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# Karnataka Congress leader stirs racial pot at poll rally

PTI ■ RAMANAGARA

BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, a Cabinet minister in the Karnataka government, has courted a controversy by calling HD Kumaraswamy, union minister and former CM, a racist slur for being dark complexioned. Retorting strongly, the Janata Dal Secular (JD(S)) demanded that the Congress government should sack Khan from the cabinet for his racist slur. Addressing an election rally in Ramanagara on Sunday, Khan said CP Yogeeshwara, the Congress candidate from Channapatna, had no other option but to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) earlier. “Due to some differences in our party (Congress), he contested as an independent. He had no option but to join



the BJP. He was not ready to join the JD(S) because “Kaaliya Kumaraswamy” was more dangerous than the BJP. Now he (Yogeeshwara) has come back home,” said Khan.

Yogeeshwara is contesting Nikhil Kumaraswamy, Kumaraswamy’s son who is contesting as an NDA candidate on the JD(S) ticket, in a direct contest in the Channapatna Assembly

bypoll. Khan also alleged that Kumaraswamy had said he did not need Muslim votes. At the rally, Khan played an audio of the purported statement where Kumaraswamy is allegedly heard saying, “My politics is not dependent on Muslim votes. I am making this clear. I don’t need Hijab or Pajaab.” The minister asked those gathered, “Kumaraswamy says he does not want Hijab or Pajaab but he wants Muslim votes. Will you vote for him?” He said Kumaraswamy is under the impression that he can buy Muslim votes. “Aye Kumaraswamy, tell me your bidding amount. The Muslim community will generate funds that can buy your entire clan,” Khan said amid cheers of the crowd. The JD(S) in a post on ‘X’ called Khan a ‘racist’. “Your power and greed that you

will buy the family of Deve Gowda who brought you up politically will not last long,” the JD(S) post read. The party sought to know the colour of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, ministers HC Mahadevappa, Satish Jarakiholi, Priyank Kharge and KH Muniyappa. “Dismiss such a low mentality person from the Cabinet immediately,” the party further demanded. Kiren Rijju , Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, too condemned Khan’s slur. “I strongly deplore Congress Minister Zameer Ahmed calling Union Minister & Ex CM of Karnataka Sh. Kumaraswamy as ‘Kaalia Kumaraswamy’. This is a racist remark, same as Rahul Gandhi’s adviser calling South Indians look like Africans, North East as Chinese, North Indians as Arabs,” Rijju wrote on ‘X’.



# Disclosing marks obtained in public exams not invasion of privacy: Bombay HC

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday said the recruitment process for public posts must be transparent. It further observed that marks obtained by candidates were not private information and their disclosure would not amount to any unwarranted invasion of privacy. A division bench of Justices MS Sonak and Justice Jitendra Jain said withholding such information allows doubts to linger, which is not healthy in promoting transparency and accountability in the working of public authorities and public recruitment processes. The bench passed the order on a plea filed by one Onkar Kalmankar, seeking details of the marks obtained by candidates who appeared for the tests in 2018 for the post of junior clerk in the Pune district court. Kalmankar had appeared for the tests but was not selected.

The court directed the concerned authorities to furnish the petitioner with the marks obtained by the selected candidates in the written test, Marathi and English typing test and interview within six weeks. The bench, in its order, said the case pertains to the selection process for the post of junior clerk in the district court in Pune, for which applications were invited through a public advertisement. “In that sense, this public process must be transparent. The marks obtained by the candidates in such a selection process cannot ordinarily be held to be personal information, the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest,” the court noted. It observed that provisions of the Right To Information (RTI) Act have exempted only such personal information, the disclosure of which has no

relationship to any public activity or interest. “Given that such selection processes must be transparent and above board, it would be in the public interest to disclose such information rather than withhold it and allow any doubts about the process to linger,” the court further noted. The bench also said in the context of public examination for selection to a public post, it was doubtful whether disclosure of marks obtained by the candidates would amount to any “unwarranted invasion of privacy”. Kalmankar had participated in the recruitment process and passed the written and typing tests but did not clear the interview. He had initially sought information under the RTI Act from the public information officer and the state information commissioner, but his request was denied, following which he approached the high court.

# Two linked to Arshdeep Gill arrested for murder in Punjab

PTI ■ GWALIOR

Two firearms made in Australia and China respectively, as well as mobile phones with foreign IMEI numbers, have been seized from Canada-based Khalistani terrorist Arshdeep Singh Gill’s two aides, who allegedly shot dead a man in Madhya Pradesh’s (MP) Gwalior last week, a police official said on Monday. The two accused, identified as Navjot Singh alias Neetu and Anmolpreet Singh alias Vishal, were arrested in Punjab on Sunday in connection with the murder of a YouTuber, as per police. They had allegedly shot dead Jaswant Singh Gill on

November 7 outside his house in Dabra area in Gwalior, the official said. Jaswant Gill was sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his wife’s cousin Sukhvinder in 2016 and has been out on parole since October 28. The official said Sukhvinder’s brother Satpal possibly transferred Rs2.50 lakh from Canada to his cousin Jitu Singh alias Jita here to facilitate the November 7 killing. “The two firearms, an Australian Glock and Chinese-made pistol, are worth Rs 15 lakh each. One of these pistols and the high-end mobile phones were used in the November 7 murder here. Our probe has found Navjot



and Anmolpreet, after the killing, fled from here late Thursday night to Chandigarh in a taxi booked by Satpal,” the official said. After MP police got information about the duo through an identity card used at the hotel they had stayed in

Gwalior, Punjab police was contacted, he said. “We sent our Punjab counterparts their photos. The duo was arrested on Sunday and Punjab police are questioning them at present. Later, we will bring them here on transit remand. They had come to the hotel on November 7. Jita gave them local inputs,” he said. The official said Satpal transferred Rs 1 lakh to Jita when victim Jaswant Gill came out on parole, and the remaining Rs 1.50 lakh was sent online after the November 7 murder. “After Navjot and Anmolpreet reached Chandigarh, Satpal made some online payments on their behalf. We were monitoring Satpal’s online

transactions and shared all information with our Punjab counterparts. Satpal and his family migrated to Canada after Jaswant Gill killed Sukhvinder. But Satpal continued to visit here once in a while,” the official said. The official said the two alleged shooters are from Dalla’s gang as per Punjab police, adding he would not comment on whether the Canada-based Khalistani terrorist has any role to play in the November 7 murder. Arshdeep Gill, who has been accused of involvement in targeted killings, terror financing and extortion in Punjab, was in January last year designated a terrorist by the Indian government.

# Haryana Assembly’s winter session from November 13

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

The Haryana Assembly’s winter session will begin on Wednesday, during which the new Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government will bring in some bills including one on ensuring job security for contractual employees. After a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of the Assembly, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini told reporters on Monday that it has been decided that the session will be held on November 13, 14 and 18. The session will begin with the Governor’s address followed by a discussion in the House on the motion of thanks. The chief minister will reply on November 14. The opposition Congress, still reeling from the defeat in assembly polls, is yet to decide



its Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader. Geeta Bhukkal, Congress leader, indicated that the decision is likely to be taken by the party high command after the Maharashtra and Jharkhand polls. She said the opposition will raise issues such as the shortage of fertilizers that is affecting farmers. The Haryana CLP, which had held its first meeting here on October 18 after the

Assembly poll results were announced on October 8, had passed a resolution authorising the party high command to appoint its next leader in the house. Bhukkal told reporters that since Assembly elections are being held in Maharashtra and Jharkhand, “We hope it will be decided soon”. Former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda was the Leader of Opposition in the previous House and after the string of losses, a section of leaders wants the younger generation to take over. It will be the first full-fledged session of the 15th Haryana Assembly. The 90-member assembly met on October 25 but the House was adjourned sine die on the same day after newly elected MLAs were administered oath and the Speaker and Deputy Speaker were elected.

# Kamal Hasan renounces honorary titles

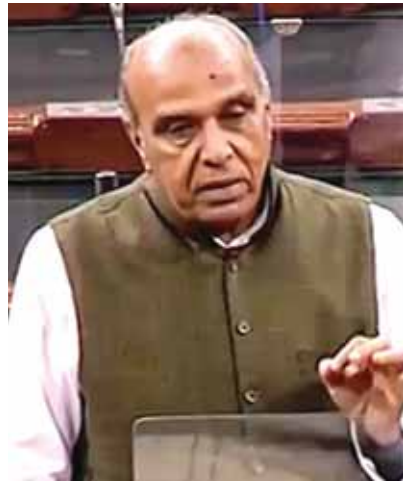
PTI ■ CHENNAI

Asserting that cinema is bigger than any individual and that he remained a student, actor Kamal Haasan on Monday announced his decision to renounce titles such as Ulaga Nayagan (universal hero) bestowed on him and said he may be addressed by his name. “Such accolades, given by the people and recognised by esteemed colleagues and admirers, have always been humbling and I have been genuinely moved by your love in conferring it upon me,” the actor said.He said it was his humble belief that artists must not be elevated above the art.

# JPC on Waqf bill meets stakeholders in Odisha

PTI ■ BHUWANESHWAR

The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 has started hearing different stakeholders here on Monday. During the first half period, the JPC held discussions with representatives from the Odisha government, state minority commission, state waqf board, senior advocates, social activists and other different stakeholders from the state, said the panel’s chairman Jagdambika Pal. “The stakeholders have given their views and opinions on the proposed Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024. Our JPC will examine the views and incorporate the contents in its report”, he told media persons. Pal said it is the responsibility of the JPC to hear the stakeholders of Odisha and it is doing so. “Whether someone has joined or not, it doesn’t make any difference,” he said when asked about the absence of the opposition members in the meeting. The committee will submit its report to the Lok Sabha Speaker by the last working day of the upcoming winter session of the Parliament, he said.



The opposition members of the JPC had decided to boycott this tour, alleging that the chairperson was acting in an arbitrary manner and their request to defer the trip was unheeded. Since the formation of the JPC in August this year, the panel has held discussions with different stakeholders for over 100 hours in 25 formal settings in New Delhi only, said Dilip Saikia, a

member of the JPC. “We have taken views and suggestions from different stakeholders including waqf boards, minority commissions and Muslim institutions and organisations,” he said. The MP said the panel has completed its first phase of tour to different states including Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. However, the opposition members have boycotted the second phase tour starting from Guwahati on Saturday, which is “unfortunate”, Saikia said. “The waqf boards need to be accountable for proper management of its properties, to empower the poor Muslims and to give its benefits to marginal sections of society,” he said. Prior to Bhubaneswar, the panel visited other major cities, including Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Guwahati, where discussions covered a range of issues surrounding Waqf property management and proposed amendments to the Wakf Act, 1995. From Bhubaneswar, the committee will leave for Kolkata, and then is scheduled to visit Patna and Lucknow, official sources said.

# Fasten that helmet ladies...

From page 1

The bike taxi service, introduced by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) in partnership with the First And Last Mile Connectivity India Pvt. Ltd, comprises a total of 50 SHERYDS and 150 RYDR motorbikes, which will operate from these stations in a radius of around three to five kilometres between 8 am and 9 pm. The rides have a minimum charge of Rs. 10 followed by Rs. 10 per

kilometre for the first two kilometres and thereafter, Rs. 8 per kilometre. “Subsequently over 100 stations will be covered with this facility in a month’s time, and remaining stations will be covered in next three months thus further strengthening the last mile connectivity across all 250 Metro stations of DMRC thereby taking the total count of SHERYDS and RYDER to around 1000 each,” the official said.

# Stuck in a crossfire?...

From page 1

“We encourage adventurers, especially those venturing into high-security areas, to always share their travel plans with the nearest police station. This communication helps us prepare and respond swiftly should any unforeseen issues arise,” he noted. “Locals, tourists, and especially trekkers should reach out to us if they

encounter any situation that requires urgent attention. Dialling 100 or contacting the nearest police station helps us coordinate with ongoing operations and ensures rapid assistance,” Birdi said. After the tourism department opened up several trekking sites across different parts of Kashmir valley several amateur trekkers undertook weekly treks in the precincts of Mother Nature.

# Harris, Trump dependent on India: MP CM

PTI ■ GWALIOR

Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, on Monday claimed that during the recently concluded American elections president-elect Donald Trump and Kamala Harris were dependent on India. Talking to reporters in Gwalior, Yadav said that all superpowers in the world wanted to associate with

India. “Our prime minister is a shubhankar (mascot). India has also shown the strength of its democracy to the world. Today, any big superpower sees a benefit in associating with India. We have seen in the US presidential elections that whether Trump or Harris won, both were dependent on India. We are happy that president-elect Trump has been a personal friend of Modi ji. The Russian president is also looking the

same (towards India),” Yadav said. He said no one can measure the depth of Modi’s popularity in India, which resulted in him forming a government for the third time in a row after a gap of 60 years. The chief minister expressed confidence that the BJP will win elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand and the bypoll to Budhni and Vijaypur assembly seats in Madhya Pradesh. People of the Budhni

and Vijaypur assembly seats are with development, he said. Ramniwas Rawat, the BJP candidate from Vijaypur, is a six-time MLA from the Congress and a minister, he said. Rawat left Congress as he failed to develop the region despite being a minister and joined the BJP for development, Yadav said. State forest minister Rawat will face the bypoll necessitated after his resignation as MLA.

# Terrorist Pannu threatens Ayodhya Ram...

From page 1

Pannu has also called for violence against Indian diplomats, indicating a broader attempt to provoke unrest and tension within Indian and expatriate communities. Pannu’s SFJ has been involved in various anti-India activities, aiming to promote the idea of a separate Sikh state. Pannu has issued several incendiary statements aimed at destabilising communal harmony. Pannu was designated as a terrorist under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in July 2020. The government of India has also issued multiple warrants for his arrest. However, he continues to function from the United States and Canada.

# Murder trial against Jagdish Tytler will...

From page 1

Tytler’s plea challenging the framing of murder and other charges against him is listed on November 29 but he moved court with the plea to stay the trial. His plea said the evidence of the prosecution witness was recorded by the trial court and her cross-examination by the defence counsel was scheduled for November 12. “The criminal revision petition (of Tytler) raised substantial questions upon the motivation of the prosecution and the investigation conducted by the CBI. Therefore, an order/direction from this court for the trial court to not proceed with the captioned matter till the pendency of the revision petition is expedient

in the interest of justice,” his plea read. Tytler has claimed being a victim of a “witch-hunt” and contended the trial court’s order framing charges against him was “perverse, illegal and lacked application of mind”. “Trial court has erroneously framed charges against the petitioner overlooking the settled principles of law on the point of charge,” his petition stated. While Tytler’s counsel raised the plea of alibi, claiming his absence at the time of the incident, the counsel for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and victims argued the plea of alibi had already been decided and rejected by the high court. Tytler argued there was no

credible evidence to corroborate the allegations against him and the trial court’s order was “misconceived” passed “mechanically” and liable to be set aside. He alleged it was a case of harassment wherein he was made to face the trial for alleged crimes committed more than four decades ago, and referred to being 80-years old and suffering from several ailments, including heart disease and diabetes. The trial court on September 13 framed charges against him after he pleaded not guilty. Besides murder, the trial court ordered the framing of charges pertaining to unlawful assembly, provocation, rioting, murder, promoting enmity between different groups,

house trespass, and theft, among others. The CBI on May 20, 2023, filed a chargesheet against Tytler in the case saying he “incited, instigated and provoked the mob assembled at Pul Bangash Gurdwara Azad Market” on November 1, 1984. The mob, the agency claimed, provoked by Tytler, set a gurdwara ablaze and killed three men, Thakur Singh, Badal Singh, and Gurcharan Singh. Anti-sikh riots erupted in several parts of the country in the aftermath of the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, by her sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984. A sessions court had in August, 2023, granted anticipatory bail to Tytler in the case.

# MCD Mayoral election on November 14

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The long due to mayoral elections for Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), slated to be held on November 14, will finally bring a Dalit candidate in the office, however with a reduced tenure after a seven-month standoff between the AAP and BJP. The standoff between the parties led to repeated disruptions of the MCD House besides delaying the polls for five months initially scheduled for April this year. With the elections approaching, both the ruling

AAP and the opposition BJP are intensifying their campaigns, setting the stage for a closely-contested battle to decide Delhi’s next mayor. However, the new mayor and the deputy mayor will only get to serve for a period of five months. According to MCD rules, mayoral elections are held annually in April with five-year tenure comprising five single-year terms on a rotation basis. The first year is reserved for women, the second for open category, the third for reserved category, and the final two years again for the open category. This will be

the third mayoral term since the AAP came to power in the MCD in December 2022, ending the BJP’s 15-year rule. Current Mayor Shelly Oberoi has started holding meetings with the officials of all the 12 zones of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to review the pending works and projects to ensure they are completed before the elections. Projects such as park fencing, beautification, gate installations, road repairs, street lighting, electricity supply, and the covering of open drains have been put forward for approval, an official said.



# Campaigning for Raipur South by-election ends

## CM takes out road show in support of BJP's Soni

STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

Campaigning for the Raipur South Assembly byelection in Chhattisgarh ended on Monday evening, two days ahead of polling.

There is a direct contest in this constituency between BJP's Sunil Soni and Congress' Akash Sharma.

Raipur South is considered a BJP stronghold as it has never been defeated from the seat since it came into existence in 2008. BJP's Brijmohan Agrawal represented the seat eight times in a row.

In a show of strength on the last day of campaigning, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo took out a roadshow in support of the BJP. The voting will be held on November 13 in 253 polling centres.



Votes will be counted on November 23.

There are 2,70,936 voters, of which 1,33,713 are men, 1,37,171 women and 52 belong to the third gender.

The by-election was necessitated as BJP MLA Brijmohan Agrawal vacated the seat after being elected as MP from Raipur.

# Rs 27 lakh cash seized in Raipur



STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Police on Monday seized unaccounted cash totalling Rs 27.10 lakh from a man in

Raipur city.

This happened at the static surveillance team checkpoint in Purani Basti area, Raipur. Additional Superintendent of Police (Urban) Lakhna Pawar Patle said.

# Elephant found dead in Balrampur

STAFF REPORTER ■  
BALRAMPUR

A male elephant was found dead at a paddy field on Monday in Balrampur district in Chhattisgarh.

The incident happened in Murka village in the Wadrafnagar forest range, Balrampur. Divisional Forest Officer Vivekanand Jha said.

Officials initiated the process of autopsy. A probe was ordered to find out the exact cause of the death.

The Chhattisgarh High Court took suo moto cognizance last week after three elephants died of electrocution in Raigarh district last month.

Also, the court has sought replies from the Secretary of the Energy



Department and Managing Director of the Power Distribution Co Ltd over the deaths. A hearing is due on November 20.

In the last six years, nearly 80 elephants have died due to ailments, age and electrocution in Chhattisgarh.

# Jashpur's adventure tourism evokes broad response



STAFF REPORTER ■  
JASHPUR

A recent bike trip organised by Jashpure and Pahari Bakra Adventure in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district attracted riders from across the country, an official communiqué said on Monday.

The communiqué said the government has made extensive efforts to promote tourism in the tribal-dominated district and raise the standard of living of the locals. The aim is to turn adventure sports and tourism into a major source of employment for local youths. They have been trained in the nuances of adventure sports at the international level.

Jashpur offers a thrilling experience of untouched natural beauty, winding roads, difficult trails, lush green forests, tribal cuisines and insight into tribal lifestyles and their rich culture.

# Voters to vote for change in by-election: Baij



STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Congress Chief Deepak Baij on Monday said that voters of Raipur South Assembly seat have decided to exercise their franchise for change.

Baij claimed that there

was a wind of change in the constituency.

The main issue of the Raipur South by-election is active versus inactive leaders, he said.

The Congress chief said that BJP candidate Sunil Soni had failed to tell voters his achievements as Mayor and MP during

the election campaign.

So, the voters want to elect Congress candidate Akash Sharma who he said was an active and energetic youth. Baij alleged that the least development work took place in Raipur South among the four Assembly constituencies of Raipur.

# Black Box's delivers robust Q2 performance



STAFF REPORTER ■  
MUMBAI

Leading IT solutions provider Black Box Ltd has announced its results for the quarter and for the first half ended on September 30, 2024 in which it delivered robust performance.

As per a press communiqué, the company reported impressive quarterly and half yearly EBITDA and PAT.

EBITDA for the quarter increased to Rs 135 crore, reflecting a growth of 34 percent YoY and 18 percent QoQ. For H1FY25, EBITDA grew by 31 percent YoY and stood at Rs 250 crore.

EBITDA margins for Q2FY25 improved substantially by 260 basis points YoY to 9.0 percent whereas for H1FY25, EBITDA margins improved by 250 bps YoY and stood at 8.6

percent.

The EBITDA margins continue to improve on account of consistent efforts on cost optimization leading to enhanced productivity and margin performance.

Profit after tax for Q2FY25 stood at Rs 51 crore growing by 60 percent YoY and 38 percent QoQ.

For H1FY25, PAT increased to Rs 88 crore, reflecting a growth of 58 percent YoY. PAT margins improved by 140 bps YoY and stood at 3.4 percent in Q2FY25 whereas for H1FY25 PAT margins stood at 3.0 percent, reflecting a growth of 120 bps YoY. Strong operating performance has resulted in better profitability.

Revenue for Q2FY25 stood at Rs 1,497 crore, compared to Rs 1,574 crore in Q2FY24. For H1FY25 revenue stood at Rs 2,921 crore compared to Rs 3,146 crore in H1FY24.

# Eligibility date to vote in urban body polls is Oct 1



STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

The Election Commission in Chhattisgarh announced on Monday that those who have completed 18 years of age on October 1, 2024 are eligible to vote in the upcoming urban body elections.

Earlier this date was January 1, 2024. A preliminary voter list was published on October 16.

**As per the revised programme claims, objections and applications for new voter registrations will be accepted from November 13 to 20.**

But as per the revised programme claims, objections and applications for new voter registrations will be accepted from November 13 to 20. The final voter list will be published on December 11.

Officials said that as per the new date, every eligible person will get the opportunity to vote.



A glimpse into the sports events at the ongoing Bastar Olympics in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Monday.

# Chhattisgarh promoting traditional healers, medicinal herbs

STAFF REPORTER ■  
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh Forest Department has taken effective steps to promote indigenous medical knowledge embedded within its forest-rich tribal communities.

An official in the department said recognizing the holistic value of Ayurveda and other traditional practices, these initiatives aim to preserve ancient wisdom that supports physical, mental, social and environmental health.

The department, in collaboration with the Department of AYUSH and other stakeholders, has embarked on certifying Traditional Community Health Practitioners (TCHPs or traditional healers) — including Baiga, Guniya, Sirha



and Vaidya — while documenting, assessing and scientifically validating medicinal plant formulations.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Head of Forest Force, V. Sreenivasa Rao, said: "The Chhattisgarh Forest Department is committed to preserving and promoting traditional medicinal knowledge for the well-being of our communities."

The Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Commission, with European support, conducted an ethnobotanical survey across 21 districts, interviewing 418 traditional healers and documenting 3,399 medicinal plant formulations.

These formulations were scientifically evaluated by a team from the Government Ayurveda College, Raipur, led by Dr. Rakshpal Gupta, Dr. P.K.

Joshi, Dr. R.N. Tripathi and Dr. P.K. Baghel, who recommended 86 formulations for direct preparation and use.

Traditional healers are a critical healthcare resource for rural and tribal populations, providing local plant-based remedies without formal recognition.

Certifying these practitioners acknowledges their invaluable contribution to the health needs of tribal and marginalized communities, enhancing respect for their work and fostering greater awareness of traditional practices.

In collaboration with the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions and The University of Trans- Disciplinary Health Sciences and Technology, Bengaluru, the Forest Department has

certified 500 traditional healers, recognizing their role in upholding the cultural and healthcare heritage.

A prominent example is Vaidyaraj Hemchand Manjhi from Narayanpur who was recently awarded the Padma Shri for his commitment to providing traditional and affordable healthcare to villagers for over five decades.

Another healer, 62-year-old Santosh Kumar Patel from Malhari village in Dhamtari district, has been practicing for more than four decades. According to Dr. Neetu Harmukh, Senior Scientist at the CG State Biodiversity Board, the state's medicinal plants are documented in the Public Biodiversity Register, providing an invaluable resource for ongoing conservation efforts.

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# People determined to bring change: PM Modi to BJP workers

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Congress is trying to break the collective strength of SC, ST and OBC by creating divisions among them to weaken their voice and eventually end the reservation for them, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday as he called for unity among these communities. “That’s why I keep saying ‘ek rahenge, toh safe rahenge (if you remain united, you would be safe),” he said while interacting with BJP workers in Jharkhand under the ‘mera booth sabse mazboot’ programme through the NaMo app. The state goes to assembly polls on November 13 and 20. Modi also highlighted the

“failures” of the JMM-Congress-RJD combine’s five-year rule and said the state has to be freed from “corruption, mafiaism and misrule” to put it on the path of progress. The kind of blessings that the BJP is receiving at booth levels, it’s clear that the “corrupt” JMM-led government is set to be ousted, Modi asserted. “The countdown has begun,” he said. Modi said “everyone from the royal family” of the Congress -- from Jawaharlal Nehru to Rajiv Gandhi -- were “staunch opponents” of the provision of reservation and the party crushed all the voices rising in its favour till it was at the helm from “panchayat to Parliament” as the Dalit, OBC and Adivasi societies were scattered then.

But, gradually they started understanding what B R Ambedkar had said and came together posing a challenge to the Congress in many of the states, he said “The OBC society could not come together till 1990. But when they came together, the Congress suffered severe losses. “Since then, the Congress has not been able to form its government with a full majority. It has its government in just three states in the country today,” he added. Modi said the Congress has decided to break “the collective strength” of the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the Other backward Classes (OBC) as its “royal family is angry”.



“It has become their (Congress’) agenda over the past few years. It’s because the states, which have the highest number of Dalits, OBC, Adivasis, are under the BJP-NDA rule today and there is no possibility of the Congress coming to power in these

states,” he said Modi said the Congress wants Dalits, tribals and other backward classes to break into “hundreds of smaller castes”, instead of collectively being the SC, ST and OBC, so that they get scattered, lose their identity and fight

with each other. “When these societies break into smaller castes, their voice as SC, ST and OBC will become weak. The day this happens, the Congress’ conspiracy will succeed. It will take away reservation as well,” he said. “That’s why I keep saying ‘ek rahenge, toh safe rahenge (if you remain united, you would be safe). All the OBC, SC and ST societies should remain united,” Modi said. “People have shared on social media an old advertisement given by the Congress during elections... Perhaps Rajiv Gandhi was the leader of the party then. “The SC, ST and OBC have been painted so ugly in this advertisement. In their adver-

tisement, they have clearly said that reservation has to be taken away from the SC, ST and the OBC,” he added. Modi launched an all-out attack on the Congress, JMM and RJD and accused them of making tall claims but failing to deliver on their promises. He said in these polls, the people of Jharkhand are determined to bring change. The biggest reason for this, the prime minister said, is that JMM, Congress and RJD have attacked Jharkhand’s “roti, beti and maati” (bread, daughters and land). “They made tall claims in the last five years, but today the people of Jharkhand can see that most of their promises are false,” Modi said. He said despite the lack of cooperation from the state

government, the Centre is trying its best to develop the state with its mantra of ‘sabka saath, sabka vikas’. Dynastic parties are not only corrupt but also the biggest hurdle for talented youth of the society, he said. Modi said that the JMM too has learned these tricks from the “royal family” of the Congress. It now only cares for power and money, the prime minister alleged. Earlier, the rich had gas cylinders in their homes and the poor could not even think of having a gas cylinder, he said adding the reason being that Congress had the nature of catering to the rich. The BJP delivered gas cylinders to the homes of people through the government’s ‘Ujjwala’ scheme, Modi noted.

## SC stays warrant against Shivraj Singh Chouhan in defamation case

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the execution of bailable warrant against Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and two other BJP leaders in a defamation case filed by Congress Rajya Sabha MP Vivek Tankha. A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti sought Tankha’s response on a plea of Chouhan and others challenging the October 25 order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court refusing to quash the defamation case. The bench said, “The execution of bailable warrants against the petitioners shall not be executed subject to their effective participation in the proceedings before the court in the case.” Senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, appearing for Chouhan and others, said the purported statements mentioned in the complaint by Tankha were made on the floor of the house



and were covered by Article 194 (2) of the Constitution. Article 194 (2) states, “No member of the Legislature of a State shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in the Legislature or any committee thereof, and no person shall be so liable in respect of the publication by or under the authority of a House of such a Legislature of any report, paper, votes or proceedings.” Jethmalani submitted it was unheard of that in a summons case, a bailable warrant was issued by the court, when the

parties could appear through their counsel. On October 25, the high court had refused to quash the defamation case lodged by Tankha against former Madhya Pradesh CM Chouhan, BJP state president V D Sharma and former minister Bhupendra Singh. Tankha, in his complaint in the trial court, said defamatory statements were made in the run-up to Panchayat elections in the state in 2021. On January 20, 2024, a special court in Jabalpur registered the defamation case against the three BJP leaders under IPC Section 500, summoning them in court.

## Justice Sanjiv Khanna sworn in as 51st CJI



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Justice Sanjiv Khanna was on Monday sworn in as the 51st Chief Justice of India. President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office to him at a brief swearing-in ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Justice Khanna took the oath in English in the name of God. Born on May 14, 1960, Justice Khanna will serve as the CJI for a little over six months and

demit office on May 13, 2025, on attaining the age of 65 years. He succeeds Justice D Y Chandrachud, who demitted office on Sunday. Hailing from an illustrious Delhi-based family, Justice Khanna is the son of former Delhi High Court judge Justice Dev Raj Khanna and the nephew of renowned former apex court judge HR Khanna. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union

Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and former CJI J S Khehar were among those present on the occasion, besides Justice Chandrachud. Justice Khanna, who served as a Supreme Court judge since January 2019, has been part of several landmark judgments such as upholding the sanctity of EVMs, scrapping the electoral bonds scheme, upholding the abrogation of Article 370 and the granting of interim bail to former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal.

## Indian Navy, Sri Lankan Navy review preparedness to jointly combat transnational maritime crime

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

India and Sri Lanka on Monday reviewed their preparedness to jointly combat transnational maritime crime and regional cooperation in the seventh annual High Level Meeting (HLM) between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Sri Lanka Coast Guard (SLCG) at Colombo, ICG said here. Giving details, officials said this meet marked a significant milestone in the collaborative efforts to combat transnational maritime crime and promote regional cooperation. This annual meeting follows the institutionalized mechanism as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between both the maritime agencies in May 2018. The four member ICG delegation is led by its Director General S Paramesh while the SLCG side is led by Rear



Admiral YR Serasinghe, Director General, Sri Lanka Coast Guard. The HLM underscores the commitment of both the Coast Guards to jointly address maritime challenges while focusing on a range of regional maritime contemporary issues, including drug trafficking, marine pollution, safety of mariners, adoption of best practices, capacity-building programs and other collaborative arrangements. The outcome of the meeting reiterates enhancing mutual cooperation in addressing these challenges, thereby strengthening the maritime safety and security framework in the region.

## Gwalior murder: Foreign pistols, phones seized from two aides of Khalistani terrorist Arsh Dalla

**PTI ■** GWALIOR

Two firearms made in Australia and China as well as mobile phones with foreign IMEI rpt IMEI numbers have been seized from Canada-based Khalistani terrorist Arshdeep Singh Gill’s two aides who allegedly shot dead a man in Madhya Pradesh’s Gwalior last week, a police official said on Monday. The two accused, identified as Navjot Singh alias Neetu and Anmolpreet Singh alias Vishal, were arrested in Punjab on Sunday in connection with the murder of a Youtuber there, as per police. They had allegedly shot dead Jaswant Singh Gill on November 7 outside his house in Dabra area in Gwalior, the official said. Gill was sentenced to life imprisonment for killing his wife’s cousin Sukhvinder in 2016 and was out on parole since October 28. The official said Sukhvinder’s brother Satpal possibly transferred Rs



2.50 lakh from Canada to his cousin Jitu Singh alias Jita here to facilitate the November 7 killing. “The two firearms, an Australian Glock and Chinese-made pistol, are worth Rs 15 lakh each. One of these pistols and the high-end mobile phones with foreign IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) were used in the November 7 murder here. Our probe has found Navjot and Anmolpreet, after the killing, fled from here late Thursday night to Chandigarh

in a taxi booked by Satpal,” the official said. After MP police got information about the duo through an identity card used at the hotel they had stayed in Gwalior, Punjab police was contacted, he said. “We sent our Punjab counterparts their photos. The duo was arrested on Sunday and Punjab police are questioning them at present. Later, we will bring them here on transit remand. They had come to the hotel on November 7 itself. Jita gave them local inputs,” he said. The official said Satpal transferred Rs 1

lakh to Jita when victim Gill came out on parole, and the remaining Rs 1.50 lakh was sent online after the November 7 murder. “After Navjot and Anmolpreet reached Chandigarh, Satpal made some online payments on their behalf. We were monitoring Satpal’s online transactions and shared all information with our Punjab counterparts. Satpal and his family migrated to Canada after Gill killed Sukhvinder. But Satpal continued to visit here once in a while,” the official said. The official said the two alleged shooters are from Dalla’s gang as per Punjab police, adding he would not comment on whether the Canada-based Khalistani terrorist has any role to play in the November 7 murder. Arsh Dalla, who has been accused of involvement in targeted killings, terror financing and extortion in Punjab, was in January last year designated a terrorist by the Indian government.

## Shaan, Raghu Dixit, Jasleen Royal among singers performing at ASEAN India Music Festival 2024

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Shaan, Raghu Dixit, Jasleen Royal and singer duo Sukriti-Prakriti are among the singers performing at the upcoming third edition of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) India Music Festival 2024 here, starting November 29. The three-day festival, to be held at iconic Purana Qila, will feature performances from top Indian artists and talented ASEAN bands, offering a unique opportunity to experience diverse musical traditions. Organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and cultural organisation Seher, the festival this year will celebrate 10 years of friendship between India and ASEAN under India’s ‘Act East Policy’. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be the chief guest of the musical event. “The ASEAN India Music



Festival is a beautiful reminder that despite our different backgrounds, music has the power to unite us all. It allows us to connect not only as artists but as individuals who are part of a much larger global community. “It is not just about showcasing talent, but about celebrating the bonds we’ve built over the years and the new ones we’ll form through the universal language of

melody,” Sanjeev Bhargava, founder director of Seher, said in a statement. While the festival will feature performances by India’s beloved music icons, Raghu Dixit and Shaan on day one; the second day will witness performances by the vibrant ‘Western Ghats’ and the dynamic duo Sukriti-Prakriti bringing an eclectic mix of sounds to the stage. It will come to a grand con-

clusion on December one with a soulful performance by Jasleen Royal, known for her hit singles such as “Heeriye” and “Ranjha”. In addition to the Indian artists, the festival will also showcase an eclectic line-up of ASEAN bands, offering audiences a chance to experience the rich and diverse musical traditions from across the ASEAN region. “Television Off” from Thailand, ‘Buc Tuong’ from Vietnam, ‘Floor 88’ from Malaysia, ‘Subsonic Eye’ from Singapore, ‘Chet Kanchna’ from Cambodia, ‘MRTV’ from Myanmar are among the bands performing on the occasion. The event will be attended by the Heads of Missions from all 10 ASEAN member nations, including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

## Committee under Shah approves three projects under ‘Expansion and Modernisation of Fire Services’

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

A high-level committee, under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah has approved three projects of Rs. 725.62 crore under “Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the states” for Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal, ministry of home affairs said here in a statement on Monday. The Committee has approved Rs. 147.76 crore for Chhattisgarh, Rs. 201.10 crore for Odisha and Rs. 376.76 crore for West Bengal. The committee comprises Finance Minister, Agriculture Minister and Vice Chairman NITI Aayog as members. To fulfil Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of disaster resilient India, Ministry of Home Affairs under the guidance of Home Minister Amit Shah has taken several initiatives to ensure effective man-



agement of disasters in the country. A number of steps have been taken to prevent any extensive loss to life and property during disasters by strengthening disaster risk reduction system in India. The Central Government has allocated a total of Rs. 5000 crore under National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for “Expansion and Modernization of Fire Services in the states”, proposals of 15 states at a total outlay of Rs. 2,542.12 crore had already been approved. Under the leadership of Prime

Minister Modi and guidance of Home Minister Shah more than Rs. 21,026 crore has already been released to the states during this year. This include Rs. 14,878.40 crore from State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to 26 States, Rs. 4,637.66 crore from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to 15 States, Rs. 1,385.45 crore from State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 11 States and Rs. 124.93 crore from National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) to three States.

## IFFI 2024: “Better Man” to open gala, Satyajit Ray award to filmmaker Noyce

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Better Man, a semi-autobiographical film about British pop singer Robbie Williams, will open the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), where Australian filmmaker Phillip Noyce will be presented the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award. The annual film gala, which will run through November 20-November 28 in Goa, will present over 180 international films from 81 countries, including 15 world premieres, three international premieres, 40 Asian premieres and 106 Indian premieres. The curtain raiser press conference for IFFI 2024 was held on Monday at the National Media Centre here. The event was attended by L Murugan, Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Sanjay Jaju, Secretary Information and Broadcasting ministry, Shekhar Kapur, Festival Director and Prasoon Joshi, Chairman, CBFC. The IFFI is “not less than the

Cannes Film Festival”, said Murugan. “You can compare our IFFI with Cannes and some of the other festivals... We are giving the same festivals in IFFI. The response that we are getting from the international audience and delegates is great... There are roadshows about the festival in Mumbai and Chennai. Another roadshow will happen in Hyderabad. We are seeing how the industry is owning the festival, taking responsibility,” the minister told reporters. The festival will open with the Asia premiere of Michael Gracey’s “Better Man”, an Australian film that offers a captivating glimpse into the life of popstar Robbie Williams, portrayed as a chimpanzee by Jonno Davies in a groundbreaking motion-capture performance. Noyce, known for films such as the Angelina Jolie-starrer “Salt”, “Patriot Game” starring Harrison Ford, and “The Bone Collector” featuring Denzel Washington and Jolie, will receive the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award at IFFF



2024. The upcoming gala will have 47 films directed by women and 66 works by young and debut filmmakers, reflecting “the festival’s commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices”. Jaju said the team behind IFFI is excited to be charting a new path. “This is the first time in the history of the film festival that we have started this tradition of handing over the festival to the industry. Now, Shekhar Kapur has taken over as the festival director. This is the festival of the industry being completely led and run by the industry. “We look at the festival as the biggest because we are the world’s biggest filmmaking nation. The content we make in

our country is made at one-millionth of the cost at which the content is made outside,” he added. The theme of this year’s festival is ‘Young Filmmakers - The Future is Now’, following which the Creative Minds of Tomorrow initiative has been enhanced to support 100 young talents from 75 in the previous editions. Kapur said that theatrical films are becoming less and less important. “But we need to nurture this idea of theatricals without saying that it’s the only important medium. Because storytelling can be anything. I can give you a 30-second video and tell you a story. If I can’t tell you a story in 30 seconds, 1 minute or 5 minutes, then nobody is going to remember you. We took a Western technology from ‘Raja Harishchandra’ and we made the biggest film industry in the world,” the filmmaker said. A new award of Best Debut Indian Director has been instituted to recognise the young filmmaking talent across India. The winner will be awarded a certificate and cash prize of Rs

5 lakh at the closing ceremony. India is a country of “restless dreams and storytellers”, added Joshi. “If we want our stories to be diverse, we need the courage to tell stories that come from our roots. Filmmaking has become more about courage than talent. It’s become a property of those who are courageous. Now, why should that be? Many stories face story infanticide because they don’t have resources. In such a case, IFFI is a national stage that platforms those who don’t have sufficient funds or facilities,” he said. Australia will be the Country of Focus for IFFI 2024, with a dedicated package of Australian films and a strong presence at the festival. The film festival will mark the centenary of four icons of Indian cinema Raj Kapoor, Tapan Sinha, Akkineni Nageswara Rao (ANR), and Mohammed Rafi at its upcoming 55th edition, honouring them with in-conversation series, exhibitions, and screenings of the restored versions of their timeless classics.



# Assam bypolls: ECI transfers officers after violence escalates in Nagaon

PTI ■ NAGAON

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has ordered the transfer of two police officers in Assam's Nagaon district following incidents of violence in Samaguri Assembly constituency area of the district, where bypoll is scheduled this week, official sources said on Monday.

Partha Pratim Saikia, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) (Crime), Nagaon, and Rupiyoti Dutta Kaliabar sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) have been moved out of the district, the sources said. Jayanta Baruah and Shyamanta Sarma have been named the new ASP (Crime) and SDPO respectively with immediate effect, they added.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Pary (BJP) has written to the ECI demanding bar on Rakibul Hussain, MP, Dhubri from campaigning in Samaguri. The ruling party

has also filed a police complaint against the Congress leader. Hussain had been representing Samaguri in the state Assembly for the past 23 years. He vacated the seat following his election to the Lok Sabha earlier this year. His son Tanzil is the Congress candidate in the by-election. The BJP has fielded Diplu Ranjan Sharma, the party's state general secretary and a former president of the party's state youth wing.

In the letter to the EC, sent through the Returning Officer, Nagaon, on Sunday, the BJP has maintained that Hussain's presence has incited violence in the area and wanted a bar on the MP from campaigning in the constituency. "The by-election in Samaguri has turned violent due to conspiracy of this one person, Rakibul Hussain. We want that Hussain should not be allowed to campaign here any further. The by-election will



not be fair and transparent if he is allowed to move around here," Bimal Bora, a minister in the state government, said after submitting the letter.

Jitu Goswami, a BJP MLA, filed the complaint, whose vehicle was purportedly fired upon, at Rupahihat police station on Sunday. The complaint against Hussain and other Congress workers alleges stone pelting, gun

violence, attempt to murder and inciting violence.

Goswami claimed that stones were pelted at him and BJP supporters during the campaign in Muriputhi Kheta area on Saturday evening from a Congress election office, with gunshots also fired at them later.

He further claimed that Hussain was present at the spot during the incident and

instigated a criminal and other Congress workers to attack the BJP leaders and workers. The MLA, who said two BJP workers were injured in the incident, named 15 persons, including Hussain, in the complaint.

Violence has rocked Samaguri constituency with both the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress alleging gun violence, besides workers of the two parties being engaged in verbal spats and scuffles.

Journalists covering the poll campaign have also been injured in the spats.

On Sunday, Tanzil's SUV was allegedly attacked by BJP supporters at Udmari village, with the Congress filing complaints with the EC and police over the matter, a local party leader had said.

The BJP is making an all-out effort to snatch the seat in the demographically sensitive Nagaon district, while Congress is in no mood to leave its stronghold.

# Tribal strike shuts down Dibrugarh, Tinsukia



PTI ■ DIBRUGARH / TINSUKIA

A 12-hour strike in Assam's Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts called by Moran and Motok community organisations demanding ST status brought life to a standstill on Monday, with all business establishments, offices and other institutions remaining closed.

Thousands of agitators blocked the main roads in Dibrugarh and Tinsukia towns and stopped vehicular movement along the national highways despite the district administrations promulgating prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in entire districts.

Protesters came out in large numbers to impose the 12-hour bandh from 5am called by All Moran Students' Union (AMSU) and All Assam Motok Yuva Chatra Sammilan (AAMYCS) defying district administrations' orders issued on Sunday night, prohibiting

any forceful bandh call, road blockage, picketing, burning of tires and carrying of inflammable items.

Tires were burnt on roads blockaded by the strike supporters in various places in the two Upper Assam districts, with police opening two rounds in the air to disperse strike supporters on Makum-Tinsukia bypass, an official said."So far, we have not detained anyone. People have hit the streets in thousands at various places. We are trying to clear the highways and local roads," he added.

All shops, business establishments, offices, banks and other institutions remained closed, while some witnessed thin attendance. Bandh supporters, however, exempted school buses, vehicles carrying students to attend examinations, and those of the emergency services from the purview of the shutdown.

Assam's Moran, Motok,

Chutia, Tai-Ahom, Koch-Rajbongshi and Tea-Tribes communities have been demanding ST status for many years, with several senior Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and state ministers regularly offering assurances of granting the reservations.

AMSU and AAMYCS have been protesting Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram's reported comment that the government has not taken any formal step to grant ST status to the six communities.

Although the 12-hour strike was called by the two organisations, several other groups of the remaining four communities seeking ST status also extended support to the agitation.

AMSU president Pulendra Moran said the movement will intensify in coming days. "We have been fooled by the BJP government many times. Now, we will not listen to any of their assurances. We need sincere actions only," he added.

## Andhra FM presents Rs 2.94 lakh Crore budget for 2024-25

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

The government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) on Monday presented a budget of Rs 2.94 lakh crore for the year 2024-25 with Payyavula Keshav, the state finance minister. "The budget proposals, which I am presenting today, were made by keeping the state's financial position in consideration and to revive the (state) financially by creating wealth. This is aimed at restarting the financial wheels of the state," said Keshav, addressing the second session of the Assembly in the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

Presenting the budget in the Assembly, with four months left in the fiscal, he said the estimated revenue deficit is around Rs 34,743 crore (2.12 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)) and the fiscal deficit is estimated at around Rs 68,743 crore (4.19 per cent of the GDP) for the financial year.

The state government presented a budget of Rs 2.94 lakh crore for FY25 with a revenue expenditure estimated at Rs 2.36 lakh crore and capital expenditure at Rs 32,713 crore. The budget allotted Rs 16,739 crore for panchayat raj and rural development, a portfolio held by Pawan Kalyan, the deputy chief minister of the state. A total of Rs 29,909 crore for school education and Rs 18,421 crore for healthcare and family welfare were also allotted.

Observing that the ambition of the NDA government of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Janasena and Telegu Desam Party (TDP) is to eradicate poverty and extend welfare for the marginalised, the finance minister allocated Rs 18,497 crore as Scheduled Castes (SC) component.

## Punjab bypolls: Manpreet Singh Badal returns to roots 12 years later

PTI ■ GIDDERBAHA

Manpreet Singh Badal has returned to Gidderbaha to seek a re-election as a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate twelve-year after losing his stronghold.

The former state finance minister has been visiting villages in the constituency and is invoking the name of five-time chief minister late Parkash Singh Badal.

The 62-year-old has as his rivals Aam Aadmi Party's nominee Hardeep Singh Dimpy Dhillon and Congress candidate Amrita Warring, who is the wife of Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring. The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) (Amritsar) has fielded Sukhraj Singh.



The Gidderbaha seat fell vacant after Amrinder Singh, who was a Congress MLA, was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Ludhiana seat in the 2024 parliamentary elections. The seat in Muktsar district was once considered a stronghold of the Akalis, with Parkash Singh Badal representing it for five consecutive terms - 1969, 1972, 1977, 1980 and 1985. Manpreet began his political journey from Gidderbaha in

1995 on a SAD ticket and went on to win the seat in 1995, 1997, 2002 and 2007.

After parting ways with the SAD, Manpreet unsuccessfully contested from Gidderbaha in 2012 on a ticket of People's Party of Punjab, a party he floated, but lost to Amrinder Singh. He then shifted from Gidderbaha seat to Bathinda Urban Assembly segment, which he won in 2017 on a Congress ticket. He lost it again in 2022, and switched sides in 2023 by joining the BJP. Amrinder Singh won the Gidderbaha seat in 2012, 2017 and 2022.

"In the next two years, we want to develop Gidderbaha as a model Assembly segment to showcase to the rest of 116 Assembly constituencies that this is what the BJP model can

look like. I want to showcase to the people of Punjab that this is what Gidderbaha can achieve. This should be a model for the rest of Punjab to emulate," Manpreet said.

The politician seeks inclusion of the constituency under the AMRUT-2 scheme, plans to lay down water pipes for irrigation, and set up 20,000 solar-powered tubewells. "My first priority will be to get Gidderbaha declared as a smart city under the AMRUT-2 programme and the government of India has to select a certain number of cities in India so let Gidderbaha be one of them.

The bypolls to the four assembly seats - Gidderbaha, Dera Baba Nanak, Chabbewal and Barnala - will take place on November 20.

## Congress expels 28 rebels in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Less than a week after the BJP expelled 40 party rebel candidates, the Congress, has shown the door to as many as party's 28 rebel candidates in poll-bound Maharashtra for a period of six years.

Acting on the directions of AICC general secretary in-charge of Maharashtra, State Congress president Nana Patole issued two separate orders, suspending 28 rebels in 22 constituencies across the state.

The seven candidates suspended in the first list were: Shyamkant Saner (Sindhkheda), Rajendra Thakur (Shrivardhan), Aba Bagul (Aba Bagul), Manish Anand (Shivajinagar), Sureshkumar Jethaliya and Kalyan Borade (both from Partur) and Chandrapal Choukse (Ramtek).

Of the 21 more rebel candidates suspended through the party's second order were six pairs Anandrao Gedam and Shilu Chimurkar (both from

Armori), Sonal Kove and Bharat Yorme (both from Gadchiroli), Abhilasha Gavture and Raju Jhode (both from Ballarpur), Vilas R. Patil and Asma J. Chikhalekar (from both Bhiwandi), Manoj Shinde and Suresh Patil-Khede (both from Kopri-Pachpakhi).

The other rebel candidates against whom disciplinary action was initiated were Premasagar Ganveer (Bhandara), Ajay Lanjewar (Arjun Morgaon), Hanskumar Pandey (Mirambhayander), Kamal Vyawahare (Kasbapeth), Mohanrao Dandekar (Palus-Kadegaon), Mangal V. Bhujbal (Ahmednagar City), Vijay Khadse (Umarchhed), Shabbir Khan (Yavatmal), Avinash Lad (Rajapur), Yagnavalkya Jichkar (Katol) and Rajendra Mulak (Ramtek).

The suspension of rebel candidates came a day after Ramesh Chennitala sent a warning the rebel candidates that his party would not tolerate their indiscipline, that

the party would not allow 'friendly contests' and that the party would do everything to protect the prospects of the Maha Vikas Aghadi candidates are in the candidates in the fray.

Earlier on November 5, the BJP had cracked the whip and expelled as many 40 rebel candidates in 36 constituencies across the state.

The expelled rebels included two rebels from Dhule -- Rural (Shrikant Karle and Sophan Patil), two from Jalgaon city (Mayur Kapse and Ashwin Sonawane), two from Nanded-North (Vaishali Milind Deshmukh and Milind Uttarmrao Deshmukh), Nanded south (Dilip Venkatrao Kadkrute, Sunil Sahebrao More and Sanjay Dhongare), Baglan-ST (Aakash Salunke and Jayashree Garund).

Notwithstanding the disciplinary action taken by both the ruling BJP and Congress, there are still more rebels against official candidates of various political parties in the poll fray.

## BJP's Jharkhand poll cry: love jihad, infiltration, Rohingayas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ SERAIKELA (JHARKHAND)

Amit Shah, Union Minister for Home Affairs, on Monday announced that a committee would be formed if Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) forms government in Jharkhand to identify and drive out infiltrators from the state besides reclaiming land grabbed by them.

Shah also said a legislation will be brought to prevent transfer of land to infiltrators on their marrying tribal women. He went on to accuse the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led dispensation of patronising Bangladeshi infiltrators. Elections to the 81-member Jharkhand Assembly will be held on November 13 and 20, while the counting of votes polled will take place on November 23.

"Tribal population is declining in Jharkhand. Infiltrators are grabbing land

by marrying our daughters. We will bring legislation to prevent transfer of land to infiltrators if they marry tribal women. We will also form a committee to identify infiltrators to drive them out and reclaim land grabbed by them," Shah said addressing a rally at Seraikela.

He claimed that Champai Soren was insulted when he raised the infiltration issue and was forced to resign from chief minister's post by Hemant Soren.

Accusing the JMM-Congress and the RJD of only working for personal growth and indulging in corruption, he said, "Corrupt leaders of JMM-led coalition to be sent behind bars if BJP forms government in Jharkhand."

Shah alleged that the JMM-led dispensation was behind Rs 1,000 crore MNREGA scam, Rs 300 crore land scam, Rs 1,000 crore mining scam and multi-crore liquor scam and devoured Rs 3.90 lakh



crore sent by the Centre.

He promised that once the BJP government is voted to power in the state it will ensure that if the Centre sends rupee one, 25 more paise is added to it by the state so that Rs 1.25 reaches to people.

In another poll rally in Jharkhand, Yogi Adityanath, chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, on Monday accused

the JMM-led coalition in Jharkhand of converting the state into a "dharmashala" for Rohingyas and Bangladeshi infiltrators.

"Jharkhand has been converted into a 'dharmashala' for Rohingyas and Bangladeshi infiltrators who have been given free rein to spread anarchy," he claimed, while addressing an election rally at Bhawnathpur.

## MP bypoll: Nail biting finish expected in Budhni, Vijaypur

GIRISH SHARMA ■ BHOPAL

Since the start of the Selection season in Budhni and Vijaypur Assembly constituencies, both the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the main opposition Congress have left no stone unturned in the two constituencies.

Spearheading the BJP's attack, Mohan Yadav, chief minister of Madhya Pradesh (MP) and Vishnu Dutt Sharma, BJP state unit chief, addressed more than a dozen public meetings and conducted roadshows in both areas.

Narendra Singh Tomar, MP Assembly Speaker, has been camping in Vijaypur for over a fortnight. Though not on the original list of star campaigners due to his position in the state Assembly, Tomar was pressed into service after the BJP

sensed rough weather in the tribal-dominated area.

Tomar's involvement stirred the Congress, and the party immediately moved the Election Commission of India (ECI), describing Tomar's campaigning as a violation of the model code of conduct. The election watchdog is yet to respond.

The absence of Jyotiraditya Scindia was conspicuous in Vijaypur. Party insiders say that all may not be well between him and Raminvas Rawat, the BJP candidate in Vijaypur. Ruling party sources say that Rawat had refused to quit the Congress with Scindia when the latter crossed over to the BJP in 2020.

On the other hand, except for former Kamal Nath, all senior Congress leaders-PCC chief Jitu Patwari, Leader of the Opposition in the State

Assembly Umang Singh, Rajya Sabha MP Digvijay Singh, former PCC chief Arun Yadav and several legislators and office bearers participated in campaign activities.

With the Vijaypur bypoll beginning to acquire caste overtones, the BJP campaign requisitioned the services of Gwalior MP Bharat Singh Kushwaha to woo the sizeable Kushwaha community in Vijaypur.

The parliamentarian held a public meeting for the community in the presence of state BJP president.

Political observers feel that there is a tough fight in both constituencies. Both parties have put in all their strength. After the campaigning ended on Monday, both parties began closed-door meetings with booth workers and voters.

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ MAINPURI

The Karhal constituency in Uttar Pradesh's Mainpuri district has transformed into a political battleground with the upcoming by-election turning into a crucial test for both the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Representing the SP is Tej Pratap Yadav, grandson of the late Mulayam Singh Yadav, who is fighting to retain the family's political stronghold. His main rival is Anujesh Yadav, a BJP candidate and brother-in-law to SP MP Dharmendra Yadav, who presents himself as a "rebel" from the influential Yadav family of Saifai.

The Karhal seat was previously held by SP chief Akhilesh Yadav, who vacated it after winning the Kannauj

seat in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Akhilesh won Karhal in 2022, defeating BJP's Union Minister SP Singh Baghel. With the seat now vacant, the BJP has strategically fielded Anujesh Yadav to challenge Tej Pratap and make inroads into the SP's Yadav vote base.

"This election is about giving Karhal its share of development. Voters are ready for a double-engine government with Modi at the Centre and Yogi Adityanath in the state," Anujesh said, adding that other communities like the Shakyas, who are second in population only to the Yadavs, are keen to support the BJP for economic growth.

Historically, Karhal has been an SP fortress. Since 1993, the SP has won six of the seven elections held, with the BJP only managing one victory in

2002. In recent years, the SP has maintained its dominance, but the BJP's focus on a Yadav candidate has intensified the contest, raising questions about shifts in the constituency's political alignment.

Local journalist Neeraj Mehre commented, "The BJP hopes to replicate its 2002 success. However, the Yadavs' loyalty to the SP and their historical ties with the Mulayam family make this a formidable challenge."

Akhilesh Yadav and his wife and Mainpuri MP Dimple Yadav, has been at the forefront of Tej Pratap's campaign. Dimple, known for her close ties with voters in the region, has led door-to-door interactions, while senior family members like Shivpal Yadav and Dharmendra Yadav have actively supported her.

Notably, Tej Pratap previously represented Karhal from 2014 to 2019 after winning a by-election following Mulayam Singh Yadav's resignation. Married to Lalu Prasad Yadav's daughter Raj Lakshmi, Tej Pratap also carries the political legacy of the Yadav clan.

With Karhal's electorate of approximately 3.75 lakh voters, the Yadavs comprise the largest share at around 1.3 lakh, followed by Scheduled Castes (60,000), Shakyas (50,000), Thakurs (30,000), and other communities. The BJP's choice of a Yadav candidate is seen as an effort to fracture this vote base, while the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has fielded a Shakya candidate, potentially dividing the vote further.

Additionally, the entry of Chandrashekhar Azad's candidate may siphon off

Dalit support, adding complexity to the SP's traditional advantage.

BJP district president Rahul Chaturvedi expressed confidence in Anujesh's local connections and the development track record under the Yogi-Modi administration. "Karhal has benefited from our crime-free governance, and the people want to see more development," he stated.

While the BJP seeks to penetrate this SP bastion, the SP leadership remains optimistic. An SP leader said that disillusionment among farmers and youth with the BJP government strengthens Tej Pratap's chances.

As Karhal approaches the polling date, the election has become a high-stakes contest of Yadav loyalty, political legacy, and changing caste dynamics.



# India bears the brunt

This year’s high death toll and losses due to climate change underscore the urgent need for policy action

With over 3,200 fatalities, extensive crop damage across 3.2 million hectares, and 2.3 lakh buildings destroyed in the first nine months of 2024 alone, the country’s vulnerability to extreme weather events is undeniable. These findings of the ‘India Climate Report 2024’ from the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) give a shocking picture of the impact of climate change on the country. The report underscores that 93 per cent of the days between January and September were marked by extreme weather, a clear indication that climate-related disasters are becoming not only more frequent but also more severe. The report’s findings reveal a staggering increase in extreme weather events. In 2024, India faced climate extremes on 255 out of 274 days, a record when compared to previous years. Notably, over 35 of the 36 states and union territories experienced such events, with states like Karnataka, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh witnessing over 40 additional days of climate extremes compared to 2023.



The grim statistics point to a significant toll on human life and livelihoods. Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Assam were the hardest-hit states in terms of fatalities, while Andhra Pradesh saw the greatest destruction of homes, and Maharashtra experienced the largest crop damage. Among the notable phenomena in 2024 were prolonged heatwaves and an unprecedented number of warm nights. Besides, the monsoon season was particularly disastrous, with heavy rains, floods and landslides occurring every single day from June through September. Assam, for example, faced extreme weather on 111 days out of 122, highlighting the relentless impact of intense rainfall and flooding. The 2024

India Climate Report also points to a significant data gap. While the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has made strides in tracking events like warm nights, it lacks absolute temperature benchmarks, which many other countries use to enhance climate data accuracy. The lack of comprehensive, real-time data on climate-related damages impedes effective planning and resource allocation, especially in vulnerable regions. Several factors have contributed to India’s vulnerability which must be addressed. The lopsided development, scant regard to the climate impact and allowing reckless construction in hills must stop. This pattern of ‘bad development’ worsens the impact of natural disasters, transforming regions with poor infrastructure or unplanned urban sprawl into high-risk areas. As the world approaches the dangerous threshold of 1.5°C of warming above pre-industrial levels, India’s situation signals the urgent need for effective climate policies, mitigation strategies and public awareness. The ‘India Climate Report 2024’ serves as a somber reminder of the escalating costs of climate inaction. A collective and urgent response is needed, one that includes better data collection, sustainable urban planning and policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Only then can India hope to protect its people and environment.



A baby monkey eats a slice of bread by the side of a road, in New Delhi

PTI

## A Journey of imagination, resilience and self-discovery

Dreams can teach us resilience, guide us through adversities and keep us striving for something more

All of us dream with our eyes open. It matters not whether we succeed in all of these. The beauty of the journey also enriches our lives in ways that we may not immediately fathom. My innumerable dreams keep me moving. My father got me a comic adaptation of David Copperfield by Charles Dickens when I was 6.

I was impressed by the way David tackled the adversities in his life. He was sent to the boarding school by his stepfather and was saved from being bullied by James Steerforth. The two formed an unlikely friendship that ended with the death of James.

Steerforth was a rakish scoundrel, but David looked at all that was good in him. My dream at that tender age depended on my frame of mind. Sometimes I would want to be like David, overcoming all adversities, other times I would want to be a loveable scoundrel like James, ready to help friends. I guess I imbibed a bit of both. I had studied mostly



in Hindi medium all boys’ schools in my formative years. I was shy of speaking to girls the first time that I went to a co-ed school when I was only 12. I would look enviously at boys who could speak with girls in fluent English. I would want to be like them. In later years, I understood that it was important to communicate, language was secondary. Two heroes entered my life around this time. Sunil Gavaskar from the cricket world and Bjorn Borg of the lawn tennis fame. I looked enviously at their ability to display no emotions whether winning or losing. I was and continue

to be sentimental. My face is transparent and displays all my emotions. However, I have come to realise that being sentimental is also akin to being passionate about your goals and is not a weakness. My dreams were not so spectacular in my intervening professional years. They were the routine dreams about going up the career ladder to reach the top, whether in the government sector, where you are bound to move up at a steady pace to a point predetermined by your age and seniority; or to earn better money in the private sector.

Then I quit the system. Free of the invisible shackles, I went berserk with my dreams. I spent a lot of time in the kitchen during the COVID-19 days, baking bread and making wine. Surprisingly, even my wife stopped objecting to my presence in a space that she had always considered as her private domain. I started harbouring dreams of recognition as a renowned chef. I also started writing at

this late stage in life and another dream was born. I started thinking of winning a Booker prize or a Sahitya Akademi award. Once you have crossed 60, you want to be immortal. What could be better than to be remembered centuries after you are gone? My dream is for my books to occupy pride of place on someone’s bookshelf in the 23rd century; like the books of my favourite author, Charles Dickens, on my bookshelf, 200 years later. I now understand that no dream is irrational, outlandish, bizarre, or not worth pursuing. What is this life if we do not dream and strive for them? We may fail to attain many, but we will succeed in a few. That is what makes life extraordinary. Lee Kuan Yew’s words are apt, “If you are just realistic, you become pedestrian, you will fail. You must be able to soar above the reality and say, ‘this is also possible.’” (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

# Trump’s win sets stage for ‘America First’ revival



V K BAHUGUNA

Trump’s second term promises to reshape alliances and influence critical issues, including US-India relations, climate policy and the global energy market

Donald Trump has made history by winning the 2024 US Presidential election, securing 292 Electoral College votes and defeating Kamala Harris, the media’s favoured candidate. His resounding victory marks a significant comeback and has reignited debates globally about what his second term might bring. This election wasn’t without its drama, as Trump survived an assassination attempt on September 15, 2024, amid allegations of interference from powerful interest groups attempting to prevent his reelection. The victory was further shaped by the support of influential figures, including Indian American Vivek Ramaswamy, a former Republican hopeful who backed Trump. “Trump’s comeback is America’s comeback,” Ramaswamy remarked, applauding Trump’s strong persona as a “badass Commander-in-Chief” that many believe the US needs. A substantial part of Trump’s campaign success was due to substantial financial support from allies like Elon Musk, who reportedly contributed \$119 million to the campaign. Musk’s active presence on X (formerly Twitter) and outspoken defence of Trump against media criticism played a key role, particularly in swing states like Texas, Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina and Florida. This unconventional alliance between Trump and Musk has sparked speculation and surprise, even influencing figures abroad, such as Bangladesh’s Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus. Previously critical of Trump, Yunus has become a reluctant admirer following Trump’s success. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also likely pleased with Trump’s return. The two leaders share a warm rapport, marked by a mutual understanding rooted in their strong nationalist stances. Though Modi was unable to meet Trump during his September 2024 visit to the US due to protocol issues, Trump’s victory strengthens India-US ties and suggests a renewed focus on strategic cooperation between the two nations.



Trump’s “America First” policy will likely shape his approach to foreign relations in this term. Expect him to push allies, including NATO and the European Union, to shoulder more of their defence costs. He may scale back US involvement in international conflicts, aiming instead to negotiate peace agreements that align with American interests. A notable example is his stance on Ukraine: Trump’s re-election could mean a reduction in US military and financial support for Ukraine, possibly pressuring the country toward a peace settlement with Russia—a development that could lead to a significant de-escalation of the conflict. In the Indo-Pacific region, Trump’s focus will likely remain on curbing China’s influence and India could play a pivotal role in these efforts. India’s strategic importance as a counterbalance to China in the region aligns well with Trump’s vision. The US-India partnership could expand in sectors like defence, technology and energy security. Trump’s push for “reshoring” American manufacturing from China may create new investment opportunities for India, especially in high-growth industries like pharmaceuticals, electronics, and renewable energy. Energy collaboration will also likely be a highlight of US-

PRIME MINISTER  
NARENDRA MODI IS  
ALSO LIKELY  
PLEASED WITH  
TRUMP’S RETURN.  
THE TWO LEADERS  
SHARE  
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MARKED  
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NATIONALIST  
STANCES

India relations. With India’s growing energy needs, Trump’s focus on US energy independence could lead to mutually beneficial trade in oil, natural gas, and renewable technologies, while US firms may look to invest in India’s energy infrastructure. However, Trump’s immigration policies, particularly concerning H-1B visas for skilled workers, may remain a point of contention. While Trump generally supports highly skilled professionals, further restrictions on visas could push India to enhance its own tech ecosystem, promoting more in-country growth and innovation. Trump’s stance on climate change negotiations may remain divisive. Given his scepticism toward multilateral climate agreements, he could once again withdraw the US from global climate accords. This could impact the efficacy of initiatives like the Paris Agreement, where developed countries have pledged \$100 billion to support developing nations. So far, only a fraction of this amount has materialised, raising concerns about the long-term viability of global climate targets. Trump’s reluctance to support these accords without substantial changes could weaken international resolve on climate issues. India will closely watch Trump’s policies on counterterrorism, particularly regard-

ing Pakistan, a country that has historically been linked to terrorism in the region. Trump’s past rhetoric and strong stance against terrorism suggest he may align with India’s concerns. A tougher US stance on Pakistan could address India’s longstanding issues with cross-border terrorism, potentially strengthening US-India ties in this area. Trump’s complex relationship with the US media, especially during the 2024 campaign, added another layer to the narrative. Musk was one of the few who openly supported Trump on X, condemning what they saw as a biased media landscape that often criticised Trump. This approach may have contributed to his strong showing in swing states, bolstered by Musk’s strategic influence on social media. As Trump prepares to re-enter the White House in January 2025, the world anticipates how his policies will unfold. His administration’s priorities are expected to bring significant shifts in US domestic and foreign policy, from trade and immigration to international alliances and climate action. Global leaders and citizens alike are waiting to see how Trump’s assertive approach to governance will redefine America’s role on the world stage. (The writer is former member of Indian Forest Service; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### AMERICA CHOOSES TRUMP

Madam — With 295 electoral votes, the American people have chosen Donald Trump as the 47th President of the United States. Many entrepreneurs from the business sector have welcomed Trump’s reelection, indicating that development is a key issue for the US. According to Google CEO Sundar Pichai, of Indian descent, “We are in the golden age of transformation in America and are committed to working with the administration. This will benefit everyone. Similarly, Jindal also responded positively to Trump’s win.

Trump’s strong opponent, Kamala Harris, who received 226 votes, mentioned that the process of transitioning power would be completed as quickly and peacefully as possible. In her concession speech, Harris emphasised moving forward but mentioned that she would resist when given the opportunity. Speaking at her alma mater, Harvard University, Harris stated, “Never give up. Our allegiance remains with the American Constitution, and the fight to protect the country’s fundamental principles will continue. Overall, the US presidential election was thrilling and closely contested. In the coming period, a key point of interest will be how the new administration under Trump addresses issues faced by immigrants and tackles unemployment in the country. But the business world is happy. Dattaprasad Shiroadkar | Mumbai

### CANADA VISA BARRIER

Madam — Apropos of the headlines (Nov 10), the impasse over Student Direct Stream for Indian students chasing for studies in Canadian universities in furtherance of diplomatic tussle is going beyond proportions. This should be seen as an opportunity, as the compulsively foreign-bound students should explore alternatives and preferably shed their obsession for foreign universities, as the standards of our premier engineering, medical and management institutions are superb and provide better

## Manipur needs peace



It is unfortunate that ethnic conflict between the valley-based Meitei and the hills-based Kuki-Zo tribal communities began on May 3, 2023, still unabated. The latest incident

happened in the Bishanpur district of Manipur on Saturday, when militants fired a group of farmers, killing a 34-year-old woman. Since the ethnic violence erupted in Manipur, it has so far claimed the lives of more than 250 people and about 60,000 others were displaced, besides a devastating economic loss to the state. Despite a great loss of men and material, the government (Centre and state) has done very little to initiate a meaningful dialogue between the warring communities. To obviate further clashes, there is a greater need to maintain peace in the entire state but deploying force alone cannot quell a situation that requires sensitivity and compassion in equal measure. S K Khosla | Chandigarh

### AMU MINORITY STATUS

Madam — The simple logic that guided the 5-judge SC judgement depriving the minority status of AMU, “that the university was neither established by Muslims nor administered by Muslims,” has been declared null and void by a majority judgement of the 7-judge bench of the Supreme Court of India. Surprisingly, the majority of SC judges led by the CJI overlooked the fact that it is a Central University run by the Union of India constituted under a Constitution that is essentially SECULAR. It took 7 long years for the bench to arrive at the judgement declaring Status Quo about the question, and according to Dipankar Dutta, one of the dissenting judges, this judgement was hastily delivered without the ideal procedure of consultations and discussions before the final draft. Still, the Supreme Judges expect the highest regard for their deeds from the people of this country. Jai Prakash Gupta | Ambala Cantt

Vinod Johri | Delhi



FIRST COLUMN

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF BURNOUT

Addressing mental health with managerial support is essential for a healthy workplace



SAKSHI SETHI

Numerous studies found that high job demands, low control, low social support and job insecurity are significant risk factors for depression in the workplace while, factors such as excessive workload, lack of control, poor work-life balance and unsupportive work environments trigger burnout. Research in all these areas has grown substantially in recent years, revealing valuable insights into how these mental health challenges affect individual employees and organisations. In today's fast-paced and high-pressure work environment, burnout and depression have become prevalent challenges affecting employees across industries. While burnout is often a result of chronic workplace stress characterised by exhaustion, cynicism and a feeling of reduced accomplishment, depression on the other side, is a mental health disorder marked by persistent sadness, lack of motivation and feelings of hopelessness that may affect all areas of a person's life. Both can severely impact employee wellbeing, workplace productivity and organisational success. Burnout and depression in the workplace are typically rooted in multiple factors often exacerbated by modern work conditions and expectations such as excessive workload and unrealistic expectations, lack of control and autonomy, poor work-life balance, toxic work environment and insufficient recognition and reward. There is no denying that when employees lack the time and resources to recover and recharge or have no input into their work, their sense of helplessness can contribute to both, they become more susceptible to burnout and over time, even depression. Moreover, a hostile or untrusting work environment can erode employee morale and mental health contributing to burnout and, in some cases, even depression. The impact of burnout and depression extends beyond individual suffering and affects the workplace as a whole. As stated earlier, to maintain productivity, employees experience burnout and depression which may consequently lead to decline in productivity thereby impacting the profitability and overall performance. It is quite often stated that absenteeism and presenteeism both have significant implications for workplace productivity and team morale. Now when the levels of burnout and depression within an organisation are high, it will create a culture of dissatisfaction, resulting in a lack of engagement and trust among employees and as a result can harm collaboration, innovation and the company's reputation, thereby making it difficult to attract and retain top talent. It will end up driving employees to leave their jobs in search of a healthier work environment. Addressing burnout and depression in the workplace requires both—structural changes within the organisation as well as individual efforts. By creating a culture where employers foster an environment that values open communication and employees express concerns without the fear of stigma or reprisal; training managers to identify symptoms of burnout and depression and to respond effectively; providing small gestures of appreciation through praise, bonuses, or other rewards can significantly improve job satisfaction, and help in reducing stress and the likelihood of burnout. Organisations can create a healthier, more productive and more sustainable work environment where employees and the company can thrive. *(The writer is an educator; views are personal)*

Trump's return and the US-India trade challenge



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The evolving global trade landscape may offer India an opportunity to capture markets left by China, positioning it as a key partner in America's strategy to diversify supply chains



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DURING HIS PREVIOUS TERM, TRUMP ARGUED THAT INDIA IMPOSES SOME OF THE HIGHEST TARIFFS IN THE WORLD, POINTING TO EXAMPLES SUCH AS THE 100 PER CENT TARIFF ON HARLEY-DAVIDSON MOTORCYCLES, THOUGH IT WAS LATER REDUCED BY PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

The world is galvanised, shaken, in a trance with Donald Trump's return to the US presidency. There are hope, aspirations, anxiety and speculations of a changing world. One knows the reality but the uncertainties around rock. Would it be a stable or turbulent India? Sizeable Indians are celebrating his victory against Kamla Harris, who possibly lost because she is a woman than any other reason. Not surprisingly, Indians obsessed with Trump, who exceeded the limits of decency, in the uses of words and even a 'B...' word are rejoicing. An Indian newspaper headline was eloquent or jocular as its banner blared "Kamala Harris", an intended pun may be to express the happiness that she was destined to lose. 'Harris' in Hindi and some other Indian languages means defeat. So, an unsomber person gets the support against a dignified woman, whose Indian origin did not enamour Indians either in the US or India. Would Trump, supposedly a friend of India, spread out the red carpet for India? Does India matter much for the US, strategically or economically? The US is India's export partner with total exports of \$77.5 billion in FY24 and total bilateral trade was about \$120 billion. Obviously, this balance of trade in favour of India spurs the US to counterbalance it. Trump has often criticised India's trade policies for creating barriers to American products, framing them as unfairly protectionist. During his previous term, Trump argued that India imposes some of the highest tariffs in the world, pointing to examples such as the 100 per cent tariff on Harley-Davidson motorcycles, though it was later reduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He calls India "an abuser" of import tariffs, a claim that echoed his October 2020 statement labelling India the "Tariff King". It seems to signify potential India and US-India trade tensions, the emphasis is on renegotiating trade terms. The new US President's economic policy is expected to focus on higher tariffs on all imports – 10 per cent across the board, and as high as 60 per cent on those from China, restrictions on immigration as well a reduction of corporate tax rate to 15 per cent for all companies manufacturing in the US. All this could eventually fuel higher inflation in the US and subsequent action by the Federal Reserve. For India, it could impact key export sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles and IT services. This may affect sectors where India has maintained high tariffs to protect domestic industries, such as agriculture and manufacturing. This is a highly sensitive issue for the Indian policymakers. The NDA government has taken conscience steps to ensure protection for the domestic industry, agriculture and other sectors. The IT companies, like TCS, Infosys and Wipro, rely heavily on the US for both revenue and talent deployment. "It could make Indian exports less competitive in the US market, impacting revenue," says a report by the economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI). It may hit China the most being the largest US trade partner. Many Indians believe that Indian exporters could benefit from the vacuum created as they also expect to fill the Bangladesh garment export fall by 6.2 per cent. The expectations may not be a reality, as the US itself strives to be a manufacturing hub, which is termed "America First". Besides, if a new tariff regime begins it may require intense effort and allowing concessions for increasing Indian exports. While the barriers are high, apart from the government's diplomacy, some large companies are already in touch with the Trump coterie to mollify the issues as they are keen on setting up new ventures in the US or with US companies. His previous immigration policies affected Indian professionals, especially those reliant on H-1B visas. Stricter immigration controls may hinder the mobility of Indian IT workers and engineers to the US, posing potential challenges for the Indian tech industry. The IT companies are giving preference to indigenous US workers. It reduces opportunities for new entrants. India's leading status as a generic drug exporter to the US could be hit with new regulatory hurdles and tariffs, impacting companies like Sun Pharma and Dr Reddy's. Additionally, India's steel and aluminium industries may suffer if Trump reinstates tariffs on these metals, as he did during his previous term. His preference for fossil fuels and his resistance to international climate commitments could discourage joint US-India investments in renewable energy, a priority for India. It could impact Indian solar and renewable energy companies. Trump's support for India in defence and security matters is unpredictable. His prior attempts to mediate between India and Pakistan on issues like Kashmir created unease in New Delhi, which values its autonomy in regional matters. Possibly sensing this China entered into a border agreement with India after four years of logjam. An Indian concern is that the West Asia war zone extends to Iran now. India is simultaneously developing ties with the Taliban in Afghanistan. The recent rate cut by the US Fed Reserve and the latest presidential polls have disturbed Indian stock markets, which continue to fall. Along with this, rupee parity with the dollar touches new lows with a one-day fall of 21 paise to Rs 84.30 on November 6 and a further decline to Rs 84.38 on November 8. It may go down to Rs 85, the market says. There are also positive aspects in the US-India relationships, which Trump ensured earlier too. His personal equation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi had warmed up the ties. It is expected that high-profile events like Howdy Modi in Houston and Namaste Trump at Ahmedabad will be repeated to cement public engagements, and personal diplomacy and strengthen people-to-people ties. Indian exports and trade with the US might increase under Donald Trump for several reasons, despite his protectionist "America First" stance. India, with its growing manufacturing sector and cost advantages, emerged as a potential alternative to China for certain goods. If Trump continues to push for decoupling from China, India could benefit by positioning itself as a substitute supplier in many areas including semiconductors. Despite many issues, it is expected that US firms moving away from China could set up shops in India. Some like Ford set up 200,000 vehicle manufacturing units in Chennai for exports. McDonald's is also expanding. Ups and downs apart, India and the US are likely to have better ties for strategic reasons by engaging in intense negotiations also to end proposed sanctions against 19 Indian companies. *(The author is a senior journalist; views are personal)*

Women waste pickers in India: Transforming waste management amidst challenges

Recognising the intersection of caste, gender and class in the waste sector is essential to building a cleaner, more equitable world for all

In India, women waste pickers play a vital role in waste management, particularly in urban and semi-urban areas. They are part of a larger, often invisible workforce within the informal waste sector, which comprises around 1.5 million workers. These women, mostly from marginalised backgrounds, undertake roles in waste collection, sorting, and sometimes even in supervisory capacities. Despite contributing significantly to recycling operations, they earn approximately 33 per cent less than their male counterparts, underscoring deep-rooted gender inequalities in this sector. The rise of initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission



SANJAY K GUPTA

(SBM) has shifted the landscape of waste management in India. Many Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) now employ more women in front-end roles, such as door-to-door waste collection and material sorting at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs). This inclusion has led to improved Swachh Survekshan rankings for these ULBs, reflecting

enhanced cleanliness and waste management efficiency. Despite this progress, women waste pickers continue to face multifaceted challenges, including gender-based violence, caste discrimination and limited economic mobility. **Case Studies:** Studies from cities like Ambikapur, Bengaluru, and Tinsukia highlight the significant positive changes brought about by involving women in waste management. **Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh:** With a population of around 146,000, Ambikapur became the cleanest town in its population category, mainly due to a large female workforce in waste management. Out of 550 jobs created, 457 were filled by women, resulting in



46 were allocated to women, enabling the town to achieve the status of the fastest-moving clean city in its category. **Challenges Faced by Women Waste Pickers:** Despite their essential contributions, women in the waste sector face a range of difficulties. Hazardous working conditions expose them to toxins and diseases and their work often goes unrecognised. Many women waste pickers are Dalits or

Adivasis who endure societal stigma, which reinforces their marginalisation and limits their social mobility. They lack access to formal recognition, fair wages and safety measures, making them some of the most vulnerable in India's workforce. The absence of specific policies addressing women waste pickers aggravates these issues. The informal nature of their work, coupled with limited research on gender dynamics in waste management, restricts policy interventions, leaving women out of leadership roles and decision-making processes. **Intersection of Caste and Gender in Waste Work** Caste adds another layer to the marginalisation of women in waste management.

Often seen as "dirty work," waste picking and sorting are stigmatised, especially for women from marginalised castes. This reinforces social hierarchies that exclude them from fair participation and economic upliftment. Scholars like Nancy Fraser and Martha Chen emphasise that caste and gender intersectionality compounds discrimination, limiting women's bargaining power and political representation in waste management. Addressing such complex intersections requires policies that recognise these overlapping identities and create inclusive opportunities for women waste pickers. To address these challenges and create a more equitable waste management system,

policies should adopt a gender-sensitive approach, ensuring that women have access to leadership roles and opportunities for entrepreneurial development. By promoting women in management roles, their economic empowerment and social standing can be enhanced. The inclusion of women not only enhances cleanliness but also contributes to larger goals of social justice and economic empowerment. Recognising the intersection of caste, gender and class in the waste sector is essential to building a cleaner, more equitable world for all. *(The writer is Global Advisor and Consultant on waste management; views are personal)*



# Trump, Putin discuss ending war in Ukraine, but Kremlin denies

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President-elect Donald Trump spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin over the phone and discussed ending the war in Ukraine amongst many other important topics, according to a media report. However, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov denied the media report of the phone call between Putin and Trump. After winning the recent presidential elections, Trump has spoken to over 70 world leaders. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu were among the firsts. “The two men discussed the goal of peace on the European

continent and Trump expressed an interest in follow-up conversations to discuss ‘the resolution of Ukraine’s war soon,” one of the people said,” The Washington Post said in an exclusive report published on Sunday. One former US official who was familiar with the Putin call said that Trump likely does not want to enter office with a fresh crisis in Ukraine prompted by Russian escalation, “giving him the incentive to want to keep the war from worsening,” the daily said. Trump is scheduled to be sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025. Ukraine has been

informed about the Trump-Putin call. “During the call, which Trump took from his resort in Florida, he advised the Russian president not to escalate the war in Ukraine and reminded him of Washington’s sizable military presence in Europe, said a person familiar with the call, who, like others interviewed for this story, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter,” The Washington Post reported. However, Kremlin spokesman Peskov in Moscow said the Western media reports of the phone call between Putin and Trump are “untrue”, state-run TASS news agency reported. “There was no conversation... This is completely untrue; it’s pure fiction,” Peskov said. Meanwhile, Steven Cheung, Trump’s communications director, told PTI he would not comment on the private calls between President-elect Trump and other world leaders. “President Trump won a historic election decisively and leaders from around the world know America will return to prominence on the world stage. That is why leaders have begun the process of developing stronger relationships with the 45th and 47th President because he represents global peace and stability,” Cheung said.

# Russian glide bombs, drones, ballistic missile kill 6, injure 30 in Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Russian glide bombs, drones and a ballistic missile smashed into cities in southern and eastern Ukraine on Monday, officials said, killing at least six civilians and injuring about 30 others. Russia recently intensified strikes that have long tormented civilian areas, Ukraine President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy said, in an apparent effort to unnerve Ukrainians and wear down their willingness to keep up a war that is approaching its 1,000-day milestone. “Every day, every night, Russia commits the same terror,” Zelenskyy said in a post on the Telegram messaging app. “Except that an increasing number of civilian objects are becoming targets.” Both Russia and Ukraine are waiting to see how Washington will change its policy on the war after Donald Trump takes office in January. The US is the biggest provider of military help to Ukraine but Trump has chided the Biden administration for giving Kyiv tens of billions of dollars of aid. The major cities struck Monday by Russia are close to the war’s around 1,000-km (600-mile) front line. Russian drones hammered the southern city of Mykolaiv, killing five people and injuring a 45-year-old woman, local



In this image provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service on Monday, a firefighter works on a site of a Russian attack on residential area in Mykolaiv, Ukraine.

AP/PTI

authorities said. Around two dozen people sought psychological help following the attack that damaged houses and stores, officials said. Mykolaiv, located about 60 km (37 miles) northwest of the front line in the Kherson region, frequently comes under Russian attack. An overnight attack on Zaporizhzhia, also in the south, with three powerful glide bombs killed one person and injured 21, including a 4-year-old boy, Ukraine’s National Police said. The strikes partially destroyed a two-story apartment building and damaged a dormitory. A five-story apartment building in Kryvyi Rih, Zelenskyy’s hometown in central Ukraine, was hit by a Russian ballistic

missile, injuring at least eight people. Emergency services were searching through the rubble, Oleksandr Vikul, head of Kryvyi Rih Military Administration said. The missile destroyed all five stories in one part of the building, he said. Meanwhile, Ukraine’s intelligence agency claimed in a statement it destroyed a Russian Mi-24 assault helicopter parked at the Klin-5 airfield in the Moscow region. The claim could not be independently verified. The Russian Defence Ministry said Monday that 17 Ukrainian drones were destroyed over the Russian regions of Kursk, Belgorod and Voronezh overnight and in the morning.

# Netanyahu admits Israel’s role in pager, walkie-talkie attacks on Hezbollah

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the first time admitted that Israel was behind the pager and walkie-talkie attacks on Hezbollah in September that left at least 39 people dead and more than 3,000 injured, local media reports have said. “The pager operation and the elimination of (Hezbollah leader Hassan) Nasrallah were carried out despite the opposition of senior officials in the defence establishment and those responsible for them in the political echelon,” The Times of Israel newspaper quoted Netanyahu as saying. Netanyahu’s remarks came during Sunday’s weekly Cabinet meeting, according to Hebrew

media reports. Israel had so far not taken responsibility publicly for the attacks, but it was widely speculated that it was behind the complex successfully orchestrated attacks that took the world by surprise. Thousands of pagers containing explosives exploded on their Hezbollah owners across Lebanon and parts of Syria on September 16. While the world was still absorbing the news of pager explosions, walkie-talkies met the same fate a day later on September 17, shocking the world at the level of Israeli intelligence’s preparation in its war against the Lebanese Shia militia. Netanyahu’s statement is being interpreted in the context of his firing of Defence Minister Yoav

Gallant and efforts to shore up personal popularity by taking credit for war successes. Gallant was fired from the defence minister’s position on November 5. Netanyahu and Gallant have clashed repeatedly over the course of their time in government together. Netanyahu also tried to get rid of him in March 2023 as well, a day after Gallant called for pausing the legislation process of the government’s contentious judicial overhaul plan arguing that it caused divisions that posed a threat to national security, but had to reinstate him due to massive public protests. He was the defence minister when Hamas committed its deadly terror assault in southern

Israel on October 7 last year and had so far carried out his duties in the subsequent war in the Gaza Strip, the fighting on the northern border, and the ground operation in southern Lebanon. In a press conference on Tuesday, Gallant said that he was fired because of differences on the issue of the need to draft ultra-orthodox men in the Israel Defence Forces, the imperative to bring back the hostages from Gaza, and the need for establishing a state commission of inquiry to look into the October 7 Hamas terror attack and the ensuing war. Netanyahu has resisted taking responsibility for the country’s security oversights, blaming Israel’s security forces for the failure to foresee Hamas’ October 7 massacre.

# Israeli strike kills 3 in central Gaza

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Palestinian medical officials say an Israeli strike hit a tent sheltering a displaced family in the central Gaza Strip, killing at least three people, including the parents of twins. The strike late Sunday in the urban Nuseirat refugee camp wounded the two children, aged 10, who were being treated for serious injuries at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the nearby city of Deir al-Balah. The details of the casualties were listed in hospital records and an Associated Press reporter saw two of the bodies. The Israeli military says it only targets militants and accuses them of hiding among civilians. Palestinians reported heavy bombing late Sunday in the western areas of Nuseirat camp, which dates back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel’s creation. At least 24 people were wounded and taken to the Awda hospital in Nuseirat, said Mohamed Muhareb, head of



the hospital’s ambulance service. The Israel-Hamas war began after militants stormed into Israel on Oct 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducting 250 others. Israel’s military response

in Gaza has killed more than 43,000 people, Palestinian health officials say. They do not distinguish between civilians and combatants, but say more than half of those killed were women and children. Hezbollah began firing into

Israel on Oct 8, 2023, in solidarity with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Since the conflict erupted, more than 3,100 people have been killed and nearly 13,900 wounded in Lebanon, the health ministry reported.

# Japan’s parliament re-elects Ishiba as PM despite his coalition’s recent loss

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan’s parliament reelected Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba on Monday after his governing coalition suffered the worst election loss in more than a decade, forcing the struggling leader to form his second Cabinet in just over a month since taking office. Ishiba’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its junior partner Komeito together lost their majority in the 465-seat Lower House, the more powerful of Japan’s two-house parliament, in the Oct 27 election due to continued voter outrage over financial misconduct by his party and its lukewarm response.

A special parliamentary session convened Monday to pick a new leader in a vote required within 30 days of a general election. Ishiba beat top opposition leader Yoshihiko Noda 221-160 in the first runoff in 30 years. Ishiba reappointed most of his previous Cabinet members, including Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya, Defence Minister Gen Nakatani and Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi, but had to replace three who lost seats or were affected by the election results. Ishiba is expected to hold a news conference to explain his new Cabinet and policies. Ishiba has refused to step down

and showed willingness to cooperate with additional coalition partners to boost stability and help him pursue his party’s policies. Ishiba will struggle in the coming months as he must gain consent from the opposition on policies including the budget and other legislation, experts say. He is eyeing a rising smaller, conservative opposition, the Democratic Party for the People, whose seats quadrupled to 28 under its popular leader Yuichiro Tamaki, whose proposal for raising the basic tax-free income allowance and increasing take-home wages garnered support

from low income and younger voters. Tamaki only wants to cooperate with Ishiba’s party on policy — not as part of a coalition — since he wants to use his leverage to increase his party’s standing ahead of the next election. However, Tamaki was recently stung by a magazine article exposing an extramarital affair, which he admitted to on Monday. Ishiba’s government is preparing for his trip later this month to Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation and Group of 20 summits, as well as a possible meeting with President-elect Donald Trump on his way home.

THE PIONEER

CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Harshita Singla D/o Shri Manoj Kumar Singla R/o 137/3 Patparganj, Village Ghronda Neem Ka Bangar Delhi-110091,** hereby declare that my father name of Manoj Kumar Singla and Manoj Kumar both are same and one person that my father correct name is Manoj Kumar Singla.

PD(904)C

**I, Sammer Singla S/o Shri Manoj Kumar Singla R/o 137/3 Patparganj, Village Ghronda Neem Ka Bangar Delhi-110091,** hereby declare that my father name Manoj Kumar Singla and Manoj Kumar both are same and one person that my father correct name is Manoj Kumar Singla.

PD(905)C

**I, No.16012124K Hav Yogindar Kumar, R/o- Vill-Khera Hatana, PO- Khera, PS- Baraut, Teh+Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250619,** have changed my daughter’s name from Tania to Taniya Dangi, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(906)C

**I, Iqbal Singh, Father of- No.16012124K Hav Yogindar Kumar, R/o- Vill- Khera Hatana, PO- Khera, PS- Baraut, Teh+Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250619,** have changed my name from Iqbal Singh to Iqbal, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(907)C

**I, Bala Devi, Mother of- No.16012124K Hav Yogindar Kumar, R/o- Vill- Khera Hatana, PO- Khera, PS- Baraut, Teh+Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250619,** have changed my name from Iqbal Singh to Iqbal, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(908)C

**I, No.16015608P Hav Harsh Kumar, R/o- Vill+PO- Kakripur, Thana- Ramala, Teh- Baraut, Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250623,** declare that in my service records, my Father’s name has wrongly written as Chander Pal Singh, whereas in his Aadhar Card No. 9879 0840 0620, his name is written as Chanderpal Singh, which is true & correct and should be known as this only.

PD(909)C

THE PIONEER

CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

**I, No.16015608P Hav Harsh Kumar, R/o- Vill+PO- Kakripur, Thana- Ramala, Teh- Baraut, Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250623,** declare that in my service records, my Mother’s name has wrongly written as Rajes Devi, whereas in her Aadhar Card No. 2032 8811 8043, her name is written as Rajesh, which is true & correct and should be known as this only

PD(910)C

**I, Lingale Shobha Janardan W/o- No.14854914P L/NK/HK Lingale Janardan Mahadev, R/o- Kadave B.K., Teh- Patan, Dist- Satara, Maharashtra- 415014,** have changed my name from Lingale Shobha Janardan to Shobha Janardan Lingale, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(911)C

**I, Birmati Devi, Mother of- No.10137015M Rfn Sandeep Kumar, R/o- Vill- Bhagana, Dist- Hisar, Haryana- 125014,** have changed my name from Birmati Devi to Veermati, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(912)C

**I, No.16013456A Hav Pritam Chand, R/o- Vill- Rajwalta, Dist – Kathua, Jammu & Kashmir- 184203,** have changed my son’s name from Harshv Basotra, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(913)C

**I, Anu, W/o- No.16012124K Hav Yogindar Kumar, R/o- Vill- Khera Hatana, PO- Khera, PS- Baraut, Teh+Dist- Baghpat, U.P.- 250619,** have changed my name from Anu to Annu, vide affidavit dated 11/11/2024 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(914)C

| ORIENTAL NAGPUR BETUL HIGHWAY LIMITED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Regd. Off.: Unit No 307A, 3rd Floor, Worldmark 2 Asset Area No 8, Hospitality Dist. Delhi Aerocity New Delhi - 110037                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| E-mail: onbhlinvestors.relations@orientalinfratrust.com; CIN: U45400DL2010PLC203649                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| ₹ in Millions)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| Sl. No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Particulars                                                                                                                                | Quarter Ended 30.09.2024 (Un-audited) | Quarter Ended 30.09.2023 (Un-audited) | Year Ended 31.03.2024 (Audited) |
| 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Total income from operations (net)                                                                                                         | 1,114.36                              | 1,000.47                              | 3,918.30                        |
| 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax and Exceptional Items)                                                                        | 491.88                                | 502.92                                | 2,020.75                        |
| 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional Items)                                                                    | 491.88                                | 502.92                                | 2,020.75                        |
| 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional Items)                                                                     | 437.87                                | 487.85                                | 1,973.07                        |
| 5                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)] | 438.06                                | 488.03                                | 1,973.09                        |
| 6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Paid up Equity Share Capital                                                                                                               | 181.35                                | 181.35                                | 181.35                          |
| 7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Reserves (excluding (excluding Debenture Redemption Reserve)                                                                               | 8,800.14                              | 7,549.67                              | 8,269.23                        |
| 8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Securities Premium                                                                                                                         | 3,443.66                              | 3,443.66                              | 3,443.66                        |
| 9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Net Worth                                                                                                                                  | 10,358.18                             | 9,336.13                              | 9,942.89                        |
| 10                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt                                                                                                      | 17,826.50                             | 20,093.76                             | 18,969.53                       |
| 11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares                                                                                                   | -                                     | -                                     | -                               |
| 12                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Debt Equity Ratio                                                                                                                          | 1.72:1                                | 2.40:1                                | 2.13:1                          |
| 13                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Earnings Per Share (of Rs 10/- each)                                                                                                       |                                       |                                       |                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1. Basic:                                                                                                                                  | 24.16                                 | 26.91                                 | 108.80                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2. Diluted:                                                                                                                                | 24.16                                 | 26.91                                 | 108.80                          |
| 14                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Capital Redemption Reserve                                                                                                                 | -                                     | -                                     | -                               |
| 15                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Debenture Redemption Reserve                                                                                                               | 1,376.70                              | 1,605.12                              | 1,491.82                        |
| 16                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Debt Service Coverage Ratio                                                                                                                | 1.08:1                                | 1.10:1                                | 1.14:1                          |
| 17                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Interest Service Coverage Ratio                                                                                                            | 2.05:1                                | 1.97:1                                | 2.00:1                          |
| <b>Notes:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of un-audited financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulations 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the un-audited financial results are available on the websites of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the listed entity ( <a href="http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in">http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in</a> ). |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| b) For the other line items referred to in Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, pertinent disclosures have been made to the Stock Exchange and are available on the websites of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the listed entity ( <a href="http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in">http://www.nagpurbetulhighway.in</a> ).                                                               |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| c) These un-audited financial results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors of the Company at their meeting held on Monday, November 11, 2024. The Statutory Auditors have carried out Limited Review of the aforesaid financial results.                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| d) The financial results of the Company have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting standard prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| For and on behalf of Board of Directors of Oriental Nagpur Betul Highway Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       |                                 |
| Sd/-                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       | Rajesh Yadav                    |
| Place: New Delhi                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       | Director                        |
| Date: November 11, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                            |                                       |                                       | DIN: 08397240                   |



## POSSESSION NOTICE

### APPENDIX IV (See rule 8(1)) (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **UGRO Capital Limited**, having its registered office at 4th Floor, Tower 3, Equinox Business Park, LBS Road, Kurla, Mumbai 400073 & **POONAWALA FINCORP LIMITED**, having its registered office at 601, 6th Floor, Zero One IT Park, Survey No. 79/1, Ghorapdi, Mundhwa Road, Pingle Wasti, Pune-411036, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with interest thereon, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 on the day, month and year mentioned below.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **UGRO Capital Limited** for the amount mentioned in the notice together with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

| Borrower Details | Demand Notice | Mortgaged Property | Possession Date |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|

|                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1.R.R Garments.</b><br><b>2.Raju Jain</b><br><b>3.Ritu Jain</b><br><b>4.Khajal Devi Jain</b><br><b>Loan Account Number:</b><br><b>UGDELS0000013910</b> | <b>Demand Notice dated</b><br><b>28.02.2024</b><br><b>for an amount of</b><br><b>Rs.</b><br><b>1,69,15,317/-</b><br><b>- as on</b><br><b>09.08.2024</b> | "All that piece and parcel of immovable property having built up for property no. IX/5348 (part), measuring area 66 Sq.Yards i.e. 55.18 Sq.Meter, with complete terrace/roof/rights, with the rights of upper construction upto Last Storey, out of Khasha No. 302, Khewat No.56, Khattani No.172, situated at abadi street No. 02, old seelampur, Gandhi Nagar in the area of village Seelampur, Ilkha Shabdara, Delhi – 110031." | <b>08-11-2024</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|

Date: 12-11-2024, Place : Delhi Authorised Officer, UGRO Capital Limited



# RBI issues framework for reclassification of FPI to FDI

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday issued an operational framework for reclassification of investment made by a foreign portfolio investor to foreign direct investment (FDI) if the entity breaches the prescribed limit. Currently, an investment made by foreign portfolio investor along with its investor group (FPI) should be less than 10 per cent of the total paid-up equity capital on a fully diluted basis. Any FPI investing in breach of the prescribed limit has the option of divesting their holdings or reclassifying such holdings as FDI subject to the conditions specified by the RBI and Sebi within five trading days from the date of



settlement of the trades causing the breach. The RBI has issued an operational framework for reclassification of foreign portfolio investment by FPI

to FDI. As per the framework, the FPI concerned will have to take necessary approvals from the government and concurrence of the Indian

investee company concerned. However, the facility of reclassification shall not be permitted in any sector prohibited for FDI, the RBI said.

For reclassification, the entire investment held by such FPI should be reported within the timelines as specified under the Foreign Exchange Management (Mode of Payment and Reporting of Non-Debt Instruments) Regulations, 2019. Post completion of reporting, the FPI should approach its Custodian with a request for transferring the equity instruments of the Indian company from its demat account maintained for holding foreign portfolio investments to its demat account maintained for holding FDI, the RBI said. The directions have become operative with immediate effect, the central bank added.

# IRF writes to PM expressing concern at growing road fatalities in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The International Road Federation (IRF) has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressing concern at growing number of road accident fatalities in the country. IRF president emeritus K K Kapila in the letter suggested implementing strategies aimed at raising awareness, influencing policy, and advancing road safety measures. According to the latest government data, about 5 lakh road accidents occur in India annually. Of this, there are 1.5 lakh fatalities, while 3 lakh suffer injuries. Recently, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari had



highlighted that this caused 3 per cent loss to the country's GDP. "Despite running of various campaigns involving road safety by the government, corporates and non-government bodies, India remains one of the most dangerous places for road users," Kapila said. He further said it is therefore, essential to galvanize public awareness, political will, and continuous engagement at

every level of society. As the leader of the nation and someone who embodies India's values and aspirations, IRF humbly requests the Prime Minister's support in promoting road safety initiatives, Kapila said. Some of the suggestions and actions made by IRF include incorporating road safety into PM's various addresses with a brief mention of road safety, the importance of obeying traffic rules, and reducing road fatalities, which could reach millions of people, especially youth. Other suggestions are spreading the road safety anthem prepared by IRF in 23 Indian languages and 10 foreign languages in schools, offices etc.

# Sensex, Nifty close flat amid unabated foreign fund outflows, muted earnings



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed flat in highly volatile trade on Monday as continuous FII selling, disappointing quarterly earnings and weak trends from Asian markets dented investor sentiment. After gyrating between highs and lows, benchmark Sensex eked out gains of 9.83 points or 0.01 per cent to settle at 79,496.15. The barometer gyrated 1,100.8 points between the day's high of 80,102.14 and a low of 79,001.34. The NSE Nifty dipped marginally by 6.90 points or 0.03 per cent to 24,141.30. From the 30-share Sensex pack, Asian Paints tumbled over 8 per cent after the company on Saturday reported a 43.71 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 693.66 crore for

the September quarter, impacted by soft-demand conditions, material price inflation and a decline in decorative and coatings business in the domestic market. Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, JSW Steel, NTPC, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finserv and Larsen & Toubro were also among the laggards. However, Power Grid, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services and ICICI Bank were among the gainers. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,404.04 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said, Indian markets remain under pressure, largely due to relentless foreign investor selling.

"The actions of FIIs are dominating the current market momentum, which is backed by a weak set of earnings and expectations from Trump policy. The risk of further downgrades in Nifty earnings casts clouds over investor sentiment, while the IT sector continued to outperform due to the strong US dollar and in anticipation of a revamp in US IT spending," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. India is also looking forward to the CPI data with a muted view as food prices are likely to be higher on MoM basis, essentially forging RBI to hold the interest rates in the short term, Nair added. In Asian markets, Seoul and Hong Kong settled lower while Tokyo and Shanghai ended higher. European markets were trading on a firm note. Wall Street ended in positive territory on Friday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.83 per cent to USD 73.26 a barrel. On Friday, the BSE benchmark gauge declined by 55.47 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 79,486.32. The Nifty dipped 51.15 points or 0.21 per cent to 24,148.20.

# Star India to make web series on Reserve bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star India will make a web series on the Reserve Bank of India's 90-year-long journey to help people have a better understanding about the central bank's vital role in the country's fast-growing economy. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which was set up in 1935, completed 90 years in April this year. Star India Private Limited, Viacom 18, Zee Entertainment Network Limited and Discovery Communications India were in the fray for "Production and distribution of Web Series Commemorating 90 years of RBI" after the central bank floated a Request for Proposal (RFP) in July. While Zee Entertainment Network and Discovery Communications India did not qualify beyond the technical evaluation round, Star India Pvt Ltd and Viacom 18 made it to the final round. According to the RBI, Star India has been awarded the tender for Rs 6.5 crore to make the web series. As per the RFP document, the RBI had desired the creation of a web series of



five episodes of approximately 25-30 minutes each, which can be aired on national TV channels and/or OTT platforms, commemorating 90 years journey of the RBI. The five-episode series will serve as a valuable resource for enhancing public understanding of the central bank's vital role in the economy, fostering greater engagement, and building trust and confidence in its operations and policies," said the RBI's Request for Proposal (RFP) issued in July. The series aims to highlight the central bank's vision and mission, showcase its significant achievements and initiatives, and provide insights into ongoing developments and collaborations. "Through compelling storytelling, expert interviews, and high-quality visuals, the web series seeks to enhance transparency and build trust in the central bank's operations and policies," the RBI has said while inviting the bids. The series aims to make complex financial concepts accessible and interesting to a broad audience, thereby, contributing to financial literacy.

# Sugs Lloyd emerges as lowest bidder for two govt projects worth Rs 300 crore in Bihar



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

EPC services provider Sugs Lloyd on Monday said it has emerged as the lowest bidder for two government projects worth Rs 300 crore in Bihar. The contracts involve supply, installation, testing, and commissioning (SITC) of a power substation, along with high-tension (HT) and low-tension (LT) lines, the company said in a statement. Sugs Lloyd has achieved a significant milestone by emerging as the lowest bidder (L1) for two government projects worth a combined initial value of over Rs 300 crore from the

Bihar government entities, the statement said. Sugs Lloyd CEO Satyakam Basu said, "We are thrilled to be declared as the L1 bidder for these critical infrastructure projects in power networks and solar vertical. We are also contemplating raising funds through an IPO very soon to expand our business and meet working capital requirements." Sugs Lloyd is engaged in the business of electrical engineering, civil and electrical EPC projects (Engineering, Procurement and construction) and renewable energy.

# Maruti Suzuki unveils all-new Dzire compact sedan, priced between ₹ 6.79 lakh and ₹ 10.14 lakh

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India on Monday introduced the all-new version of its compact sedan Dzire and said the automaker would continue to cater to all customer segments in order to preserve its high market share in the domestic market. The automaker introduced the new Dzire priced between Rs 6.79 lakh and Rs 10.14 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). While the SUV segment has been growing, other segments are also important to the company in order to maintain high market share, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI)



MD and CEO Hisashi Takeuchi told reporters here. He said Dzire has been a global success for the automaker with around 30 lakh units sold so far across markets.

Takeuchi noted that the company has invested around Rs 1,000 crore on the development of the model. MSI Senior Executive Officer (Marketing and Sales) Partho Banerjee said the company's endeavour is

to serve all customer segments. MSI currently has over 40 per cent market share (wholesales) in the overall domestic passenger vehicle segment. In terms of retail sales the company posted its highest-ever performance in October with 2.02 lakh units. In the sedan segment it has over 50 per cent market share. In the entry compact-sedan segment, which also has Honda Amaze, Hyundai Aura among others, MSI has a market share of over 61 per cent in the April-September period of this fiscal year.

# Equity mutual funds see record ₹ 41,887 crore inflow in October

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Equity mutual funds witnessed a record inflow of Rs 41,887 crore in October, marking a surge of over 21 per cent on a month-on-month (MoM) basis, fuelled by robust investments in thematic funds. This also marks the 44th consecutive month of net inflow in the equity-oriented funds, highlighting the ever-increasing appeal of mutual funds among investors, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed on Monday. "October's numbers are indeed phenomenal, especially given the backdrop of a steep market correction. While earlier this year,



equity inflows were buoyed by strong market performance, October marked a stark reversal. "The 5-6 per cent drop in both the Sensex and Nifty was one of the sharpest in recent years, similar to what we last saw in March 2020. Despite this, retail investors have shown remarkable resilience, with inflows

exceeding Rs 40,000 crore," Santosh Joseph, Co-founder and CEO of Germinate Investor Services, said. Overall, the mutual fund industry witnessed an inflow of Rs 2.4 lakh crore in the month under review, after an outflow of Rs 71,114 crore in September. The huge inflow was due to investments to the tune of Rs

1.57 lakh crore into debt schemes. The industry's net assets under management rose to Rs 67.25 lakh crore last month from Rs 67 lakh crore in September. As per the data, equity-oriented schemes witnessed an inflow of Rs 41,887 crore in October, as compared to Rs 34,419 crore in September. Before this, equity schemes saw an inflow of Rs 40,608 crore in June. Within the equity schemes, sectoral thematic attracted investors with the highest net inflows of Rs 12,279 crore during the month under review. However, flow in the segment was less compared to Rs 13,255 crore in September.

# Arun Duggal ceases to be chairman of Icra Ltd board

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic rating agency Icra on Monday said Arun Duggal ceased to be the chairman and independent director on the board of the company upon completion of his term. In a regulatory filing, Icra said the second consecutive term of appointment of Arun Duggal and Ranjana Agarwal as Independent Director(s) of the company ended on November 10, 2024. "Consequently, Duggal ceased to be the Chairman and an Independent Director of ICRA Limited and Agarwal has also ceased to be an Independent Director of the company with effect from November 11, 2024," it said. Shares of Icra were trading at Rs 6,878.75, down 1.40 per cent over the previous close on the BSE.

# Coca-Cola India FY24 profit falls 42 per cent to ₹ 420.29 crore revenue rises 4 per cent to ₹ 4,713.38 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Beverages major Coca-Cola India's consolidated profit fell 41.82 per cent to Rs 420.29 crore in FY24 while its revenue rose 4.24 per cent to Rs 4,713.38 crore, according to the company's filing to RoC (Registrar of Companies). Its total income, which also includes other income, was up 4.19 per cent to Rs 4,801.84 crore during the fiscal ended March 2024, according to financial data accessed through business intelligence platform Tofler. In FY23, Coca-Cola India Pvt Ltd, an unlisted entity, had reported a net profit of Rs 722.44 crore and revenue from operations at Rs 4,521.31 crore. Its expenses on advertising and sales promotion were up 35.47 per cent to Rs 1,520.21 crore during the financial year under review. This was at Rs 1,122.11 crore a year ago.



Moreover, royalties paid to its US-based parent the Coca-Cola Company also went up 4.68 per cent to Rs 507.51 crore. The total tax expense of Coca-Cola India in FY24 was down 35.34 per cent to Rs 171.42 crore. This was at Rs 265.14 crore a year earlier. Coca-Cola India's total expenses in FY24 was up 16.27 per cent to Rs 4,210.11 crore.

The company, which operates with power brands in Indian markets, including Coca-Cola, Thums Up, Limca, Sprite, Maaza and Minute Maid, is owned by Atlanta-based US beverages major The Coca-Cola Company. India is the fifth largest market for Coca-Cola. Besides, Coca-Cola also has a bottling unit, Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) Private Ltd, which operates 16 plants.

# Tata Power-DDL Gains International Recognition

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL) has gained international recognition by winning the acclaimed 'International Smart Grids Action Network (ISGAN) Award of the Excellence 2024' for its project 'enhancing grid Resilience through End-User behavioural demand response'. The award ceremony was held on October 2, 2024 in Foz Du Iguaçu, Brazil, where the Tata Power-DDL's project received an 'Honorable Mention' for its approach to flexible grid resilience among an exceptional group of nominees. Commenting on the win, Mr

Gajanan S. Kale, Chief Executive Officer of Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited said, "We're honored to have received this recognition. With the objective of promoting groundbreaking advancements in smart grid technologies, this international recognition reflects the Tata Power-DDL's leadership in grid quality and resilience in energy's evolving scenario tilting towards renewable sources. This timely award will motivate us to keep striving for excellence & innovation in the area of smart grids." The awardees were selected by a highly distinguished international jury in collaboration with the Global Smart Energy Federation (GSEF).

# INBRIEF

## VIT-AP UNIVERSITY EMPOWERS RURAL TOPPERS

**AMARAVATI:** VIT-AP University is proud to announce the distribution of free laptops to students under the STAR (Support the Advancement of Rural Students) Scheme. This initiative reflects VIT-AP's dedication to supporting academic excellence among top-performing students from rural areas across Andhra Pradesh.



## SRM TO HOST INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SUMMIT IRIS'24



**KATTANKULATHUR:** SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) is proud to announce the upcoming Industrial Research and Innovation Summit (IRIS'24), scheduled for 22-23 November, 2024, in Chennai.

## VIT-AP UNIVERSITY HOSTS VIKAS 2024 INDUSTRY SUMMIT

**AMARAVATI:** VIT-AP University successfully hosted its flagship industry summit, VIKAS 2024, on November 8th.





# India beat Malaysia 4-0 in women's ACT hockey opener

PTI ■ RAJGIR (BIHAR)

Young striker Sangita Kumari scored a brace as defending champions India defeated Malaysia 4-0 to open their campaign at the women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament on a confident note here on Monday. Sangita (8th, 55th minutes) struck twice, while Preeti Dubey (43rd) and Uditia (44th) were the other goal getters for the hosts. India will next play South Korea on Tuesday. In other matches of the day, Japan and Korea played out a 2-2 draw, while reigning Olympic silver medallist China thrashed Thailand 15-0. The Indians completely dominated the proceedings in the first quarter even though Malaysia had the first shy at the goal in the form of a penalty corner in the fifth minute which they wasted. Thereafter, it was India all the way as they mounted attack after attack to put pressure on the Malaysian defence. India secured two penalty corners in two minutes and Sangita scored with a variation from the second effort in the eighth minute. Preeti then came close to doubling



India's lead twice. First, her push from close range was saved by the Malaysian goalkeeper, and then a minute from the first quarter, she

struck the side post. Just seconds from the first quarter, India secured another penalty corner but wasted the opportunity.

India continued in the same vein and dominated the share of exchanges with persistent attacks on Malaysia but lacked the

finishing touch. The Indians earned four penalty corners in the second quarter but failed to capitalise on a single opportunity to go into the breather with a slim one goal lead despite dominating the match. The Indians kept up the pressure after the change of ends and secured another penalty corner two minutes after the changeover but failed to get past the Malaysian goalkeeper. Minutes later, Malaysia secured their second penalty corner but didn't trouble the Indian backline. In the 43rd minute, India doubled their lead through Preeti who deflected in Navneet Kaur's flick as India went for another variation from a set piece. A minute later, India extended their lead when Uditia found the net with a slap shot from another penalty corner. The Indian secured yet another penalty corner in the 50th minute but this time Uditia's slap shot was saved by the Malaysian goalkeeper. Five minutes from the final hooter, Sangita scored a brilliant field goal. She first collected an excellent through pass from the deep, ran past two defenders and slammed the ball into the net with a fierce reverse shot.



## Barcelona hit by absence of injured Yamal, loses to Sociedad in Spanish league

AP ■ MADRID

Missing injured Lamine Yamal, Barcelona saw its seven-game winning run come to an end with a 1-0 loss at Real Sociedad in the Spanish league. Yamal, one of the team's key players this season under new coach Hansi Flick, was ruled out before the game because of a right ankle injury. He was replaced by Fermin López and the team's attack - by far the best in the league with 40 goals scored in 13 matches - struggled in the Basque Country, unable to get a single attempt on target against Sociedad. Sheraldo Becker scored a 33rd-minute winner to move Sociedad, which had lost two of its last three games in all competitions, to eighth place. Barcelona has a six-point lead over second-place Real Madrid, which routed Osasuna 4-0 at home on Saturday with a hat trick from Vinicius Junior. Madrid has a game in hand after its visit to Valencia was postponed because of the deadly floods in the Valencia region. "We have to analyze what happened and keep working after the international break," Barcelona midfielder Pedri said. "We have been playing well and we are still in first place." Barcelona had won seven in a row in all competitions since a 4-2 loss at Osasuna in the league in September. Its only other loss this season had been at Monaco in the Champions League. All of its other 14 matches were victories. Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski, the league's leading scorer with 14 goals, had a first-half goal disallowed for offside. **Yamal injury** Barcelona said Yamal sustained a "severe right ankle contusion" in last Wednesday's game against Red Star in the Champions League. "Over the past few days, he has

undergone treatment, but the discomfort has yet to subside. His recovery will determine his availability," the club said. Flick said the club tested Yamal on Sunday to see if he could play "but it was not possible." Atletico Madrid back in third place Julián Álvarez scored a second-half winner as Atletico Madrid moved back into third place with a 1-0 victory at Mallorca. That left Atletico one point behind Madrid. It moved two points ahead of Villarreal, which defeated visiting Alaves 3-0 on Saturday. Álvarez scored Atletico's winner in the 61st minute after Giuliano Simeone's assist. Simeone, the son of Atletico coach Diego Simeone, beat a defender to a long pass and set Álvarez for an easy strike from close range. Goalkeeper Jan Oblak had another solid performance for Atletico, which earned its seventh clean sheet in the league this season, the most by any club. Atletico was coming off a 2-1 midweek win at Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League. **Betis draws late** Marc Bartra scored a stoppage-time equalizer as seventh-place Real Betis salvaged a 2-2 home draw against 11th-place Celta Vigo. Celta had moved ahead with Anastasios Douvikas' goal in the 82nd. The visitors earlier took the lead through Javi Rodriguez in the 13th before Vitor Roque equalized for Betis in the 40th. **Other results** Midtable Girona won 1-0 at 17th-place Getafe with a first-half goal by Yangel Herrera, while sixth-place Athletic Bilbao was held at second-to-last-place Valladolid, with the Basque Country club earning the equalizer with Gorka Guruzeta in stoppage time after the hosts had taken the lead with Raúl Moro in the 79th.



## Sindhu, Lakshya hope to regain form at Kumamoto Masters Japan

PTI ■ KUMAMOTO (JAPAN)

Star shuttlers PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will be eager to regain form when they lead the Indian challenge at the Kumamoto Masters Japan Super 500 tournament beginning here on Tuesday. Both players have struggled to find their best form since disappointing performances at the Paris Olympics. While Sindhu reached the quarterfinals at the Denmark Open Super 750, Lakshya Sen suffered early exits at both Arctic Open Super 500 and Denmark Open. The two players have struggled to close out deciders after staying competitive in their matches. Sindhu, after a shock first-

round exit to Canada's Michelle Li in Finland, made it to the quarterfinals in Odense but lost to Paris bronze medallist Gregoria Mariska Tunjung of Indonesia in a tense deciding game. Lakshya, on the other hand, fell short against Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen and China's Lu Guang Zu in Finland and Odense. Despite these setbacks, Sindhu has expressed confidence in her preparations, having worked closely with new coaches Anup Sridhar and Korean legend Lee Syun Il. "I'm in good shape, physically and mentally fit," said Sindhu, who will open her campaign against eighth-seeded Thai Busanan Ongbamrungphan. "We've been working on

different aspects, like speed and defence. I hope to perform well in Japan and China with their guidance." In the men's singles, Lakshya possesses the game to challenge the world's best, but his mental resilience has been questioned following his near-miss at the Tokyo Olympics, where he slipped from a medal position in a heartbreaking loss. The 23-year-old will open against Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao, with a potential showdown against eighth seed Anthony Ginting of Indonesia in the next round. The only other Indian pair in action will be the women's doubles team of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, who will face Taipei's Hsu Yin-Hui and Lin Jhih Yun in their opening match.

## Shubhankar Sharma finishes 32nd as Warring grabs title in Abu Dhabi

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma produced his best card of the week, a superb seven-under 65, in the final round to sign off at tied 32nd position at the HSBC Abu Dhabi Championships. After 71-73 on the first two days, Sharma had a great weekend as his final two rounds of 66 and 65 had an eagle each. On the final day, Sharma, who retained his DP World card, had seven birdies, an eagle and two bogeys. Paul Waring held off a stellar chasing pack to win the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship and claim his first Rolex Series title. The Englishman displayed nerves of steel in his bogey-free closing 66 as he got to 24 under par and two shots ahead of four-time Rolex Series winner Tyrrell Hatton, with Race to Dubai leader Rory



McIlroy, England's Matt Wallace and Dane Thorbjørn Olesen a shot further back. Waring had taken control of the first event of the new DP World Tour Play-Offs with a course-record 61 at Yas Links on Friday but saw his five-shot halfway lead reduced to one as he posted a 73 a day later. The 39-year-old, whose only previous DP World Tour title came at the Nordea Masters more than six years ago, made a fast start with two opening birdies and added two more at the seventh and 10th. He responded to being caught by Hatton with a moment of

magic as he converted from 40 feet at the 17th, before hitting a perfect drive at the last, running a three-wood through the back of the green and getting up and down to seal victory. McIlroy had the chance to make his lead in the Race to Dubai Rankings in Partnership with Rolex unassailable and was first to make an early charge as the four-time Major winner birdied four of his first six holes. He bogied the fifth and added five more gains to sign for a 64, but the Race continues into the season-ending DP World Tour Championship after closest challenger Thriston Lawrence recorded two eagles and four birdies in his round of 64 to get to 20 under and a tie for sixth alongside two-time Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship winner Tommy Fleetwood, and French pair Ugo Coussaud and Antoine Rozner.

## Skillhub Online Games Federation launches inaugural Grandmasters Series

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Skillhub Online Games (SOG) Federation on Monday unveiled the first edition of the SOG Grandmasters Series in a bid to promote skill-based mind sports and establish a competitive framework for the online gaming industry in India. For its inaugural event, the SOG Federation will host three skill-based mind sports: the Indian Chess Masters (ICM), Indian Chess Masters for Blind (ICMB) and Indian



Rummy Grandmasters (IRG). After online qualifiers, "phygital" zonals -- blending

physical and digital presence-- will begin with the South Zone on December 18-19 in

Bengaluru, followed by other regions. To conclude the inaugural SOG Grandmasters, two zonal finalists from chess, two from blind chess and six from rummy will compete in the Nationals in early March 2025 in Delhi for their respective titles and a consolidated prize pool of more than Rs 2 crore. The SOG Federation has also tied up with the International Mind Sports Association. "By providing a premier platform for talented players, we aim to foster a culture of excellence, competitiveness,

and integrity in the gaming community," said Shankar Agarwal, President, Skillhub Online Games Federation. "Our strategic partnership with the International Mind Sports Association ensures that we also adhere to global standards, paving the way for sustainable growth and recognition of skill games as legitimate mind sports in India. "We are committed to shaping a vibrant ecosystem that empowers players and enriches the gaming landscape in India."

## Arsenal's winless run goes on after 1-1 draw with Chelsea and Man United beats Leicester 3-0

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Arsenal's Premier League title challenge took another hit after a 1-1 draw with Chelsea. It's now four games without a win in the league for Mikel Arteta's team, which is nine points behind leader Liverpool. While a point saw Arsenal climb up to fourth in the standings, its winless run has seen a gap open up at the top. Chelsea is third, ahead of Arsenal on goal difference. Gabriel Martinelli had fired Arsenal in front in the 60th minute at Stamford Bridge, but Pedro Neto equalized 10 minutes later. "It's about transforming these performances into victories," Arteta said afterward. Arsenal was runner-up to Manchester City in each of the last two seasons and expected to be the closest rival to the defending champion again. Instead it is Liverpool, under new manager Arne Slot, that has powered ahead at the start of the campaign and taken advantage of the faltering form of both City and Arsenal. City is five points back in second after two-straight losses in

the league. "It is a long season - long way to go. We had a tough period in December last season and came back," Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard told Sky Sports, as reported by the BBC. Odegaard was making his first start since sustaining ankle ligament damage in September. "We know the quality and mentality we have and we just have to keep going." Behind the top two the league is bunching up. Just four points separate Chelsea and 13th-place Manchester United after 11 rounds of the season. **Injury concerns** Declan Rice went into the match with a broken toe and was taken off in the 71st, while Bukayo Saka was substituted 10 minutes later, placing doubts over whether they will be available for England's Nation League games against Greece and the Republic of Ireland. "I don't know whether to expect them to be fit, because if not they don't come off," Arteta said. **New era** Over to you Ruben Amorim. United's incoming head coach will



take over a team on the up after a 3-0 win against Leicester made it four games unbeaten in all competitions under interim boss Ruud van Nistelrooy. Amorim officially starts on Monday after serving out his notice period at Sporting Lisbon -

where his last game in charge Sunday was a 4-2 win at Braga in the Portuguese league - and comes into a club that looks to be in a much healthier position than it was when Erik ten Hag was fired at the end of last month. "We said Let's make the most of

these four games, get the maximum out of it,' and I think we did an okay job," Van Nistelrooy said. "I really enjoyed it, it's been a short but amazing period." Van Nistelrooy, Ten Hag's former assistant and an iconic striker for the club in his playing days, has

secured three wins and a draw during his four-game temporary reign. Now he is seeking clarity from United's hierarchy about his own future once Amorim takes over. "I expect to hear today or tomorrow from them," he said. On his 250th appearance for the club Bruno Fernandes scored with a brilliant curling shot from the edge of the area in the 17th minute at Old Trafford. His effort in the 38th then saw Victor Kristiansen accidentally divert the ball past Leicester goalkeeper Mads Hermansen to double United's lead before the break. Substitute Alejandro Garnacho scored an even more spectacular goal than Fernandes' in the 82nd when sweeping the ball into the top corner from outside the box. Fernandes said later that the Argentina international didn't fully celebrate the goal because he believes some fans have lost faith in him. **Newcastle fights back** Nottingham Forest's rise has been one of the stories of the season, but it missed the chance to close the

gap on Manchester City in second after falling 3-1 to Newcastle. City's 2-1 loss against Brighton on Saturday meant Forest could have moved to within a point of Pep Guardiola's team and it got off to an ideal start through Murillo's goal in the 21st at the City Ground. But second-half goals from Alexander Isak, Joelinton and Harvey Barnes completed eighth-place Newcastle's comeback. Defeat saw Forest drop from third to fifth on goal difference. **Ipswich wins** Ipswich won for the first time in the league this season with a 2-1 victory at Tottenham that saw it climb out of the relegation zone. It was promoted Ipswich's first Premier League win in 22 years. Ipswich was the only top-flight team without a win heading into Sunday and led 2-0 at halftime against a Spurs side that could have moved into the top four with victory. Sam Szmodics and Liam Delap put Ipswich in control at that break. Rodrigo Bentancur pulled one back for Tottenham, but couldn't prevent Ange Postecoglou's team falling to a fifth league loss this season.



# Bumrah to lead, Rahul likely to open in Perth: Gambhir

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Head coach Gautam Gambhir on Monday said Jasprit Bumrah, as designated vice-captain, will lead India in the opening Test against Australia in Perth if regular skipper Rohit Sharma is unavailable for the game due to personal reasons. The straight-talking former opener also indicated that KL Rahul could be asked to open the innings in place of Rohit. The second batch of the Indian players is leaving for Perth, but Rohit has stayed back. Uncertainty remains if Rohit will compete in the series-opener. "At the moment, there is no confirmation. We will let you know exactly what the situation will be. Hopefully, he is going to be available, but everything you want to know, you will get to know before the start of the series," Gambhir said. "Bumrah is the vice-captain, so obviously If Rohit is not available, he is going to lead in Perth," the coach added. Rahul likely to open Rohit's possible absence also leaves a spot vacant at the top of the batting order and Gambhir said one among the uncapped

Abhimanyu Easwaran and KL Rahul, who both played in the unofficial Tests against Australia A for India A, will be picked. "Obviously, there is Easwaran, there is KL there. We will take a call closer to the first Test match if Rohit is not available. "There are options. There are quite a lot of options in this spot. Once it gets closer to the first Test match, we will try and play the best playing XI who is going to do the job for us," he added. However he gave enough indications that Rahul's experience might prevail over rookie Easwaran's current form. "There are times when you go with the experienced players as well and that is the quality of the man. He (Rahul) can actually bat at the top of the order, he can bat at number 3 and at number 6 as well," said the former southpaw. "So you need quite a lot of talent to be doing these kind of jobs as well and he has kept wickets in One-day format as well. So imagine how many countries have players like KL who can actually open the batting and can bat at number 6 as well?



"So I feel that if needed be, I think he (Rahul) can do the job for us, especially if Rohit is not available for the first Test

match," Gambhir said. Team moving forward, coach hints on Shardul non-selection The coach backed uncapped

all-rounder Nitish Reddy, who has a batting average of 21 in first-class cricket, and was picked ahead of veteran pace

bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur. "It is also about moving forward and I feel that this is the best set of players that

we have selected to do the job for the country," Gambhir said. Indicating that doors are closed on Shardul for the time being. Shardul was one of India's heroes at the Gabba with handful of wickets and a half-century. He has been seamer all-rounder in SENA countries. "We have picked the best squad who can do the job for us. Nitish Reddy, we all know that how incredibly talented he is and if given an option, he will deliver for us," Gambhir said. Why Harshit Rana wasn't sent for A tour? Rana was not sent with the India A squad for the unofficial 'Tests' in Australia to be ready for the BGT series but Gambhir said the management did not want to add to his workload by getting him to play First-Class games. "He had played a first-class game against Assam and he did reasonably well (took five-for and scored half-century). We all thought that he has had enough bowling under his belt rather than just sending and playing him another first-class game," Gambhir said. "For us, it is important for a fast bowler to be fresh as well. It is going to be a long tour, it is going to be a five-Test match

series. The bowling coach, the physios and the trainers thought that he has had enough under his belt and that was one of the reasons," he added. While there is no Mohammed Shami and tremendous pressure on Jasprit Bumrah to carry the pace bowling load, Gambhir feels that the attack is potent even with three inexperienced speedsters in Rana, Prasidh Krishna and Akash Deep. "We have got quality. We have got tall guys who can hit the deck like Prasidh and Harshit. All five guys have different skill sets. That makes our fast bowling attack very very potent." 10 days of training good enough Gambhir, who will be travelling with the second batch of Indian squad on Monday, said adjusting to conditions in Australia over the next 10 days will be vital for the team. "We have got a lot of experienced players who have been to Australia a lot of times. Their experience will come in handy for the young players as well. These 10 days are going to be very crucial but come 22nd morning, we should be absolutely ready to fire from ball one," he said.



## Ponting should be concerned about Australian cricket, not India's: Gambhir

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Head coach Gautam Gambhir on Monday fired a shot back at Ricky Ponting for questioning Virat Kohli's form and place in Indian team, saying the Australian legend should only be concerned about cricket in his country. Ponting had recently said Kohli's form is a concern, given the Indian batter has scored only two Test centuries in last five years but also felt that the Indian legend has it in him to roar back to form and there is no better place than Australia to do so. "What does Ponting have to do with Indian cricket? I think he should think about Australian cricket. More importantly, I have got no concerns whatsoever for Virat and Rohit," Gambhir said during an interaction with media before leaving for Australia. Kohli has just one fifty this year - 70 against Bangladesh in Kanpur Test - while his last Test century came in July 2023 against the West Indies. Someone, who averaged above 50 in Test cricket from 2016 to 2019, Kohli has managed only 1838 runs from 34 Tests at an

average of 31.68, with two centuries since then. In 2024, the 36-year-old averaged only 22.72 in six matches, the lowest in his career. Speaking in a recent episode of the ICC Review, Ponting said if it was not for Kohli, surviving in Test cricket was tough with such a dismal record. "I saw a stat the other day about Virat, it said he's only scored two (three) Test hundreds in the last five years. That didn't seem right to me, but if that is right, then that is, I mean, that's a concern," Ponting said. "There wouldn't be anyone else probably even playing international cricket as a top-order batsman that's only scored two Test match hundreds in five years." "I've said it before about Virat, you don't ever question the greats of the game. There's no doubt, he's a great of the game. He loves playing against Australia. In fact, I know he loves playing against Australia. And as I said, his record (in Australia) is very good. If there's a time for him to turn it around, it'd be this series. "So I wouldn't be surprised to see Virat make runs in the first

game." When asked if the form of the two Indian senior batters Kohli and captain Rohit Sharma, who scored 93 and 91 runs respectively in the team's 0-3 loss to New Zealand, is a concern, Gambhir said, "Not at all." "They are incredibly tough men, they have achieved a lot for Indian cricket and they will continue to achieve a lot in future as well. "For me, the most important thing is that they still work really hard and they are still passionate, they still want to achieve a lot more and that is something which is very important," he added. Gambhir said the hunger to do well is "incredibly important" for the Indian team especially after the loss to the Kiwis. "The hunger in that dressing room is incredibly important for me and for the entire group of people as well and especially after what has happened in the last series," he said. Indian batters were collectively exposed by New Zealand on a seaming track in Bengaluru in the first Test and spin-friendly pitches for the last two Tests at Pune and Mumbai.

# Won't be surprised if Anderson ends up at Chennai Super Kings: Vaughan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former England captain Michael Vaughan says he "won't be surprised" if retired pacer Jimmy Anderson ends up at Chennai Super Kings as the former champions prefer a fast bowler who can swing the ball. The 42-year-old Anderson, who retired from Test cricket earlier this year, surprised everyone by registering himself for the IPL for the first time. "You mention James Anderson, I would not be surprised if Jimmy Anderson ends up at Chennai Super Kings," Vaughan said on the 'Club Prairie Fire Podcast' which also featured former Australian great Adam Gilchrist. "They are a team that like someone who can swing it inside the first few overs. They have always had a swinger, whether it is Shardul Thakur or



someone else. It would not surprise me if Jimmy Anderson ends up at Chennai," Vaughan added. The veteran pacer, who last played a T20 10 years ago in 2014, has never competed in a global franchise T20



league, prioritising red-ball cricket. He has a base price of Rs 1.25 crore for the mega auction. Asked about the decision, the veteran pacer said he has listed himself for the auction to enhance his knowledge

about the game. "There is still definitely something in me that thinks like I can still play. I have never done the IPL; I have never experienced it and I think for a number of reasons I feel like I have more to give as a player," Anderson had said on a BBC Radio podcast last week. "I have done a little bit of coaching since I have finished in the summer. I have been around the England team doing a bit of mentoring or whatever you like to call it," he said. "I just think opening my eyes to something like that and experiencing it, sort of might help me grow my knowledge of the game and help further down the line," Anderson had said. Over 1500 players have registered for the IPL mega auction, slated to take place on November 24 and 25 in Jeddah.

# Shooters Aishwary, Samra disappoint as little-known Rameshbhai clinches silver

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading Indian rifle shooters Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Sift Kaur Samra failed to make an impact even as little-known Smit Rameshbhai Moradiya clinched the men's 10m air rifle silver after an extremely close fight for gold in the World University Shooting Championship here on Monday. On a day when Rameshbhai was the only Indian to win a medal, his more illustrious counterpart, Olympian Tomar finished fifth in the event, while Samra, a member of the Paris Games contingent, ended at fourth in the women's 50m rifle three-positions event. Rameshbhai, who hails from Gujarat, missed the gold medal to Czech Republic's Jiri Privratsky by just 0.1 point, scoring 252.1 in the final. It was a grand double for Privratsky, who shot 252.2 to claim the top-podium finish and add to the men's 50m rifle three-positions gold he won on Sunday. The 23-year-old Privratsky had recently clinched a silver (50m rifle 3-positions) and bronze (10m air



rifle) in the year-ending ISSF World Cup Final held at the Karni Singh Range here last month. Tomar shot 187.7 for a fifth-place finish, while

another Indian, Umamahesh Maddineni (208.8), finished fourth. Earlier, in the qualification round, Rameshbhai shot 630.0 to enter the eight-shooter final in second place. Umamahesh and Tomar shot 629.8 and 628.3 to enter the final in third and fifth place respectively. Samra, one of the best 50m rifle exponents in the country, was a big disappointment, finishing fourth with 439.6. France's Agathe Girard (462.3) won the gold medal, while Poland's Julia Piotrowska (462.0) and Anna Janssen (450.2) clinched the silver and bronze respectively. Samra had earlier secured a place in the eight-shooter final at seventh in the qualification round with a score of 587. India have so far won nine medals, including a gold struck by the 10m air pistol mixed team of Palak Gulia and Amit Sharma on Sunday. As many as 220 shooters from across 23 countries are competing in the championship. The event is being hosted by Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies.

# Last three years were tough, changed everything about my bowling: Chakaravarthy

PTI ■ GOEBERHA

Mystery spinner Varun Chakaravarthy has described the three-year gap from international cricket as "tough," saying he had to completely overhaul his bowling after finding that his orthodox side-spin wasn't working at higher levels. The 33-year-old recorded his career-best figures of 5 for 17 in Sunday's second T20I against South Africa, though his efforts could not prevent India from losing by three wickets. "I had to go to the drawing board and check out all my videos. I figured out that I was bowling side spin and it was not working out in the higher levels," he told Jio Cinema. "I had to change everything about my bowling. It took me two years and I started bowling in the local leagues and IPL also. It worked there and I have started bowling it in the international stage and it's working out for me." While side spin creates enough revolutions to make the ball drift sideways, over-spin generates a

sharp bounce and turn. Talking about what worked for him as he added a fifer on Sunday to the three wickets he scalped in the first T20I in Durban, Chakaravarthy said: "It is a combination of both my consistency and overspin. "The overspin I bowl has more bite from the pitch and hopefully I can keep doing that and hopefully I can keep contributing for the country." Chakaravarthy was axed from the Indian team after going wicketless during the 2021 World Cup but he earned his place back after his exploits in the last two editions of the IPL. He snapped 20 wickets in IPL 2023 before finishing as the second highest wicket-taker this year. "Definitely, the last three years were a little tough," Chakaravarthy told media after the match. "The only thing I could do was play lots of cricket. And I started playing a lot of the domestic league (TNPL) in India. And that definitely helped me understand my game better. And that's what helped me."



Chakaravarthy was part of the Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL-winning team this year under Gambhir, who recently took over as the coach of the Indian team and he credited the role clarity provided by the coach for helping him to regain his lost form. "Yes, we played the Bangladesh tour and he was coaching the team. And definitely we spoke a lot and he gave me a lot of role clarity. "He told me, even if you go for 30-40 runs, it doesn't matter. All you have to look is to pick wickets. So that's your role in the team. The clarity which they gave definitely helped me." Chakaravarthy's match-changing spell reduced South Africa to 66 for 6 while chasing a modest target of 125, but a gritty partnership between Tristan Stubbs (47) and Gerald Coetzee (19) saw the hosts home in 19 overs, ending India's 11-match winning streak. "During the innings break, Surya (skipper Suryakumar Yadav) came and told us that let's not think about the result and let's just go all out. And that's what we tried to do.

We did our best and we could have pulled it off. "Obviously, the mindset has to be aggressive when the score is low. You have to pick wickets and that's when we can win the match. That has to be my approach in the next two games also because it's going to be a do-or-die match for us," he said. The spinner added that performing against a formidable team like South Africa would serve as a confidence booster heading into the remaining matches. "Definitely, when we came to South Africa, we knew that it's going to be a challenging tour because the Proteas, they are one of the best teams right now and they have a powerful batting lineup. "Doing well against them definitely gives me motivation to do more better and definitely I can. Hopefully I can do well in the upcoming games." India will face South Africa in the third and final T20Is on Wednesday and Friday at Centurion and Johannesburg, respectively.