regional legislatures, which in turn will appoint regional governors.

In the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces, thousands of candidates are also competing for seats on dozens of local councils.

The balloting is scheduled for the same weekend as other local elections in Russia. In the occupied regions, early voting kicked off last week as election officials went door to door or set up makeshift polling stations in public places to attract passersby.

The main contender in

## Proximity of Russian attacks on Danube ports stirs fear in Romania

**Bucharest (Romania):** The discovery of drone debris on Romanian territory this week has left some local residents fearing that the war in neighbouring Ukraine could spread into their country, as Russian forces bombard Ukrainian ports just across the Danube River from NATO-member Romania.

Moscow aims to disrupt Ukraine's ability to export grain to world markets with a sustained campaign of attacks targeting Ukrainian Danube ports, and has attacked the port of Izmail four times this week, Ukrainian officials say.

Across from Izmail, pieces apparently from a drone were found near the Romanian village of Plauru, Romanian Defence Minister Angel Tilvar said Wednesday. It was unclear if Romanian authorities had determined when or from where the drone was launched, and Tilvar said the debris didn't pose a threat, but the development has left citizens in the European Union nation feeling uneasy. Daniela Tanase, 46, who lives in Plauru with her husband and son, told The Associated Press that the drone strikes on Izmail this week have woken her up, and that

the election is United Russia, the Putin-loyal party that dominates Russian politics, although other parties, such as the Communist Party or the nationalist Liberal Democratic party, are also on the ballots.

For some residents of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, large swaths of which have been held by Russian-backed separatists since 2014, there is nothing unusual about the vote. "For the last nine years, we've been striving to get closer with Russia, and Russian politicians are well-known to us," Sergei, a 47-year-old resident of the occupied city of Luhansk, told The Associated Press, asking that his last name

be withheld for security reasons. "We're speaking Russian and have felt like part of Russia for a long time, and these elections only confirm that."

Some voters in Donetsk shared Sergei's sentiment, expressing love for Russia and saying they want to be part of it. The picture appears bleaker in Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. Local residents and Ukrainian activists say poll workers make house calls accompanied by armed soldiers, and most voters know little about the candidates, up to half of whom reportedly arrived from Russia — including remote regions in Siberia and the far east.

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# Missile attack kills cop, hurts 52 others in Zelensky's hometown

AP ■ KYIV

A Russian missile attack Friday on President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown in central Ukraine killed one policeman and injured at least 52 others, emergency officials said, while another attack in the southern Kherson region killed three people.

The strikes were among multiple Russian attacks across the country overnight, officials said. Meanwhile, Moscow is trying to strengthen its position politically with local elections in areas it has illegally annexed, including some it still does not control. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it does not recognize the "fake elections."

The strikes came days after 16 people were killed in a Russian attack on a market in eastern Ukraine and drone debris was found in Romania. That sparked fears among local residents that the war could spread into the NATO-member country bordering Ukraine. Ten buildings were damaged in the

attack on Zelensky's hometown of Kryvyi Rih Friday. Three people pulled from the rubble were in serious condition, according to Ihor Klymenko, Ukraine's minister of Internal Affairs. Photos posted by Klymenko on Telegram showed a building on fire, burnt timbers and emergency services evacuating the injured. Three people were also killed Friday after a Russian bomb struck the village

of Odradokamianka in the Kherson region of southern Ukraine, Klymenko said.

Also on Friday, a funeral was being held for an 18-year-old who was among 16 people killed Wednesday in a Russian attack on a market in Kostiantynivka in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region. The attack, which wounded 33 others, turned the market into a fiery, blackened ruin and overshadowed a two-

day visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken aimed at assessing Ukraine's three-month-old counteroffensive. Blinken's visit signalled ongoing US support with the announcing of an additional USD 1 billion in aid.

Meanwhile, Russia is holding local elections in the part of the Kherson region it controls. Local elections are also being held in the Donetsk, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia regions. In Kherson, local residents and Ukrainian activists say election poll workers have made house calls accompanied by armed soldiers.

Ukraine has dismissed the elections, calling on its allies to condemn Russia's actions and urging them not to recognise any administration created as a result of the votes. The war continued to raise difficult questions for other nations trying to manage the war's fallout on food security, inflation and other matters. Britain announced Friday it will host a global food security summit in November in response to Russia's withdrawal of a Black Sea grain deal.

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In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, emergency services personnel work to extinguish a fire following a Russian attack in Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, on Friday.

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# Aus, Philippines strengthen ties amid SCS disputes

AP ■ MANILA

Australia and the Philippines elevated their seven-decade ties to a strategic level Friday to broaden an alliance underpinned by their rejection of China's increasingly provocative actions in the disputed South China Sea.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Philippine Ferdinand Marcos signed the pact upgrading their ties in Manila. They also agreed to hold an annual meeting of their defense chiefs. Aside from an aim to further boost trade and economic engagement, Albanese said their countries "have common views about the need to uphold international law, and Australia's position on that will continue to be consistent, as we have always been, including recently over issues relating to the South China Sea."

China and the Philippines, along with Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei, have been locked in a decadeslong territorial standoff in the disputed waterway. It's a key passageway

for global trade and is regarded as an Asian flashpoint. It's also where China has repeatedly had tense face-offs with Philippines vessels.

Marcos said he and Albanese "acknowledge that our shared values, the democratic principles and mutual respect for international law, have been instrumental in fostering a strong partnership."

"Our commitment to these ideals has guided our path forward as we address the complex challenges facing our region and the world at large," Marcos said.

In just-concluded summit talks attended by Albanese, Marcos, and several other Western and Asian leaders Thursday in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta, the Australian premier underscored Canberra's recognition of — and the need to uphold — a 2016 arbitration ruling by a tribunal set up under the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea that invalidated China's expansive territorial claims in the South China Sea on historical grounds.

The Philippines sought the arbitration after China forcibly took control of a disputed shoal after a tense 2012 sea standoff. China did not participate in the arbitration, rejected its outcome as a sham, and continues to violate it.

Marcos thanked Albanese for renewing Australia's position during the Jakarta summit talks, where Chinese Premier Li Qiang was also in attendance. "You have made very clear that the claims that are being made upon our Philippine maritime territory are not valid and have not been recognized, and not in conjunction or consistent with international law," Marcos said. "To have friends like you and partners like you, especially on that subject, is very gratifying and encourages us to continue down that path."

Australia, along with the United States and Japan, immediately condemned an Aug. 5 action by a Chinese coast guard ship that used a water cannon to block a Philippine boat delivering food and other supplies to Filipino forces sta-

tioned at the Second Thomas Shoal. China also claims the atoll and has surrounded it with Chinese coast guard ships and militia vessels in a yearslong standoff.

While Albanese and Marcos were meeting Friday in Manila, two Philippine supply boats en route to the Second Thomas Shoal were blocked by a Chinese coast guard ship and other Chinese vessels, but managed to breach the blockade and reached the Filipino sailors stationed in a long-marooned and rusting navy ship, Philippine security officials said. The Philippine government condemned the Chinese coast guard's actions and vowed it would not be deterred by the aggression and continue the supply missions.

An inter-agency government body dealing with the territorial disputes said it "strongly deplores and condemns the continued illegal, aggressive, and destabilizing conduct of the Chinese coast guard and Chinese maritime militias within our nation's Exclusive Economic Zone."

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# Germany to keep Russian oil giant subsidiaries under its control

Berlin (AP): The German government said Friday it will keep two subsidiaries of Russian oil giant Rosneft under the control of German authorities for another six months.

The government announced a year ago that it was putting Rosneft Deutschland GmbH and Rosneft Refining and Marketing GmbH under the administration of Germany's Federal Network Agency. In March, a German federal court threw out complaints from Rosneft and upheld the decision. The trusteeship gave German authorities control of three Russian-owned refineries. Rosneft accounted at the time for about 12 per cent of Germany's oil refining capacity. The Economy Ministry said Friday that it is extending the trusteeship again until March 10, 2024, "to secure the energy supply."

The Rosneft subsidiaries own a refinery at Schwedt, on the Polish border northeast of Berlin, which provides petroleum products for the capital and much of northeastern Germany.

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# Pakistan urges global attention on abandoned Afghan Weapons

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Friday drew the world's attention toward the danger posed by the weapons abandoned by the US following its hasty withdrawal from war-torn Afghanistan, saying the weapons have reached terrorists. Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said this at the weekly briefing, just two days after rebels from Afghanistan attacked a military outpost and killed four Pakistani soldiers.

"We do not blame anyone but weapons left in Afghanistan require global attention since they have fallen in the hands of terrorist

groups now," she said, adding that the issue of terrorist attacks from Afghanistan had been taken up with the Afghan interim government. She said that Pakistan was determined to eradicate terrorism from the country while sharing concerns with the interim Afghan authorities about the recent incidents of terrorism along the border. The statement comes as White House National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communication John Kirby on Wednesday disagreed with the suggestion that the US had left behind about USD 7

billion worth of weapons and equipment in Afghanistan and militant groups were now using those weapons against Pakistan, the Dawn newspaper reported.

"There was no equipment left behind by American forces. There was a small amount of equipment and some aircraft at the airport when we finished our evacuation efforts, but they were all rendered unusable as we left," he said.

"In fact, the only thing that we left that the Taliban could take advantage of was some airport mechanic capabilities: tow trucks and trucks with ladders on them, and some fire-fighting equipment," he added. Kirby explained that

the equipment that people were saying the Americans left behind, was transferred to the Afghan National Security Forces before the US withdrawal.

"As the Taliban advanced on Kabul and other places throughout the country, they (official Afghan forces) abandoned that equipment, not the US," he added.

In February 2020, the United States and the Taliban reached a deal, known as the Doha Agreement, under which the United States agreed to withdraw all US forces from Afghanistan by May 2021.

# China pledges \$21bn investment to strengthen ties with Indonesia

AP ■ JAKARTA

Visiting Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Friday pledged USD 21.7 billion in new Chinese investment in Indonesia to strengthen the countries' economic and political ties, an official said.

Li arrived in Jakarta on Tuesday to attend the three-day summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and meet with Indonesian leaders.

President Joko Widodo hosted Li at the colonial-style Merdeka palace in Jakarta on Friday and discussed ways to expand trade and investment. He sought China's help in plans to move Indonesia's capital from congested and polluted Jakarta on the main island of Java to Nusantara on Borneo island.

After the meeting, Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi announced the new

Chinese investment pledge, which follows a previous USD 44.89 billion investment commitment made when Widodo met Chinese President Xi Jinping in July. Details of the new investment weren't announced.

Marsudi said Widodo asked China, Indonesia's largest trade and investment partner, to "realise these commitments immediately" and urged it to explore investment in other sectors, such as maritime and fisheries.

The two leaders also oversaw the signing of six agreements on e-commerce, support for enterprises, industrial cooperation, agriculture, fisheries and science and technology, Marsudi said.

On Wednesday, Li took a test ride on Indonesia's new USD 7.3 billion high-speed rail line, which was funded largely with Chinese loans. It connects Jakarta and

Bandung, the heavily populated capital of West Java province, and is part of China's Belt and Road infrastructure initiative.

Commercial service on Southeast Asia's first high-speed railway is to begin on Oct. 1 and will cut travel time between the cities from the current three hours to about 40 minutes.

Indonesia wants a larger role in supplying nickel and other raw materials for China's fast-growing electric car makers. Nickel smelting plants in Indonesia are part of China's Belt and Road transnational development program. Indonesia and China are both members of the Group of 20 major developed and emerging economies. The two leaders were to leave Jakarta on Friday afternoon for New Delhi to attend the G20 summit.

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# American explorer trapped 3,000 feet deep in cave

Istanbul (AP): Rescuers from across Europe rushed to a cave in Turkey on Thursday, launching an operation to save an American researcher who became trapped almost 1,000 metres below the cave's entrance after suffering stomach bleeding. Experienced caver Mark Dickey, 40, suddenly became ill during an expedition with a handful of others, including three other Americans, in the Morca cave in southern Turkey's Taurus Mountains, the European Association of Cave Rescuers said. While rescuers, including a Hungarian doctor, have reached and treated Dickey, it could be days and possibly weeks before they are able to get him out of the cave, which is too narrow in places for a stretcher

to pass through. In a video message from inside the cave and made available Thursday by Turkey's communications directorate, Dickey thanked the caving community and the Turkish government for their efforts.

"The caving world is a really tight-knit group and it's amazing to see how many people have responded on my behalf," said Dickey. "I do know that the quick response of the Turkish government to get the medical supplies that I need, in my opinion, saved my life. I was very close to the edge," Dickey, who is seen standing and moving around in the video, said that while he is alert and talking, he is not "healed on the inside" and will need a lot of help to get out of the cave.

# 'Rishta ka Achar' draws many to Karachi's Hyderabad Colony

PTI ■ KARACHI

Many Pakistanis worried about finding the right marriage proposals drive down to the famous Hyderabad Colony in one of Karachi's oldest areas to taste Tahir's 'Rishta Ka Achar' in the hope of finding a perfect life partner. The Hyderabad Colony in the city is home to thousands of Hyderabad-speaking Muslims who are proud of their heritage and identity in the diaspora of Urdu-speaking Muhajirs from India in the city of millions.

The colony is famous for its food street and it is here that 48-year-old Tahir Kaleem's family has been doing business for 73 years now. He tells his

customers to try his special pickle (achar) if they are struggling to get married. He even claims the same thing on morning shows where he is known as "Chef Tahir."

"Look, finding the right 'Rishta' for marriages is eventually God's will, but our elders say if there are methods avail-



able to help you out why not try them also," the unshaven and ragged-looking Tahir told PTI at his shop named the Deccan Achar House, which was opened in 1950.

Pickles of different varieties made from mango chunks, ginger, cloves, vinegar and mixed with delicious spices and herbs are usually considered a traditional fare at dining tables in many households in Karachi.

Tahir's 'Rishta Ka Achar' is famous in the city and he gets many customers, mainly mothers, aunts, sisters, young girls and even young men willing to do something different to find the right proposals. Tahir's grandmother migrated with

her family to Karachi from India's Hyderabad after the Partition and opened her achar shop.

Tahir says his 'Rishta ka Achar' is also famous in India and has been mentioned in many Hyderabad stage and television dramas.

"The elders say that if someone feeds you one spoon of the achar with love and faith you will find a good marriage proposal," he said as two women, a mother and her daughter, arrived at the shop inquiring about the 'Rishta ka Achar'.

He told his workers to attend to the women, who wanted to know if Tahir's claim about the pickle was true.



groups now," she said, adding that the issue of terrorist attacks from Afghanistan had been taken up with the Afghan interim government. She said that Pakistan was determined to eradicate terrorism from the country while sharing concerns with the interim Afghan authorities about the recent incidents of terrorism along the border. The statement comes as White House National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communication John Kirby on Wednesday disagreed with the suggestion that the US had left behind about USD 7

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In February 2020, the United States and the Taliban reached a deal, known as the Doha Agreement, under which the United States agreed to withdraw all US forces from Afghanistan by May 2021.



# FM hold talks with US Treasury Secy

## Sitharaman, Yellen discuss G20 priorities in bilateral meeting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday held a bilateral meeting with US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and discussed G20 priorities.

The bilateral meeting took place a day ahead of the G20 Leadership Summit beginning on Saturday here.

"FM Smt. @nsitharaman and Secretary Ms. @SecYellen discussed key #G20 priorities and bilateral cooperation between the two democracies to address pressing global economic and financial issues," the finance ministry said in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

Yellen on Thursday had said Russia's war against Ukraine has led to the needless loss of lives and stands in direct contradiction to everything the G20 stands for.

"We will rally our partners to maintain our collective economic support for Ukraine as well as impose severe costs on Russia," she had said in a post on X on Thursday.

"As @POTUS said last year, India is one of America's indispensable partners. This will be my 4th visit to India in 10 months and our ties are



stronger than ever. Bilateral trade between our two countries reached an all-time high last year, and we expect it to grow even further," Yellen had said.

Sitharaman also held a meeting with Nigerian Minister of Finance and Economy Adebayo Olawale Edun and Nigerian Minister of Budget and National Planning Abubakar Atiku Bagudu, against the backdrop of the G20 Leaders Summit.

The Ministers discussed issues of mutual interest in sev-

eral areas. "FM Smt. @nsitharaman conveyed India's continued support to people of Nigeria in their development trajectory through Indian lines of credit, cooperation between Central Banks, collaboration with NITI Aayog @NITIAayog and exchange on best practices," the finance ministry said in a post on X.

Minister Edun appreciated the rich contribution of Nigerian citizens of Indian origin in the development of the Nigerian economy, it said.

# Stock markets rally for 6th day running

## HDFC Bank, L&T, RIL drive run

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rallied further 333 points on Friday to extend its winning run to a sixth straight session driven by buying in index heavyweights HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Reliance Industries.

Shrugging off weak global market trends, the BSE Sensex jumped 333.35 points or 0.50 per cent to close at 66,598.91. During the day, it climbed 501.36 points or 0.75 per cent to 66,766.92.

The broader Nifty advanced 92.90 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at 19,819.95, rising for a sixth session in a row.

Nifty has gained 473 points or 3 per cent in the six trading sessions while Sensex rallied 1,434 points or 2.41 per cent.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark jumped 878.4 points or 1.34 per cent and the Nifty climbed 384.65 points or 1.97 per cent.

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From the Sensex pack, NTPC rose the most by 2.65 per cent. Tata Motors, Larsen



& Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, Titan, Power Grid and State Bank of India were the major gainers.

ITC, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

"Benchmark indices ended the week just a few percentage points away from record highs ahead of the G20 Summit buoyed by good support from the Bank Nifty as well as the PSU & Infrastructure stocks," S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP securities said.

Despite a deficient monsoon, the mood in the market was optimistic as PSU stocks across sectors exhibited positive

investor appetite, Ranganathan said.

Banking shares gained after the RBI announced a phased withdrawal of the incremental CRR from Saturday which was imposed to absorb surplus liquidity following the withdrawal of Rs 2,000 currency notes.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said that global markets stumbled as they processed August's jobless claims data from the US and the rise in gas prices due to strikes in Australia, rekindling further slowdown.

"The domestic market, however, showcased its resilience once more by rallying, seemingly unfazed by global distress signals.

# India's forex reserves jump to USD 598.89 bn



PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's forex reserves jumped by USD 4.039 billion to USD 598.897 billion for the week ended September 1, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped by USD 30 million to USD 594.858 billion.

It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion. The reserves took a hit as the central bank deployed the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments since last year.

By USD 3.442 billion to USD 530.691 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves were up by USD 584 million to USD 44.939 billion, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by USD 1 million to USD 18.195 billion, the apex bank added.

The country's reserve position with the IMF was also up by USD 12 million to USD 5.073 billion in the reporting week, the RBI data showed.

# RBI decides to withdraw incremental CRR in phased manner

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday decided to discontinue the Incremental Cash Reserve Ratio (I-CRR), which was put in place to absorb surplus liquidity following the withdrawal of Rs 2,000 currency notes, in a phased manner beginning Saturday.

On August 10, the RBI mandated banks to maintain an incremental cash reserve ratio (I-CRR) of 10 per cent on the increase in their net demand and time liabilities (NDTL) between May 19, 2023 and July 28, 2023.

The measure was intended to absorb the surplus liquidity generated by various factors, including the return of Rs 2,000 notes to the banking system.

"On a review, it has been decided to discontinue the I-CRR in a phased manner," the central bank said in a statement.

Based on an assessment of current and evolving liquidity conditions, it has been decided that the amounts impounded under the I-CRR would be released in stages so that system liquidity is not subjected to sudden shocks and money markets function in an orderly manner, it added.

The RBI said 25 per cent of the amount of I-CRR maintained by banks will be released



on Saturday and another 25 per cent on September 23. The rest will be released on October 7.

While announcing the I-CRR, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had indicated that the provision was a temporary measure for managing the liquidity overhang.

The RBI had announced that the I-CRR would be reviewed on September 8, 2023, or earlier with a view to returning the impounded funds to the banking system ahead of the festival season.

Following the withdrawal of the Rs 2,000 notes, the liquidity with the banks had surged significantly, the I-CRR was aimed to absorb the excess cash.

As much as 93 per cent of Rs 2000 currency notes that were in circulation on May 19 -- the day when the currency was withdrawn from circulation -- have been returned to banks.

The total value of Rs 2000 banknotes received back from circulation is Rs 3.32 lakh crore up to August 31, 2023.

# Panasonic to invest another ₹300 crore in Andhra facility by 2026



PTI ■ VARANASI

Panasonic Electric Works India (PEWIN) will invest another Rs 300 crore to increase capacity at its unit in Sri City, Andhra Pradesh, company officials said on Friday.

The Japanese company is looking to use the facility for exports and will primarily target the Middle East and African markets, they told reporters here.

"We have invested Rs 300 crore as part of the first phase of the project, and will be investing another Rs 300 crore by 2026," PEWIN Director for power business unit, Rajesh Nandwani, said.

At present, the overall production capacity of the company, which operates plants in Daman and Haridwar as well, is 62 crore pieces per year, which will grow to 70

crore by 2025 and 100 crore by 2030, Nandwani said.

The company produces various products such as switches and switchboards.

PEWIN Managing Director Yoshiyuki Kato said the company's revenues stood at Rs 5,100 crore in FY23, and is aiming to increase it three times by 2030 because of the opportunities it sees here.

Nandwani said exports constitute 2 per cent of the overall revenue at present, and it is aiming to push it up to 10 per cent of the targeted revenue by 2030.

To boost exports, the company will launch products aimed at local market conditions and also increase its distribution strength, Nandwani said.

The company is also open to inorganic growth opportunities and will be looking at

proposals that help it increase its market share and capabilities, Nandwani said.

About three-fourths of the revenues for PEWIN are contributed by the power unit, while the rest come from lighting and solar verticals.

PEWIN employs 8,900 people in India at present.

The company will look to become more solutions-centric rather than product-centric, Raja Mukherjee, its head for the lighting business unit, said.

Government business contributes a third of the topline for the lighting unit at present, he said.

Amit Barve, who heads the solar power solution unit, said the company is looking at solar lighting along highways as a big opportunity, given the mandate to have a fifth of the country's roads to be lit up using solar power.

# Jupiter Life IPO subscribed 63.72 times on last day of offer



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The initial public offering (IPO) of multi-specialty hospital chain Jupiter Life Hospitals Limited was subscribed 63.72 times on the last day of subscription on Friday, helped by huge demand from institutional buyers.

The public issue received bids for 54,14,60,120 shares against 84,97,169 shares on offer, according to NSE data.

The portion for qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) received 187.32 times subscription, while the quota for non-institutional investors got subscribed 34.75 times and that of Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) was subscribed 7.73 times.

The IPO had a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 542 crore and an offer for sale of up to 44.50 lakh equity

shares. The initial public offering had a price range of Rs 695-735 a share.

Jupiter Life Line Hospitals on Tuesday said it has raised Rs 261 crore from anchor investors.

Proceeds of the fresh issue will be utilised to retire debt and for general corporate purposes.

The hospital chain operates in Thane, Pune and Indore under the 'Jupiter' brand with a total bed capacity of 1,194 as of December 2022. It is also in the process of developing a multi-specialty hospital in Dombivli, Maharashtra.

ICICI Securities, Nuvama Wealth Management and JM Financial were the managers to the offer.

The equity shares are proposed to be listed on BSE and NSE.

# SJVN inks PPA with BBMB to set up 18 MW solar project

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned SJVN Ltd has signed an agreement with Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) to set up a 18 megawatt (MW) solar power project at an investment of Rs 90 crore.

Both entities signed a power purchase agreement (PPA) in this regard on Friday, SJVN said in a statement.

SJVN, through its wholly-owned subsidiary SJVN Green Energy Limited (SGEL), signed a PPA for 25 years with BBMB for 18 MW solar power. The project will be developed on the land parcels of BBMB in Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, SJVN CMD Nand Lal Sharma said.

The project is scheduled to be commissioned by August 2024, he said, adding commissioning of the project is expected to reduce 44,923 tons of carbon emission annually.

"The project shall be developed within 12 months on a Build, Own and Operate basis and will involve an investment of around Rs 90 crore," Sharma said.

The project has been secured through open competitive bidding at a tariff of Rs 2.63 per unit in the e-reverse auction organised by the Punjab Energy Development Agency, and the cumulative energy generation over a period of 25 years would be about 917 million units, he noted.

## IN BRIEF

**CAMPUS ACTIVEWEAR ANNOUNCES 'AIR TURBO' LAUNCH**  
Campus Activewear, one of India's largest sports and athleisure footwear brand, on Wednesday announced the launch of new technology - "Air Turbo" as part of Campus Nitroboost range. With this, Campus becomes the pioneer in bringing this footwear tech through specially designed ranges suited for Indian consumers. Campus Air Turbo is a revolutionary product tech designed to keep the feet cool, fresh, and comfortable throughout the day, the company said in a release. The Campus Air Turbo features an innovative air circulation system built right into the sole. Situated in the heel area, the Compressible Pumping Chamber (CPC) ventilation system serves as the beating heart of this groundbreaking technology.

**GARWARE HI-TECH FILMS SHARES HIT ALL TIME HIGH**  
Shares of Garware Hi-Tech Films Ltd have hit an all-time high in trade after Brokerage Sharekhan initiated coverage on the stock on Tuesday with a 'Positive' rating. The scrip rallied eight percent to trade at Rs 1,330.05 apiece on the BSE. The smallcap stock has yielded multibagger returns to its investors as it has spiraled up 118 percent in the last six months. Sharekhan has forecasted an upside potential of 30 percent of the stock.

**SRM MCH&R ACHIEVES GUINNESS WORLD RECORD**  
SRM College of Physiotherapy at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (SRM MCH&R), Kattankulathur achieved a Guinness World Record for "Most people lighting flame torches in a relay". Over 300 students took part in this attempt at the torch conclusion ceremony of the Physio Run 2023: Resounding Overnight Momentous (ROM).



# CEA rejects 'statistical discrepancy' criticism on Q1 growth numbers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran has rejected criticism of 'statistical discrepancy' in the first quarter GDP data, saying when the same statistical authority reported the severest contraction in the first quarter of 2020, the naysayers had called it credible as it suited their narrative.

"In Q1 of 2023-24, the discrepancy of 2.8 per cent has a plus sign. This indicates that the expenditure side has explained only 97.2 per cent of the income side. It does not mean that the 2.8 per cent that has yet to be explained does not exist," Nageswaran said in an op-ed article.

"It exists and lends itself to being explained in subsequent quarters. Similarly, the preceding eight quarters have shown negative discrepancies. It means that the expenditure side has been over-explained and needs to be reconciled," the



article co-authored by senior government economist Rajiv Mishra said.

Over a long period, the negatives and positives offset each other, it said, adding that between 1Q FY12 and 1Q FY24, the CAGR of real GDP (quarter-on-quarter) between the two approaches (income and expenditure) was 5.3 per cent annualised.

Therefore, it said, "the insinuation that GDP is exaggerated does not hold ground. The income side approach has not always been higher than the expenditure side. There has been a fair distribution of discrepancies since 2011-12 within a range of 6.4 per cent to (-) 4.8 per cent. The latest quar-

ter discrepancy lies well within that. This is easy to verify".

The Chief Economic Advisor's (CEA) comments were reposted by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on the microblogging site X.

"When statistical authorities reported a GDP contraction of around 25 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21... it had reported one of the severest contractions in the history of Indian GDP data. That data suited naysayers... Hence it was 'credible'," the finance minister said, quoting the CEA article.

The article was written in light of debates over India's economic performance and economist Ashoka Mody, a Princeton University professor, raising concerns regarding the country's GDP growth rate for the first quarter of the financial year 2023-24. "Indian authorities are downplaying inconvenient macroeconomic facts so that they can celebrate seemingly flattering headline figures ahead of hosting the G20 sum-

mit. But, in covering up the growing struggles faced by the vast majority of Indians, they are playing a cynical and dangerous game," Mody said in an article posted by Project Syndicate titled 'India's Fake Growth Story'.

# SAT defers hearing on SEBI's confirmatory order to September 13

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Friday postponed to September 13 the final hearing on a plea challeng-

ing a SEBI's confirmatory order that barred Zee Entertainment Enterprises' Punit Goenka and Subhash Chandra from holding any key positions in the company and other organisations.

**M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.**  
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)  
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Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586656  
Bhopal, Dated : 08.09.2023

**TENDER NOTICE**

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites online bids from Manufacturers only through e-tendering for procurement of following items:-

Tender specification Number	Particulars of material for Procurement	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender fee (incl. GST) (In Rs.)	Date of Pre Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD /MK/ 04 /976	Survey, Supply, and Installation of minor material and replacement of defective Isolator, AB switch & Male/Female contact of AB switch along with Augmentation of Bus Bar Conductor at various 33/11 KV Substations on semi turnkey contract basis under SSTD Scheme in MPMKVVCL, Bhopal.	705.10	11800.00	22.09.2023 3.00 PM	04.10.2023 3.00 PM

Other details and full tender document would be available on our Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. website <https://mptenders.gov.in> very shortly.  
M.P. Madhyam/11913/2023

**CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)**

# Sabalenka vs Coco in US Open final

AP ■ NEW YORK

Aryna Sabalenka fought back from the brink of defeat to overcome American 17th seed Madison Keys in a third-set tie-break and line up a US Open final against home favourite Coco Gauff.

Keys served for the match in the second set but incoming world number one Sabalenka overhauled the 2017 runner-up to win 0-6, 7-6 (7/1), 7-6 (10/5) to reach her second Grand Slam final.

"I'm really proud of myself that I was able to turn around this game and get this win, because it was just incredible," said Sabalenka.

"I was just, like, 'Come on, keep trying, keep pushing, like, I don't know, do something extra. Just try to turn around this match.'"

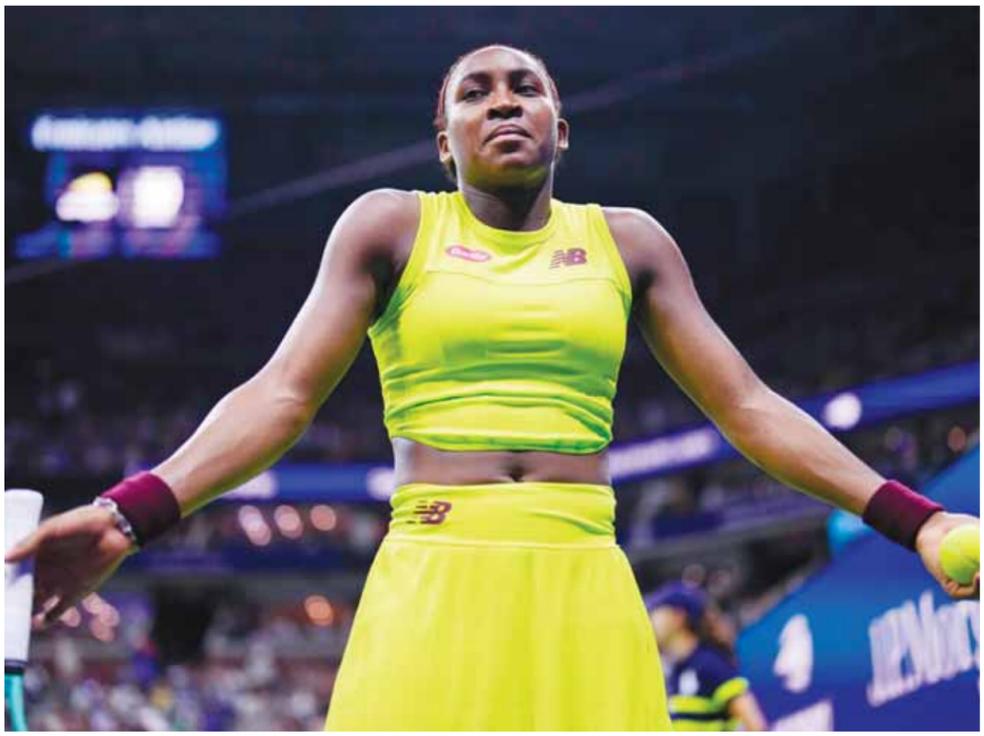
"It really means a lot to be in the final of the US Open for the first time," she added.

Keys was left devastated by the loss after going agonisingly close to a second Grand Slam final.

"I think everyone at the start of the tournament would obviously be really, really excited to be in the semis. Right now it sucks," said Keys.

"But yeah, I just think being able to, you know, take this and turn it to a positive is really possible. Yeah, there is still a lot to be proud of and still tons of tennis to play this season."

Sabalenka rode an emotional rollercoaster, angrily remonstrating with her coaching team at times, before being



able to sheepishly laugh off celebrating prematurely in the decisive tie-break.

"I thought that we play tie-break up till seven. I was just all over the place," she said.

"I was thinking that if I'm going to lose this semi-final, I'll be struggling with sleeping for I don't know how many days, and I was just, like, I

don't want this to happen. I need some sleep."

The Australian Open champion will bid for her second Grand Slam title on Saturday against the 19-year-old Gauff. The American holds a 3-2 edge but this will be their first meeting at a major.

"She's an unbelievable player," said Sabalenka. "The

crowd will be supporting her a lot. I will do everything I can. I'll be fighting for every point and I will do my best."

### NIGHTMARE START

Sabalenka beat Keys in straight sets in the Wimbledon quarter-finals but was pushed to her limit by an opponent who knocked out two top-10

players en route to the last four in New York.

The second seed handed Keys a break in the first game with a double fault and her troubles were compounded when she again dropped serve after leading 40-0 two games later.

Keys shook off two break chances before a wayward Sabalenka faltered on serve for

a third time, allowing her opponent to wrap up the set with ease.

Sabalenka raised her arms in mock celebration as she held to finally get on the board to start the second set.

Keys continued to pump winners with her powerful forehand and broke again for a 2-1 lead, Sabalenka drawing a code violation after smacking a court-side barrier and hurling her racket towards her coach.

The Belarusian briefly got back on serve before Keys struck once more, further infuriating an irate Sabalenka who had stormed into the semi-finals without losing a single set.

Sabalenka broke Keys to love to stay in the tournament, winning 12 points in a row to move 6-5 ahead, but she couldn't convert two set points as the American steadied herself to force a tie-break.

However Sabalenka won that easily to send the match to a deciding set, before which Keys took a medical timeout to receive treatment to her upper left leg.

Keys withstood an early break point and the first five games went on serve before a loose game from Sabalenka handed Keys the initiative at 4-2.

Sabalenka dug deep and overpowered Keys to retrieve the break straight away, surviving two more break points to level at 4-4.

The Belarusian took charge in the tie-break, leading from the front before securing a second win over Keys in as many Grand Slams.

## US Open chaos as climate protesters halt semi-final

AP ■ NEW YORK

The US Open was plunged into chaos on Thursday after climate activists disrupted play, forcing a 50-minute stoppage as the tennis showpiece became the latest sporting event to be targeted by protesters.

The semi-final clash between American teenager Coco Gauff and Karolina Muchova in the Arthur Ashe Stadium was halted in game two of the second set as three protesters wearing t-shirts with the slogan "end fossil fuels" began chanting the same message.

The protesters were greeted with jeers and chants of "kick them out" by other spectators as security staff moved in.

One of the protesters glued his feet to the concrete floor of the stadium, preventing his swift removal from the arena, tournament officials said.

The delay occurred as Muchova prepared to serve early in the second set with Gauff leading 6-4, 1-0 just after 8pm local time.

Gauff and Muchova waited patiently on the court for several minutes but eventual-



ly left the court to return to the locker rooms.

US Open tournament director Stacey Allaster later confirmed to US media that one of the protesters had glued themselves to the floor.

"When security got there they found one of the protesters had physically glued themselves to the cement floor," Allaster said.

Television footage showed Gauff and Muchova trying to stay loose in the locker rooms, consulting with coaching staff during the unprecedented delay.

Gauff and Muchova finally returned to the court at around 8.50pm local time after a stoppage in play timed at around 50 minutes.



## Messi scripts Argentina's win

AP ■ MONTEVIDEO

A trademark, curling free-kick from Lionel Messi got world champions Argentina off to a winning start in South American World Cup qualifying on Thursday with a 1-0 victory at home to Ecuador.

Colombia beat Venezuela 1-0 while 10-man Peru held on for a 0-0 draw at Paraguay as the long journey of South American qualifying for the 2026 World Cup got under way.

Messi, who led Argentina to their third World Cup triumph in Qatar in December, has yet to confirm whether he will continue with his national side all the way to 2026, but he showed his importance yet again with the breakthrough in what had threatened to be a frustrating night for Lionel Scaloni's team.

Lautaro Martinez won a free-kick in a central area in the 78th minute, just outside the Ecuador penalty area and Messi executed to perfection with his effort floating over the wall and dipping perfectly to beat the stationary Hernan Galindez.

With the goal, Messi drew level with former Barcelona teammate Luis Suarez of Uruguay as the all-time leading scorers in the South American qualifiers, both with 29 goals.

The Albiceleste had dominated possession against an Ecuador side which defended in numbers and limited their attacks to the occasional break on the counter.

Elsewhere a 46th minute header from Rafael Santos Borre, from a pinpoint Jhon Arias cross, was enough to earn three points for Colombia in Barranquilla.

The victory ensured a winning start for new Colombia coach, Argentine Nestor Lorenzo, who was taking charge of his first competitive game.

Colombia failed to qualify for last year's World Cup in Qatar while Venezuela are hoping to earn their first ever appearance in a World Cup finals.

Peru's difficult task in Ciudad del Este became harder after they lost defender Luis Advincula on the stroke of half-time when he was dismissed for a second yellow card.

But they held on for a point in what was a pulsating, high-tempo encounter.

## France close on Euro 2024 spot, Netherlands beat Greece

AP ■ PARIS

France took a huge step towards qualifying for Euro 2024 with a 2-0 victory over Ireland on Thursday, while the Netherlands and Denmark claimed big wins as they eye places at next year's finals in Germany.

Aurelien Tchouameni and Marcus Thuram scored either side of half-time and France could have added several more goals as they outclassed Ireland at the Parc des Princes in Paris in qualifying Group B.

Captain Kylian Mbappe had a goal disallowed for offside and Ousmane Dembele later hit the post for a France side who saw Olivier Giroud limp off with an ankle injury in the first half.

Last year's beaten World Cup finalists have a maximum 15 points and have yet to concede a goal after five matches in the group, which they lead by a massive nine points from both the Netherlands and Greece.

Ronald Koeman's Dutch side, who have played just three games, beat Greece 3-0 in Eindhoven with all the goals coming in the first half.

Marten de Roon smashed in their opener, Liverpool's Cody Gakpo made it 2-0 and Wout Weghorst headed in the third on 39 minutes.

Ireland, with just three points after four games, will surely need to beat the Netherlands at home on Sunday to maintain a realistic chance of going through with the top two teams in each



group qualifying.

Elsewhere, Robert Lewandowski scored two late goals as Poland beat the Faroe Islands 2-0 in Warsaw.

The veteran Barcelona striker's first came from the

penalty spot on 73 minutes and he added another seven minutes from time.

Poland, coached by former Portugal boss Fernando Santos, are third in Group E with six points, two points behind lead-

ers the Czech Republic and one behind Albania.

The Czech Republic were held to a 1-1 draw by Albania in Prague.

In Group H, a late Oliver Antman goal gave Finland a 1-0 in Kazakhstan, damaging the Central Asian nation's hopes of qualifying for a first major tournament.

Finland top the group with 12 points, two points ahead of Denmark and Slovenia who both also won on Thursday.

Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg, Joakim Maehle, Jonas Wind and Christian Eriksen netted as Denmark defeated San Marino 4-0 in Copenhagen as new Manchester United signing Rasmus Hojlund appeared off the bench in the second half.

Andraz Sporar scored

twice as Slovenia beat Northern Ireland 4-2 in Ljubljana.

A Jonny Evans own goal and a strike by RB Leipzig's Benjamin Sesko made it a miserable night for the Northern Irish, although Evans did also score at the other end.

Northern Ireland have lost four of their five games in the group with the return of Michael O'Neill as manager not having the desired effect.

Meanwhile Hungary are three points clear of Serbia at the top of Group G after coming from behind to win 2-1 in Belgrade.

Attila Szalai's own goal gave Serbia the lead but Barnabas Varga equalised and Willi Orban got the winner.

Lithuania drew 2-2 with Montenegro in the same group.

PTI ■ CHIANG MAI

Indian football team captain Gurpreet Singh Sandhu was critical of the second penalty awarded to Iraq after his side's heartbreaking 4-5 defeat in shootout in the King's Cup semifinal here.

The Blue Tigers were leading 2-1 till the 79th minute when the referee awarded a soft penalty to Iraq after their striker Ghadhban was squeezed by two defenders inside the box during a tussle to get on to a high cross.

It did not look like a definite penalty, but Ghadhban himself stepped up to take the kick from the spot and make it 2-2, taking the game to the penalty shootout.

Sandhu told the AIFF, "Obviously, it's a hard result to digest. I think we could've won the game. Unfortunately, the second penalty which was awarded was questionable."

However, he expressed his satisfaction with the overall performance of the team

## Second penalty was questionable: Gurpreet



despite the absence of veteran striker Sunil Chhetri.

"But again, we did much, much better than what I think people would have thought. And we just need to believe in

ourselves. We have to be a bit more patient and positive, which we were.

"We need to be humble and also make sure that we don't give away chances the way we

did. Unfortunately, Iraq got their chances to come back and win the game," he added.

"We just need to make sure if we want to be one of those big teams, we don't give away opportunities even if it looks like it's something out of our control."

"We need to make sure that we don't give any chances whatsoever to other teams if we want to be in those high numbers in Asia or in the world."

"We need to build on this performance because we have another game coming up. We need to make sure that we rest well, eat well, and get ready for that."

The failure ended India's unbeaten streak of 12 games. However, Sandhu expressed

his confidence in his team and said the players need to believe in themselves.

"Most of the boys in this bunch have played together for a long time. They are maturing at the right age, peaking at the right time."

"The sky's the limit for us. We just need to believe in ourselves as a team."

"We are working day in and day out to make sure that we, as a team, keep on pushing our limits, break the barriers and move forward in Asia because that's where we want to be," he signed off.

India will take on Lebanon in the bronze-medal playoff, which will be followed by the title clash between Iraq and Thailand on Sunday.

## India announces squad for SAFF U-19 C'ship

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National Under-19 football head coach Shivendu Panda on Friday announced a 23-member Indian squad for the SAFF U-19 Championship, to commence in Kathmandu on September 21.

The squad flew to Saudi Arabia for an exposure-cum-training camp early on Friday from where they will travel to the Nepal capital on September 19.

India has been drawn in Group B along with Bhutan and Bangladesh, while Group A comprises the hosts, Maldives and Pakistan.

After a single round-robin group stage, the top two teams from both groups will move into the semifinals. The final will be played on September 30.

## Spanish prosecutors accuse Rubiales of sexual assault

AP ■ MADRID

Spanish public prosecutors have filed a lawsuit against football chief Luis Rubiales for sexual assault and coercion after he kissed player Jenni Hermoso on the lips without her consent, the prosecutors office said on Friday.

Spanish football federation (RFEF) president Rubiales, 46, sparked a worldwide backlash after forcibly kissing Hermoso during the medal ceremony following Spain's Women's World Cup triumph in Sydney on August 20.

"The prosecutors request



that Luis Rubiales be questioned as an accused (party) and Jenni Hermoso as a victim," the prosecutors office

said in a statement.

The move comes after Hermoso, 33, filed a complaint at the National Court

on Tuesday, formally accusing Rubiales of sexual assault.

A judge at the court must now decide whether to accept or archive the request.

If the judge accepts the request, a magistrate will be assigned to head an investigation which will end either with a recommendation for the case to go to trial or be dismissed.

Under Spanish law, sexual assault includes a wide array of crimes from online abuse and groping to rape, each with different penalties. The punishment for a non-consensual kiss can range from a fine to four years in

prison.

Hermoso, who plays for Mexican club Pachuca, has said the unwanted kiss had left her feeling "vulnerable and like the victim of an assault", with a statement on social media describing it as "an impulsive, macho act, out of place and with no type of consent on my part".

She has also accused Rubiales of pressuring her to speak out in his defense immediately after the scandal over the kiss erupted, which prosecutors said could be considered a crime of coercion.

Rubiales insists the kiss was consensual.

## Thakkar makes Ma Long work hard for his win

PTI ■ PYEONGCHANG

India's Manav Thakkar had his moments against Chinese legend Ma Long before going down fighting in a round of 16 men's singles contest at the Asian Table Tennis Championships here on Friday.

The 23-year-old from Surat, who suffered a 0-3 defeat, was expectedly nervous going into the match against arguably the greatest player of all time but ended up giving a good account of himself in the three games he got

to play.

Manav, ranked 100, led 9-5 in the first game but Long managed to reel off the next six points.

Even in the second game, the Indian had an 8-4 advantage but was not able to sustain the high level of table tennis he needed to produce consistently against the five-time Olympic gold medalist -- two in singles and three in team events.

Long dominated the third game to complete a 11-9, 12-10, 11-5 win.

Earlier on Friday, Manav

had pulled off a memorable 11-8, 8-11, 11-7, 11-7 win over world number 33 Kao Cheng-Jui of South Korea to enter the pre-quarterfinals.

On a day when the seasoned G Sathiyam and Sharath Kamal lost their round of 32 matches, another heartening performance came from the 17th ranked Ayhika Mukherjee who stretched the Olympic bronze medallist Chen Xingtong of China to five games, before going down 2-11, 6-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-3 in the women's singles round of 32.

# ACC ADD RESERVE DAY FOR INDIA-PAK ASIA CUP MATCH

PTI ■ COLOMBO

In view of the prevailing weather conditions, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) on Friday decided to add an exclusive reserve day for the Super 4 match between India and Pakistan, which is scheduled for September 10, here on Sunday.

However, there will not be a reserve day for any of the other Super 4 matches in Sri Lanka.

It means that if the rain plays spoilsport during marquee clash on September 10, the match can be resumed from the point it was halted on the very next day.

"A reserve day has been incorporated for the Asia Cup 2023 Super 4's match between Pakistan and India scheduled to take place on 10th September 2023 at R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium in Colombo," the ACC said in a statement.

"If adverse weather suspends play during the Pakistan vs India game, the match will continue on 11th September 2023 from the point it was suspended," the statement added.

The Asia Cup final, to be played on September 17, already has been provided with a reserve day considering the heavy rains in the Lankan capital.

In such an eventuality, the ACC said spectators can hold on



to their match tickets which will remain valid on the reserve day.

Recently, the PCB management committee chairman Zaka Ashraf had written to ACC chairman Jay Shah, demanding com-

ensation for allegedly losing out considerable money on gate receipts due to poor crowd response for matches in the island nation.

The group league match

between the arch-rivals had to be called off after a steady downpour after the end of Indian innings in which they scored 266.

While there is not even remotest of chance of ACC giv-

ing any compensation to PCB, the reserve day is the most amicable settlement that could have been reached amidst rising tension between continental body and the tournament hosts.

## Players should've been convinced to look at bigger picture: Gavaskar

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Indian legend Sunil Gavaskar wants someone to find the "real story" behind Asia Cup 'Super Four' matches not being shifted out of Colombo to a much drier Hambantota and feels at times, even players need to look at the "bigger picture".

The Asia Cup, which is being hosted by PCB, is being held in a 'Hybrid Model' with India playing all their matches in Sri Lanka after refusing to travel to Pakistan.

With heavy rains predicted in Colombo through the week, there were talks of shifting matches to Hambantota but Asian Cricket Council has stuck to its original itinerary.

"Well, somebody should find the real story. It appears from cricketing points, that it was probably the players who didn't want to go to Hambantota.

"So administrators, had to at last moment, change it from Hambantota to Colombo despite knowing Colombo could have pretty dicey weather," Gavaskar told 'Sports Today'.

But the former India captain clarified that he was not referring to players from any particular country.

"When I meant players, I didn't mean players of one team but players of all teams that were supposed to be there," he said.

Gavaskar also sympathized with administrators as often they get the rough end of the stick from the fans, who are missing out on quality cricket due to inclement weather.

"It is easy to point fingers at administrators and they can be easily made scapegoats. It is really important to find out why despite knowing that weather forecast of Colombo won't be good, matches were not held in Hambantota," he said.

Gavaskar is not averse to modern day players having a say in scheduling of matches but he also wants them to be accommodating when there are some unforeseen circumstances, like poor weather in this case.

Rain can also play spoilsport on September 10 when India are scheduled to face Pakistan for the second time in the tournament. The first game between the arch-rivals was called off due to rain.

"Obviously, you want players to be in good mental space. The gym facilities, practice facilities need to be good but at times like these, we need to look at the larger picture and Hambantota had less chance of rain and Colombo has more chance of rain.

"And when I say experimentation, it is a chance to prepare for the World Cup. But by no means I am saying that Asia Cup is less important. We also need to win the tournament," he said.

## Dhoni spotted playing golf with former US President Trump

PTI ■ NEW JERSEY

India's World Cup-winning captain MS Dhoni was spotted enjoying a friendly round of golf with former President of the United States of America Donald Trump, here.

Trump hosted the wicket-keeper-batter to play golf at Trump National Golf Club Bedminster.

A picture of the two and a video of them playing have been doing the rounds on social media.

In the group picture, Dhoni is seen in his vintage long hair while Trump was wearing a red



coloured MAGA (Make America Great Again) cap.

The dasher from Ranchi was also seen enjoying the quarterfinal match between defending champion Carlos Alcaraz and Alexander Zverev

at the US Open in New York a day earlier.

Dhoni had led Chennai Super Kings to their fifth IPL title earlier this year. The 42-year old had undergone a surgery on his left knee in June.

## B'desh face SL in must-win match

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Survival will be foremost in Bangladesh's mind whereas Sri Lanka will aim for a winning start when they cross swords in the second Super 4 match of the Asia Cup here on Saturday.

A seven-wicket towelling at the hands of Pakistan in the Super 4 opener in Lahore has made a victory mandatory for Bangladesh against the Lankans, assuming that the weather remains dry enough for the match to take place.

A defeat will almost certainly put an end to their Asia Cup campaign. Batting is their main concern, and they will have to address it immediately.

They did make 334 for 5 against Afghanistan riding on hundreds by Najmal Shanto and Mehidy Hasan Miraz in the league phase.

But they came a cropper against more capable bowling units of Sri Lanka and Pakistan, making meagre totals of 164 and 193 respectively.

That propensity to go flat against top-class opponents will worry them going into the match against Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankans have a set of bowlers like Maheesh Theekshana, Matheesha Pathirana etc who can inflict high damage, and Bangladesh know it first-hand.

The pace-spin combination of Pathirana and Theekshana had taken six wickets among them to restrict Bangladesh to a sub-200 total in a Group B league match at Pallekele on August 31.

Sri Lanka are better placed in that department and pacer Kasun Rajitha had also played a handy role in their narrow win over Afghanistan in the last league match of the Asia Cup in Lahore on September 5.

Even though he went for a lot of runs, Rajitha's four-wicket haul helped Lanka

score a narrow 2-run victory in that match, along with the Afghans' unawareness of the

run equation. But the hosts too have their own worries.

The way Afghan batters piled up 289 runs in just 37.4

overs will serve as a timely reminder to the Lankan bowlers about the need to stay focused on the task.

## Stokes could miss India Test series

PTI ■ CARDIFF

England's Test captain Ben Stokes in all likelihood will undergo knee surgery after the conclusion of ODI World Cup, rendering him a doubtful starter for the important five-match away series against India next year.

Once a premier all-rounder Stokes has found it hard to bowl this summer due to chronic tendonitis in his knee. He has mostly played as a specialist batter in the last three Ashes Tests and will continue to do so in the ODI series against New Zealand followed by the World Cup in India next month.

Stokes said he plans to sort out his long pending surgery post the World Cup but refused to divulge the details.

"I know what's going to happen, I just don't think now is right time to say what I'm doing," Stokes told reporters on



Thursday ahead of the first ODI against New Zealand.

"I've been having some good conversations with some specialists. There is a plan in place. It's nice knowing after the World Cup we've got something, a really good plan we can do and we can stick to."

"I want to be playing next summer as a genuine all-

rounder. This winter is all about playing this World Cup, then getting this knee sorted," he added.

If the England Test captain undergoes a surgery post the World Cup he could be in a race against time to get fit for the five-Test series in India, starting January 25.

Any player recuperating from knee surgery could take at least 8-12 weeks depending on the nature of the operation and time taken for extensive rehabilitation. With a million pound plus IPL contract in his kitty, the ideal time of return could well be the next year's IPL if one logically calculates the time he could take to start playing top flight cricket once again.

Stokes returns to England's ODI set up after reversing his decision to retire from the format to play in the World Cup in India, starting October 5 with the summit clash slated for November 19.

## Dutch cricket board search for Indian net bowlers for WC camp

PTI ■ AMSTERDAM

The Netherlands cricket board, in a surprise move, has posted an advertisement on social media, inviting Indian cricketers to join them as net bowlers in their preparatory camp for the World Cup.

While it is a convention (not a rule) for local state associations to provide net bowlers to visiting teams, the Dutch cricket board has sought one left-arm seamer, one right arm seamer, a mystery spinner and a left-arm

spinner for the team's five-day pre-Cup camp in Alur from September 20-24.

The Netherlands squad, led by Australia-born Scott Edwards had come to Bengaluru in August for a short three-day acclimatisation camp but it is understood, the Netherlands cricket doesn't have enough depth in domestic cricket or resources to have travelling net bowlers.

Listing out the criteria for becoming the Netherlands World Cup squad's net bowler, "the pacers need to bowl above 120 kmph (75 miles per

hour) and spinners, who are able to give it a tweak at a minimum 80 kmph (50 miles per hour)."

They have demanded videos with aspirants bowling minimum one over with clear trajectory of the deliveries visible.

Their travel, stay and meals during the camp would be taken care by the Royal Netherlands Cricket Association. All the applicants need to be above 18 years of age and residents of India.

Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA), howev-

er, is ready to help them get the best possible net bowlers in town. "They have already camped here and played a couple of matches. We have provided them the required facilities, as per their request. We are ready to host them whenever they return," a senior KSCA official said when enquired about the advertisement.

"We will provide the best possible facilities such as ground and net bowlers, and, yes, they are free to rope in any additional support," the KSCA official added.

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