













www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Course correction

The IMF's call to tax the rich and shield the poor in Pak will not be easy to implement

Pakistan's dwindling economy has steadily dug its way into such a morass that even sane, helpful and logical directions from the experts outside, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in this case, do not seem to be able to pull it through. The recent call by IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva to Pakistan for increasing taxation on the wealthy and protecting the poor is a stark reminder of the country's economic woes. The cash-strapped nation, which secured a bailout from the IMF in July, is grappling with double-digit inflation and a range of structural issues that need immediate redressal. Kristalina's meeting with Interim Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session has brought the pressing economic issues facing Pakistan to the forefront. Kristalina emphasised the need for Pakistan to collect more taxes from the wealthy and simultaneously protect the country's vulnerable populations. The IMF has long been advocating economic reforms in Pakistan.



Pakistan's economy is reeling under soaring inflation, which has been exacerbated by the conditions attached to the IMF's \$3 billion bailout package. Meanwhile things have only gone from bad to worse for general population. Massive hikes in electricity and petrol prices have driven inflation to a staggering 27.4 per cent last month, placing the citizens under a crushing burden.

The promise of economic stability and growth through the IMF bailout has not yet materialised for the majority of Pakistanis. The IMF's insistence on revenue collection and protecting the most vulnerable segments of society underscores the importance of a balanced approach.

But the irony is that this bailout, and even the previous ones, have hardly changed anything. The ordinary Pakistani continues to suffer while the Pakistani elite (especially the army) enjoys the privileges. These measures are essential not only for fiscal sustainability but also for maintaining social cohesion in a country facing considerable economic hardships. The IMF's approval of the \$3 billion standby agreement, which is crucial to prevent a sovereign debt default, has saved the day but the crisis runs deeper in Pakistan's system. It must galvanise and upgrade industry and trade to compete in the international market. But it is resorting to piecemeal reforms such as earmarking 10 Government-owned companies for privatisation. Though this move is in line with the IMF's recommendations as State-owned entities' losses have been straining Government finances, it is not a permanent solution. Pakistan's economy needs structural changes that can create a conducive business environment. The IMF's prescription may not be easy to follow as Pakistan's elite is going to resist it tooth and nail, especially with the general elections slated for January end. In the short term, however, such moves can play a pivotal role in steering Pakistan away from the brink. The path ahead is challenging as it is directly linked with the survival of Pakistan as a State.

### PICTALK



Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel perform during diamond jubilee celebrations of Air Force Station Jammu

# Who killed Hardeep Singh Nijjar?



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

The Indo-Canada relations have deteriorated after the killing of Nijjar, a pro-Khalistani. Are sectional conflicts among Khalistanis in Canada the cause?

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation that Indian agents had murdered the Khalistani leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, on June 18, 2023, in Canada, is reportedly based on inputs from intelligence sources. This raises the question as to how reliable these inputs are. No final judgement is possible until these inputs and the evidence behind them are made public. Nevertheless, one can have some idea of the efficiency of the Canadian intelligence and security establishment by looking at their performance in respect of the biggest ever terrorist outrage emanating from Canadian soil—the mid-air explosion that brought down Air India's Boeing 747 aircraft, Emperor Kanishka, carrying flight AI 182 from Toronto to Mumbai via Montreal, off the coast of Ireland. All 329 persons, passengers and staff, on board the flight which had taken off on June 23, 1985, were killed. Only 131 of the bodies could be recovered.

The Air India explosion was a result of negligence, intelligence failure, inaction and lax security arrangement on the part of the Canadian authorities. For quite some time before the explosion there was a fear that Khalistani terrorists in Canada were planning a strike. Alerted, India's Intelligence Bureau had sent a telex message on June 1, 1985, both to Air India's management and the Canadian authorities asking them to beef up security measures to forestall a possible attack on an aircraft by Sikh terrorists.

James Bartleman, then head of Canada's intelligence bureau, got a frosty response from an official of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), whose attention he drew to a highly classified Communications Security Establishment (CSE) document saying that Sikh extremists might be targeting AI 182. He was told that officials were probing the matter. Security measures remained lax. Sniffer dogs remained missing from all Canadian airports because they were under training at Vancouver. X-ray screens at Toronto's Pearson Airport



"broke down" on the day of the flight.

Days before the bombing, Canadian intelligence operatives who were tracking Talwinder Singh Parmar, founder and leader of terrorist group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI), and subsequently considered to be the mastermind behind the downing of AI-182—heard an explosives test that he conducted in a forest. They ignored it, thinking that it was a "gunshot!"

In its report submitted in 2010, a commission of inquiry, appointed by Stephen Harper, then Canada's Prime Minister, in 2006, and headed by a retired judge of the country's Supreme Court, John Major, condemned several security failures and blunders on part of Canadians that led to the bombing. According to the report, the RCMP and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) had significant pieces of information that, taken together, "would have led a competent analyst to conclude that Flight 182 was at high risk of being bombed by known Sikh terrorists in June 1985." Lack of coordination among them prevented the risk from being neutralised. The report called the security lapses "inexcusable" and termed Canadian security arrangements at the time "wholly deficient".



THE REPORT CALLED THE SECURITY LAPSES "INEXCUSABLE" AND TERMED CANADIAN SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AT THE TIME "WHOLLY DEFICIENT"

Nor have the post-explosion developments shown any profound regret on the part of the Canadian authorities over what had happened. Nor have they reached out to the victims and their families the way they should have. The earnestness with which investigations into the outrage were conducted is reflected in the fact that only one person Inderjit Singh Reyat, was convicted and, that too, decades after the bombing. Talwinder Singh Parmar, who had returned to India, was killed in an encounter with the Punjab police in 1992. The other accused, including Ripudaman Singh Malik, who was subsequently murdered in Canada on July 14, 2023, were acquitted.

In a searing observation, judge John Major, had stated that Canada had relegated the biggest terrorist attack targeting their country to background. He noted, "I stress this is a Canadian atrocity. For too long the greatest loss of Canadian lives at the hands of terrorists has somehow been relegated outside the Canadian consciousness." Given this background, one can hardly be blamed for doubting, prima facie, Canadian intelligence agencies' conclusion that Indian agents had murdered Hardeep Singh Nijjar. This is particu-

larly so in the context of Ripudaman Singh Malik's subsequent murder. He had written a letter on January 17, 2022, to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, praising him for his initiative to redress some of the pending demands of the Sikhs. While thanking Modi for removing the names of some Sikhs from the blacklist which prevented them from visiting India, he accused certain "anti-India members" of the Sikh community of running an "orchestrated campaign" against Modi. Back in Surrey in British Columbia, his praise for Modi had prompted a section of Sikhs to accuse him of treachery towards the Sikh qaum. Was he murdered for the 180-degree turn in his attitude to India and Modi?

The world of Khalistani terrorists, it appears, is not one of great mutual camaraderie and friendship, but one of sectional acrimony. Was Hardeep Singh Nijjar a victim of this internecine conflict, and the RCMP, CSIS and the CSE have been clueless about this entire matter as they were about the preparations to blow up the Air India flights? The question needs to be looked at seriously.

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PLAYING POLITICS

Sir — The proposal by Karnataka State Co-operation Minister Rajanna to appoint three additional Deputy Chief Ministers in the Karnataka government seems to be a well-calculated political manoeuvre aimed at weakening the current Deputy CM, D K Shivakumar, who is poised to replace Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the second half of the government's five-year term. Rajanna has openly aligned himself with CM Siddaramaiah, fueling speculation that he is the latter's spokesperson. Reports indicate that only one Deputy Chief Minister position was created in response to D K Shivakumar's demand to assert his position as the second most powerful figure in the government after the Chief Minister. In this context, Rajanna's statements hint at a power struggle behind the scenes. Moreover, the open rebellion staged by senior leaders B K Hariprasad and Bsavaraja Raya Reddy against the government undermines the expectation that the Congress, with its 135 seats, can provide a strong and stable government in the state. Failure to address these troubling developments with firm corrective measures early on may spell trouble for the Congress government, erode its credibility, and pave the way for political instability.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

### WOMEN REPRESENTATION

Sir — It is disheartening that despite being proud to call ourselves the world's largest democracy, we have failed to achieve gender equity in our legislative bodies at both the national and state levels even after seventy-six years of independence. While women constitute nearly half of India's 95 crore registered voters, they make up only 15 percent of lawmakers in Parliament and 10 percent in state assemblies. Therefore, the move to reserve 33 percent of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislatures, initiated in 1996, is a significant and commendable step toward promoting gender equality in politics. However, due to political maneuvering, we have failed to enact it into law.

## Neutralise the Khalistan movement



Late Indira Gandhi, who had a keen awareness of the dangers posed by the divisive Khalistan movement, confronted it head-on through Operation Blue Star. Without this intervention, the movement could have taken deeper root within our nation. Although its leaders were compelled to disperse abroad, in 1984, she paid the ultimate price with her life for the greater national cause. Canada, with its enthu-

siasm for immigration and a relative lack of experience in dealing with terrorism, tragically suffered the loss of 268 of its own citizens in the 1985 bombing of Air India's Kanishka Flight 182. It appears that, perhaps due to a delayed examination of history, Canada is now recklessly aligning with proponents of the Khalistan movement within its borders for short-term political gain. Sooner or later, the nation will realize that these renegades owe their allegiance to nothing but blind devotion to a misguided cause. The Indian government must step far beyond the scope of diplomacy and demonstrate unwavering resolve through every possible means to neutralise the Khalistan movement, not only within Canada but also in other emerging regions, to prevent the ignition of domestic unrest.

R Narayanan | Mumbai

Finally, after six attempts and twenty-seven years since its first introduction in 1996, the Women's 33 Percent Reservation (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam) Bill passed in the Lok Sabha on September 20, 2023. Despite all political parties' efforts to attract women voters with various schemes and financial incentives, they have remained silent on the 33 percent reservation. Now that the bill has cleared this hurdle, the question arises of how soon it can become law. According to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, "After the next year's elections, the census and delimitation exercise will take place. After this, there will be 1/3 women in this house." This implies that it is unlikely to happen before the 2029 elections, unless there is a significant shift in the government's stance and amendments to the Constitution. Nevertheless, involving women in policymaking is essential to address issues concerning them adequately.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

### RAHUL GANDHI MEETS COOLIES

Sir — Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi once again surprised people by vis-

iting a railway station in New Delhi and engaging with porters to understand their concerns. The Congress leader arrived at Anand Vihar Railway Station to interact with the coolies. Gandhi engaged in extensive conversations with them and discussed the challenges they face. This visit comes several months after a group of porters requested him to meet them and comprehend their issues, and to work towards their betterment.

In recent months, Rahul Gandhi has consistently surprised people with his interactions with the public. He visited Bengali Market, the Jama Masjid area to have a meal, and Mukherjee Nagar to engage with UPSC aspirants.

Recently, he undertook a motorcycle journey in Ladakh, Leh, and Kargil regions to interact with the local population. Rahul Gandhi's fearless and courageous efforts to engage with ordinary people and understand their problems are commendable.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

# Multivitamins: A traveller's companion

The role of multivitamins cannot be overstated to reinforce your immunity while travelling



GAGAN MANCHANDA

Travel has become an integral aspect of modern lifestyle. People nowadays are traversing the globe more than ever before for business as well as for leisure. Even though travelling is fun, people who travel a lot often face the challenge of maintaining their health during their trips. This is because of the change in their usual routines, consumption of different foods, and the new environment. These factors can drain travellers, both physically and mentally, besides dampening the excitement of their adventure. This is precisely where multivitamins come into play.



blend of vitamins and minerals usually found in our food. They are beneficial for bridging nutritional gaps and naturally improving health. One daily multivitamin during travel can serve as a reliable support system, countering the deficiency of essential nutrients induced by changing diets. Changing time zones and long flights can disrupt our sleep patterns and leave us fatigued and stressed. B vitamins, particularly B6, B12, and folic acid, play a substantial role in stimulating the nervous system for combating stress. Including these nutrients in a multivitamin can help travellers manage fatigue and adjust to new time zones more effectively. Thus, consuming health supplements or multivitamins during travel can play a crucial role in balancing irregular meal patterns. Multivitamins

come in various forms, from traditional tablets and capsules to gummies and powders, catering to different preferences and dietary restrictions. Their portability makes them an ideal travel companion. When choosing multivitamins for your journey, consider a blend that includes all the essential nutrients for travellers—Vitamin B complex, Vitamin C, magnesium, probiotics, and ginseng. For instance, vitamin B complex boosts cognitive performance while Vitamin C aids in fortifying the immune system.

### Vital Nutrients to Vegan & Vegetarian Travellers

Vegan and vegetarian travellers often struggle to meet their nutritional needs while on the go. Dietary restrictions can impact their energy levels and overall health during their journey. Multivitamins play a crucial role in bridging these nutritional gaps for such individuals. Furthermore, multivitamin supplements for this group contain medicinal herbs and higher levels of zinc, vitamin B12, iron, and algae-derived omega-3 fatty acids to address deficiencies

commonly found in plant-based eating patterns. For instance, multivitamins composed of Ashwagandha, an age-old medicinal herb renowned for its rich reserve of Vitamin C, calcium, and iron, are known for enhancing stamina. Similarly, certain multivitamin products include Shilajit, a mineral-dense resin used in Ayurveda. This natural substance is rich in nutrients, including iron, magnesium, retinol, and vitamins B, C, and E. It also aids in stress and anxiety reduction, which makes it an ideal companion for vegan and vegetarian travellers.

Multivitamins, the tiny powerhouses are not just supplements; they are the steadfast companions that can empower you to conquer new horizons with strength, and vigour. So, whether you are chasing sunsets on remote beaches or sealing business deals in bustling cities, let multivitamins be your trusted companions. Your journey is extraordinary—let your health be equally exceptional.

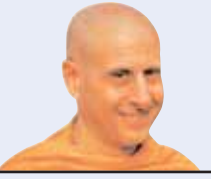
(The writer is the CEO, Co-Founder, of Positive Gems; views are personal)



## FIRST COLUMN

### A CALL FOR FAITH, PEACE, AND UNITY

The positive spirit of hope and faith in God is essential for our well-being



RADHANATH SWAMI MAHARAJ

The Bhagavat Gita verse (BG 8.15) states, that the world is a place of ordeal and unease for the living beings. Further, it outlines the genres of trouble caused by nature (adi-Devika), by society (adi-bhautika), and by body & mind (adhyatmitka). Does the cause of discomfort trigger resentment, bitterness, and anger? Does it invoke a victimhood mindset? Does the innate troubles of the world have a license for perpetrating violence, causing generational rivalry and spreading animosity?

Humans look forward to living in peace and harmony however still we see fights between individuals, family, friends and nations. The underlying reason behind such fights/war shows the obvious failure of any potential dialogue, but more than that it reveals the true characters of an individual or and leaders involved directly in this fight/war. The Bhagavad Gita 16.4 states; that hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit, anger, harshness, and ignorance are the traits of a person possessed by ignorance. And, these fights/war exposes the deep-seated dark traits seated within the hearts of individual/leaders, leading to the unfortunate dehumanization of humanity.

Every fight/war historically, globally and generationally has been fought due to conflicting ideologies between the well-intentioned and not-so-well-intentioned people or groups. But people bereft of spiritual wisdom; act whimsically, instinctually, and emotionally to further their self-serving ideologies without much thought. Additionally, when people start believing they are 'right' 20 times a day, it gets into their heads. They act as (pseudo) God displaying their ignorance brazenly, adversely impacting the lives of many. What they fail to recognize is that, at the core, every being is equal in spiritual identity (nastatmano). Steeped in arrogance and ignorance they fail to perceive the sanctity of life, and thus engage in unbeneficial, destructive work (Agra karma) bringing socio-cultural and economic ruins (ksayaya Jagat). True greatness lies in forgiveness, sacrifice, and compromise for a higher objective of life, peace, and harmony. If those are not the values that drive us; how could it be



otherwise? In the absence of spirituality that fosters resilience and forgiveness, people would naturally tend to slip into the bloody cycle of endless retribution. As a social thinker's question, How many lives per mile would ultimately work, to bring the parties to the table in negotiation? If tooth for a tooth, and eye for an eye is the policy followed, then the whole society will end up blind and toothless.

The quintessential message of Krishna Consciousness, calls forth the positive spirit of hope, meaning and faith in God in critical times. Historically, Kamsa ran a godless kingdom and wreaked havoc in the society by using deceit, fear, and force to maintain his grip on power. To assuage the suffering, Lord Krsna appeared as lightning amid the darkness of the world and neutralized Kamsa who was possessed by the spirit of ignorance beyond redemption. Currently, this lightning potency of the Lord is still accessible, within our reach, as the wisdom of the Gita. Irrespective of social, cultural, or religious diversities, the spiritual wisdom of the Gita empowers us to orient our lives towards a higher purpose, beyond selfish and short-sighted objectives. This higher purpose needs to be placed at the heart of world leaders and citizens, guided by universal qualities of forgiveness, fortitude, simplicity, non-violence, truthfulness, and freedom from anger, among others. Guided by wisdom and integrating such favourable characteristics into our lives as individuals, we feel spiritually empowered to be a positive force, bringing order amid the chaos of godless civilization and bridging the divide among human hearts with faith, peace, and unity.

(The author is the Spiritual Guru of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness)

# Celebrating International Day of Sign Languages



ARMAN ALI

On this day, let us recognise the power of communication and the indispensable role sign languages play in bridging the gap for the deaf-mute community



Every year, on September 23rd, the world unites to observe the International Day of Sign Languages, acknowledging the vital role sign languages play in our global society. This year, with the theme "A World Where Deaf People Everywhere Can Sign Anywhere!" we contemplate the significance of sign languages in reshaping the world, especially in a context where communication is an integral part of our daily lives.

Communication forms the lifeblood of our interconnected world, serving as the foundation for building relationships, sharing ideas, and engaging in the intricate processes that shape our societies. Yet, for the millions of individuals worldwide who are deaf or hard of hearing, accessing this fundamental human right can be challenging. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), currently, over 1.5 billion people, nearly 20% of the global population, live with hearing loss, and 430 million of them experience disabling hearing loss. Alarmingly, it is projected that by 2050, this number could exceed 700 million people with disabling hearing loss.

The deaf community in India constitutes a significant portion of the population, with a diverse and vibrant culture. India has the largest deaf population in the world. As per WHO estimates in India, there are approximately 63 million people, who are suffering from Significant Auditory Impairment; this places the estimated prevalence at 6.3% in the Indian population.

Despite the challenges they face, the deaf community in India has made considerable strides in recent years. The Indian Sign Language (ISL) is recognized as one of the officially recognized languages of India, which has helped promote communication and inclusion among the deaf population. Additionally, various NGOs, government initiatives, and educational institutions have been working tirelessly to improve access to education, healthcare, and employment

opportunities for the deaf.

In terms of education, there are specialised schools and institutions across the country that cater to the needs of deaf students, offering tailored curricula and sign language instruction. However, there is still a need for more inclusive education practices and increased awareness about the rights and potential of deaf individuals.

Efforts are also being made to empower the deaf community through vocational training and employment opportunities, ensuring they can lead fulfilling and independent lives. Indian sign language interpreters play a crucial role in facilitating communication between the deaf and hearing communities in various settings, including government offices, hospitals, and educational institutions.

Indeed, the deaf community in India is a significant and dynamic part of the country's diverse population. While there have been positive developments in terms of recognition and inclusion, ongoing efforts are needed to further improve the quality of life and opportunities for deaf individuals in India. Accurate and up-to-date statistics will be essential to track the progress and tailor interventions to better meet the needs of this vibrant community.

For this vast community, sign languages act as a conduit to participate in the broader narrative of global communication. Sign languages are not just tools of communication; they are intricate and vibrant linguistic systems in their own right, featuring distinctive grammar, vocabulary, and cultural nuances. They provide the means through which deaf individuals convey their thoughts,

share their stories, and connect with the world around them. On the International Day of Sign Languages, we celebrate the diversity of these languages and the sense of unity they foster among the global deaf community.

India, being the most populous nation globally, also has the largest deaf population and therefore it is our collective responsibility to address their needs and aspirations. We have made significant strides in assistive technology, and there must be a decisive push to enable larger access to these technologies for the deaf population. With its inbuilt rich dynamics, the addition of technology will make sign language more profound and relevant. It's also essential for the country to view disabilities as an investment to promote their integration into mainstream society.

In the same vein, it is important to emphasize that achieving inclusion cannot occur in isolation. An ecosystem must be created to facilitate two-way communication through sign language. The responsibility lies not only with the deaf community but with society as a whole. Sign language should be integrated into the standard school curriculum to ensure that everyone becomes proficient in this language and skill. Just as foreign languages are taught in schools, there's no reason why Indian Sign Language shouldn't be part of the curriculum.

The significance of sign language reaches beyond everyday conversations. In an increasingly interconnected and diverse world, sign languages are pivotal in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, and civic engagement. They empow-

er deaf individuals to access quality education, pursue meaningful careers, make informed healthcare decisions, and participate in the political and social life of their communities. Without sign languages, millions would find themselves excluded, unable to fully engage in society.

To ensure that government proceedings and policies are accessible to the deaf community, it should be mandatory to have a sign language interpreter at every government event. This way, a significant portion of the population would not miss out on essential government information and programs.

In a world that prides itself on progress and inclusivity, such oversights should be deemed unacceptable. The International Day of Sign Languages serves as a stark reminder of the imperative for governments, organizations, and individuals to prioritize accessibility and inclusivity in all facets of society. It is a day when we should reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that sign languages are accessible to all, everywhere.

As we commemorate the International Day of Sign Languages in 2023, let us recognize the power of communication and the indispensable role sign languages play in bridging the gap for the deaf community. Let us also advocate for increased awareness, investment, and action to guarantee that sign languages are accessible to everyone, everywhere. Only through such collective endeavours can we genuinely create "A World Where Deaf People Everywhere Can Sign Anywhere!" and transform the global order for the better, making it a more inclusive and equitable place for all.



TO ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT PROCEEDINGS AND POLICIES ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE DEAF COMMUNITY, IT SHOULD BE MANDATORY TO HAVE A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER AT EVERY GOVERNMENT EVENT

(The writer is Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People)

# Cooperatives can end Punjab's agriculture woes

Cooperative societies can make agricultrue viable by providing cheap loans, selling agricultural inputs at reasonable rates and buying farm produce at fair price

Punjab has been the leader in food grain production; despite the bad weather, this year too, the contribution of wheat to the national grain reserve from Punjab is more than 46 per cent. However, the economic condition of the farmers of Punjab is getting worse. They cannot repay the loans taken on crops and commit suicide. One-third of the farmers in Punjab are either marginal with up to 2.5 acres of land or small farmers with 2.5 to 5 acres of land. Their total land is only 9.7% of the cultivable land in the state. According to a survey, the number of marginal and small farmers with up to 5 acres of land is 3,61,938, while the number of semi-medium farmers with 5 to 10 acres of land is 3,67,938



SUKHDEV SINGH

The writer is Professor (Retd) Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar and a member, the Governing Council Amritsar

and medium farmers with 10 to 25 acres of land is 3, 05,220. There are only 57,707 farmer families with more than 25 acres of land. Despite their hard work and optimization of the yield, more than 80 per cent of the farmers in the state are in debt.

The majority of the farmers depend on six-month yield crops i.e. wheat and paddy, and earn what barely meets the repayment of the money borrowed during the previous six months for expenditure on growing the crop and supporting the families. Then the cash is needed for the next cycle. But they don't have savings to defray the expenses on agricultural implements, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, on the one hand, and on personal needs, such as food,

clothing and health facilities for the family, children's education and other social responsibilities, on the other. Thus, the farmers have to take a loan for the next term. Small landowners face difficulty in loan sanctions from banks or moneylenders. Due to a lot of paperwork and lateral guarantees, the sanction of bank loans is delayed and sometimes completely refused or else the partial amount is sanctioned. Then the farmer has to approach some private moneylender for a loan at a high interest rate to save the crop. Due to the high interest rate, the real income from the crop decreases, while due to delayed loans, the use of fertilizer and pesticides is delayed causing low yield and losses. Some moneylenders sell fertil-

izers and pesticides instead of giving the loan amount in cash, so the farmers have to buy these products at the moneylender's price. What is worse is that sometimes the farmers double their losses when they happen to buy fake products.

In such circumstances, cooperative societies can be a solution to this thorny issue. They can purchase agricultural inputs like quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides in bulk at competitive prices and sell to the farmers at a marginal profit, sanctioning the total cost as a crop loan at low interest. Societies can buy farm machinery and tools and rent to such farmers at a reasonable cost. This will benefit both farmers and cooperatives.

Cooperative societies can

encourage farm support activities and set up processing and procurement centres for agrop-products to help farmers generate their daily, weekly or monthly income. If possible, they may employ marginal farmers on a part-time basis in the processing units.

**Future of Cooperative Societies:** There are 19164 cooperative societies in Punjab out of which 3953 are Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Societies (PACS). Of these, 56% are in profit, 38.6 in loss, while the rest are in 'no profit, no loss'. While effecting administrative reforms in cooperative societies and efficient utilisation of funds, the Punjab Government can take advantage of the recent Union Cabinet decision to expand the scope of cooperative soci-

eties, by setting up new PACS in unrepresented villages and by computerizing PACS for their efficient, transparent and accountable performance.

**Future Action Plan:** In Punjab, the State Agricultural Development Bank (SADB), Primary Agricultural Development Bank (PADB) and Primary Agricultural Cooperative/Credit Societies (PACS) should jointly support dairy, poultry, fisheries, piggery and agro-processing units in addition to loans for crops. operative farming should be developed by pooling the holdings of 2.5 to 5 acres of land to form a unit of at least 25 acres to which 10 acres of Panchayat land on concessional contract may be added making it a unit of 35 acres. In addition to

other facilities, such cooperative farms may be provided electricity connections for tube wells on priority and the necessary machinery at concessional rates.

The other types of cooperative farms can be the cooperative farm for Dalits, the cooperative farm for women and the cooperative farm for landless farmers, each on 10 acres of Panchayat land attached to a subsidiary business of dairy, piggery, poultry, fish farming etc. Similarly, by combining 5-10 acres and 10-25 acres of land holdings, cooperative farms of 35-50 acres can be created without the addition of Panchayat land. These farms should also be given the same facilities as other cooperative farms.

Ramaswamy calls for economic independence from China

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Indian-American Republican presidential aspirant Vivek Ramaswamy has called for declaring "economic independence" from China, for which he proposed a slew of measures including an expanded relationship with countries like India.

In a major foreign policy speech in his home state Ohio on Thursday, Ramaswamy also underlined the need to move away from Chinese-controlled pharmaceutical supply chains and increase military spending. "What we are laying out here is a clear and pragmatic vision for how we will actually, finally at long last declare economic independence from China while actually advancing American prosperity at home," the 38-year-old biotech entrepreneur said.

US and China launch economic groups with aim of easing tensions

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The US Treasury Department and China's Ministry of Finance launched a pair of economic working groups on Friday in an effort to ease tensions and deepen ties between the nations. The two finance ministers have agreed to meet at a "regular cadence," the Treasury Department said in a news release.

The working groups will "establish a durable channel of communication between the world's two largest economies," Yellen said in a series of planned tweets shared with The Associated Press ahead of Friday's announcement. Yellen said the groups will "serve as important forums to communicate America's interests and concerns, promote a healthy economic competition between our two countries with a level playing field for American workers and businesses."

At least 80 corruption cases to be revived in Islamabad's Accountability Court

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

At least 80 high-profile corruption cases, including those against former prime ministers Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif and ex-president Asif Ali Zardari, would be revived following a recent landmark ruling by the Supreme Court, according to a media report on Friday.

These are among the hundreds of cases closed as a result of amendments made to the anti-corruption laws by the previous government led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led by Nawaz Sharif. The hearing for these cases would begin soon, officials sources said. An apex court bench, headed by former Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, had on September 15 declared the amendments to the anti-graft laws void and directed the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to revive within seven days the closed cases against public office holders.

The apex court had announced its reserved decision on jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's plea filed last year, challenging the amendments made to the accountability laws by the then government led by Shehbaz Sharif. NAB prosecution has submitted the record of 80 cases to the accountability court in Islamabad, the Dawn newspaper reported. Several others have been returned to the accountability courts of Rawalpindi and Quetta.

According to official sources, about 2,000 cases, which were earlier closed, are being reopened against officials and businessmen after the intervention by the apex court. The 80 cases transmitted to the local accountability court included the Park Lane case against Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Zardari, Universal Services Funds, in which former prime minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani and others are suspects; the Rental Power Projects case against former premier Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, and the case of Benazir Income Support Programme's former chairperson Farzana Raja. The cases against former prime minister Shaukat Aziz and fake accounts cases against Zardari and Omni Group's directors also stand revived. The Supreme Court had in its order

Pakistan political parties demand exact date for Jan 2024 elections

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's political parties have demanded an exact polling date from the election commission, a day after it announced that the general election will be held in the "final week of January 2024". The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday issued a vague timeline for elections without disclosing a specific date for the polls, sparking mixed reactions from politicians.

HUM News TV, in a story, highlighted the reaction of various parties to the ECP announcement. The main opposition party, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), rued that the ECP failed to announce a definitive date and demanded clarity. "The election commission has not provided a definitive date yet," PPP leader Shazia Marri said. Senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ahsan Iqbal said that his party welcomed the decision by the ECP as it has ended the uncertainty about the delimitation. "Everyone knew from the first day that the election commission was bound to conduct delimitation after the census," he said. Iqbal said that uncertainty should end after the announcement of polls and all political parties should start preparations now. "It is important that the elections are held peacefully and a stable government

is formed that takes the country out of the economic crisis," the former planning minister was quoted as saying by Geo News. He added that any party that comes into power should take all the parties on the same page and work on the economic agenda with consensus. Commenting on the "uncertainty surrounding the election date," PPP leader Qamar Zaman Kaira stressed that a level playing field and a clear and transparent election process were essential. The ECP had on Thursday said in an official statement that it had assessed the progress of constituency delimitation and decided to release the initial list for constituency delimitation on September 27. Following a period of consideration of objections and suggestions regarding this process, the final list will be unveiled on November 30. It had said that by the end of delimitation, it would announce a 54-day election programme after November 30 and "polls will be held in the last week of January 2024."

'War in Sudan could spread beyond borders'

AP ■ NIGERIA (ABUJA)

The war in Sudan could spread beyond the northeast African country's borders if it is not stopped, Sudan's army chief told the United Nations General Assembly, while urging world leaders to designate the rival paramilitary force as a terrorist group. "The nature of this war is now a threat to regional and international peace and security... This is like the spark of war, a war that will spill over to other countries in the region," Sudan's Army Chief Gen. Abdel Fattah Burhan told world leaders late Thursday. Sudan plunged into conflict in April when long-simmering tensions escalated between the military, led by Gen. Burhan, and the rival Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. Both had joined forces in 2021 to seize power in a coup that cast aside Sudan's pro-democracy forces. The conflict has killed at least 5,000 people and wounded 12,000 others, according to Volker Perthes, the U.N. envoy in the country, who announced

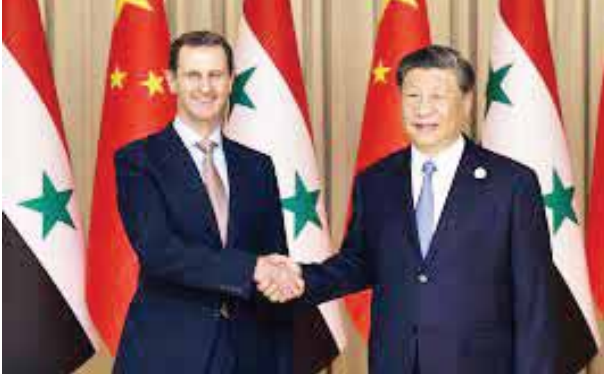
Af migrants get temporary legal status from Biden administration

Washington (AP) The Biden administration said it was giving temporary legal status to Afghan migrants who have already been living in the country for a little over a year. The Department of Homeland Security said in the announcement Thursday that the decision to give Temporary Protected Status to Afghans who arrived after March 15, 2022, and before September 20, 2023, would affect roughly 14,600 Afghans. This status doesn't give affected Afghans a long-term right to stay in the country or a path to citizenship. It's good until 2025, when it would have to be renewed again. But it does protect them from deportation and give them the ability to work in the country. A relatively small number of people are affected. On Thursday, the administration announced it was giving Temporary Protected Status to nearly 5,000 Venezuelans in the country. But many Afghans who would benefit from the new protections took enormous risks in getting to the US, often after exhausting all other options to flee the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Supporters have argued that they are deserving of protection.

Syria, China announce strategic partnership

AP ■ BEIJING

China and Syria announced the formation of a strategic partnership on Friday as Chinese leader Xi Jinping kicked off a series of diplomatic meetings ahead of the upcoming Asian Games. Xi met Syrian President Bashar Assad in the southern Chinese city of Hangzhou, which is hosting the 15-day sports competition. "In the face of the unstable and uncertain international situation, China is willing to work with Syria to firmly support each other ... and jointly safeguard international fairness and justice," Xi said in a video clip posted online by state broadcaster CCTV. Assad's visit parallels in some ways that of Russian President Vladimir Putin last year for the opening ceremony of the Beijing Winter Olympics. Both leaders are virtual pariahs in the West but welcomed by China as it tries to expand its global influence and promote an alternative to the US-led international order. The Syrian leader will attend the Asian Games opening ceremony on Saturday night along with the king of Cambodia, the crown prince of Kuwait and the prime ministers of Nepal, East Timor and South Korea, China's Foreign Ministry has said. Xi also met Kuwaiti Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah on Friday and said he would work with him to take bilateral relations to a new level, CCTV reported. Both meetings took place at the West Lake state guest house. West Lake is a scenic tourist destination that has inspired Chinese painters over the centuries. Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni arrived on Friday at the airport in Hangzhou. CCTV video posted online showed him walking down the stairs from his plane to the tarmac for a red carpet welcome that included the Asian Games mascots. Assad, who is making a rare trip abroad, is looking for ways to emerge from the international isolation brought on by a brutal war at home that shows no sign of ending after 12 years. He was expected to discuss economic assistance from China, which could play a major role in Syria's future reconstruction. Syrian state TV quoted Assad as thanking Xi and his government for standing on the side of the Syrian people "during the crisis and suffering." China has backed Assad, using its veto on the UN Security Council eight times to block resolutions against his government. Assad expressed hope that the meeting would be the basis for "wide-ranging and long-term strategic cooperation in all fields" between China and Syria. The Asian Games were scheduled for last year but postponed because of China's then-strict pandemic restrictions. China eased its restrictions in December of last year.



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, shakes hands with Syrian President Bashar Assad before their bilateral meeting in Hangzhou, China on Friday.

Indian-origin author's debut novel shortlisted for Booker Prize 2023

PTI ■ LONDON

London-based Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel 'Western Lane' has been shortlisted for the 2023 Booker Prize. Kenya-born Maroo's novel set within the context of the British Gujarati milieu has been praised by the Booker judges for its use of the sport of squash as a metaphor for complex human emotions. It revolves around the story of an 11-year-old girl named Gopi and her bonds with her family. Chetna Maroo's deeply evocative debut of a family grappling with grief conveyed through crystalline language which reverberates like the sound of a ball hit clean and hard with a close echo. It is stunning and it stays with you," said Canadian novelist Esi Edugyan, the chair of the Booker Prize 2023 judging panel, as she announced the shortlist here on Thursday. With reference to her shortlisted work, Maroo said it would be fair to call it a "sports novel." "It's also been called a coming-of-age novel, a domestic novel, a novel about grief, a novel about the immigrant experience. Recently a friend asked me if the book has something of the detective story about it, with Gopi trying to find her way, piecing together the clues of small gestures, actions and fragments of overheard conversations; she has little to go on and since she's dealing with the mysteries of loss, there are no answers for her," she said. Sarah Bernstein's 'Study for Obedience,' 'If I Survive You' by Jonathan Escoffery, Paul Harding's 'The Other Eden,' Paul Lynch's 'Prophet Song' and Paul Murray's 'The Bee Sting' complete the shortlist of six that will compete for the 50,000-pound prize to be unveiled on November 26 at an award ceremony in London. "Together these works showcase the breadth of what world literature can do, while gesturing at the unease of our moment. From Bernstein and Harding's outsiders attempting to establish lives in societies that reject them, to the often-funny struggles of Escoffery and Murray's adolescents as they carve out identities for themselves beyond their parents' mistakes, to Maroo and Lynch's elegant evocations of family grief - each speaks distinctly about our shared journey - while refusing to be defined as any one thing," noted Edugyan. Although full of hope, humour and humanity, the books address many of 2023's most pressing concerns: climate change, immigration, financial hardship, the persecution of minorities, political extremism and the erosion of personal freedoms.

King Charles III winds up his France state visit

AP ■ FRANCE

After pageantry and politics in Paris, King Charles III concluded his three-day state visit to France with a trip down south to Bordeaux on Friday to focus on a more personal passion: the environment. As the skies cleared after a morning downpour, Charles and Queen Camilla helped plant a loquat leaf oak tree, known for adaptability to a changeable climate, in the garden of Bordeaux City Hall. The UK monarch will meet emergency workers affected by wildfires in the Bordeaux region last year and visit an experimental forest designed to monitor the impact of climate on urban woodlands. Locals waved French and British flags, and some shouted "God Save The King!" as the royal couple greeted well-wishers outside Bordeaux's town hall. Charles and Camilla are also scheduled to visit a vineyard known for its sustainable approach to wine making, in a region where wine exports are a pillar of the economy. Severe drought last year forced Bordeaux's earliest-ever harvest, and the region has long been working to adapt to climate change. Friday's events mark the third and final day of a state visit aimed at shoring up the alliance between Britain and France after years of disputes related to Brexit, migration and other issues. Charles' warm words toward France have been met with a standing ovation in the Senate and even cheers of "Long Live The King!", an uncommon phrase in a country that beheaded its last monarchs. In Bordeaux, the royal couple joined a reception on a royal navy frigate to celebrate military ties between the countries. The surrounding Aquitaine region — an English possession in the Middle Ages that English and French royalty fought over for centuries — is home to a large British community today, and the king and queen met with Britons running businesses in the region. After flying in to Bordeaux from Paris, the king and queen will briefly switch to more environmentally friendly public transport, riding a pioneering electric tram to the main city square. In an address to the French Senate on Thursday, Charles praised France and the United Kingdom's "indispensable relationship" and its capacity to meet the world's challenges, including Russia's war in Ukraine and climate change. He called for a new 'entente for sustainability'.



China presents itself as member of Global South at UNGA

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

China told assembled world leaders that it considers itself part of the Global South, saying it identifies with the goals and challenges of less-developed nations and offering them an alternative to what it has long called "Western hegemony". The message came from a second-tier official after the country's powerful president, Xi Jinping, skipped the annual UN meeting again. Xi sent Vice President Han Zheng to deliver a policy statement at the General Assembly's leaders' meeting that covered the government's usual positions with global familiar language but appeared to focus on building coalitions around its approach to development and international relations. "As the largest developing country, China is a natural member of the Global South. It breathes the same breath with other developing countries and shares the same future with them," Han said Thursday. He also said China supports those nations' development path "in keeping with their national conditions". The loosely defined term "Global South", which has come up frequently at the United Nations this year, identifies nations around the world that are less developed and less rich than what have typically been called "first-world nations". They're not necessarily in the Southern Hemisphere; many, in fact, are not. Leaders of a number of larger developing nations, including Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and India's Narendra Modi, have of late pitched themselves as leaders around whom the Global South could coalesce. Just Tuesday, Lula told leaders at the UN meeting that "Brazil is back" in a speech widely received as Global South-focused manoeuvring. And Modi in January hosted a "Voice of the Global South" virtual summit. China, too, has loosely cast itself in a similar role for more than a decade — and more so since Xi launched the "Belt and Road Initiative" to drive Chinese development, infrastructure and influence in other nations, particularly developing ones. The sprawling project has been widely touted but has encountered bumps along the way. "China," Han promised, "will remain a member of the big family of developing countries."



# Zelensky visiting Canada for first time since war started

AP ■ TORONTO

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will address the Canadian Parliament on Friday as he continues his efforts to shore up support from Western allies for Ukraine's war against the Russian invasion. Zelensky was scheduled to arrive at Ottawa's airport late Thursday after meeting with US President Joe Biden and lawmakers in Washington, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office said. Trudeau planned to greet Zelensky and also to speak in Parliament in Ottawa on Friday. It is Zelensky's first visit to Canada since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. He previously addressed the Canadian Parliament virtually after the war started. Zelensky and Trudeau are scheduled to go from Ottawa to Toronto to meet with the local Ukrainian community. Canada is home to about 1.4 million people of Ukrainian descent, close to 4

per cent of the population. The Ukrainian president is making the trip after stops at the United Nations and the White House. Canada's UN Ambassador Bob Rae said it is important for Zelensky to see the extent to which Canada supports Ukraine in the war. "We have done a lot to help him and we need to do more," Rae said. "We're going to continue to do everything we can to support the Ukrainian people." Canada has provided more than 8.9 billion Canadian dollars (USD 6.6 billion) in support to Ukraine in what Trudeau's government calls the highest per-capita direct financial support to Ukraine in the Group of 7 industrial nations. More than 1,75,000 Ukrainians have come to Canada since the war started and an additional 7,00,000 have received approval to come as part of an initiative that supports temporary relocation of those fleeing the war. The initiative allows for an open work

permit for three years with pathways to permanent residency and citizenship. Zelensky is facing questions in Washington about the flow of American dollars that for 19 months has helped keep his troops in the fight against Russian forces. Ukrainian troops are struggling to take back territory that Russia gained over the past year. Their progress in the next month or so before the rains come and the ground turns to mud could be critical in rousing additional global support over the winter. Zelensky made his first official visit to Canada in 2019. Zelensky to speak before Canadian Parl Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will speak to the Canadian Parliament on Friday as part of his campaign to bolster support from Western allies for Ukraine's war against the Russian invasion. Zelensky flew into Canada's capital late Thursday



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, left, greets Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as his wife Olena Zelenska looks on as they arrive at Ottawa airport, Canada, on Thursday. AP/PTI

after meetings with US President Joe Biden and lawmakers in Washington. He spoke at the United Nations' annual meeting Wednesday. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who also planned to speak to Parliament on Friday, gave Zelensky a warm welcome on the tarmac at Ottawa's airport. It is Zelensky's first visit to Canada since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. He previously addressed the Canadian Parliament virtually after the war started. After their speeches, Zelensky and Trudeau are scheduled to go to Toronto to meet with the local Ukrainian community. Canada is home to about 1.4 million people of Ukrainian descent, close to 4 per cent of the population. Canada's UN ambassador, Bob Rae, said it is important for Zelensky to see the extent to which Canada supports Ukraine in the war. "We have done a lot to help him and we need to do more," Rae said. "We're going to continue to do everything we can to support

the Ukrainian people." Canada has provided more than 8.9 billion Canadian dollars (USD 6.6 billion) in support to Ukraine in what Trudeau's government calls the highest per-capita direct financial support to Ukraine in the Group of 7 industrial nations. More than 1,75,000 Ukrainians have come to Canada since the war started and an additional 700,000 have received approval to come as part of an initiative that supports temporary relocation of those fleeing the war. The initiative allows for an open work permit for three years with pathways to permanent residency and citizenship. Trudeau's office said Canada has provided 1.8 billion Canadian dollars (USD 1.3 billion) in military aid, including tanks, artillery, armored vehicles and ammunition. Zelensky is facing questions in Washington about the flow of American dollars that for 19 months has helped keep his troops in the fight against Russian forces.

# Ukrainian missile strike hits Russia's Black Sea Fleet HQ

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine carried out a fiery missile strike on Friday on the main headquarters of Russia's Black Sea Fleet and one serviceman was missing, the Russian Defence Ministry said. Photos and video showed large plumes of smoke over the building in Sevastopol in annexed Crimea. The ministry initially said one servicemember was killed but then issued a subsequent statement saying he was missing. The Russian-installed governor of Sevastopol, Mikhail Razvozhayev, said no one was injured outside the burning headquarters, and he didn't provide information on other casualties. Firefighters battled the blaze, and more emergency forces were being brought in, an indication the fire could be massive. Sevastopol residents said they heard explosions in the skies and saw smoke, Russian news outlets reported. Images circulated in Ukrainian Telegram channels showed clouds of smoke over the seafloor. The Associated Press could not immediately verify the videos. A stream of ambulances arrived at the

fleet's headquarters, and shrapnel was scattered hundreds of metres (yards) around, the Tass news agency reported. The Defence Ministry said five missiles were shot down by Russian air defense systems responding to the attack on Sevastopol. It was not immediately clear if the headquarters was hit in a direct strike or by debris from an intercepted missile. Oleg Kryuchkov, an official with the Crimean administration, said one cruise missile was shot down near Bakhchysarai, about 30 kilometres (18.5 miles) inland, sparked a grass fire. Razvozhayev said civilian infrastructure wasn't damaged but did not mention the impact on the fleet headquarters. He initially warned Sevastopol residents that another attack was possible and urged them not to leave buildings or go to the city centre. He later said there was no longer any threat of an air strike but reiterated calls not to go to the central part of the city, saying roads were closed and unspecified "special efforts" were underway. Police asked residents to leave the central part of the city, Tass said. Ukrainian officials, who have claimed responsibility

for a series of other recent attacks on Crimea, didn't immediately announce Kyiv launched the strike. The attack comes a day after Russian missiles and artillery pounded cities across Ukraine, killing at least five people as President Joe Biden and congressional leaders in Washington with an additional USD 24 billion aid package being considered. The port city of Sevastopol serves as the main base for Russia's Black Sea Fleet. A Ukrainian drone hit the fleet's headquarters in July 2022, injuring six people and causing minor damage to the building. Last week, the Russian-installed authorities in the city accused Ukraine of attacking a strategic shipyard in the city, damaging two ships undergoing repairs and causing a fire at the facility. The Crimean Peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014 in an act that most of the world considered illegal, has been a frequent target since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than 18 months ago. The attack on the shipyard was the biggest in weeks.

# Pope visits multicultural Marseille

AP ■ MARSEILLE

Pope Francis arrived on Friday in the French port city of Marseille, for centuries a multiethnic and multifith melting pot, to amplify his call for the Mediterranean to be a place of welcome for migrants, not a cemetery for people who die trying to cross the sea to Europe. French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne awaited the pope on the airport tarmac for the arrival ceremony. His two-day visit comes as Europe is again seeing an increasing number of people who set off in flimsy boats from Tunisia for Italy. Speaking to reporters on the plane en route to Marseille, Francis was asked about the recent influx of migrants to the Italian island of Lampedusa, where the thousands of people who arrived last week briefly outnumbered the island's resident population. "Cruelty, a lack of humanity, a terrible lack of humanity," Francis said. The pope's position on migration is an increasingly lonely one in Europe, where some countries



are emphasising border fences, repatriations and the possibility of a naval blockade to keep a new influx of would-be refugees out. Francis is presiding over the closing session of a gathering of Mediterranean Catholic bishops, but his two-day visit to Marseille is aimed at sending a message well beyond the Catholic faithful to Europe, North Africa and beyond. After a prayer at the southern French city's basilica, Francis is scheduled to hold an interfaith prayer at a monument dedicated to those who have died at sea. The UN's International Organisation for

Migration estimates that more than 28,000 Europe-bound migrants have died since 2014 while attempting to cross the Mediterranean. Francis, who has long lamented that the Mediterranean Sea has become "the world's biggest cemetery," confirmed his visit months ago, but it comes as Italy is again seeing an increasing number of migrant arrivals. Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni resurrected calls for a naval blockade and announced new centers to hold those who don't qualify for asylum until they can be sent home. France, for its part, beefed up patrols at its southern border with Italy, a few hours' drive from Marseille, and increased drone surveillance of the Alps to keep newcomers from crossing over. With a European Parliament election set for next year and France's far right challenging the centrist government's policies, French government officials stood firm. "France will not take in migrants from Lampedusa," Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said this week on

French TV network TF1. "It's not by taking in more people that we're going to stem a flow that obviously affects our ability to integrate them into French society, he said. Marseille's archbishop, Cardinal Jean-Marc Aveline, who was born in Algeria and moved to France as a child, said such "aggressive" measures weren't the answer. But he said "naive" and peacenik speeches about everyone living together happily ever after weren't helpful either. "The church must measure these evils well and find a path that is neither naively irenic nor aggressive out of special interests, but prophetic" by being close to migrants and living among them, Aveline told reporters in Rome before the visit. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the maritime rescue organization SOS Mediterranée, which operates a ship that assists migrants, issued Friday an "urgent call for all actors to dignify the lives of children, women and men survivors of rescues at sea."

# Quad group expresses concern over 'raging' war in Ukraine

PTI ■ NEW YORK

The Quad grouping comprising India, Australia, Japan and the US on Friday expressed deep concern over the "raging" war in Ukraine and asserted that the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons would be unacceptable, underscoring that the rules-based international order must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japanese Foreign Minister Kamikawa Yoko met here on the margins of the high-level 78th session of the UN General Assembly for the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting. The Quad group reaffirmed its unwavering support for the United Nations, the enduring importance of upholding mutually determined rules, norms, and standards, and to deepen Quad cooperation in the international system, a joint readout of the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting said. Quad expressed "deep concern over the war raging in Ukraine and mourned its terrible and tragic humanitarian consequences," the Joint Readout of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting said without naming Russia. The four-nation bloc underscored the need for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with international law, consistent with the principles of the UN Charter. "We are deeply concerned about the global food security situation and support the efforts of the UN in the resumption of the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI). In the context of this war, we concur that the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons would be unacceptable," the joint readout said.

We underscore that the rules-based international order must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states," the joint readout said, in a veiled reference to China and Russia. The Quad also affirmed its support for a UN that solves the consequential challenges of "our time and safeguards our shared and interconnected resources." The ministers said they are committed to advancing a comprehensive UN reform agenda, including through expansion in permanent and non-permanent seats of the UN Security Council. "We call for a UN Security Council that is more representative, transparent, effective, and credible. We underscore the need to address attempts to subvert the international system, including in the UN, and promote accountability," they said. The ministers also discussed the recent Quad Counterterrorism Working Group's Consequence Management Exercise, which explored the capabilities and supports Quad countries could offer regional partners in response to a terrorist attack and look forward to the upcoming Quad Counterterrorism Working Group meeting and tabletop exercise in Honolulu, Hawaii in December which will focus on countering the use of emerging technologies for terrorist purposes. "We continue to cooperate on countering the use of the internet and other technologies for terrorist and violent extremist purposes," they said. The four nations said they are committed to countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including preventing the international and cross-border movement of terrorists and countering terror finance networks and safe havens, in a veiled reference to Pakistan.

# Israeli forces kill Palestinian militant

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Jerusalem (AP): Israeli forces killed a Palestinian militant in the restive northern West Bank on Friday, Palestinian authorities said, the latest death in a spiral of violence that has gripped the occupied territory over the last year and a half, surging to levels unseen in two decades. The militant Islamic Jihad group claimed the man as its fighter and identified him as 18-year-old Abdullah Abu Hasan. The Palestinian Health Ministry said Hasan was shot in the abdomen by Israeli forces early Friday morning in a Palestinian village north of the West Bank city of Jenin. The Israeli army said the incident occurred during a nighttime raid into the West Bank, after Palestinians fired and threw explosives at soldiers in the town of Kafr Dan.



"Khaibar-buster" missiles are carried on a truck during an annual military parade marking anniversary of the beginning of war against Iran by former Iraqi Dictator Saddam Hussein, in front of the shrine of the late revolutionary founder Ayatollah Khomeini, just outside Tehran, Iran, Friday. AP/PTI

# 'No place for hate, aggression and intimidation in Canada'

PTI ■ TORONTO

Canada on Friday said that acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear have no place in the country amid the circulation of an online video in which Hindu Canadians are told to leave the country. Public Safety Canada, the department responsible for matters of public safety, emergency management, national security, and emergency preparedness, said the circulation of the video is offensive and hateful and is an affront to all Canadians and "the values we hold dearly". "There is no place in Canada for hate," it said in a post on X. "Acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear have no place in this

country and only serve to divide us. We urge all Canadians to respect one another and follow the rule of law. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities," it added. The video was circulated amid tensions flared between India and Canada following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's explosive allegations of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. India angrily rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case.

# Azerbaijan sends food, other aid to Nagorno-Karabakh

AP ■ YEREVAN (ARMENIA)

Azerbaijan said it was delivering food and other humanitarian aid to Nagorno-Karabakh on Friday, two days after the region's ethnic Armenian separatist government called a cease-fire in a short but intense fight with Azerbaijan forces. But the aid will be only a slight relief to the region that has endured severe food and medicine shortages since last December, an ordeal now aggravated by thousands who fled the recent fighting without being able to take food with them. Nagorno-Karabakh's 120,000 people began suffering shortages late last year when a blockade began of the road connecting the region to Armenia. Improving the supply of food and other basic needs will be a key issue in building stability in the region, which is within Azerbaijan but had been

under the control of ethnic Armenian forces since 1994. Azerbaijan on Tuesday launched intense fire on Armenian positions in what it called an "anti-terrorist operation," demanding that the Armenians lay down their arms and the separatist government disband. A day later, Nagorno-Karabakh authorities agreed to the military demands, but talks on how the region will be reintegrated into Azerbaijan have not reached final agreement. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Friday said at a government meeting that there was no immediate need for the region's ethnic Armenians to leave their homes, but said Armenia is prepared to receive as many as 40,000 evacuees if needed. Anxiety is high among the region's people. "The majority of the population wants to be evacuated

to Armenia. We cannot live with Azerbaijan," 21-year-old Hayk Harutunyan said in Stepanakert, the regional capital. "During the last 30 years thousands of Armenians were killed, our brothers and sisters," he told The Associated Press by telephone, referring to decades of conflict over the region. "Azerbaijan's goal is the annihilation of the Armenian nation; how can we live with those who want to kill us?" Harutunyan said "the whole city is full of refugees brought from those regions ... that came under the control of Azerbaijan after the September 19 attack. These people left their homes empty-handed, they had no food, no clothes, no place to stay." Azerbaijan's emergencies ministry said 20-ton trucks with food and hygiene products as well as two trucks with bread were dispatched to

Nagorno-Karabakh on Friday, travelling on the road from Aghdam, which lies east of the region. Supplies for Nagorno-Karabakh previously had come from Armenia, to the west. Jeyhun Bayramov, Azerbaijan's foreign minister, said at the United Nations on Thursday that his country is determined to guarantee Nagorno-Karabakh residents "all rights and freedoms" in line with the country's constitution and international human rights obligations, including safeguards for ethnic minorities. Talks with Nagorno-Karabakh in the Azerbaijani city of Yevlakh will continue, he said. A Stepanakert woman who gave her name only as Mary appeared to be holding on Friday, but that she feared living under the new conditions. "Azerbaijan starved us for

nine months, deprived us of basic living conditions, then attacked the civilian population, how can we stay here after all these atrocities? It's impossible," she said. Nagorno-Karabakh came under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by the Armenian military in separatist fighting that ended in 1994. Armenian forces also took control of substantial territory around the Azerbaijani region. Azerbaijan regained control of the surrounding territory in a six-week war with Armenia in 2020. Russia-brokered armistice ended the war, and a contingent of 2,000 Russian peacekeepers was sent to the region to monitor it. The agreement left Stepanakert connected to Armenia only by the Lachin Corridor, along which Russian peacekeepers were supposed to ensure free movement. But a blockade by Azerbaijan

deprived Nagorno-Karabakh of basic supplies for the last 10 months, until Monday, when the International Committee of the Red Cross was able to make a delivery via that road from Aghdam. Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at the UN that Azerbaijan's offensive this week targeted critical infrastructure such as electricity stations, telephone cables and internet equipment, killed more than 200 people and wounded 400 others, including women and children. More than 10,000 people fled their homes to escape the offensive, he said. Electricity and phone service were knocked out, leaving people unable to contact each other, and "Azerbaijani troops control main roads in Nagorno-Karabakh, which makes it impossible to visit and get information on the ground," he said.

# Govt to make IT hardware import authorisation process fully online

**Seeks 3 years' import data from firms**

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The government on Friday informed IT hardware players that the process of import authorisation for laptops, tablet, servers etc, will be completely online and has sought data of the past three years for the inbound shipments of mobile, IT and telecom products, sources aware of the development said.

General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), will go live by the end of this month.  
"MeitY has informed companies that 'import management system' will go live by September end. It will be managed by DGFT. It has asked importers to feed their organisation data and import data subsequently for the past 3 years," a source, who did not wish to be identified, told PTI.

The government has proposed to implement new rules for import of IT hardware from November 1. The new rule will allow imports of IT hardware by authorised firms.

The import management system will handle imports related to mobile phones, IT and telecom products.



"The import authorisation will be processed completely online without any manual interventions for speedy approval," an industry source said.

The authorisation will be initially granted for about a year, after which there will be gradual reduction of 5 per cent on import quota of finished products.

"There may be conditional relief on import quota on a case to case basis," the industry source said.

Minister of State for electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar will hold a meeting with the industry on

October 1 to assess the situation.

"The minister has told industry that he will also speak with commerce minister Piyush Goyal and request him to set up a similar consultation with the industry on this subject," the industry source said.

Earlier in the day, Chandrasekhar told reporters that the government aims to meet up to 70 per cent of the country's IT hardware requirement through local production in the next three years and reduce dependency on imports from non-trusted sources.

"At present, almost 80 per cent of our supplies to the digital ecosystem come from imports. We want to make sure whatever the sources are, they are trusted. "As part of emphasising trust, it is obvious that the

Indian component of that supply chain will have to grow. Today 8-10 per cent of our supply requirement comes from India, we want to make that 65-70 per cent in the next three years," the minister said.

As many as 40 companies, including Dell, HP, and Lenovo, have applied for the IT hardware production linked incentive (PLI) scheme with a commitment to make personal computers, laptops, tablets, servers and other equipment worth Rs 4.65 lakh crore during the scheme period.

If all companies get selected under the scheme then the government will need to increase the incentive amount to Rs 22,890 crore against the budgetary allocation of Rs 17,000 crore.



## BSE to discontinue stop loss market orders to check freak trades

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Leading stock exchange LBSE has decided to discontinue Stop Loss Market (SL-M) orders from October 9 to prevent erroneous order placement arising out of manual or algo trades.

This came after a recent freak trade incident caused a lot of angst among the trading community earlier this month due to an SL-M order.

SL-M is a type of order that automatically sells or buys a security at the market price when the trigger price is reached.

"As a measure to prevent erroneous order placement, stop loss orders with market condition in equity segment, equity derivatives segment, currency derivatives segment, and commodity derivatives segment shall be discontinued by the exchange with effect from October 9," BSE said in a notice.

Welcoming the decision, Narendra Solanki, Head, Fundamental Research - Investment Services, Anand Rathi Shares and Stock Brokers, said it is a good step to prevent erroneous orders and should prove beneficial to small and retail traders as such freak trades harm and create unnecessary volatility in the markets.

"We believe that this is a positive and progressive step that will benefit all market participants by improving the trading process and market quality as SL-M can also lead to extreme price executions during low volumes or when the market price fluctuates sharply," Tejas Khoday, Co-founder and CEO of FYERS, said.

This measure will protect traders from such incidents and align its operations with the NSE, which discontinued SL-M orders in September 2021. Khoday said traders can use Stop Loss Limit (SL-L) orders instead of SL-M orders.

An SL-L order is another type of stop-loss order that only sells or buys a security at the specified price in a range. This helps to avoid executing orders at strike prices with low volumes or sharp movements in the market.



## Glenmark Pharma shares fall over 3% after Nirma deal

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Shares of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals on Friday ended over 3 per cent lower after the company said its board has approved divestment of 75 per cent stake in its subsidiary Glenmark Life Sciences to Nirma Ltd for Rs 5,651.5 crore.

The stock opened on a weak note and declined 6.40 per cent to Rs 775 on the BSE during the day. It later ended at Rs 802.25, down 3.12 per cent.

"At the NSE, it fell 6.36 per cent to Rs 775 apiece during the day. Shares of the company ended at Rs 803.05, lower by 2.97 per cent.

"Shares of Glenmark Life Sciences, however, recovered during the afternoon trade and climbed 2.95 per cent to settle at Rs 645.60 on the BSE.

"Glenmark Pharmaceuticals on Thursday said its board has approved divestment of 75 per cent stake in its subsidiary Glenmark Life Sciences to Nirma Ltd for Rs 5,651.5

crore, and proceeds would be used to repay debt and deleverage the balance sheet.

"As per the definitive agreement, the Mumbai-based drug maker will offload 75 per cent stake in Glenmark Life Sciences (GLS) to Nirma Ltd at a price of Rs 615 per share.

"After the divestment, Glenmark, which currently owns 82.84 per cent in GLS, will own just 7.84 per cent stake after the completion of the transaction, the drug firm said in a statement.

"Nirma will make an open offer for a 17.15 per cent stake in GLS at an offer price of Rs 631 per share.

"Later addressing a virtual press conference, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Chairman and Managing Director Glenn Saldanha said a major reason for the stake sale in GLS was the divergent business models of the company and its subsidiary.

"He noted that the generic drugs environment has changed over the years and is highly competitive, especially in the US market.

## Forex kitty drops USD 867 million to USD 593 billion

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
India's foreign exchange Reserves declined USD 867 million to USD 593.037 billion in the week ended September 15, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves dropped USD 4.99 billion to USD 593.90 billion.

In October 2021, the country's reserves had touched 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.

For the week ended September 15, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased USD 511 million to USD 525.915 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the Reserve Bank of India (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 down USD 384 million to USD 44 billion, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up USD 32 million to USD 18,092 billion, the apex bank said. The country's reserve position with the IMF was down USD 4 million to USD 5.03 billion in the reporting week.

## Lupin inks pact to acquire 5 drug brands from Menarini for ₹101 crore

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Drug firm Lupin on Friday said it has inked a pact to acquire five drug brands from Italian firm Menarini for Rs 101 crore.

"The company has signed an agreement to acquire five legacy brands catering to gastroenterology, urology and anti-infective segments, the Mumbai-based company said in a statement.

"The brands are Piclin (Picosulphate Sodium),



Menocetyl (Otilonium Bromide), Sucramal O (Sucralfate + Oxetacaine), Pyridium (Phenazopyridine) and Distacolor (Cefaclor), it added.

"Lupin has been exclusively marketing these brands in the Indian market since July 2021 under a distribution and promotion agreement with A Menarini India Pvt Ltd.

"Menarini Group is a leading international pharmaceutical and diagnostics company, with a turnover of over USD 4.4 billion and over 17,000 employees.

"Menarini India is a 100 per cent subsidiary of Menarini Group.

"Lupin Managing Director Nitesh Gupta said the acquisition aligns well with the company's strategic goal to broaden presence in the Indian market. "By offering a comprehensive range of products, our aim is to deliver even greater value to our stakeholders and the communities we serve," he added.

## Sebi empanels 34 entities for forensic probe of mutual funds, AMCs, trustees

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Sebi has empanelled 34 entities, including Ernst & Young LLP, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP and Grant Thornton Bharat LLP to conduct forensic investigation of mutual funds, their asset management companies (AMCs) and trustees.

"KPMG Assurance and Consulting Services LLP, Chokshi & Chokshi LLP, Nangia & Co LLP and Pipara & Co LLP are among the other empanelled entities, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a latest update.

"The period of empanelment is from September 20, 2023 to September 19, 2026, it added.

"These 34 entities have been empanelled after evaluation of all the applications in response to Expression of Interest (EoI) invited by the capital markets regulator in February.

"The entities are required to undertake acquisition, extraction and analysis of digital evidence from mobile, computers, tablets, hard drives and USB drives. Also, they need to prepare and submit a report mentioning the findings and conclusions of the analysis.

"Risk-averse sentiment prevailed due to the ongoing ascent of US bond yields and concern over higher rates for a prolonged period," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

"Wipro was the biggest loser among Sensex firms, sliding 2.32 per cent, followed by HDFC Bank, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, ITC, ICICI Bank and

Tata Motors.

"IndusInd Bank, Maruti, State Bank of India, Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints and Bajaj Finserv were among the gainers.

"In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.14 per cent and smallcap index gained marginally by 0.04 per cent.

"Downward spiral continued in the markets despite

### BUSINESS BRIEF

**66TH AGM OF NAFED HELD**  
New Delhi: The 66th Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) took place on Friday in New Delhi. 558 delegates representing various societies and state federations, such as RAJFED, MARKFED-Punjab, BISCOMAUN-Bihar, BUNKUS, Delhi State Co-op Federation, and Ahilya Co-operative Society Federation, participated. NAFED Chairman Bijender Singh said during FY 2022-23, NAFED earned a net profit of remarkable ₹264.51 crore, seeing NAFED went through a dark period of extreme financial losses during 2010-2015. As on March 31, NAFED has registered 646 FPOs, aiding around 2.06 lakh farmers. The organisation's membership also grew from 974 to 994, resulting in an increased shared capital of Rs 43.07 crore from Rs 41.02 crore.

**INSPIRE FILMS ISSUES IPO**  
New Delhi: Inspire Films Limited, an Indian media production company, is set to launch an IPO comprising 35,98,000 shares at a price of ₹59 per share, with a face value of ₹10 each. The minimum investment lot comprises 2,000 shares. The IPO subscription window will open from September 25 to 27. Following the IPO, the company's shares will be listed on the NSE Emerge platform on October 9. With a robust portfolio, Inspire Films has spearheaded numerous projects, including 'Dear Ishq' for Disney+ Hotstar, 'Tu Zakhm Hai' for MX Player

**BIG F AWARDS HELD**  
Gurugram: The 10th edition of The Big F Awards, organised by Indian Food Freak, in Gurugram was attended by the who's who of the hospitality industry. "Our steadfast commitment to transparency and fairness remains the cornerstone of our values," said the host Pawan Soni, Indian Food Freak founder. Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi, Chef Kunal Kapur, Sourish Bhattacharya, Marryam Reshii, Chef Amrinder Sandhu, Aslam Gafour, Amin Ali and Khurafati Nitin were among the many luminaries who attended the most sought-after Big F Awards.

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Philips India has reported 4.6 per cent rise in revenue from operations at Rs 5,734 crore for FY23, though the profit after tax (PAT) was down 2.2 per cent to Rs 260 crore, according to financial data accessed by business intelligence platform Tofler.

"Revenue from operations was at Rs 5,481.4 crore in FY22 and PAT was at Rs 265.9 crore.

"Philips India is a subsidiary of Dutch multinational company Koninklijke Philips N.V.

"Philips India's other income in FY23 was at Rs 71.9 crore, up 10.95 per cent from a year ago. Total income was up 4.68 per cent to Rs 5,805.9 crore. Total expenses were at Rs 5,485.1 crore, higher by 3.24 per cent year-on-year.

## Philips India FY23 revenue up 4.6% to ₹5,734 cr, profit down 2%

"Philips India, which operates in verticals Personal Health, Health Systems and Innovation Services, is not publicly listed.

"Its revenue from Personal Health segment was down 13.78 per cent in FY23 to Rs 774.6 crore. It was at Rs 898.5 crore in FY22.

"Philips' Personal Health business includes the beauty and grooming segment, with products such as hairdryers, hair straighteners, hairbrushes, beard trimmers. Its health business also includes oral care -- electric tooth-



brushes, and mother and child care products.

"Similarly, Health Systems' revenue was down 4.42 per cent year-on-year to Rs 2,649.3 crore in FY23. Under this section, Philips is in the field of medical electronics equipment such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), ultrasound and customer services.

"The addressable market has shown a high single-digit growth in comparison to the previous year, the strong tailwinds on

account of the acute increase in healthcare needs during the pandemic," it said.

"However, revenue from Innovation Services in FY23 was up 27.35 per cent to Rs 2,172.9 crore. Under this segment, Philips India works on the development of embedded software.

"Its revenue from 'others' was at Rs 71.4 crore in FY23.

"Philips India has manufacturing facilities in Pune, Maharashtra, and Software Development Centre in Bengaluru.

# LIVERPOOL, WEST HAM WIN IN EUROPA

**AP ■ PARIS**

In a meeting of two former European champions in crisis, Ajax and Marseille drew 3-3 in "a crazy game" while Liverpool and West Ham were also winners on Thursday in the opening round of Europa League group games.

Liverpool fell behind for the fourth time in five matches this season but fought back to beat LASK 3-1 in Linz to make Jurgen Klopp the first coach to win 50 European games at the Merseyside club.

West Ham, who won the Conference League last season, also hit back to beat visiting Serbian club TSC Backa Topola 3-1.

Brighton, making their European debut in the Europa League, and Aston Villa returning to Europe, after 12 years, in the Conference League, both fell behind early and although they each equalised twice, lost 3-2.

In Amsterdam, Ajax, who have won just two games all season and sit 12th in the Dutch league met Marseille who are third in Ligue 1.

Ajax carved open the visiting defence in the first 20 minutes and took a two-goal lead with goals by Carlos Borges and Steven Berghuis.

Jonathan Clauss and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang hit back before half time.

In Brighton, Djibril Sidibe put AEK ahead with a bullet



header from 13 yards.

Brighton twice levelled with Joao Pedro penalties. AEK twice regained the lead when sudden deflections in the rain opened up chances. Mijat Gacinovic buried one and Ezequiel Ponce tucked home the winner.

"We can improve but it's difficult to accept this defeat," said Brighton coach Roberto De Zerbi. "I can't be happy when we win at Old Trafford and sad today with a good performance."

"We didn't show as much experience as AEK Athens."

Liverpool, playing in the Europa League for the first time since finishing runners-up in 2016, changed their entire starting 11 away to LASK.

They fell behind to a 14th-minute rocket from Florian Flecker.

Darwin Nunez levelled with a 55th-minute penalty kick after Luis Diaz was brought down.

After 61 minutes, Klopp started to replace teenagers with regular starters.

Within two minutes they were ahead when Ryan

Gravenberch, on his full debut, burst down the right and crossed low for Diaz to score from close range.

Two minutes from the end Mohamed Salah, a second-half replacement, poked home a third.

"I'm really, really happy, because I said before, I knew it would be difficult and it was difficult," said Klopp.

"A well-deserved win in the end, and that's it."

Elsewhere in the Europa League, Romelu Lukaku earned last year's beaten finalists Roma a 2-1 victory at Sheriff in Moldova.

Abdallah Sima scored the only goal as Rangers beat Real Betis 1-0 in Glasgow.

Bayern Leverkusen crushed Swedes Hacken 4-0, Rennes cruised past Maccabi Haifa 3-0 in France, Spaniards Villarreal lost 2-0 to Panathinakos in Greece.

In the Conference League, Aston Villa fell behind in the third minute to Legia Warsaw and despite equalising twice lost 3-2.

"We have to be demanding of ourselves to impose the game plan, but we didn't do it," said Villa boss Unai Emery, three time winner of the Europa League.

"I like demanding games that are a challenge and not easy. Now these will be the types of matches we will face in the group."



## Odegaard signs new contract

**AP ■ LONDON**

Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard has signed a new five-year contract at the club, becoming the latest player to commit his long-term future to the Gunners.

The 24-year-old midfielder follows in the footsteps of Bukayo Saka, Gabriel Martinelli and William Saliba, who have all extended their deals.

The former Real Madrid player scored 15 Premier League goals and provided seven assists as the Gunners finished second behind Manchester City last season.

He has three goals in all competitions this season.

"It was an easy decision for me," said the Norway international, who initially joined on loan from Real in January 2021.

"As I said many times, I felt connected and I felt at home here since the first day."

"Also, I was moving around a lot (during loan spells) and struggling to really settle down, so I felt like I needed a place to come and settle down and to kind of find a home."

Arteta said Friday that the new deal was "great news" for Arsenal. Arsenal are fourth in the Premier League table ahead of Sunday's home match against Tottenham.



## Garcia, Kenin reach WTA Guadalajara semis

**AP ■ GUADALAJARA**

France's Caroline Garcia overpowered Victoria Azarenka in straight sets to reach the semi-finals of the WTA 1000 Guadalajara Open on Thursday.

Third-seed Garcia was always in control against her 10th-seeded opponent from Belarus, winning 6-3, 6-4 in 1hr 37min.

The 29-year-old French woman will face Maria Sakkari in the last four on Friday after the second seed from Greece eased past Colombia's Emiliana Arango 6-3, 6-4.

Garcia, who is chasing the 12th title of her career, used her powerful serve to gain the upper hand on Azarenka, slamming down 10 aces during the match.

Garcia was also able to save no fewer than 11 break points to deny Azarenka any chance of an opening.

"It's always tricky," said Garcia. "She had a lot of break point opportunities, but I served really well at those points, so I guess I have to thank my serve."

The win ensured that Garcia, the world number 11, will move into the top 10 at the end of this tournament.

In other quarter-final action

# Naglesmann is Germany's new boss

**AP ■ MUNICH**

Julian Nagelsmann has been given nine months to revive flailing Germany ahead of hosting Euro 2024 after being named as the sacked Hansi Flick's successor as national team coach on Friday.

Germany fired Flick with the national team struggling, the German football association (DFB) fearing another embarrassing performance in a major tournament, this time as hosts at next year's European championships.

Former Bayern Munich boss Nagelsmann has signed a deal until the end of next July, allowing the 36-year-old to leave after Euro 2024.

"We have a European



Championship in our own country -- that's something special," Nagelsmann said in a statement.

"I have a great desire to take on this challenge."

Nagelsmann said he signed the short-term deal "to keep the Euros in focus" but insisted he "would not rule out" an extension.

Flick, who became the first coach in Germany history to be sacked, had won just four of 17 matches leading up to his dismissal and took the team to a disappointing group-stage exit at the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

The four-time world champions were also knocked out in the group stage at the 2018 World Cup in Russia under previous boss Joachim Loew.

DFB president Bernd Neundorff called Nagelsmann "an outstanding coach" and said: "We are convinced (he) will ensure that the national team inspires its fans and that the Euros are also a sporting success."

Flick was sacked after a humiliating 4-1 friendly loss to Japan in Wolfsburg in early September.

Nagelsmann, who also succeeded Flick as Bayern coach, has been jobless since he was sacked by the German champions in March.

DFB sporting director Rudi Voeller called Nagelsmann "an absolute football expert" and said he had "proven himself at a very young age for a head coach".

## Verstappen gets back on track ahead of Japanese GP qualifying

**AP ■ SUZUKA**

Max Verstappen laid down a marker with the fastest times in both practice sessions for the Japanese Grand Prix on Friday, as he looks to put one hand on his third-straight Formula One title.

Red Bull's Verstappen put down a lap of 1min 30.688sec to finish 0.320sec quicker than second-placed Charles Leclerc of Ferrari in the second practice.

Verstappen, who leads teammate and nearest rival Sergio Perez by 151 points in the championship standings, cannot clinch the title on Sunday but a favourable result can set him up to seal the deal at the Qatar Grand Prix next month.

The Dutchman is looking to bounce back from a disappointing fifth-place finish at last weekend's Singapore Grand Prix that ended his record streak of 10-straight wins.

He said his car was "enjoyable to drive again".

"We had a strong day on short runs, long runs," said Verstappen.



"There's a lot of degradation on this track so it will be quite tough on tyres in the race, but so far it's a good start to the weekend."

Verstappen made his intentions clear from the start of the day, finishing the first practice quickest ahead of

## Paris Olympics berths up for grabs at Asian Games boxing

**AP ■ HANGZHOU**

Flyweight world champion Hasانبой Dusmatov will be one of the favourites for gold when boxing gets under way at the Asian Games on Sunday, with qualification for the Paris Olympics also up for grabs.

The 30-year-old Uzbek was Olympic champion in 2016 and in Hangzhou will be seeking the one gold medal absent from his collection in the 51kg division.

His first bout will be on Monday, with gold and silver medallists in the seven men's weight divisions all guaranteed a place at next summer's Paris Olympics. In the women's competition, 20 Paris berths can be won in Hangzhou.

Dusmatov was stunned in the 2018 Asian Games final by Amit Panghal in a massive upset, but the Indian is a notable absentee this time.

Another hoping to turn 2018 silver into gold is middleweight (71kg) world champion Aslanbek Shymbergenov from Kazakhstan.

Shiva Thapa, a winner at the 2013 Asian Championships, will lead the Indian squad in Panghal's absence.

In the women's competition, light flyweight (50kg) Thi Tam Nguyen has recovered from a torn knee ligament suffered at the SEA Games earlier this year and will lead a nine-strong Vietnam team.

The world championships silver medallist has already secured her place at Paris and will become the first Vietnamese boxer to take part in two consecutive Olympics.

She could again come up against India's multiple world champion Zareen Nikhat, who beat the Vietnamese by unanimous decision to lift the world title in New Delhi earlier this year. Nikhat also won gold in the 2022 world championships in Istanbul in the 52kg category.

Oh Yeon-ji from South Korea returns to defend her Asian Games lightweight (60kg) gold medal.

Organisers will be desperate to avoid the chaos of five years ago in Jakarta when the Asian Games boxing competition was marred by judging protests and controversy.

# Asian Games: Chance for Chopra-led India to showcase its sporting prowess

**PTI ■ HANGZHOU**

Led by Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, India will seek to showcase its ascendancy as a sporting power at the Asian Games, which opens formally on Saturday after an unprecedented one-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

India will hope to surpass the 70 medals (16 gold, 23 silver and 31 bronze) won in 2018 in Indonesia with largest contingent of 655 athletes competing in 39 sports in Hangzhou to show the world the rapid strides the country has made in sports since the historic performance in Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

India have not finished in the top-5 in medal tally standings since the 1986 edition in Seoul. For the first time in the Asian Games history, India will be having five Olympic medalists in their ranks led by javelin superstar Chopra, who will be defending his title, raising hopes of the country grabbing more



gold medals than the 16 won in 2018.

The other Olympic medalists are weightlifter Mirabai Chhanu, shooter PV Sindhu, wrestler Bajrang Punia and boxer Lovlina Borgohain.

Still, it is difficult to predict the gold medal count for India. Sindhu has been struggling for some time, Chhanu has had fitness issues recently while Bajrang started training only a few months ago after taking part in the wrestlers' protest.

Borgohain and Chopra have, though, become world champions recently. Borgohain will also shoulder the responsibility of being the Indian contingent flag-bearer during the opening ceremony on Saturday along with the men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh.

The eight-gold show in athletics in 2018 will be hard to repeat but hockey (men and women), kabaddi (men and women), chess and archery can swell India's yellow metal tally.

Going by current form, India can win gold in both men's and women's hockey competitions. India can also win a gold each in men's and women's kabaddi and make amends for missed chance in Jakarta. The men's team had won a bronze and the women's settled for a silver last time.

Shooters had given nine medals in 2018, including two gold, but they may not be able to surpass the tally this time.

In boxing, the likes of Nikhat Zareen and Borgohain are favourites to win a medal but it is difficult to predict the colour. The same is the case with the wrestlers who had won three medals, including two gold, in 2018.

By hosting the world's biggest multi-sporting event, China is heralding its opening from the pandemic, a giant competition which will be the biggest ever in its history.

No doubt the Olympics is the pinnacle of multi-sporting event in the world but more athletes compete in the Asian Games, with over 12,000 taking part in Hangzhou.

The 19th edition of the continental showcase, which will run till October 8 in Hangzhou and five co-host cities of Huzhou, Ningbo, Shaoxing, Jinhua and Wenzhou, was to be held in September 2022 but was postponed by a year after a surge of COVID-19 cases in China.

Forty-five nations and territories in Asia will compete for 481 gold medals from 40 sports and 61 disciplines, including Esports which is making its debut in the Asian Games. Competitions in football, volleyball, cricket, rowing, sailing and modern pentathlon began before the grand opening ceremony.

China are fielding their second-largest contingent in their Asian Games history with 886 athletes, including 437 women, taking part in Hangzhou. It is 91 less than the 977 athletes China fielded at the 2010 Guangzhou Games.

China are not only fielding

the most number of athletes in this edition of the Games but they are also set to continue their domination by bagging the top spot in the medal tally, which they have been doing at every edition since 1982 with several Olympic champions participating. South Korea are sending their largest ever athletes' contingent of 867 with an aim to finish second in the medal tally.

The Asian Games are expected to be declared opened by Chinese president Xi Jinping.

Organisers have already spent about 10.2 billion yuan (USD 1.4 billion) on venues for competitions and training, according to reports.

Hangzhou is the third Chinese city to hold the Asian Games, after Guangzhou in 2010 and Beijing in 1990. The Chinese capital has also hosted the Summer and Winter Olympics.

All the venues will use green electricity as the goal is to host a carbon-neutral and green Asian Games.

# Five-star Shami, classy Shubman set up Indian victory



## Shami will force team think-tank to think differently

PTI ■ MOHALI

It is very difficult not to respect Mohammed Shami for his mastery over his craft. Also, how much a player means to the dressing room speaks volumes about his worth. Just as he was coming off the field after a match-turning 5/51 against Australia, it was rested pacer Mohammed Siraj who came out and was engaged in a bear hug with his senior pace bowling partner. Shami didn't bowl a devastating spell like Siraj did in Colombo last week, but considering the quality of opposition combined with sultry and unhelpful conditions for fast bowling in Chandigarh, this spell was as lethal, if not more. Siraj knew it more than anyone else as to what Shami had done for the team. "We enjoy each other's success a lot. We have spent the last so many years together and this is a result of the same," Shami said during a snap interview with host broadcasters Jio Cinema. If one looked at the kind of bowling composition India played against Pakistan, it is dif-

icult to imagine how Shami would fit in if India is playing two spinners and Hardik Pandya is the third seamer during most matches. It is also impossible in Indian conditions for any pacer to play 11 games in the World Cup (if India reaches final) in six weeks, including travel, but Shami cooling his heels during important games would be a travesty as India is looking at multi-skilled cricketers, especially those who can bolster the batting. It can be very difficult to adjust being in and out of the playing XI, but after 179 international games for India across formats in the last 10 years, Shami knows how to adjust current demands. The first spell to David Warner, where the left-hander faced 11 balls and scored only one run, was where Shami's skills were in full bloom. It didn't matter that it wasn't a red Dukes or SG Test ball with a pronounced seam in his hands. "When you operate with the new ball, you have the responsibility of finding the right line and length, set the tempo and that's exactly what I wanted to do today," he said.



half-century in ODIs, was undoubtedly the batting star of the day. He had six fours and two sixes in his knock but the short-arm pick-up pull off Marcus Stoinis left everyone stunned. Off-spinner spinner Matthew Short was at the receiving end when he was lofted over long-off for the other six.

Gaikwad, who would have to switch on to the T20 mode in another two weeks' time, had 10 boundaries to his credit. He hit cover drives and square drives and was especially severe on Sean Abbott. For Australia, the only bright spot was leg-spinner Adam Zampa finding some bowling form with figures of 2/57 off 10 overs.

But the game-changer on the day was Shami, who doesn't seem to feature in India's first XI plans for the World Cup. He literally made a statement with his second five-wicket haul in ODIs. His performance also put tremendous pressure on the weakest link among pacers Shardul Thakur (0/78 in 10 overs), who has been selected

in the 15, primarily due to his batting skills. Shami was literally unplayable in his opening spell, and then came back to remove a set Steve Smith (41 off 60 balls) in a short second stint, to disturb the visiting team's momentum. Stockily built wicketkeeper Jos Inglis (45 off 45 balls) and Marcus Stoinis (29 off 21

balls) added 62 runs for the sixth wicket to take Australia past the 250-run mark but it was certainly below par as Shami got Stoinis in the nick of time to put the brakes on their scoring. Warner (52 off 53 balls), Smith and Marnus Labuschagne (39 off 49 balls) all got starts but the lack of conversion did hurt the Aussies on a day when the Indian bowling unit was supremely effective without being exceptional. All eyes were trained on Ravichandran Ashwin (1/47 in 10 overs) and he did find his rhythm in the second spell after looking rusty during the first spell. He went for 36 in his first six overs from the 'Harbhajan Singh End' but Rahul changed his end during the second spell and it read 4-0-11-1. The Australian team also suffered due to freak dismissals, first when Labuschagne missed an Ashwin delivery while trying to play a reverse sweep and the ball ricocheted off Rahul's pads with the batter out of his ground. Then it was Cameron Green (31 off 52 balls), who was slowly but steadily setting it up with Inglis before a miscommunication led to his run-out. But no praise will be enough for Shami, probably the most versatile seam and swing bowler of his generation, who has magic in those fingers and wrists.

## ICC select seven venues in Caribbean to host 2024 T20 WC

PTI ■ DUBAI

The ICC on Friday said seven venues in the Caribbean and three cities of USA will co-host the next year's men's T20 World Cup from June 4-30. The seven Caribbean venues shortlisted by the ICC are Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad & Tobago. Besides three places in the USA -- Dallas, Florida and New York will co-host the event. "We're delighted to announce the seven Caribbean venues that will host the biggest ICC Men's T20 World Cup ever staged, with 20 teams compet-



ing for the trophy. They're all popular venues with players and fans alike that will provide a wonderful backdrop to the event," ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said in a statement. "This will be the third ICC senior men's event hosted by the West Indies, and the match-

es will again give cricket fans the unique experience of enjoying cricket in the Caribbean. I'd like to thank Cricket West Indies and the seven host governments for their continued commitment and support of our sport." Cricket West Indies CEO Johnny Grave said: "This is an

exciting moment as we announce the venues approved to host the largest ICC Men's T20 World Cup in history, with 20 teams playing in 55 matches in June next year. "We are grateful to the host Governments of the Caribbean for their overwhelming responses and enthusiasm for hosting what will be the most significant sporting event held in our region for a generation," he said. "We are confident that together we will deliver a world-class tournament showcasing the best this region has to offer with our unique culture and carnival atmosphere that will ensure there is a real celebration of the sport next June."

## Hangzhou-bound India T20 team go down to Karnataka

PTI ■ BENGALURU

India's Asian Games-bound T20 cricket team lost to Karnataka by four wickets in a pre-departure warm-up fixture, here on Friday. Manoj Bhandage returned 4-1-15-4, while Vasuki Koushik and Shubhang Hegde claimed three wickets each as the Indian XI were shot out for 133 in 20 overs. In reply, Manish Pandey struck an unbeaten 52 (40 balls) while opener LR Chethan (29), Mayank Agarwal (19) and Abhinav Manohar (17 not out) also contributed in Karnataka's chase as they romped home with five balls to spare. Avesh Khan, Ravi Bishnoi and R Sai Kishore took one wicket apiece for the Indian Asian Games T20 side. The Indian team crumbled against the Karnataka bowlers but only after openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Prabhsimran Singh made strong contributions. Prabhsimran cracked seven fours and a six to make 49 from



31 balls whereas Jaiswal scored 31 from 17 balls with seven hits to the fence.

The pair of Bhandage and Hegde ran through the Indian top and middle-order as none

among Rahul Tripathi (6), Jitesh Sharma (2), Rinku Singh (5) and Shivam Dube (0) could trouble the scorers. India were bowled out with Koushik taking the last three wickets. The Asian Games-bound team was without captain Ruturaj Gaikwad, who was named in the Indian playing XI for the first ODI against Australia in Mohali. India's men's team will compete in the Asian Games for the first time, with the competition set to take place between September 28 and October 8. India's women's team have already qualified for the semi-finals of the continental showpiece in China. **Brief Scores:** India 133 in 20 overs (Prabhsimran Singh 49, Yashasvi Jaiswal 31; Manoj Bhandage 4/15, Shubhang Hegde 3/17, Vasuki Koushik 3/36) lost to Karnataka 136/4 in 19.1 overs (Manish Pandey 52 not out, LR Chethan 29; R Sai Kishore 1/20) by six wickets.

## Kesh Kanti

Ab apne baalon se kaho  
**JUG JUG JIYO!**

**Benefits of Kesh Kanti Oil & Shampoo**

Stops hairfall, untimely greying and split ends

- Strengthens hair roots and makes them healthy and beautiful with natural nutrition
- Makes hair soft and silky naturally
- Makes scalp dandruff-free
- Repairs damaged hair and grows new hair
- Precious herbs improve the growth and health of the hair