



# the pioneer

NEW DELHI, MONDAY OCTOBER 21, 2024; PAGES 12 & 4

www.dailypioneer.com

PUBLISHED FROM: DELHI | LUCKNOW | BHOPAL | BHUBANESWAR | RANCHI | RAIPUR | CHANDIGARH | DEHRADUN | HYDERABAD | VIJAYWADA

INSIDE

SPORTS  
THAT DAY BELONGED TO  
NADEEM: NEERAJ ON PARIS  
OLYMPICS JAVELIN FINAL



## KASHMIR UNDER ATTACK



FILE PHOTO/PTI

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In the second dastardly act of terror in the last two days, two non-local construction workers were killed and two others were injured by terrorists near Sonamarg in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir late Sunday evening. This is also the second major incident of terrorist violence after the formation of the Omar Abdullah-led government in Jammu and Kashmir. According to preliminary reports, the terrorists opened fire on the camp housing labourers of a private company working on the construction of a tunnel in the Gund area in the Ganderbal district. The identity of the deceased could not be ascertained immediately. Both the workers were shot in the head. Their bodies were seen lying on the floor of the camp while panicked migrant workers

were seen taking videos. The workers who were targeted by the group of terrorists were part of the construction team working on the Z Morh tunnel, connecting Gaganer to Sonamarg in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. The 6.412 km long Z-Morh tunnel, a flagship project, aims to ensure all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Sonamarg and Kargil in Ladakh. A migrant worker, hailing from the Banka district of Bihar, was mercilessly killed by terrorists in the Wachi area of Shopian on Friday. He worked in the corn fields to earn his livelihood. Official sources claimed two labourers died on the spot while two others sustained injuries, they said, adding further details are awaited. Police and army have cordoned off the area to track down the footprints of the terrorists. Reacting to the news Chief Minister Omar Abdullah posted a message on X

(earlier Twitter), "Very sad news of a dastardly & cowardly attack on non-local labourers at Gagangir in Sonamarg region. These people were working on a key infrastructure project in the area. 2 have been killed & 2-3 more have been injured in this militant attack. I strongly condemn this attack on unarmed innocent people & send my condolences to their loved ones". In February this year, two migrant workers hailing from Amritsar were targeted from a close range by unidentified terrorists in the Shaheed Gunj area of Srinagar. A sikh carpenter identified as 31-year-old Amritpal Singh was killed on the spot while another person identified as Rohit Masih succumbed to his critical injuries the next day. In 2023, a total number of 14 civilians were killed in different incidents of terrorist-related violence while 31 were killed in 2022, 41 in 2021, 38 in 2020, and 44 in 2019 across J&K.

## Hoax threats to airlines continue on Sunday



RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The menace of hoax bomb threat calls to airlines continued on Sunday, with more than 24 flights of IndiGo, Air India, Akasa Air and Vistara flights receiving fresh bomb threats messages. This affected both domestic and international flights, scaring air passengers in the festive season. Six flights each of IndiGo, Vistara and Air India received the threats. So far this week, more than 90 flights have received bomb threats and most of them have turned out to be hoaxes. The overall impact of these hoax threats has resulted in financial losses of up to Rs 100 crore for various airlines. IndiGo released a series of press statements sharing details of the bomb threat received by the flights. In its statement, IndiGo confirmed the airline is cognisant of a situation involving flight 6E 58 (Jeddah to Mumbai), 6E87 (Kozhikode to Dammam), 6E11 (Delhi to Istanbul), 6E17 (Mumbai to Istanbul), 6E133 (Pune to Jodhpur) and 6E112 operating (Goa to Ahmedabad). Security alerts were received for six Akasa Air flights - QP 1102 (Ahmedabad to Mumbai), QP 1378 (Delhi to Goa), QP 1385 (Mumbai to Bagdogra), QP 1406 (Delhi to Hyderabad), QP 1519 (Kochi to Mumbai) and QP 1526 (Lucknow to Mumbai). Vistara said it got security threats for six flights - UK25 (Delhi to Frankfurt), UK106 (Singapore to Mumbai), UK146 (Bali to Delhi), UK116 (Singapore to Delhi), UK110 (Singapore to Pune) and UK107 (Mumbai to Singapore). "In line with the protocols, all relevant authorities were immediately notified, and security procedures, as directed by them, are being carried out," a Vistara spokesperson said in a statement.

Continued on page 2

## Bomb blast shatters Delhi's Sunday slumber

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Shattered glass panes, showcases, signboards, frightened residents and heavy deployment of intra-department security forces marked a high stress Sunday in the National Capital. Delhi woke up to the shocking news of a 'bomb blast' near the renowned Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) school in Rohini Sector-14 on Sunday morning, when many had woken up early to begin rituals for Karwachauth, a festival celebrated by married women. While the school was closed for the weekend, the markets were to open as usual, especially sweet shops as the festive season has begun in the city. A quiet Sunday morning turned into a nightmare for the residents when they heard a loud blast around 7:45 am. The sound they recalled could be heard up to a kilometre away. The Prashant Vihar area where the blast occurred is densely populated and has residential buildings, schools, Rohini Court and Delhi Development Authority (DDA) complex. Pramod Chauhan, a security guard, who was on duty outside a jewelry shop right opposite of the school at the time of the blast, said that there was dense smoke for at least 10 minutes after a sudden loud noise was heard. "I was almost about to leave since my shift was over when the blast happened. I could not see anything for the next 10 minutes after the blast as there was thick white smoke all around. My heart started palpating very fast. The glass panes of the shops around were shattered, and cars that were parked near the school were also damaged," 52-year-old Chauhan said. He added that there was a "chemical-like smell" from the site, and that the police arrived about 20 minutes after the incident. The owner of the shop Vinod Kumar said that he incurred



National Security Guard (NSG) personnel conduct investigations at the site of the blast at Prashant Vihar, near the CRPF school in Rohini area of New Delhi on Sunday

losses worth Rs 2 lakhs because of the blast. Ankit, a 25-year-old who lives near the CRPF school said the sound was so loud that it was heard for at least a kilometre away from the place. According to police sources, the investigation may be transferred to the National Investigative Agency (NIA) by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday, after it sought a report from the Delhi Police on the matter. The Delhi Police has already submitted a preliminary report to the MHA. Police officials added that it seems to be a crude bomb made of ammonium nitrate and ammonium chloride. The usually bustling area which has markets and eateries was relatively quiet and many shops remained closed on Sunday. Residents also stayed in their homes. A frightened Kiran Sachdeva, a resident of the locality, described the blast as "an earthquake-like shock", that they felt in her house which was about 200-250 meters away from the site. A senior police official said, "On Sunday, at 07:47 am, a PCR call was

received in which the caller informed that a blast with a lot of noise took place near CRPF school Sector 14, Rohini. Local police reached the spot, where the school wall was found damaged with a foul smell. The glasses of a nearby shop and a car parked near the shop were found to be damaged." The place has been cordoned off and there is heavy deployment of officials from Crime team, Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team, bomb squad team, National Security Guard (NSG) team, National Investigative Agency (NIA) team, CRPF Team and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team visited the spot. "FSL and NSG teams conducted the inspection of spot and lifted samples. A case under section 326(g) (Mischief by injury, inundation, fire or explosive substance, etc) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 4 Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and 3 Explosives Act has been registered at Prashant Vihar police station.

Continued on page 2

## Wayanad hills are alive, with the sound of politics



FILE PHOTO

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The stage is set for a battle royale from the Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency that sits atop the Western Ghats in Kerala which goes to the polls for a by-election on November 13. With the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) announcing its candidate from the constituency late Saturday evening, the lineup of contestants is ready. Priyanka Gandhi, the super star of Indian National Congress, is making her electoral

debut from Wayanad, which fell vacant following the decision of her sibling Rahul Gandhi to retain the family fiefdom of Rae Bareilly from where he won the 2024 election with a brute majority. Rahul had retained the Wayanad constituency with a mammoth margin of 3,64,422 votes (59.69 per cent of total votes polled) and had literally decimated all his rival candidates. Though the voters in Wayanad were disappointed by his decision to quit the constituency, Rahul had

promised the electorate that a person who would be adored and admired by them would be fielded by the Congress and that is how Priyanka entered the scene. The fact that Priyanka is making her electoral debut from the constituency has brought Wayanad to the global political map. On Sunday, the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee announced that Sonia Gandhi will hold a road show in Wayanad on Tuesday along with Priyanka and Rahul, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha. Sathyan Mokeri of the Communist Party of India (CPI) is the Left Democratic Front (LDF) candidate from Wayanad. The BJP has fielded Navya Haridas, leader of the Mahila Morcha (the women's wing of the party) as its fighter. Haridas, an articulate and suave politician is a councillor of Kozhikode Municipal Corporation.

Continued on page 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and others during the inauguration of various projects at the newly-constructed stadium at Sriga, in Varanasi, Sunday

## PM Modi gives Diwali gifts to Varanasi, brickbats to Opposition

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ VARANASI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a sizable Diwali gift worth over Rs 6,100 Crore to the people of Varanasi. As a third-term Member of Parliament from the constituency, PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 23 development projects valued at Rs 6,611.18 crore. The PM inaugurated a range of public facilities, including those related to healthcare, education, sports, religion, tourism, employment, housing, and aviation. This included laying the foundation stone for the expansion of Varanasi Airport and the

construction of a new terminal. Additionally, he inaugurated the RJ Shankara Eye Hospital. He also launched a scathing attack on the Opposition parties, including the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Congress, accusing them of stalling the nation's progress. The PM said that the BJP has been at the forefront of development, especially in honouring sportspersons. Addressing a large gathering at the Sriga Stadium, PM Modi criticised the Opposition, stating, "These people have consistently hindered the country's development. Even today, they create obstacles in developmental work."

Continued on page 2

## BJP releases 99-strong Maharashtra list

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday retained 71 of its sitting MLAs, as it released its first list of 99 candidates for the Maharashtra Assembly polls that contained the names of its bigwigs like Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, state unit President Chandrashekar Bawankule and as many as 13 women candidates. With the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) still to formalise its tie-up among its constituents and its own MahaYuti allies - the Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) and Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar) having not released their lists of candidates yet, the BJP became the first major political party in Maharashtra to get off the blocks for the November 20 Assembly polls. The BJP, which heads the grand ruling alliance MahaYuti, is likely to contest anywhere from 155 to 160 seats out of the total 288 seats in the 2024 Assembly polls, as against 164 seats it had contested in the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly polls. The BJP released its first list of



Devendra Fadnis and Chandrashekar Bawankule

candidates in New Delhi on Sunday, after its central election committee cleared the names at a meeting held on October 16 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers Rajnath Singh and Party president J P Nadda. As many as 71 sitting BJP MLAs out of the total 105 seats the party won in the 2019 State Assembly polls, figure in the first list of candidates. The list also contains the names of second-generation and third-generation leaders. A five-time MLA, Fadnis will contest from Nagpur South West, while State BJP president Chandrashekar Bawankule, who is currently a MLC, would contest the Kanteer seat.

Speaker Rahul Narwekar, who has presided over hearings of disqualification petitions filed in connection with the splits in the Shiv Sena and NCP, will contest from Colaba. Among other things, the BJP has fielded former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan's daughter Shreejaya Chavan from the family seat of Bhokar, former Union Minister Raosaheb Danve's Santosh Raosaheb Danve from Bhokardan, Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg MP and former Chief Minister Narayan Rane's son Nitesh from Kankavli and late Congress Chief Minister Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar's grandson Sambhaji Patil Nilangekar from Nilanga.

Continued on page 2



## Meri car, meri marzi ... vehicle owners cock a snook at the law

High Security Registration Plates are mandatory since 2022, yet violations continue

BY SAUMYA SHUKLA

Even though High Security Registration Plates (HSRP) were made mandatory by the Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) since 2022, a drive on the roads of the National Capital shows rampant violations of the same by many vehicles, be it cars, buses, auto-rickshaws or bikes, despite hefty challans of up to Rs 10,000 in force by the Delhi Police. A transport and traffic expert said that around 40 per cent of vehicles made prior to 2019, in Delhi, do not comply with the HSRP rule. The MoRTH had notified the HSRP in December 2018. The unique HSRP is linked electronically to the vehicle after its affixation, and comes embedded with a chromium-based Ashoka Chakra symbol in a blue-coloured hologram.

As per the guidelines of the Union Ministry, all motor vehicle owners must install an HSRP. All vehicles purchased after the year 2019 already have the HSRP installed. Mahesh Malhotra, Secretary of the Association of Registration Plate Manufacturers of India (ARPMI) revealed while there are guidelines to implement the same, real action is missing on the ground. "Under the Section 50 of CMVA (Central Motor Vehicles Act 1989), all vehicles after 1 April 2019 will be fitted with the HSRP at the time of the registration. With these provisions, all vehicles in Delhi after the said date have near 100 per cent compliance. However, vehicles prior to the date of order have not met with more than 40 per cent compliance," he stated, adding that although it is mandated by the law, the HSRP are also helpful

to the vehicle owners. One can easily distinguish between an ordinary number plate and an HSRP. Its distinctive design aids law enforcement in tracking and identifying vehicles, reducing vehicle thefts and fraud. It is also impossible to make counterfeit plates, which enhances authenticity and prevents fraudulent activities. Unlike conventional plates, the HSRPs are difficult to remove, alter, or tamper with. Their non-reusable and non-removable locking system significantly reduces the risk of vehicle theft. However, due to the lack of strict implementation on the ground, many vehicles still have old



number plates affixed. The Delhi Traffic Police department stated, "As per order of MoRTH, HSRP plates are necessary for all vehicles-new and old-from 2022. Licence plates that are manufactured after April 2019 already have HSRP elements. After 2022, High Security Number Plates were compulsory to be obtained online or offline for cars that were bought before April 2019." However, despite the hefty fine of up to Rs 10,000 for the non-adherence of the same, the situation on the ground remains as such that those vehicles roam freely on the roads of Delhi without any fear of any challans. A traffic police source said that they avoid penalising such vehicles because the issue of licensing falls with the Delhi transport government and they have to lay down the guidelines properly to ensure action.

# Centre planning to impose President's rule in Maharashtra, alleges MVA's Raut

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) MP and party's chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut set the cat among the pigeons in the state political circles on Sunday, by making a sensational allegation that the Narendra Modi government was planning to impose President's Rule in Maharashtra if the BJP-led MahaYuti failed to win the State Assembly polls.

Talking to media persons here, Raut -- a key leader of the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi -- accused Union Home Minister and BJP's chief strategist Amit Shah of being behind the plan to impose President's Rule in Maharashtra.

Raut also alleged that the Election Commission of India appeared to be siding with the ruling BJP.

Explaining the logic behind his allegation, Raut said: "The term of the current (14th) Maharashtra Legislative Assembly will end on November 26.

The voting for the new (15th) Maharashtra Legislative Assembly will take place on



November 20. The results will be out on November 23. There will be barely 48 hours to form the next government." "Since Amit believes that the BJP-led MahaYuti will not win the polls, his strategy is to limit the time available for the Maha Vikas Aghadi to discuss and decide about government formation. If the MVA constituents fail to stake a claim in two days, then the Governor will recommend the President's Rule for six months," Raut said. He alleged that the ECI had purposely scheduled the Maharashtra Assembly polls in

such a way that it restricts the MVA's opportunity to form a government effectively. "The ECI's actions are like that of a BJP spokesperson. It supports the EVM but conveniently keeps mum when we speak about the alleged tampering of these machines in the Haryana state elections," the Sena (UBT) leader said. Raut claimed that the ECI's partial behaviour could be evidenced from the fact that it had not taken any action on complaints filed before it about the alleged misuse of money during the Lok Sabha elections.

# Details of Special Branch manual can not be brought into public domain under RTI Act: Delhi HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has held that details of the Special Branch manual, which contains sensitive and confidential information, cannot be brought into public domain under the Right To Information (RTI) Act. The High Court said disclosing such information will not only compromise the functioning of the Special Branch of Delhi Police, but could also jeopardise ongoing and future investigations, adding that it falls within the scope of 'exempted information' under the RTI Act. Justice Sanjeev Narula dismissed a petition seeking to provide under RTI the certified copy of the complete Special Branch manual with all annexures/latest rulings/notifications on passport verification as on February 3, 2016. "In the opinion of the court, the details contained in the Special Branch Manual, by virtue of their confidential nature, cannot be brought into public domain. "Such procedures, while operational in nature, may also reveal tactical insights into how law enforcement agen-



cies function in sensitive areas, and their disclosure could compromise the integrity of such processes," the High Court said. The court also noted that given the confidential nature of these procedures, it was of the view that the reliance placed by the Special Branch of Delhi Police on Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act, while denying the information sought, was "justified". "Disclosing such information will not only compromise the functioning of the Special Branch, but could also jeopardise ongoing and future investigations. Thus, the decision of the CIC to exempt the disclosure of this classified information under the RTI Act is well-founded and justified," it

said. In his RTI application of 2016, petitioner Harkishan Das Nijhawan sought several information from the Special Branch, including a certified copy of its manual which outlines procedural norms for passport verification. While all other queries were answered, the authorities denied providing a copy of the Special Branch manual by invoking the exemptions under the RTI Act. The petitioner challenged the denial of information before the appellate authorities before moving the Central Information Commission (CIC) which also held that the information sought was indeed classified and exempt from disclosure under the

provisions of the RTI Act. Nijhawan then approached the high court challenging the CIC order. Under Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act, authorities are exempted from giving information that could prejudice the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, or the strategic, scientific, or economic interests of the State. The court, which acknowledged the petitioner's interest in seeking transparency in government operations, said the need to protect sensitive information that could compromise national security and law enforcement procedures must be borne in mind. The court also said it was cognisant of the public interest in knowing the operational

framework governing the passport verification process, however, it must be balanced with the State's interest in safeguarding security-related procedures. "Information linked to national security, or which could potentially impede enforcement operations, cannot be disclosed under the RTI Act. The operational manuals detailing sensitive protocols fall within the realm of information that is inherently confidential. "The information concerning law enforcement operations, especially those involving national security considerations, falls under the purview of Section 8(1)(a) of the RTI Act," it said. < The court also noted that the manual outlines the procedure for conducting character and antecedent verification of the passport applicants, a process which must be inherently kept confidential to ensure the integrity of law enforcement operations. This manual includes specific steps and methods employed by the Special Branch to verify personal particulars and background information, all of which are classified and treated as confidential by the very nature of the work, it said.

# Rane wants Shinde Sena ticket for elder son

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Former chief minister and senior BJP leader Narayan Rane believes in having both sides of his bread buttered. Or how else can one explain the fact that his younger son Nitesh Rane has been re-nominated by the BJP to contest the Kankavli seat, while he is lobbying to get an Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena ticket for his elder son Nileshe? A strongman from the coastal Konkan region, Narayan Rane is currently the BJP MP from Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg constituency.

A two-time MLA from Kankavli, Nitesh was elected to the State Assembly on a Congress ticket in 2014, while



he won the 2019 State Assembly polls on a BJP ticket in the 2019. Nileshe is a former MP from Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg. He was elected to Lok Sabha when he was with the Congress. In his bid to ensure nomination from the Shinde Shiv Sena, Narayan Rane has been in touch with both Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis.

# Man killed, two injured in cross firing incident in Delhi's Jahangirpuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old man was killed while two others sustained bullet injuries in an incident of cross-firing in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area. According to police officials on Sunday, the deceased has been identified as Deepak alias Patrakar who had "Information was received from the Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial (BJRM) Hospital regarding a man brought with multiple bullet injuries, who was declared dead," a senior police officer said. The officer said that subsequently, information was received from the hospital regarding the admission of two men including Narendra



and Suraj with bullet injuries. The officer added that a police team was rushed to the spot for a detailed investigation. A preliminary inquiry revealed that there was a verbal spat between Deepak, his brother and others, and Narendra and Suraj at a park. "On local enquiry it was found that Deepak, his brother and associates were standing in

park 900 wali Gali Jahangirpuri Delhi and two persons namely Narendra and Suraj came at 900 wali gali D-block jahangirpuri and both the parties talked and had hot arguments with one another," he stated. "Both the parties opened fire at each other. Deepak sustained injuries on his neck, both legs and on his back. Narendra was hit by a bullet in his back and Suraj received injuries in his leg. Deepak was declared dead," the officer said, adding that an FIR under relevant legal provisions has been registered. Another police officer said, "Both accused Narendra and Suraj are in custody and further search on for other co-accused persons"

# Man dies of wounds suffered in being thrashed by lover's brother in Delhi's Jagatpuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 21-year-old man died of wounds he suffered in a beating by the brother of a woman he was involved with and almost half a dozen others in east Delhi's Jagatpuri area. According to the police on Sunday, a PCR call was received in the Jagatpuri police station regarding quarrel and beatings with the brother-in-law of the caller at 40 foota road by six to seven people on Friday. Police have arrested three people, including the brother of the woman. The victim has been identified as Arpit alias Golu. He was taken to Hedgewar Hospital and was discharged



after primary treatment. "Injured Arpit was taken to Hedgewar Hospital and took primary treatment from the hospital. He was discharged from the hospital after treatment and was taken back home. At night around 4 am, Arpit complained of abdominal pain," an officer said, adding that he was taken to Guru Tegh Bahadur (GTB)

hospital where a doctor declared him brought dead. An FIR was filed against several people on the complaint of Arpit's brother-in-law who was present at the spot where the fight happened. Dhurav, Nishu, and Ravindra Kumar Rajak were arrested by police, and a search is on for Aman, Raghav, and Ankit, the officer said. During the investigation, it was revealed that Arpit was thrashed because he used to talk to Dhurav's sister, police said. A case under section 103(1) (punishment for murder) and 3(5) BNS was registered on the statement of the brother in law of the victim namely Kuldeep, who was also an eye witness, on Saturday.

# Bomb blast shatters...

From page 1

Delhi Police said it is collecting mobile network data to find out who was present nearby when the explosion happened, which is suspected to be a crude bomb. Forensic experts inspecting the area outside the CRPF school, found a suspicious "white powder" from the spot and sent it to the laboratory for examination. They have also dug up a hole near the school's wall and taken soil samples with them. "The white powder could be a mixture of ammonium nitrate and chloride. There was a foul smell of chemicals after the blast. Local residents and police officials

who rushed there also felt the same. Our teams are investigating the entire matter," a senior police officer said. National Security Guard officials have also sent some material picked up from the spot for further investigation. "Whether it is some kind of explosive or anything else can only be ascertained after we thoroughly examine it. We are suspecting a crude bomb could be the reason for the blast," a senior official said. The NSG commandos have deployed robots to scan the entire area to know if there are any other explosive materials. "NSG, NIA and Delhi Police have cordoned off the entire area. Delhi

Police is already on high alert due to festival season," said the official. Senior police officers, including from the crime branch and the Special Cell, as well as the fire brigade reached the spot after it was reported. Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said they received a call regarding a blast "near the boundary wall" of the CRPF school. "We immediately rushed two fire engines to the spot. There was no fire and no one was injured due to the blast, so our vehicle returned," DFS officials said. A senior police officer said, "Our forensic team and crime unit are at the spot to collect samples from the blast location. It could be a firecracker, but we are

investigating the entire matter from all angles," the officer said. Police said they are checking the CCTV footage of the spot. Another senior police officer added, "Our bomb disposal teams are checking the nearby area. We have also sounded an alert to nearby police stations to increase vigil and checking. Foot patrolling has also been intensified in different markets. We request everyone to inform the police immediately if they see any suspected item." This blast comes just four months after many schools across Delhi received hoax bomb threats back in the month of May, which later turned out to be hoax.

# BJP releases 99-strong Maharashtra list

From page 1

Senior State ministers Sudhir Mungantwar and Girish Mahajan have been re-nominated as candidates from Ballarpur and Jamner, respectively. Three sitting MLAs who have been dropped are Ashwini Jagtap from Chinchwad, Ganpat Gaikwad from Kalyan East and Babanrao Pachpute from Shrigonda. Jagtap's brother-in-law Shankar Jagtap has been given a ticket. Gaikwad, who is in jail in a firing case, has been replaced by his wife Sulabha Gaikwad. Pachpute's wife Pratibha Pachpute

would be contesting. The BJP has re-fielded Mumbai President Ashish Shelar from Vandre West (as Bandra west is known) in Mumbai. Senior leader and minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha will contest the elite Malabar Hills where the residences of the ministerial bungalows exist and where several prominent personalities live. Veteran politician Vijaykumar Gavit has been fielded from the Nandurbar (ST) seat. Chhatrapati Shivendra Rajeshwale, a descendant of Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj will re-contest from Satara. He is the cousin of Satara MP

Shrimant Chhatrapati Udayan Rajeshwale and son of late MLA Chhatrapati Abhaysinh Rajeshwale. Another royal family member Jaykumar Rawal has been re-nominated from the Sindhkheda seat. From the temple town seat of Tuljapur, Ranajagitsinha Patil has been re-nominated. He is son of Padmasinh Patil, the brother of NCP Raja Sabha member Sunetra Pawar, wife of Ajit Pawar. Former minister and MLC Prof Ram Shinde will contest from Karjat-Jamkhed, the seat that he last time to Rohit Pawar, the grand-nephew of Sharad Pawar.

# Five arrested for gunbattle in Delhi's Welcome area

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested five men suspected to be involved in a gun battle in the Welcome area of northeast Delhi. A police officer on Sunday said that the accused were identified as 28 year old Samad, 30 year old Shanu, 23 year old Kasim, 22 year old Hasim, and 22 year old Mohammed Noor. On Saturday, around 17 rounds were fired in a gun battle between two groups over money near the locality's Raja Market. A 22-year-old woman named Ifra was shot in the chest during the firing and was rushed to a hospital where she is currently under treatment.

# Hoax threats to...

From page 1

The sources also said there were threats for at least six flights of Air India flights. There was no comment from the airline. On Saturday, more than 30 flights operated by various Indian airlines reportedly received bomb threats. The airlines that got the bomb threats include Air India, IndiGo, Akasa Air, Vistara, SpiceJet, Star Air, and Alliance Air. The latest series of hoax calls comes a day after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) met with airline CEOs on October 19 after multiple flights received at least 70 hoax bomb threats in the past week. The ongoing investigation of hoax bomb threats to domestic and international flights has revealed that nearly 70 percent were from a single source: an anonymous and unverified account on X that posted threats to 46 domestic and international flights of Indian carriers in two days. Amid the wave of hoax bomb threats to Indian airlines, with as many as 70 such posts made during the past week, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation

(DGCA) Vikram Dev Dutt has been transferred to the Ministry of Coal as Secretary. Sources said the X handle @adamlanza1111 - made 12 threats on Friday night and 34 on Saturday. The user also began posting threats to international carriers such as American Airlines, Jet Blue, and Air New Zealand. The posts had an identical message: "There are bombs onboard five of your planes... No one will make out alive. Hurry up and evacuate the plane." Some of the flights were airborne when the threats were posted, while others had already completed their journey. The threats, which have caused widespread disruptions and forced emergency procedures, have mostly turned out to be false alarms. However, they have left airlines and authorities scrambling to ensure passenger safety, while investigating the sources of the threats. Among the airlines most affected are Air India Express, Air India, Vistara, IndiGo, and Akasa Air, with each reporting multiple security scares.

# PM Modi gives Diwali gifts to...

From page 1

PM Modi contrasted BJP's developmental work with the alleged "familyism" of the Opposition parties, criticising the Congress and SP for their dynastic politics. He further highlighted that the BJP has a record of keeping its promises, such as the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and implementing women's reservation in the legislative bodies. In a key part of his speech, PM Modi outlined his vision for involving the youth in the political landscape. "In the future, one lakh youth will be made a part of politics. I urge the youth to come forward and join the nation's progress," he said. He emphasised the importance of welcoming new leaders who do not come from political backgrounds, as a means to combat the "huge threat" posed by dynastic politics in India. "These complainants do the most harm to the youth. They don't believe in giving a chance to them. That is why I have called upon the people to bring one lakh such

youth into politics whose families have nothing to do with politics," the PM asserted. He portrayed this initiative as a campaign to transform Indian politics and to eliminate corruption and dynastic practices. "This is a campaign to change the direction of Indian politics. It's time for a new, open-minded approach to politics," he said, adding that as the MP of Kashi, he is committed to empowering the youth of the region. Prime Minister Modi praised the recent development strides made by the BJP-led UP government, positioning Varanasi as a symbol of progress. "Kashi has once again become the starting point of new development records for the whole country," he remarked, extending congratulations to the states, governors, and chief ministers contributing to the nation's growth. "The BJP has always delivered on its promises, whether it is building the Ram temple in Ayodhya or ensuring reservation for women in legislative

assemblies," the PM stated. He also underscored the BJP government's achievements in supporting Muslim women, particularly through the abolition of triple talaq, which he described as ending years of suffering and empowering them to "walk with their heads held high." The PM pointed out the transformation of Uttar Pradesh from a state known for poor infrastructure to one recognised for its expressways and international airports. He highlighted Ayodhya's rise as a significant spiritual destination with a new grand international airport in Jewar, Noida, as part of the state's infrastructure growth. "Think back to when UP was mocked for its broken roads. Today, UP is known as a state with expressways and international airports," he said, emphasising the changes brought about by his government. Reflecting on the BJP's achievements, Modi noted the long-pending issue of women's reservation, stating,

"Our government has completed this historic work." He emphasised that the BJP-led government granted constitutional status to the OBC Commission and implemented a 10% reservation for economically weaker sections without affecting existing reservations. "We have worked with good intentions, aiming to transform the lives of every family in the country with honesty. That is why the country continues to bless us," he added, citing BJP's electoral successes, including record votes in states like Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir. As PM Modi concluded his speech, the crowd erupted with chants of "Har Har Mahadev" and "Modi," expressing their enthusiasm. The atmosphere was vibrant, with women, children, and elders waving colourful paintings as they cheered on the Prime Minister. The audience began exiting the stadium rapidly after the address, with the police managing crowd control to ensure a smooth dispersal.

# Wayanad hills are alive, with...

From page 1

Though she is a surprise choice as candidate despite a long list of seat seekers including K Surendran (the state BJP president) Shobha Surendran and V Muralaedharan, former Union Minister, Haridas is expected to put up a brilliant show in the by-poll. It is a foregone conclusion that Priyanka will win hands down from the constituency, what is being watched with keen interest is who would finish as runner-up in this race. The ruling CPI(M) is not in the "best of health" as the CPI candidate would file his nomination from the constituency. The unnatural death of Naveen Baby, the additional district magistrate of neighboring Kannur district following the public humiliation meted out to him by the District Panchayath President P P Divya, popularly known as the Marxist belle, has caused a major dent in the CPI(M)'s image.

The constituency, since its inception in 2009, has sent only Congress candidates to the Lok Sabha. All Opposition parties in the State are aware of the ground realities. Surendran, who has amassed material properties than the votes during his tenure as BJP state chief has accepted the Congress win by stating that the Hindutva party candidate is likely to make an upsurge in the poll. Along with Wayanad, the Assembly constituencies of Chelakkara (Reserved) and Palakkad would go to the polls on November 13. The seats fell vacant as the sitting members K Radhakrishnan and Safi Parambil had to vacate the seats following their election in the Lok Sabha polls. Both Chelakkara and Palakkad will see triangular fights featuring the CPI(M)-led LDF, Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

# Blast near CRPF School in Rohini: NIA likely to take up probe

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigative Agency (NIA) will likely take up the investigation in the blast near a CRPF school in Prashant Vihar area in Rohini on Sunday morning. According to a police source, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will likely transfer the case to the NIA on Tuesday in view of the possibility of terrorist conspiracy or any major incident. The NIA conducted preliminary investigation and collect inputs related to evidence. A police source said, "The task of investigation in this case can be handed over to the investigation agency NIA by the Union Home Ministry after a few days." He added that while a preliminary report has been submitted to the MHA, a complete report has been sought by the minister by Tuesday. "After the report of investigation of this case is ascertained by Special Cell and Rohini District Police, further decision regarding investigation can be taken in this case by Tuesday. The case can be transferred to NIA only in view of the possibility of terrorist conspiracy or any major incident," the source stated. Earlier in the day, teams from the NIA, National Security Guard (NSG), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Delhi Police cordoned off the area where the blast took place and a dense white smoke was present for at least 10 minutes. Forensic experts have also collected samples from the site to ascertain the cause of the explosion which was reported at around 7.50 am. However, after receiving information about any major criminal incident or terrorist incident or inputs related to suspicious bomb explosives, the arrival of NIA for preliminary investigation is a part of the protocol.



Due to the blast, police said a school wall, near by shops and a car were damaged. Security has already been stepped up in Delhi due to the festival season. Plumes of smoke could be seen billowing from the spot in purported videos of the incident. Also, two cars were parked near the explosion site and some two-wheelers passed by seconds before the explosion. Local residents said the explosion was "intense" and there was a foul smell in the area after it. "FSL and NSG teams conducted an inspection of the spot and lifted samples. A case vide FIR No. 512/24 u/s 326(g) BNS, 4 Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act & 3 Explosives Act has been registered at PS Prashant Vihar, Rohini," the police said. "Whether it is some kind of explosive or anything else can only be ascertained after we thoroughly examine it. We are suspecting a crude bomb could be the reason for the blast," another senior official said.

# AAP and BJP spar over Rohini blast

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP and BJP on Sunday sparred over a blast near a CRPF school in Delhi's Rohini area where the former said that it has exposed the "crumbling" law and order in the city and shows that the BJP-led central government is unable to fulfil its responsibility of keeping the Delhiites safe while the latter claimed that the ruling party politicizes even security issues. Lieutenant Governor Vinai Saxena also took to Twitter and shared, "A multi-agency probe is on in the blasts that took place in Delhi today. I am keeping a constant watch on the progress of investigation and assure that the guilty will be brought to book. Meanwhile, I appeal to all to maintain restraint and not indulge in fear mongering." Chief Minister Atishi, in a post on X in Hindi, said, "The BJP spends most of its time obstructing the work of the elected government in



Delhi instead." She stated that the recent bomb blast reveals the crumbling state of Delhi's security and emphasised that while the Central Government is tasked with maintaining law and order in the capital, it is more focused on disrupting the work of the elected Delhi government. "Today, Delhi is witnessing conditions reminiscent of the 1990s Mumbai underworld era. The city is seeing broad daylight shootings, gangsters extorting people, and a noticeable rise in criminal morale," she added.

Stating that the BJP neither has the intent nor the competence to govern Delhi, the senior AAP leader said, "If Delhiites ever made the mistake of entrusting them with governance, they would bring the state of schools, hospitals, electricity, and water services down to the same level as the current law and order situation." "Due to this, the situation in Delhi today is like that of Mumbai during the underworld era of the 1990s. Shots are fired openly, gangsters are extorting money and

criminals are emboldened," she charged. Addressing a press conference, senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia said the BJP is unable to maintain law and order in Delhi. "The people have given the BJP the responsibility of maintaining law and order and keeping them safe but the party is failing to fulfil its only responsibility," he said. Delhi Cabinet Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, who was also present at the press conference, targeted Saxena over the incident. "Where are you LG sabhit? Whenever a road is blocked due to construction or water-logging, you go there with your camerapersons but today there was a bomb blast in the city and you are missing," he said. Attacking the AAP, Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly and MLA from Rohini Vijender Gupta condemned the statement made by Delhi Chief Minister Atishi and said, "I strongly denounce Atishi's statement. The AAP's

tendency to politicize even security issues exposes their low mentality." "It is shameful that AAP leaders, who sit comfortably in air-conditioned rooms, did not bother to visit the blast site. Neither the Chief Minister, her ministers, nor any leaders of the party took the effort to reach the location," he stated. Gupta accused the AAP of politicizing security matters and suggested that before pointing fingers, the party should reflect on its own failures and focus on addressing Delhi's pressing issues. Moreover, Delhi Congress President Devender Yadav said that the Delhi governments and at the Centre, and the law enforcing agencies have totally failed in ensuring the safety and security of the people, as bomb blasts, murders, extortions and robberies have become everyday occurrence. "It was the misfortune of the people that no one seems to be in control of law and order in the Capital," he said.

# Bathroom of Kejriwal's former bungalow costs more than ₹15 crore: Inventory

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An inventory list of former Chief Minister and AAP Convenor Arvind Kejriwal's of his earlier residence at 6, Flag Staff road reveals that the bathroom of the house costs more than 15 crores with amenities like fully automatic and sensor equipped smart toilet seats installed in it. The list shows that there are five superior water supply and sanitary installations worth Rs 15 crores, three hot water generators worth Rs 22.5 lakhs and one automatic washing machine worth Rs 2.10 lakh. His rooms have been equipped with 80 body sensors and remote controlled window curtain operated with motor and track worth Rs 4 to 5.6 crores. Decorative pillars worth Rs 36 lakhs, automatic sliding sensor and remote controlled wooden doors and glass door



machines, and washing machines—beyond the imagination of a common person—have been installed in the bungalow by Kejriwal, who claims to represent the common man," he alleged. Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta said that Kejriwal has ruthlessly spent crores of rupees, earned through the hard work of the people of Delhi, to build a luxurious retreat for himself. He mentioned that the decorations in Kejriwal's 'Sheesh Mahal' are so extravagant that they surpass even those of a seven-star hotel. "It is shameful it is that a man who deceived the public with slogans like 'I won't take a car, I won't take a bungalow, I won't take security' has, in the last ten years, erected a Sheesh Mahal that even outdoes the luxury of the Mughals," the LoP said.

ties, indulging in luxury at the expense of public funds is deplorable. "For half the population, owning a Rs 1 crore house remains a distant dream, but the inventory of Kejriwal's bungalow indicates that the toilet seats alone cost rs 1 crore were installed but are now missing, with sanitary fittings exceeding Rs 15 crore and decorative items valued over Rs 5 crore," he claimed. Sachdeva stated that the list further reveals curtains worth Rs 5.6 crore and sofas costing several lakhs, adding to the extravagance of the fully air-conditioned residence. In light of these revelations, the Delhi BJP chief demanded that Atishi act ethically and invite media representatives to inspect and publicly disclose all items in the bungalow before she moves in. "Appliances such as steam ovens, microwaves, coffee

machines, and washing machines—beyond the imagination of a common person—have been installed in the bungalow by Kejriwal, who claims to represent the common man," he alleged. Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta said that Kejriwal has ruthlessly spent crores of rupees, earned through the hard work of the people of Delhi, to build a luxurious retreat for himself. He mentioned that the decorations in Kejriwal's 'Sheesh Mahal' are so extravagant that they surpass even those of a seven-star hotel. "It is shameful it is that a man who deceived the public with slogans like 'I won't take a car, I won't take a bungalow, I won't take security' has, in the last ten years, erected a Sheesh Mahal that even outdoes the luxury of the Mughals," the LoP said.

# Man dies after viewing video of girlfriend slitting her wrists

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 30-year-old man, who received a video from his girlfriend in which she is slitting her wrist, rushed her to the hospital but fainted and subsequently died after seeing her condition. According to the police on Sunday, on the intervening night of October 18 and 19, at 03:34 am, a PCR call regarding admission of an unconscious man who has been admitted to a hospital was received at Anand Vihar police station. Police suspect it could be a case of cardiac arrest but are awaiting more information to ascertain the cause of his death. A senior police officer said, "Police reached the Kailash Deepak Hospital but Arun Nanda, who is a resident of Jagatpuri, had already been



declared dead by doctors." He added that during inquiry, it was found that Nanda's friend was admitted to Kailash Deepak Hospital for slitting her veins with a sharp object in Anand Vihar area of Delhi's Shahdara. "Initially we got to know that she had sent the video of the injury to his friend Arun by using a messaging application. After seeing her condition, Arun fainted in the hospital

suddenly and was declared dead after being examined by doctors," the officer said. Police said that Arun's body was sent to Subzi Mandi Mortuary for autopsy on Saturday and later was handed over to his family members after post-mortem. "During the post-mortem, the doctor has also preserved the viscera of the deceased. There were no allegations of any assault.

# Two, including bank official arrested for providing bank accounts to cybercriminals

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Cyber crime police station team of the Gurugram police have arrested two accused, including a bank official of a government bank, for allegedly providing bank accounts for cybercriminals, police said. Priyanshu Diwan, Assistant Commissioner of Police (cybercrime), said that the arrested accused had been identified as Kanishk Vijay Vargiya and Ram Avtar, a native of Rajasthan. According to the police, a man filed a complaint at the Cyber Crime Police Station East in July 2024 that he was duped Rs 24.60 lakh in the name of investing in the share market. During the probe, Inspector Naveen Kumar, SHO of the said police station arrested the suspects on Saturday for the alleged involvement in the

crime from Rajasthan. During interrogation, the accused disclosed that Ram Avtar had been working as deputy manager in UCO Bank Mansarovar branch Rajasthan since 2016. "The bank account used in the fraud was fraudulently opened by Ram Avtar and Kanishk in collusion on fake documents, the same bank account was made available by the accused to another accused for cyber fraud," Sandeep Kumar, a spokesperson of the Gurugram police said. Till now, a total of 07 bank accounts were opened by the accused and took Rs 7,000 per account as commission. "The accused have been taken on police remand for further proceedings. So far the Gurugram police have arrested 21 bank officials within six months who were allegedly involved in cyber fraud," Kumar said.

# Faculty development programme on yoga and naturopathy held



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Peoples foundation in collaboration with National institute of Naturopathy, Pune and Dr SS Rajsthan Ayurveda University organised two days faculty development program for professors and principals of about 15 affiliated and constituent colleges of the University. The program, one of its kind in the field yoga and naturopathy curriculum for BNYS being taught in the colleges aimed at exchange of ideas, informations regarding latest progress and advances in this field, cross fertilization of ideas, pedagogy, integrated therapies, medicine and holistic treatment.

# DDA sets up tent cafe at Asita Biodiversity Park

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has set up an eco-friendly tent cafe at the Asita Bio-Diversity Park with a seating capacity of nearly 60 to 70 people and will be operational before the onset of winter. The cafe was set up under the direction of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. It is a temporary structure and will serve pre-cooked food and beverages to the visitors, DDA said in a statement. The cafe will be operational before the onset of winters. A large number of people visit Asita park every day. The tent cafe is in close vicinity of the water body and the riverine grassland and will be flanked by over two lakh seasonal flowers including Tulips to be planted at Asita this winter. The cafe has a large metal container that will serve as the kitchen. The cafe has been designed and set up in a way that it can be removed



instantly in case of flooding during the monsoon months and set up again when the water recedes. The tent has been erected atop a mound in Asita park that will add to its aesthetics. Temporary seating will be made available inside as well as outside the tent area. According to the statement, the tent cafe at Asita comes after the successful opening of Café Stone at Mehrauli Archaeological Park and Café Bamboo Oasis at Baansera, on the initiative of Lt Governor Saxena. Upon receiving enthusiastic response from people visiting these places, the LG had directed the DDA to open a tent cafe at Asita, while maintaining the ecological character of the Yamuna floodplains and the natural surroundings of the Park. Meanwhile, to the delight of the visitors, DDA will be planting nearly 02 lakh seasonal flowers at Asita this winter. This includes 6000 Tulips apart from varieties

like Poppy, calendula, cosmos, marigold, Hollyhocks, Dahlias, Coreopsis, Petunias, Salvias and many others. Asita Park, apart from being a green lung in the Yamuna floodplains, also serves as a remarkable habitat for migratory birds and reptiles. Over 70 species of resident and migratory birds can be found in Asita during the winters. This green lung on the floodplains has also become an ideal spot for morning and evening walkers and a picnic spot for students and visitors alike. Notably, in July this year, Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar had visited Asita and led a massive plantation drive at this park under the "Ek Ped Maa ke Naam" campaign. As many as 20,000 saplings were planted under the campaign at Asita, on a single day. Earlier, in March last year, Asita had also hosted the Ambassadors/High Commissioners of G-20 nations.

# CM, Environment Minister survey Anand Vihar junction

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after The Pioneer reported on the collapsing traffic management system due to illegal encroachment at the Anand Vihar junction, Delhi Chief Minister Atishi along with Environment Minister Gopal Rai, and senior officials visited the area on Sunday to take stock of the situation. After visiting Anand Vihar, Atishi said one of the biggest contributors to pollution in the Anand Vihar area is the influx of buses from other states. The CM added that the Delhi government will engage with the Uttar Pradesh government to implement anti-pollution measures at their bus depot near the national capital. The CM inspected pollution control measures at the Anand Vihar

bus depot along with Environment Minister Gopal Rai. The Pioneer raised the issue of deteriorating traffic congestion in Anand Vihar and its surrounding roads due to unregulated buses, auto rickshaws, private vehicles and a large number of encroachment here. Due to heavy traffic congestion, the area is now considered one of the busiest areas in Delhi since it lies on the city's border, close to the bustling metropolis of Ghaziabad and Noida, and millions throng here each day. Anand Vihar is a major transit hub connected with Railway, Rapid Rail Transit System (RRTS) and Metro network and is always abuzz with lakhs of commuters using various modes of transport. Highlighting the issue, Atishi



runs CNG and electric buses, the Kaushambi bus depot receives diesel buses. We plan to engage with the UP government to implement pollution control measures there as well. Constructions by the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) and Rapid Rail Transit System (RRTS) has also contributed to pollution levels in the area, she said, adding the Delhi government is utilising all available resources, including 99

teams for dust control and over 315 smog guns, to mitigate the issue. "Smog guns are operating constantly in this area, and the roads are being kept wet to control dust. All roads have been repaired, and congestion points have been cleared to ease traffic flow," Atishi said. She also addressed the issue of pollution in the Yamuna, accusing the Haryana and UP governments of releasing untreated effluent into the river. "During the Chhath festival, they shut their Agra Canal, diverting their untreated waste towards Delhi. However, we remain solution-oriented. That is why we are using food-based silicone defoamers, and the Delhi Jal Board is conducting a defoam-

ing drive to tackle the problem. Even if others try to disrupt our efforts, we will continue working towards a cleaner Yamuna," she said. Environment Minister Gopal Rai pointed out that air quality fluctuates significantly late at night and early in the morning, coinciding with the arrival and departure of buses. "The AQI is especially bad at these times, and the major reason appears to be the presence of two depots - one at Anand Vihar in Delhi and the other at Kaushambi in UP. While buses in Delhi are now running on CNG and electric, a large number of diesel buses from UP still operate at these depots. The smoke from these buses is impacting the air quality," he said.

Rai urged the UP government to adopt similar pollution control measures, saying a coordinated approach is required to yield positive results. Meanwhile, the Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva stated that the severe air and water pollution in Delhi is a consequence of the immaturity, negligence, and blind loyalty of former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, current Chief Minister Atishi Marlena, and Environment Minister Gopal Rai toward the Punjab government. "AAP leaders, having been in power for ten years are now panicking ahead of the elections due to the double blow of pollution. As a result, they are resorting to misleading statements, ignoring Delhi's geographical realities," he claimed.

# I have been accused of many things, I know what my parents go through: Salman Khan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In what could be called his first public comments following the murder of his close friend and NCP leader Baba Siddique, Bollywood superstar Salman Khan said he has to handle quarrels between "Big Boss 18" contestants at a time when he is "going through" a certain phase in his life. Siddique, the former Maharashtra minister known for his starry iftar parties and Bollywood connections, was gunned down on October 12 outside his MLA son Zeeshan Siddique's Mumbai office. According to police, Siddique may have been targeted by gangster Lawrence Bishnoi because of his proximity to Khan. On Saturday's Weekend ka Vaar episode of "Big Boss 18", on which the actor serves as the host, Khan said he



wanted to give the popular reality series a miss. "Yaar, qasam khuda ki what all I am going through in my life and I have to come and handle this (arguments between housemates) I feel that I shouldn't have come here today. But you have to do what you have to do," Khan can

be seen saying as per several videos circulating on social media. "Mere par bhi bahut saare laanchan lagaye gaye hain (I have been accused of many things). I know what my parents go through," he added in another clip. It could not be immediately

confirmed whether this episode was filmed before or after Siddique's killing. Though Khan didn't share a post condoling Siddique's passing on social media, he visited the slain politician's Bandra residence last Sunday hours before his burial service. The Mumbai traffic police received a threat message demanding Rs 5 crore from the Bollywood actor, following which the Crime Branch began a probe an official said on Friday. A case was registered at Worli police under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for threat and extortion after the city's traffic control room received the message on its WhatsApp helpline on Thursday afternoon, he said. Khan had earlier received death threats from the Bishnoi gang whose members had also opened fire outside the actor's Bandra home in April.

# Lucknow Police busts fake call centre, arrests 12

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A fake call centre has been busted here and 12 cyber fraudsters were arrested, police said on Sunday. On October 19, the surveillance team of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, East, and the police team of PGI police station, Lucknow, successfully apprehended 12 cyber fraudsters operating from a flat in Everest Enclave, Sector 18 of Vrindavan Yojana in Lucknow. The accused were arrested following a tip-off. During the raid, cops seized a substantial amount of electronic equipment, including 11 laptops, a Samsung tablet, two airfiber units, two routers, five headphones, two mice and 17 mobile phones. The cyber criminals employed a sophisticated technique to target foreign nationals, primarily from the United States and Canada. They would intentionally introduce errors or



bugs into the victims' laptops or computer systems, causing pop-up messages to appear. When the affected individuals attempted to resolve the issue, the fraudsters would contact them, posing as technical support agents, the statement said. Under the guise of troubleshooting the computer problems, the accused would

gain remote access to the victims' devices. They would then coerce the individuals into making payments, often in the form of cryptocurrency or gift cards, to supposedly resolve the non-existent issues. These fraudulent transactions resulted in significant financial losses for the victims, it said. A case has been registered

under sections 318 (4) (cheating), 319 (2) (cheating by personation), 316 (2) (criminal breach of trust), 338 (forgery of valuable security, will, etc.), 336(3) (forgery), 340(2) (forged document or electronic record and using it as genuine), 61(2) (criminal conspiracy) and 111 (organised crime) of the BNS and the IT Act. The arrested accused persons have been identified as Chandan alias Ricky (Kanpur), Mohan Shyam Sharma (Bharatpur, Rajasthan), Utkarsh Gold Smith (Lucknow), Neeraj Kumar (Rae Bareilly), Karan Singh (Lucknow), Tarun Gupta (Sant Kabir Nagar), Neeraj Pandey (Delhi), Siddharth Kashyap (Gonda), Rituraj Gupta (Lucknow), Somnath Singh (Bahraich), Virat Kumar (Chandauli) and Ramjanak (Basti). Efforts are being made to ascertain the criminal history of all the accused persons, the statement said.

# NCC launches inaugural sailing expedition on Indian rivers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a maiden initiative, the National Cadet Corps (NCC) is set to embark on its first-ever special sailing expedition, a flagship event leading up to the Republic Day Camp 2025. The expedition will involve 528 Naval Wing cadets from across India, sailing approximately 1,200 kms along the Ganges and Hooghly rivers through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, defence ministry said here on Sunday. Giving details, officials said the event, themed 'Bharatiya Nadiya - Sanskritiyon ki Janani', will be flagged off from Kanpur on Monday and conclude in Kolkata on December



20. The aim of this pioneering expedition is to celebrate India's rich maritime traditions while inspiring the youth towards adventure and a life of service in uniform. The cadets representing all State Directorates, will participate in this six-phase event. They will be accompanied by nearly 40 Associate NCC

Officers. The key phases of the expedition include Phase I: Kanpur to Prayagraj (260 KM), Phase II: Prayagraj to Varanasi (205 KM), Phase III: Varanasi to Buxar (150 KM), Phase IV: Buxar to Patna (150 KM), Phase V: Patna to Farakka (230 KM) and Phase VI: Farakka to Kolkata (205 KM). During the journey, cadets will engage with local NCC groups and contribute to the 'Swachh Bharat' initiative by cleaning riverbanks and reducing plastic waste. They will also perform 'Nukkad Nataks' to promote India's rich cultural traditions and raise awareness about environmental conservation.

# Cyclonic storm expected in Bay of Bengal by October 23

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A cyclonic storm is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal by October 23, affecting the coastal areas of Odisha and West Bengal, the IMD said on Sunday. An upper air cyclonic circulation over the Andaman Sea is likely to intensify into a low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal during the next 24 hours, a special weather bulletin said. The weather system is expected to move west-northwestwards direction, and intensify into a depression by October 22 morning and into a cyclonic storm by October 23 over east-



central Bay of Bengal, it said. "Thereafter, it is very likely to move northwestwards and

reach the northwest Bay of Bengal off Odisha-West Bengal coasts by October 24 morning,"

it added. Under its influence, the coastal region of Odisha and West Bengal is likely to receive heavy rainfall from October 23 to 25, the IMD said, advising fishermen to return to the shore by October 21. IMD Director-General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the system is likely to take the shape of a severe cyclonic storm. He said parts of Odisha are likely to experience heavy to very heavy rainfall from October 23 onwards. "Some places in the coastal region may experience 20 cm rainfall on October 24-25. The intensity of the spell may also increase to 20 to 30 cm,

and above 30 at some places," he said. The IMD has not made any forecast on landfall location and intensity, he said. Light to moderate rainfall is also likely in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, the bulletin said. Squally wind with speed reaching 40-50 gusting to 60 kmph is very likely to commence from October 23 evening in Odisha-West Bengal coasts, and it would gradually increase to 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph from October 24 night to October 25 morning. The IMD said during that period, the sea conditions are likely to be rough.

# TMC announces candidates for Bengal Assembly By-elections

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday announced its candidates' list for the November 13 Assembly by-elections to six seats in Bengal. While Sangita Roy Pradhan has been fielded from Sitai in Cooch Behar district, Jay Prakash Toppo has been given the party ticket from Madarihat in Alipurduar district. Down south Falguni Singhbabu and Sujoy Hazra have been fielded from Taldangra, and Medinipur in Bankura and West Midnapore districts. While Sanat Dey will contest from Naihati, Sk Rabiul Islam will fight from Haroa. Both the seats are in North 24 Parganas. The bypolls were necessitated due to resignations of sitting MLAs of the six segments following their victory in this year's Lok Sabha elections. While former rulers CPI(M) or the Congress were still to announce their candidates' list Opposition BJP was first to declare its list of contestants on



Saturday. The party has fielded Rahul Lohar and Dipak Kumar Roy from Madarihat and Sitai respectively. Both these seats are in North Bengal. Subhojit Roy has been fielded from Medinipur whereas Ananya Roy Chakraborty will contest from Taldangra seat. Rupak Mitra have been fielded from Naihati, whereas Bimal Das will contest from Haroa. Out of the six seats the BJP had won only Madarihat seat during the 2021 Assembly elections. Earlier TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said that despite the "disinformation campaign resorted to by the Left and other opposition parties in the garb of the doctors' movement the TMC will win all the six out of six seats in the by-elections." He also said that "the Left which is the main conspirator behind the movement will end up in the third place once again."

# Indian Navy, Oman conduct successful naval exercise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



Indian Navy ship INS Trikand and Dornier maritime patrol aircraft, participated in the Indo-Oman bilateral naval exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr with the Royal Navy of Oman Vessel Al Seeb off Goa from October 13 to 18, navy said here on Sunday. Giving details, officials said the exercise was conducted in two phases: with harbour phase from October 13 to 15, followed by the sea phase. As part

of harbour activities, personnel from both Navies engaged in professional interactions, including Subject Matter Expert Exchanges and planning conferences. In addition, sports fixtures and social engagements were also held. During the sea phase of the exercise conducted from October 16 to 18, both ships carried out various evolutions, including gun firings at surface inflatable targets, close-range anti-aircraft firings, manoeuvres, and Replenishment at Sea

Approaches (RASAPS). The integral helicopter operated from INS Trikand and undertook cross-deck landings and vertical replenishment (VERTREP) with RNOV Al Seeb. Additionally, the Indian Navy's Dornier aircraft provided Over-the-Horizon Targeting (OTHT) data with the participating ships. To further enhance interoperability, Indian Navy Sea Riders embarked on RNOV Al Seeb for a day. The exercise helped strengthen interoperability and enhanced understanding of each other's best practices. The exercise was a resounding success, achieving its aims of enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding, and strengthening cohesion between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman. This exercise further reaffirms India's commitment to constructive collaboration and mutual growth with like-minded nations in the Indian Ocean Region.

# Court to resume witness statements in WFI chief case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DELHI



A court here will resume on November 4 recording the statements of witnesses against former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in a criminal case filed against him by female wrestlers. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Priyanka Rajpoot posted the matter for further proceedings after recording the statement of one of the witnesses on October 19.

The court on May 21 framed the charges of sexual harassment and using force to outrage women's modesty against Singh. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader had pleaded not guilty before the court and claimed trial. The Magistrate had also framed the charge of criminal intimidation against Singh. The court had further framed the charge of criminal intimidation against co-accused and former WFI assistant secretary Vinod Tomar in the case.

# Two arrested for duping investors in Gurugram

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GURUGRAM

Police have arrested two people, including a bank employee, for allegedly duping people under the pretext of higher returns on investments in the stock market, officials said on Sunday. The accused were identified as Kanishk Vijayvargiy and Ram Avtar, natives of Jaipur, police said. According to police, a man filed a complaint alleging that on July 23, he was cheated on Rs 24.60 lakh under the pretext of higher returns on investments in the stock market. Following this, an FIR was registered and an investigation was launched. The police arrested Vijayvargiy and Avtra on Saturday from Gurugram. "During police interrogation, the accused revealed that Ram Avtar works as Deputy Manager in UCO bank's Mansarovar branch in Jaipur. He helped open a bank account in the name of Kanishk Vijayvargiy.

# BJP leader K Laxman accuses Telangana Government of ending reservation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Senior BJP leader K Laxman on Sunday slammed the Congress Government in Telangana over certain amendments in the state public service examination rules, alleging that the move is a "conspiracy to end reservation" and demanding a rollback. The BJP OBC Morcha chairman also hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and demanded a response from him on the issue. A section of students has been protesting against the amendments brought in by the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy government in the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) examination rules notified earlier this year. Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar and BRS leaders on Saturday held protests in Hyderabad to express solidarity with aspirants of the TSPSC Group 1 services



who are seeking postponement of the Mains exam, even as the Telangana chief minister urged the students to appear for the test without any misconceptions. "Students are protesting against the conspiracy of the Chief Minister Revanth Reddy-led Congress government in Telangana to end reservation in the recruitment of Group-1 officers in the state. The BJP extends its support to the stu-

dents," said Laxman. "I want a clear response from Rahul Gandhi on this. 'You are roaming around the country carrying the Constitution in hand, spreading misinformation on the issue of reservation and shedding tears for SC, ST and OBC, while your party's government is turning Telangana into a laboratory for ending reservation,'" the BJP leader, who is also a Rajya Sabha MP, added.

Laxman demanded that the Telangana Government roll back the revised TSPSC examination rules and reschedule the recruitment test, which is slated to begin on Monday. Addressing an event in Telangana on Saturday evening, Revanth Reddy said Group 1 service appointments have not been made since the formation of Telangana in 2014. The Government released notification for the Group 1 exam in February this year by issuing GO 29 (which also deals with reservations) deciding to entertain 50 candidates for filling up each post, he noted. He found fault with the opposition parties for their demand to conduct the exam as per the 1:100 ratio even as the recruitment process was underway. Changing the rules halfway would lead to legal wrangles, the chief minister said as he asserted that his government is safeguarding the interests of SC, ST and BCs.

# India seeks global expertise to modernise urban land records

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A two-day international workshop is being held here starting Monday, aiming to outline strategies needed to modernise urban land records across India as authorities grapple with challenges, including a lack of standardization, data security concerns, and the fragmented information across multiple agencies. Besides, issues like outdated infrastructure, resistance to change, and financial constraints which has further complicated the transition will also be deliberated threadbare at the workshop to be attended by experts from countries such as Singapore, South Korea, the UK, Spain, the Netherlands, the UAE, France, the USA, Japan, and Germany. One of the main agenda of the workshop on "Modern Technologies in Survey-Resurvey for Urban Land Records" to be inaugurated by



Union Minister of Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan will be showcasing of the best global practices in digital land records. Organised by the Department of Land Resources under the Ministry of Rural Development, the workshop aligns with Budget announcements for 2024-25, which call for an IT-based system to improve property record administration and tax management through digitization and GIS mapping, said the official. This modernization is expected to enhance transparency, efficiency, and the financial

health of urban local bodies while reducing land-related disputes, he said talking about the need for adopting IT mechanism. The workshop will be attended by various stakeholders, including government officials, urban development secretaries from all states and union territories, international experts, and technology providers. Besides showcasing global best practices, innovative technological solutions, and facilitate pilot project planning for selected urban areas will also be presented at the event. Notable case studies will be drawn from various successful schemes, including AMRUT and SVAMITVA, Raipur Mapping, Guwahati Property Taxation, Jaipur Mapping, Haryana Space Applications Centre and Directorate General Defence Estates. The Ministry has been taking steps to modernise land records in all the 28 States and 8 Union Territories of the country under

Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP), a Central Sector Scheme, since 2016, with 100 per cent funding by the Centre. With considerable experience in rural land records modernisation, the Department is now extending its focus to create and streamline urban land records. The initiative in respect of urban land records is based on the Budget Announcements 2024-25 in respect of establishment of an IT based system for property record administration, updating and tax administration by creating/streamlining urban land record by digitization and GIS mapping which will also facilitate improving the financial position of urban local bodies, said an official from the ministry. The IT based system for property record administration will enhance transparency and efficiency and support sustainable development and reduce land-related disputes, he added.

# Junior doctors continue protests amid talks with Mamata Banerjee

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Twenty four hours after Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee offered a conditional offer for talks to the protesting junior doctors asking them to first withdraw the ongoing fast-unto-death before returning to the dialogue table, she said “decided to join the meeting but without ending the indefinite fast.”

“Responding to the honourable Chief Minister’s call for a talk the junior doctors’ front has decided to go to Nabanna (State secretary) for talks but without withdrawing the indefinite fast we would expect the administration to be positive towards the ten-point demands the doctors have placed before the Government,” and “address the issue from a humanitarian angle considering the health of the doctors who have been fasting for the past 16 days,” Dr Aniket one off the doctors who too was on a fast but had to be hospitalized later on said.

Earlier the Chief Minister called up the doctors and asked them to withdraw the fast. “I am in favour of humanity. I also want justice. But at the same time the treatment of the common people will have to be ensured. So I am again requesting you to withdraw the hunger-strike and



get back to work,” she said adding “I can call you for a dialogue but only on Monday for 45 minutes but I will ask you to call off the fast and then join the meeting.” Subsequently, State Chief Secretary Manoj Pant who visited the doctors’ sit-in site along with Home Secretary Nandini Chakraborty wrote “the Hon’ble chief minister hopes that this message will be received with the understanding that the junior doctors will immediately end the hunger strike in the interest of public health and well-being.”

Emerging from a long general body meeting the doctors on Sunday evening said, “There can be no condition for talks refers to the doctors and the patients they cater to the lifting of the fast would depend upon the outcome of the talks,” adding “we think it is very much within the

scope of the Government to end the impasse because we are not asking for moon we are asking for better safety security, facility for the doctors and patients including restrooms, washrooms, CCTV coverage, centralized referral system with real time monitoring and a fixed date for students’ elections so as to stop entry of corrupt elements in the college administration via backdoor.”

The doctors’ movement started after the tragic rape and murder of a 31-year-old postgraduate trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on August 9 which sparked a nation-wide outrage. The doctors immediately resorted to a cease work demanding justice for the victim doctor and improved facilities and safety measures, inside the government medical colleges and hos-

pitals. Meanwhile, despite the Chief Ministerial offer for talks the ruling Trinamool Congress continued to mount vehement attack on the junior doctors calling them “puppets in the hands of the CPI(M) and Maoists.” TMC spokesperson Debangshu Bhattacharya attacked the doctors for allegedly impeding the health services. “These doctors are nothing but puppets in the hands of the CPI(M) or the Maoists because those who impede health services at the cost of common man’s life are nothing but Maoists,” he said.

Another senior leader Kunal Ghosh said that he would ask the administration to “note down the names of the doctors who are not working and take care of them adequately after the elections.”

The TMC leaders’ attack on the doctors came on a day when two incidents of rapes were reported from East Midnapore and South 24 Parganas sources said. While in the first case an alleged teacher was arrested for raping two school students in the second case a 60-year-old man was arrested for raping a 6-year-old minor, police said. While first incident took place at Bhupatinagar the second one happened at Basanti sources said.

# Omar Abdullah completes 21 km Kashmir Half Marathon

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

After recording a historic victory in the recently concluded Assembly elections and taking the oath of office, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Sunday hit another milestone after crossing the finish line by completing the 21 km long Kashmir Half Marathon in just over two hours.

Around 1700 runners from across the country & 12 foreign nations participated in the Kashmir Marathon. The marathon runners were cheered by a large number of sports enthusiasts along the route.

The prevailing weather conditions in the valley also boosted morale and aided marathon runners.

Bollywood actor and fitness freak Sunil Shetty along with Omar Abdullah flagged off the marathon from the Polo Ground stadium in Srinagar. Sharing his personal experience of completing the first half marathon Omar posted a message on X, “I’m so damn pleased with myself today. I completed the Kashmir Half Marathon - 21 KM at an average pace of 5 min 54 sec per KM. I’ve never run more than 13 KM in my life & that too only ever once. Today I just kept going, propelled by the enthusiasm of other amateur runners like myself”.



Feeling elated Omar said, “The best part was running past my home with family & others out to cheer me on”. He said I had no proper training, no running plan, no nutrition. Picked up a banana & a couple of ‘khajoor’ along the way. Abdullah also advised people to try running to beat stress. “You don’t need drugs to feel good or beat stress. A good run, whether a kilometer or a marathon, is enough to clear the cobwebs & achieve a natural feeling of euphoria & enthusiasm. Try it, you won’t regret it. Let’s start running for a drug-free J&K,” he posted.

Omar, who has been on a roll

ever since he won an emphatic victory in the Assembly polls said he thoroughly enjoyed the marathon and clicked lots of selfies and interacted with the journos who wanted to record a quick interview on the way. “It was such fun running with others. Lots of selfies & videos along the way. I even had a few requests for appointments and one or two job-related problems highlighted along the way. Let’s not forget the enterprising journalists who tried to run alongside in the hope of grabbing an interview”.

Interacting with the media Sunil Shetty said, “People want to come to Kashmir, and

an event like this gives a message to the entire world that people from all over the world are coming here to participate and it’s a big thing. It’s a paradise for the world. The event was organized by the Department of Tourism to show the world that the situation has improved in the valley. Commissioner Secretary Tourism Yasha Mudgal said the whole idea is to promote Kashmir as a popular sports tourism destination. “We have attracted the best of the talent at the International and national level and professional athletes who actually run marathons across the country and the globe have participated in the event”. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha attended the prize distribution ceremony after the run was completed by the athletes. Sinha congratulated all the winners & participants. “This successful mega event has put J&K on the world marathon map. Very soon we’ll organise the Jammu Marathon on a similar scale. These signature running events will bring together runners from across the globe & encourage tourism”, he added. Manoj Sinha said I’m truly grateful to PM Narendra Modi for the absolute transformation of J&K, which has made hosting of such international events possible.

## Four arrested for stealing temple artefact in Kerala

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Four people were taken into custody from Haryana for allegedly stealing a bronze vessel from the famed Sree Padmanabha Swamy temple here, Kerala police said on Sunday. The traditional vessel, called “uruli” in local parlance, was used for poojas and rituals at the ancient shrine known for its priceless treasures kept in secret vaults.

Fort police here confirmed that the accused were identified and taken into custody with the support of Haryana police but didn’t divulge much detail. “One of the accused was a doctor having Australian citizenship. A group comprising him and two or three women had visited the shrine and offered prayers last week. The crime reportedly occurred on Thursday,” a police officer said. As the vessel went missing, the temple authorities informed the police, who later identified the accused through a detailed examination of CCTV visuals, said police. They were later traced to Haryana, and with the support of the local police there, the accused were taken into custody. The accused are expected to be brought to the Kerala capital later in the day.

## RSS launches outreach programme to boost BJP prospects in Maharashtra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With the assembly polls in Maharashtra just a month away, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has launched an extensive outreach programme to shape public opinion in favour of the BJP-led alliance in the state. The RSS, which is the ideological fountainhead of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has started the move in coordination with all of its affiliates, sources said.

“Tolis (teams) have been formed across the state and they have started reaching out to people in their respective localities taking the message,” a source told PTI. Each team is holding small group meetings with 5-10 people and also reaching out to families through their local network in ‘mohallas’ in their respective localities, the source said.

“In these meetings, they do not explicitly endorse the BJP but shape the people’s opinion through intimate discussions around topics of national interest, Hindutva, good governance, development, public welfare and various local issues concerning the society,” the source added.

Before the teams were formed,



the office bearers of the RSS and its affiliates held coordination meetings across all levels in the state to devise the strategy, the source said.

The move assumes significance as it comes following the BJP’s victory in the just concluded Haryana assembly polls. Sources said the “drawing room meetings”, held by the RSS in coordination with its affiliates across Haryana, were one of the key factors behind the BJP’s electoral success in the state. Bucking anti-incumbency, the BJP secured its best-ever haul of 48 seats in the 90-member Haryana state assembly pulling off a hat-trick of wins in the state to retain power and halt the Congress’ comeback attempt in the elections.

“Tolis of Sangh workers, formed

in Haryana, held over 1.25 lakh small group meetings across the state,” another source told PTI. These meetings helped shape public opinion in Haryana by highlighting various issues including the erstwhile Congress government’s “Jat-centric policies” under then Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, the source said.

“They assuaged people’s concerns over the Agnipath recruitment scheme. They also engaged with farmers and managed to sway their sentiments in favour of the BJP,” the source said, adding “RSS stands out due to its embedded nature within the community, where its workers maintain long-term relationships and trust with people in their respective localities”.

It is widely believed that a lack of enthusiasm among the RSS workers was one of the key factors behind the BJP’s underwhelming performance in the Lok Sabha elections this year. BJP president JP Nadda’s remarks during the parliamentary polls that his party needed RSS support in the beginning but over the years it became capable of running itself, is understood to be one of the reasons that demotivated Sangh workers in various states. According to sources, the RSS workers’ “active participation” in

shaping a favourable public opinion in the run-up to assembly polls has injected optimism in the BJP rank and file with many in the party hoping that replication of the Haryana strategy may yield favourable results in Maharashtra as well. Although the RSS maintains that it does not directly engage in electoral politics, it has long been believed to be the BJP’s hidden force in elections. Stakes are high for the BJP and its allies in Maharashtra assembly polls scheduled to be held in one phase on November 20 with the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP), looking to wrest power from the ruling coalition, riding high on their success in the Lok Sabha polls this year. The BJP suffered a setback in parliamentary elections in Maharashtra as its tally came down to nine from 23 it had won in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls in the state. Its ally Shiv Sena, led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, won seven seats. Another ally, the Ajit Pawar-led NCP bagged just one seat. The Congress tally went up to 13 from one seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena won nine seats and Sharad Pawar-led NCP eight.

## Kanchi Shankaracharya: NDA is ‘Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Shankaracharya of Kanchi SKama Koti Peetha Sri Shankar Vijayendra Saraswati Swami on Sunday said that God has blessed Narendra Modi and his government is ‘NDA’, which means “Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan”. Addressing a function after the inauguration of RJ Sankara Eye Hospital in Varanasi, Shankaracharya said, “God has blessed Narendra Damodar Das Modi and his government is ‘NDA’ Narendra Damodar Das ka Anushasan (discipline of Narendra Damodar Das)”. He said that the Government is doing beautiful work for the welfare of everyone as an ideal government in the world.

The eye hospital was inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi, who was present at the function. The Shankaracharya started his address in Sanskrit and said, “Today is an opportunity to see Netra Utsav and this is an important occasion of service. It started in Coimbatore and now the 17th hospital is starting. There are two hospitals in UP in Kanpur and Varanasi.” “We have got good leaders, the person and personality are also important in the society, we need a virtuous leader, we need a leader who unites everyone,” the Swami said. The Shankaracharya also praised the recent assembly elections in Kashmir and said that he had a long acquaintance with Modi.

## Won’t settle for less than 12 seats: RJD

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ RANCHI

Expressing its disappointment with the JMM and Congress over seat-sharing for the Jharkhand assembly polls, the RJD on Sunday said it would not settle for less than 12 seats, but it will not sabotage the prospects of the INDIA bloc even if it goes solo. The JMM and Congress on Saturday announced that the two parties would contest 70 of the state’s 81 assembly seats. “Less than 12-13 seats are not acceptable to us as the RJD has a strong hold on 18-20 seats. If we are asked to contest three-four seats, we are not ready to make any sacrifices”, Rashtriya Janata Dal spokesperson Manoj Kumar Jha said. “Our sole aim is to defeat BJP, we will not sabotage the INDIA bloc,” he said. Jha, a Rajya Sabha MP, said even if the party decided to go solo in the elections, it would extend its support to INDIA bloc candidates on 60-62 seats. Last time, RJD had contested seven seats and won one seat. Its MLA Satyanand Bhokta is a minister in the Hemant Soren cabinet.

## Health Minister Nadda defends AIIMS standards

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid criticisms regarding staff shortages at the new AIIMS facilities in various States, Union Health Minister JP Nadda on Sunday said that he would not allow any dilution in the standards of teaching and faculty at the institutions and would protect the brand. Presently, 22 AIIMS across the country under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana have been approved till date. Out of the 22 AIIMS, teaching and learning, research, and patient care services are being provided in 16 AIIMS, of which six are fully functional at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Jodhpur, Patna, Raipur and Rishikesh. The others are at various stages of operationalisation. Addressing the BJMFCON 2024, a forum of doctors from Bihar and Jharkhand practising in Delhi and NCR, Nadda said that AIIMS-Delhi was set up in the 60s and it was only in the 80s that it became a brand name. “It takes 10 to 20 years for any institution to grow and function in full swing. I will not allow the dilution of the standards of AIIMS and will protect the brand name,” he said. To address staffing challenges, he highlighted the significant



increase in the number of medical colleges over the past decade, which aims to boost the supply of trained healthcare professionals. No compromise will be made in the faculty recruitment, he added. Nadda said that the groundbreaking ceremony for AIIMS-Darbanga will soon be held, and the commissioning of AIIMS-Deoghar has been done with the recruitment of staff underway. “In the 2017 health policy, we tried to make it comprehensive and holistic. Earlier, the stress was on the curative aspect but now the focus is on preventive, promotive, curative palliative and rehabilitative aspects -- a holistic approach,” he said. Nadda said that the facilities which were earlier called primary health care centres and

sub-centres have been converted into Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. At present, there are 1.73 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and their quality assessment is being done digitally, he said. Under the Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme, every district hospital offers free dialysis, he said and added that in the last 10 years, the number of medical colleges have been increased from 387 to 786 while 156 district hospitals have been converted into medical colleges. “Could you imagine a medical college in Purnia, Saharan, Samastipur, Siwan, and Buxar in Bihar and Dumka, Hazaribagh, Palamu, and Koderma in Jharkhand?” he said, adding that there is a plan to increase PG and MBBS seats by more than 75,000.

## Assam CM welcomes SC judgement

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday expressed a “mixed reaction of happiness and sorrow” regarding the Supreme Court judgment on the cut-off date of the Assam Accord. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an official function on Sunday, Sarma emphasised that the Assamese people will have to move forward through “struggles.” “I don’t know if this judgment is historic or not. The Government enacted the Assam Accord, so its stand in the court was that the cut-off date should be 1971. However, many people in Assam wished the cut-off date to be 1951,” he said when asked for his comments on the judgment. In a majority verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act which grants Indian citizenship to immigrants who came to Assam between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971. A five-judge Constitution Bench the Assam Accord was a political solution to the problem of

illegal migration. “I feel that this verdict establishes 1971 as the cut-off date, and my reaction is mixed. There is both happiness and sorrow in it. Therefore, I don’t want to label it a historic judgment; it is simply a blend of both emotions. The Assamese community has to move forward with struggles like this,” Sarma said without elaborating further in his first reaction after the judgment was delivered by the apex court. The Assam Accord was signed in 1985 after a six-year-long violent anti-foreigner movement. The pact stated, among other clauses, that names of all foreigners coming to Assam on or after March 25, 1971, would be detected and deleted from electoral rolls with steps taken to deport them. The majority verdict of the Constitutional Bench held that the cut-off date of March 25, 1971, for entry into Assam and granting citizenship is correct. Section 6A was inserted into the Citizenship Act in 1985 as a special provision to deal with the citizenship of people covered under the Assam Accord.

## Health experts urge iodine deficiency awareness ahead of World Iodine Day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

On the eve of the World Iodine Day on Sunday, health experts flagged that India, like many developing nations, faces a significant public health challenge in the form of ‘hidden hunger’, especially among growing children caused by deficiencies in crucial micronutrients such as iodine. Others are iron, folic acid, vitamin A, and zinc that can affect the development of children. However, “Iodine, in particular, is an essential micronutrient required for normal growth, thyroid function, and brain development,” they said. Dr. Shikha Vardhan, Assistant Director General of the National Program for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, emphasized the need for a policy that balances salt reduction with adequate iodine supplementation for better health outcomes. She said that the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) is revising the National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Program guidelines to ensure optimal iodine nutrition.

Dr Vardhan was speaking at a recent conference organized by Nutrition International, WHO India, Resolve to Save Lives, and Iodine Global Network, aimed to address the challenge of reducing salt intake while maintaining sufficient iodine nutrition. Iodine is vital for the production of thyroid hormones, which regulate metabolism and are crucial for fetal and infant development. The WHO recommends that dietary salt consumption be limited to less than 5 grams (or 2 grams of sodium) per person per day. However, recent data indicates that salt intake in India is nearly double this recommendation, contributing to hypertension, which currently affects around 220 million people in the country. Dr. Ashwini Anil Kumar Sirapanasetty, an Obstetrician and Gynecology Surgeon, noted that iodine deficiency during pregnancy can result in severe neurodevelopmental deficits, growth retardation, miscarriage, and stillbirth. Severe iodine deficiency can lead to cretinism, characterized by intellectual disability and physical and neurological abnormalities. Even less severe deficiencies in infants and

children can result in lowered intelligence. For instance, she said, in pregnant women, iodine deficiency of this magnitude can cause major neurodevelopmental deficits and growth retardation in the fetus as well as miscarriage and stillbirth. Chronic, severe iodine deficiency in utero causes cretinism, a condition characterized by intellectual disability, deaf mutism, motor spasticity, stunted growth, delayed sexual maturation, and other physical and neurological abnormalities, added Senior Consultant Gynecologist, Laparoscopic Surgeon & Infertility Specialist. Iodine is an essential component of the thyroid hormones, thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), which regulate metabolism and are crucial for fetal and infant development, as per a statement from the Health Ministry on Sunday. Deepika Bhan, President, Packaged Foods - India, Tata Consumer Products, added, “At Tata Salt, we remain dedicated to providing iodized salt with the right amount of iodine to help address the challenges of iodine deficiency.”



www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

## A path to democracy

Amid Bangladesh's political turmoil, the possibility of general elections in 2025 presents an opportunity for renewal

After a long wait, the possibility of general elections taking place in Bangladesh in 2025 is now on the horizon. Bangladesh's Law Adviser Asif Nazrul has said the next election could be held in 2025 after completing the pre-election preparations, including the formation of a new Election Commission. Amid the escalating crisis in Bangladesh, there is growing pressure for a new general election to restore democratic order and bring stability. The possibility of holding general elections in 2025 has become a central topic of discussion in political circles. Many see the election as a necessary step to establish a legitimate government that can address the country's economic woes, restore law and order, and guide Bangladesh towards a more stable future. However, there are significant hurdles to overcome before an election can be held. The interim government, currently tasked with maintaining order, must establish a conducive environment for free and fair elections. This involves addressing concerns about electoral fraud, ensuring the safety of voters and candidates, and reforming the Election Commission, which has been criticised for its partisanship in recent years.



International pressure, especially from the United States, and the European Union, is likely to play a role in pushing for transparent and credible elections. The international community's involvement may be instrumental in mediating dialogue among political factions and overseeing electoral reforms.

While the potential for a general election in 2025 offers a glimmer of hope, it is by no means a guaranteed solution. The path to stability will require a series of complex and delicate steps, including effective power-sharing arrangements, accountability for past political abuses, and economic policies aimed at alleviating the financial burden on citizens. The emergence of populist rhetoric and extremist groups could also pose threats to a peaceful electoral environment. Moreover, with Sheikh Hasina in exile and her Awami League party in disarray, a sizable section of Bangladesh's political milieu is likely to be away from the election process. Under Sheikh Hasina's leadership, the country experienced substantial economic growth. However, her tenure was also marred by accusations of authoritarianism, suppression of dissent, and manipulation of democratic institutions. The deterioration of democratic norms and crackdowns on opposition parties, including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), exacerbated political polarisation and unrest. As Bangladesh teeters on the edge of a political precipice, the possibility of holding general elections in 2025 brings a mixture of hope and apprehension. The nation's future will largely depend on how the interim government manages the political transition and whether it can pave the way for a truly democratic process. The coming months will be crucial in determining whether Bangladesh can emerge from this turmoil with renewed democratic vigour or if it will remain mired in chaos and instability.

### PICTALK



Visitors at the Virasat Mahotsav 2024, an art and heritage festival, in Dehradun

PTI

## The changing dynamics of Bihar politics

As Bihar prepares for the 2025 Assembly elections, Prashant Kishor launches his new party. The big question is, can it make a difference?

Prashant Kishor has entered Bihar politics with a clear message: his role is that of a guide, not a contender for power. "My work is like that of a potter who shapes the best with the right tools. We aim to bring forward the best people in society," he stated, dismissing speculations about his ambitions for the Chief Minister's post. He reiterated that his newly launched party, 'Jansuraj', will be run by its members, not him, and he would only contest elections if the party deemed it necessary.

Kishor's move has stirred the political waters in Bihar. His party's announcement to contest the upcoming Assembly elections has sparked debates on its potential impact on major alliances, the NDA, and the India Alliance. A former election strategist for both PM Narendra Modi and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, Kishor has not aligned with the Congress or the RJD. Some political analysts even suggest that his presence might benefit the BJP by weakening the RJD's support base, an idea that



gained traction following the rally and Muslim unity meeting in Patna. Despite his history with the BJP, Kishor has not held back from criticising Nitish Kumar's governance. The Janata Dal (United) (JDU), however, remains firm on its stance, with leaders affirming that Nitish Kumar is still Bihar's true leader. In a recent meeting, JDU's acting national president Sanjay Jha dismissed any doubts about Kumar's relevance, pointing to the party's

resilience despite various narratives circulating before the elections. Ahead of the 2025 Assembly elections, Kishor has strategically targeted the Muslim and backward caste communities, which represent a significant portion of the electorate—17.7 per cent and 36.1 per cent, respectively. He has announced plans to field more candidates from these communities and has emphasised inclusivity by appointing a Dalit as the party's working president.

This move has been seen as a counter to JDU's longstanding Mahadalit outreach.

Kishor has been preparing the ground for his political venture for the past two years, conducting a 'padyatra' across Bihar and engaging with the public through discussions in villages and towns. Drawing on the philosophies of Gandhi and Tagore, he has sought to resonate with the masses, though his stance on lifting the liquor ban has invited criticism for contradicting Gandhian ideals. The launch of 'Jansuraj' represents Kishor's effort to offer a new political alternative in Bihar. However, significant questions remain: can he address Bihar's pressing issues such as unemployment and crime? Will his strategies translate into a viable solution for the state's enduring challenges? As Bihar gears up for the next election, the answers to these questions will determine Kishor's political fate.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views are personal)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

the ideals of fairness and justice that legal systems aspire to uphold) and sword with open eyes and the Indian Constitution, signifying an evolving justice system in India. Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud aims to reflect impartial justice and modernise the judiciary, moving away from colonial legacies towards constitutional values. The note-worthy element of this design is the replacement of the sword with a copy of the Indian Constitution. Generally, the sword has been associated with violence and disciplinary action, whereas the Constitution is a symbol of rights, equality, and fairness. This change represents the shift towards more emphasis on core values in justice and highlights how a judiciary must act as a protector of constitutional rights rather than functioning as a law enforcer. From now onwards, justice will be served to the "right" persons. No longer will it be impartial nor will punishments be enforced. Yes, changing the attire to a saree is a welcome step. As time progresses, the positive effects of this change will

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

### NEW JUSTICE STATUE UNVEILED

Madam—In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the Citizenship Act statutory, clearing the door for the implementation of the 1985 accord reached by the Rajiv Gandhi government and the All-Assam Students Union (AASU). According to this agreement, by adding Section 6A to the Citizenship Act, those who came from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, would be eligible for citizenship. Previously, this day was January 1, 1966. After the challenge to the constitutionality of this section of the Citizenship Act is dismissed, those who arrived in Assam from Bangladesh before March 25, 1971, will be permitted to petition for citizenship, but those who arrived after that date will be identified and deported. This ruling provided solace to all individuals who had arrived from other places and were living in Assam, feeling stuck in uncertainty. The verdict made it clear whose citizenship is safe, who can obtain citizenship, and who must be identified as illegal migrants and returned properly. In this sense, there is no room for ambiguity. Politics driven by immediate interests can be more harmful in this situation. The decision may have been made in the context of Assam, but the issue of illegal immigration is significant in many other locations.

Abhijit Roy | Jamshedpur

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — In a symbolic shift, a new statue of Nyay ki Devi (Lady of Justice) at the Supreme Court (SC) replaces the traditional blindfold (serves as a reminder of

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### SECTION 6A STAYS VALID

Madam — The Supreme Court's judgement on the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act on Thursday not only put an end to concerns about an old issue reviving, but it also shed light on numerous factors that can help shape the current debate. In this regard, the ruling confirms the methodology established in the Assam Accord to address the issue of illegal immigrants in Assam. The Supreme Court's five-member constitutional bench ruled Section 6A of the



## FIRST COLUMN

## THE ART OF SAYING NO

Setting boundaries allows employees to focus on high-value tasks and protects their well-being



SAKSHI SETHI

In the modern workplace, professionals are often expected to handle a variety of tasks and responsibilities, making it easy to become overwhelmed. While many employees adopt a yes-boss mentality to stay in good favour or advance their careers, the ability to say no can be just as important. Learning to decline certain requests, combined with the effective use of delegation, is the key to managing time, preserving mental well-being and ensuring tasks that are completed efficiently and effectively. Looking at today's fast-paced and highly competitive work environment, learning to say no can be one of the most valuable skills for any professional. While the workplace often rewards the individual with a can-do attitude but the ability to refuse certain tasks or requests is equally essential to maintain productivity, well-being and professional integrity. There is often an underlying fear of being seen as uncooperative, damaging relationships with colleagues, or missing out on future opportunities.

The result of this is an overloaded schedule, which can lead to decreased productivity, poor work quality and even burnout. It can negatively impact both the individual and the organisation, as over-stretched employees may struggle to meet deadlines or produce substandard work. The ability to refuse is not just about rejecting requests rather it's about setting boundaries that protect one's time and energy, ensuring that the most important tasks get the attention they deserve. Saying no to unnecessary or low-priority tasks allows professionals to focus on higher-value work, leading to better outcomes, a stronger contribution to the organisation and helps prevent individuals to maintain focus on their core responsibilities.



Despite its clear benefits, saying a no is often easier said than done. Many employees find it difficult to refuse tasks due to cultural or organisational pressures that equate being helpful with taking on as much work as possible. Some even fear that saying no could label them as difficult or unwilling to be a team player, leading to missed promotions or opportunities.

Moreover, individuals often grapple with personal barriers to saying no. Perfectionism, fear of conflict or a desire to please others can make it hard to set boundaries resulting in employees worrying that a simple refusal to additional tasks reflects their inabilities or lack of dedication towards the job. But in reality, saying no in the workplace brings several important benefits, both for the individual and the organisation.

Effective delegation can offer a constructive alternative when refusing a task outright is not an option for it allows work to be distributed across a team, which can increase overall productivity, help build confidence and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility within the team. It even helps concentrate on strategic tasks and high-priority responsibilities that require their attention and most importantly demonstrates trust in the abilities of individuals, which can improve team morale and encourage a more collaborative working environment.

While learning to say no and delegating effectively are two critical skills for success in the workplace. Saying no helps protect time and energy for the most important tasks, while delegation allows leaders to distribute work more effectively and empower others. By mastering the art of saying no and delegating, professionals can not only manage their workloads but also foster a more efficient and empowered team.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

# Indian immigrants to Canada bear brunt of diplomatic row



K S TOMAR

The fallout threatens to disrupt visa processes, immigration pathways, and opportunities for Indian workers and students in Canada



The fallout of the current diplomatic tensions between India and Canada, particularly in the wake of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusations and expulsions of diplomats by both countries, could have significant consequences for Indian citizens working, studying, or planning to immigrate to Canada. Trudeau's Liberal Party has been facing declining support, and his minority government has been kept afloat by the New Democratic Party (NDP), led by Jagmeet Singh, a prominent Sikh politician.

The NDP's support base includes a significant portion of Canada's Sikh population, and Trudeau may be attempting to retain their support by taking a tough stance against India, which is perceived by some Sikhs in Canada as being hostile to their interests. The deteriorating relations between the two countries may affect several key areas:

**Impact on Indian Workers in Canada:** Indian Workforce in Canada: Indians form a significant part of Canada's skilled workforce, especially in sectors like IT, healthcare, engineering and finance. Over the years, Canada has become a top destination for experienced professionals from India due to its immigration-friendly policies. Visa and Work Permit Issues: While the immediate impact on Indian workers in Canada has been limited, any prolonged diplomatic standoff could lead to delays in the processing of work permits, visa renewals and permanent residency (PR) applications. The processing times might increase, and stricter scrutiny could be imposed.

**Uncertainty for Future Migrants:** Potential immigrants or those awaiting work permits may face hurdles in terms of visa approvals. If relations continue to sour, Canada might impose tighter immigration controls on Indian workers, which could hamper the flow of professionals into the country.

**Impact on Indian Students in Canada:** There is large Indian Student Population in Canada as it has become a major destination for Indian students, with nearly 320,000 Indian students enrolled in Canadian universities as of 2023. The country's world-class education system, relatively easier immigration pathways



THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO MITIGATE THE FALLOUT IS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE. BOTH GOVERNMENTS MUST FIND COMMON GROUND AND WORK TOWARDS DE-ESCALATION. DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS SHOULD PRIORITISE RESOLVING MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHILE PROTECTING THE INTERESTS OF CITIZENS ON BOTH SIDES

post-graduation, and diverse work opportunities have made it attractive for Indian students.

**Visa Delays:** The current diplomatic tension may lead to delays in student visa approvals or increased scrutiny of applications. While there is no immediate indication that Indian students will face outright rejections, the uncertainty could cause stress and delays in admission procedures, particularly for new applicants. Post-Graduation Work Opportunities: Many Indian students stay in Canada after completing their studies under post-graduation work permits (PGWP) and eventually apply for permanent residency.

The growing tension could complicate this process, making it harder for students to transition smoothly from education to employment.

**Impact on Immigration Pathways:** Canada's Express Entry programme, which has been highly favourable for Indian professionals and students seeking permanent residency, might slow down or become more stringent if the diplomatic rift deepens.

There could be longer processing times, more rigorous background checks, and even potential policy changes affecting Indian applicants.

**Family Reunification:** Indian citizens who have family members in Canada and are in the process of family reunification (sponsorship programmes) could face delays in their applications due to the diplomatic standoff.

**Trade and Bilateral Agreements:** Professional Mobility: If diplomatic tensions continue, professional exchanges, joint ventures, and corporate partnerships involving Indian and Canadian companies might slow down. This could reduce job opportunities for Indian professionals working for Canadian companies in sectors like IT, telecommuni-

cations, and consulting. Impact on New Immigration Streams: The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which India and Canada had been discussing, could be put on hold.

This would affect initiatives meant to streamline immigration for Indian professionals and create pathways for smoother trade and employment relations.

**Solutions to Mitigate the Fallout**

**Diplomatic Resolution:** The most effective way to mitigate the fallout is through diplomatic dialogue. Both governments must find common ground and work towards de-escalation. Diplomatic channels should prioritise resolving misunderstandings while protecting the interests of citizens on both sides.

**Temporary Shift to Alternative Countries:** While waiting for the situation to stabilise, students and professionals might consider alternative countries such as the UK, Australia, or Germany, which offer similar educational and work opportunities for Indian nationals.

**Vote Bank Politics and the Sikh Community's Role in Canada:** Canada has one of the largest Sikh populations outside of India, with an estimated 770,000 Sikhs, making up about 2 per cent of the total Canadian population.

Many of these Sikhs are concentrated in electoral districts in British Columbia, Ontario, and Alberta. In some constituencies, Sikhs represent a significant voting bloc, which can influence election outcomes.

Upcoming Elections: With elections expected by 2025, Trudeau needs to consolidate his support among key communities. Given the current minority government status, he must rely on alliances, such as with the NDP, and maintain his standing in immigrant-rich constituencies, including those dominated by

Sikhs.

His recent diplomatic actions appear designed to shore up this support by aligning himself with issues important to these groups. The Sikh community has historically supported the Liberal Party, particularly under Trudeau. Many high-profile Sikh leaders, including ministers in his cabinet, are from this community.

Thus, maintaining their support is crucial for the Liberal Party's prospects in the next election. **Khalistan Issue:** While not all Sikhs in Canada support the Khalistan movement, those who do have formed influential advocacy groups that have pushed the issue into Canadian politics. Trudeau's overtures to this section of the electorate have been interpreted as efforts to protect his vote base, especially as his government faces increasing political pressure ahead of future elections.

Experts say that Trudeau may also be positioning himself as a defender of Canadian sovereignty by alleging foreign interference, a move that could resonate with voters concerned about national security.

This fits with broader concerns in the West about foreign interference in domestic politics, even though India has categorically denied the allegations.

India-Canada ties are indeed at their lowest ebb following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's accusation that Indian agents were involved in the killing of Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil.

This extreme diplomatic move, which has severely strained relations between the two countries, is seen as a combination of vote bank politics and Trudeau's handling of domestic pressures, especially in light of upcoming elections.

(Writer is a strategic columnist; views are personal)

# India's strides towards the design and component ecosystem in telecom

## The telecom sector is evolving from a service-led growth model to a robust manufacturing ecosystem

The telecommunications sector in India has grown to become the world's second-largest, contributing around 6.5 per cent to the nation's GDP and emerging as a key economic growth engine. While we take pride in this impressive growth, there is something even more exciting - the rise of the telecom manufacturing ecosystem. India's growth as a telecom equipment manufacturing destination can be attributed to the 'Make-in-India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives launched by the Government in recent years. The Production Linked Incentives (PLI), launched in 2020, and its subsequent amendments in 2022 to facilitate design-led manu-



S P KOCHHAR

facturing at an additional incentive rate with an allocated sum of Rs 4,000 crores also provided a major boost to telecom manufacturing in India. As per the latest update by the Ministry of Communications, sales of telecom equipment have surpassed the Rs 50,000 crore milestone under the PLI scheme, with exports at about Rs 10,500 crore. During this

period, India exported mobile phones worth Rs 1.28 lakh crores and with 300 million units produced, it has emerged as the second-largest producer of mobile phones in the world.

On the telecom equipment front, India has become almost self-reliant in antennae, Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) and Customer Premises Equipment (CPE). As a result, India's status has turned from importing telecom equipment worth Rs 74,116.21 crore in FY 13-14 to exporting equipment worth over Rs 1.49 lakh crore in FY 23-24.

Though we are still importing certain products, the gap between imports and exports has gone down significantly. Apart from fostering self-

reliance, indigenous manufacturing of telecom equipment also addresses the national security concerns associated with telecom imports.

Manufacturing has emerged as an important aspect of the telecom sector's contribution to the GDP through the creation of substantial employment opportunities across the value chain, from manufacturing to research and development.

So far, telecom manufacturing has created more than 17,800 direct jobs and several indirect jobs. The Indian telecom industry is likely to attract investments in the areas of core competency and cutting-edge technologies; ensure efficiencies and create economies of scale, in turn, enhancing



exports and making India an integral part of the global value chain. Government's Push for 'Atmanirbhar' Under the government's 'Atmanirbhar Abhiyan', the Department of Telecom (DoT) aims to promote the ecosystem for research and development, transforming India into a glob-

al hub of technology development and telecom equipment manufacturing.

The Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia recently announced the Government's ambitions to set up telecommunication equipment manufacturing zones as the country expects more inflow of foreign direct investments (FDI). Prime Minister Narendra Modi too emphasised the need for "Design in India, Design for the World", calling for indigenous design capabilities and urging the citizens to create products that cater to both domestic and international markets. The Government has further established several task forces to ensure the smooth functioning of the telecom ecosystem. These include initiatives for

creating a component ecosystem, developing telecom chips from design to production, training skilled workers and designers, aggregating the demand for manufacturing from different departments and allocating them to eligible manufacturers, and optimising the use of test beds for product testing and certification. Following the Government's decision to allow 100 per cent FDI in telecom, the sector has attracted USD 39 billion in FDI for manufacturing, further boosting the momentum and solidifying India's role as a global telecom manufacturing hub.

Thanks to these concerted efforts, India has been able to bring down the trade deficit in telecom from Rs 68,000 crores to Rs 4,000 crores, over the last

five years.

Focus on design and creation of IP is crucial to fulfilling India's ambitions as a product nation as design elements add substantial value to products. To build a strong ecosystem for 5G, DoT has sanctioned 17 companies under design-led manufacturing within the PLI scheme.

Further, global telecom equipment manufacturers like Cisco and Nokia have set up their manufacturing units in India, fostering world-class manufacturing prowess. These efforts, among others, emerge as a testament to the country's indigenous engineering and entrepreneurial capabilities, as well as manufacturing progress.

(The writer is Director General, COAI; views are personal)

# Israeli strikes on northern Gaza kill at least 87 people

**AP ■ DEIR-AL-BALAH**

Israeli strikes on multiple homes in the northern Gaza Strip overnight and into Sunday left at least 87 people dead or missing, the territory's Health Ministry said. It said another 40 people were wounded in the strikes on the town of Beit Lahya, which was among the first targets of Israel's ground invasion nearly a year ago. The Israeli military said it carried out a precise strike on a Hamas target. Israel has been carrying out a large-scale operation in northern Gaza for the last two weeks, saying Hamas has regrouped there. Palestinian officials say hundreds of people have been killed and that the health sector in the north is on the verge of collapse. The United States is meanwhile investigating an unauthorised release of classified documents that assess Israel's plans to attack Iran, according to three US officials. A fourth US official said the documents appear to be legitimate. The documents, attributed to the US Geospatial Intelligence Agency and

National Security Agency and marked top secret, indicate that Israel was moving military assets in place to conduct a military strike in response to Iran's ballistic missile attack on Oct 1. The US officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly. The US is urging Israel to press for a cease-fire in Gaza following the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week. But neither Israel nor Hamas has shown any renewed interest in such a deal, after months of negotiations sputtered to a halt in August. Iran supports Hamas and the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, where a year of escalating tensions boiled over into all-out war last month. Israel sent ground troops into Lebanon at the start of October. The Lebanese army said three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on their vehicle in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on Sunday's strike. Lebanon's army has

largely kept to the sidelines in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah. The military is a respected institution in Lebanon but is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend the country from an Israeli invasion. On Saturday, a drone targeted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's house, causing no casualties. It wasn't clear if the house was hit. The military said Hezbollah fired around 160 projectiles into Israel on Sunday. There were no immediate reports of casualties. Israel has meanwhile ramped up strikes on southern neighbourhoods of Beirut known as the Dahiyeh, a crowded residential area. Hezbollah has a strong presence there, but it is also home to large numbers of civilians and people unaffiliated with the militant group. US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, has called civilian casualties in Lebanon "far too high" in the Israel-Hezbollah war and urged Israel to scale back some strikes, especially in and around Beirut. Among the dead from the strikes in Beit Lahya

were two parents and their four children, and a woman, her son and her daughter-law and their four children, according to Raheem Kheder, a medic. He said the strike flattened a multi-story building and at least four neighbouring houses. The Israeli military said it used precise munitions against a Hamas target and rejected casualty figures published by the Hamas-run government's media office, which is separate from the Health Ministry. It said the area is an active war zone and that it is trying to avoid harming civilians. Mounir al-Bursh, director general of the Health Ministry, said the flood of wounded from the strikes compounded "an already catastrophic situation for the health care system" in northern Gaza, in a post on X. Doctors Without Borders, the international charity known by its French acronym MSF, called on Israeli forces "to immediately stop their attacks on hospitals in North Gaza" after the Health Ministry said Israeli troops had fired on two hospitals over the weekend. The military said it was oper-

## US investigating unauthorised release of classified documents on Israel attack plans

**Washington (AP):** The US is investigating an unauthorised release of classified documents that assess Israel's plans to attack Iran, three US officials told The Associated Press. A fourth US official said the documents appear to be legitimate. The documents are attributed to the US Geospatial Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency and note that Israel continues to move military assets in place to conduct a military strike in

response to Iran's blistering ballistic missile attack on Oct. 1. They were sharable within the "Five Eyes," which are the US, Great Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The documents, which are marked top secret, were posted online to Telegram and first reported by CNN and Axios. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly. An emergency coordinator for MSF said, "When hospitals are attacked, their infrastructure destroyed, and the electricity cut off, the lives of patients and medical staff are under threat." Internet connectivity went down in northern Gaza late Saturday and had not yet been restored by midday Sunday, making it

difficult to gather information about the strikes and complicating rescue efforts. Israel has been carrying out a major operation in Jabaliya, also in northern Gaza, for the last two weeks. The military says it launched the operation against Hamas militants who had regrouped there. Over the course of the war, Israeli forces have repeatedly returned to Jabaliya, a densely populated urban refugee camp dating back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. The north has already suffered the heaviest destruction of the war, and has been encircled by Israeli forces since late last year, following the deadly Hamas' attack on Israel. Israel ordered the entire population of the northern third of Gaza, including Gaza City, to evacuate to the south in the opening weeks of the war and reiterated those instructions earlier this month. Most of the population fled last year, but around 400,000 people are believed to have remained in the north. Palestinians who fled the north at the start of the war have not been allowed to

return. On Oct 7, 2023, Hamas-led militants blew holes in Israel's security fence and stormed in, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. Around 100 captives are still being held in Gaza, a third of whom are believed to be dead. Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, who do not distinguish combatants from civilians. The war has destroyed large areas of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its population of 2.3 million people. **3 soldiers killed** The Lebanese army says three of its soldiers were killed in an Israeli strike on their vehicle in southern Lebanon. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on Sunday's strike. Lebanon's army has largely kept the sidelines in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group. The military is a respected institution in Lebanon but is not powerful enough to impose its will on Hezbollah or defend the country from an Israeli invasion.

# Trump kicks off Pennsylvania rally

**AP ■ LATROBE**

Donald Trump's campaign suggested he would begin previewing his closing argument Saturday night with Election Day barely two weeks away. But the former president kicked off his rally with a detailed story about Arnold Palmer, at one point even praising the late, legendary golfer's genitalia. Trump was campaigning in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, where Palmer was born in 1929 and learned to golf from his father, who suffered from polio and was head pro and greenskeeper at the local country club. Politicians saluting Palmer in his hometown is nothing new. But

Trump spent 12 full minutes doing so at the top of his speech and even suggested how much more fun the night would be if Palmer, who died in 2016, could join him on stage. "Arnold Palmer was all man, and I say that in all due respect to women," Trump said. "This is a guy that was all man." Then he went even further. "When he took the showers with other pros, they came out of there. They said, Oh my God. That's unbelievable," Trump said with a laugh. "I had to say. We have women that are highly sophisticated here, but they used to look at Arnold as a man." Trump senior adviser Jason Miller told reporters before the

speech that Trump planned to preview his closing argument against Vice President Kamala Harris and "start to get into that framing." Candidates have traditionally used their final days on the campaign trail to sum up for the electorate why they deserve to win the White House. Trump eventually hit many of his favorite campaign themes but didn't offer much in the way of new framing of the race or why he should win it. He instead boasted of creating strong tax policies and a strong military during his first term in office. He slammed Harris as "crazy" and added a profanity. "You have to tell Kamala Harris that you've had enough, that you

called him amid Israeli's ongoing war with Hamas in Gaza. "He said, It's incredible what's happened," Trump said of the Netanyahu call before moving to a criticism of President Joe Biden, saying that the Israeli prime minister "wouldn't listen to Biden." Trump praised the raucous crowd, which was outside and at an airport, but also made a point of suggesting that there was more conspicuous security around him following two assassination attempts, saying, "They give you a little extra security nowadays, you notice?" "I got more machine guns than I've ever seen — look at these guys," he said referring to security.

called him amid Israeli's ongoing war with Hamas in Gaza. "He said, It's incredible what's happened," Trump said of the Netanyahu call before moving to a criticism of President Joe Biden, saying that the Israeli prime minister "wouldn't listen to Biden." Trump praised the raucous crowd, which was outside and at an airport, but also made a point of suggesting that there was more conspicuous security around him following two assassination attempts, saying, "They give you a little extra security nowadays, you notice?" "I got more machine guns than I've ever seen — look at these guys," he said referring to security.

# No anti-China activities will be allowed on Nepal's territory: Oli

**PTI ■ KATHMANDU**

Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli said on Sunday that no anti-China activities will be allowed in the country, reaffirming the Himalayan nation's commitment to the 'One China' policy. Oli made the remarks in a meeting with a high-level Chinese delegation led by Chen Jining, a member of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee. The meeting took place at his official residence in Baluwatar, Kathmandu.

Reaffirming Nepal's commitment to the One China policy, Oli told the visiting delegation that no anti-China activities would be allowed to operate within Nepal's territory. China claims that the breakaway nation of Taiwan is part of it and makes it mandatory for all the countries having diplomatic ties with it to follow the 'One China' policy, which effectively states that Taiwan is part of China. During the meeting, Oli also expressed hopes for continued support from China for Nepal's economic development. Talks were also held about strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing collaboration between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) parties, according to the PM's secretary.

Prime Minister's Chief Advisor Bishnu Prasad Rimal, CPM (UML) Secretary and Foreign Department Chief of CPN (UML) Raghubir Mahaseth, and China's Ambassador to Nepal Chen Song were among those present on the occasion.

KSOLVES INDIA LIMITED (CIN: L72900DL2014PLC269020)						
Extract of Unaudited Consolidated Financial Results for the Quarter & Half Year ended on September 30, 2024 (Amount Rs. in Lakhs)						
Particulars	Quarter ended on 30/09/2024	Quarter ended on 30/06/2024	Quarter ended on 30/09/2023	Year to date figures for year as on 30/09/2024	Year to date figures for year as on 30/09/2023	Year to date figures for the previous year ended 31/03/2024
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Revenue from operations	3482.05	3157.03	2598.35	6639.08	4977.17	10,863.73
Profit before tax	1258.64	1181.30	1114.57	2439.94	2127.30	4586.70
Profit after tax	919.01	895.22	823.09	1814.22	1582.04	3415.96
Total comprehensive income for the period	915.30	879.37	818.16	1794.67	1575.34	3388.90
Paid up equity share capital (Face value: Rs. 10 per share)	1185.60	1185.60	1185.60	1185.60	1185.60	1185.60
Total reserves (including non-controlling interests)	2043.77	1809.94	638.80	2093.43	638.80	1197.62
Earnings per equity share Basic and diluted	7.75	7.55	6.94	15.30	13.34	28.81

Extract of Unaudited Standalone Financial Results for the Quarter & Half Year ended on September 30, 2024 (Amount Rs. in Lakhs)						
Particulars	Quarter ended on 30/09/2024	Quarter ended on 30/06/2024	Quarter ended on 30/09/2023	Year to date figures for year as on 30/09/2024	Year to date figures for year as on 30/09/2023	Year to date figures for the previous year ended 31/03/2024
	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
Revenue from operations	3477.16	3146.33	2589.79	6623.49	4955.93	10807.34
Profit before tax	1260.77	1182.20	1113.56	2442.97	2121.51	4589.33
Profit after tax	921.79	896.20	825.72	1817.99	1580.67	3422.95
Total comprehensive income for the period	918.09	880.35	820.79	1798.43	1573.97	3412.81

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Mrs. Randhir Kaur Sidhu, wife of Mr. S. S. Sidhu, sub-lease and "GPA" holder and resident of C-23 Chirag Enclave, Greater Kailash, New Delhi-110048, have lost/misplaced the original documents pertaining to the property located at C-23 Chirag Enclave, New Delhi. The missing documents are as follows:

- Form D/Occupancy Certificate
- Sub-Lease Deed
- Saction Plan and Certificate.

An FIR (LR No. 2219052/2024) dated 19/10/2024 has been lodged regarding the loss of these documents. Any person(s) having any claim, right, interest, or objection regarding the said property, or anyone who may have found the aforementioned original documents, is hereby requested to contact me at 9810189211 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. Alternatively, claims, objections, or information may be submitted in person or in writing to: Deputy Director (CS), Coop Society Branch, DDA, C-3 Block, 2nd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023. Please note, any claims or objections received after the said period will not be entertained, and the process for obtaining certified copies of the documents will be initiated.

**GOVT. OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS, CIRCLE, BHAWANIPATNA**

Bid Identification No.:- BPT/Online-01/2024-25 Date-17.10.2024

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR BUILDING WORKS IN ODISHA NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement**

- Name of the Work : Construction of 4 nos. "E" type Quarter at Naktiguda of R.W.Division, Bhawanipatna for the year 2024-25.
- No of Works : 01 No.
- Location details : Kalahandi District
- Estimated Cost : As per NIT.
- Period of Completion : As per NIT.
- Cost of tender : Rs.10,000/- per set.
- Other details :

Availability of tender for online bidding	Last date & time for seeking tender clarification	Date and time of opening of technical bid
From 24.10.2024 11.00 A.M. To 07.11.2024 5.00 P.M.	06.11.2024	08.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the web site "www.tendersorissa.gov.in"

**Chief Construction Engineer**  
Rural Works Circle, Bhawanipatna

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, JYEPPORE (R&B) CIRCLE, JYEPPORE**

Invitations For Bids (IFB)

Bid Identification No. C.C.E.J.C (R&B) - 05/2024-25 Date: 08.10.2024

No. 3484

- Nature of the work: ROAD & BRIDGE WORKS
- Total No. of Works: 05 (Five) Nos.
- Estimated cost: Rs. 1.00 Cro. to 7.11 Crs.
- Period of completion: 01 (One) to 24 (Twenty-Four) Calendar Months as per column no. 04 of IFB.
- Cost of Bid Document: Rs. 10,000/-
- Bid Security (EMD): Rs. 1.00 Lac to 7.11 Lac as per column no. 06 of IFB.
- Class of Contractor: "B", "A" & "Special" Class as per d. no. 05 of TCM & according to Financial Eligibility.
- Date & time of availability of bid Document in the portal: from 11.00 hours of 22.10.2024 to 17.00 hours of 05.11.2024
- Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the Portal: 17.00 hours of 05.11.2024
- Opening date of Bid: 10.00 hours of 06.11.2024
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Chief Construction Engineer, Jyepore (R&B) Circle, Jyepore.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> Any amendment / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the website only.

**Chief Construction Engineer**  
Jyepore (R&B) Circle, Jyepore

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Re: Residential portion of Plot area measuring 50 sq yds. i.e. 41.8 sq mtr. out of 100 sq. yds. falling in Khastha No. 527, Situated Village Jalpura, Pargana & Tehsil Dadni, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar (UP). (Hereinafter referred to as the "Said Property").

Be it known to all that our clients, Mr. Mukesh & Mrs. Shweta Begum (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intend to purchase the said property from Mr. Mohd. Shakeel (hereinafter called the "Seller"). In this connection, the seller has informed the purchaser that he is the sole and absolute owner of the said property and the same is duly registered as per Document No. 4176/6, Book No. 1, Vol No. 24950, Pages 367-360 on 03.10.2023 (SRO-Dadni) executed by Mr. Rashid Khan in his favour in favour of Mrs. Lalia Khatun. In this connection, the purchaser has also informed that the said property is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or dispute or any litigation pending regarding the said property. The seller has further informed the purchaser that the following original document namely (1) Sale Deed registered as Document No.18364 in Book No. 1, Volume No. 4678, pages 291-300 of 12.09.2012, executed by Mr. Abdul Muntalib in favour of Mrs. Lalia Khatun, in respect of said property and forming part of the chain documents and hereinafter called the "said document" is not traceable and same to have been lost. An FIR regarding loss of the said document has been lodged with Delhi Police Crime Branch vide LR No.2216413/2024 dated 19.10.2024.

If the aforesaid original said document is found or has been found by any person, the same may be returned and delivered to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below. Further, if any person, body, institution is having any claim and/or objection in respect of the said property, he/she/they may raise his/her/their objection in writing, with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of publication of this notice. Otherwise, after the expiry of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, no objection shall be acceptable.

General Public may also take note that any deal or transaction done by anybody on the basis of the said document shall be illegal and not binding on our client. The person doing so shall be liable to be prosecuted under the law.

**SHIVKANT ARORA, ADVOCATE**  
FOR M/S INTELLECTIVE LAW OFFICES  
A-74, LOWER GROUND FLOOR,  
DEFENCE COLONY, NEW DELHI-110024

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Reg: Entire Built up Ground Floor with its roof/terrace rights "said floor" Built up Portion of freshhold Property Bearing Municipal No. 3124, area measuring 165.96 sq.mtrs. Ward No. XII, Situated at Arya Pura, Mandi, Delhi-110007 (as per technical evaluation report Upper Ground Floor LHS Portion without roof rights, Arayapura, Subti Mandi, Ghanta Ghar, Delhi-110007). (Hereinafter referred to as the "Said Property").

Be it known to all that our clients, Mrs. Sheela & Mr. Nirmal (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intend to purchase the said floor from Mr. Abhishek & Mr. Gaurav (hereinafter called the "seller"). In this connection, the seller has informed the purchaser that he is the joint owners of the said floor vide Sale Deed executed by Mr. Vinod Bhatia in their favour and the said sale deed is registered as Document No. 3495, Book No. 1, Volume No. 5690, Page No. 107-118, Registered on 28.03.2023 (SRO-I). The seller has further informed the purchaser that Mr. Vinod Bhatia owned the 1/2th share in the said property in terms of Sale Deeds dated 03/05/2007 registered as Document No. 3278 executed by Mr. Hans Raj in his favour in respect of his 1/4th share in the said property. Thus, Mr. Vinod Bhatia owned the 3/4th share in the said property and sold the said floor to Mr. Abhishek & Mr. Gaurav (the present seller). The seller has further informed the purchaser that the said floor is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or dispute or any litigation pending regarding the said floor.

Any person including Bank's, Financial Institution's, relative's having any claim, right, title or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the said floor is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing, with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of publication of this notice and in the event of no response having been received to the notice, the title of the seller in respect of the said floor shall be deemed to be clear of any charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall be deemed to be clients/Purchaser, in any manner whatsoever.

**Shivkant Arora, Advocate**  
M/S Intellectual Law Offices  
A-74, LGF, Defence Colony,  
New Delhi-110024

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT**  
**O/O THE CHIEF ENGINEER (EAP)**  
**ARRTI CAMPUS, FATASIL AMBARI, GUWAHATI - 25,**  
**Email-id: as-ge.asbip@assam.gov.in**

No. CE/EAP/ARRBP/165/2024/15

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES - QCBS METHOD)**

Country : INDIA  
Name of Project : ASSAM RESILIENT RURAL BRIDGES PROGRAM (ARRBP)  
Loan No. : IBRD Loan No. 9632-IN  
Assignment Title : Technical Audit Consultancy Services for Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP)  
Reference No. : CE/EAP/ARRBP/TAC/NCB/14

The Government of Assam (GoA) has received financing from the World Bank, towards the cost of Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for Consultancy Services ("the Services").

The consulting services ("the Services") detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR), which will be available at website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in>.

- The Chief Engineer (EAP), PWRD, Assam now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.
- The Short-listing Criteria are detailed in the REOI and may be downloaded from the website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in>.
- The list of documents for submission online are mentioned in the REOI.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a Joint Venture or as Sub Consultancy to enhance their qualifications. The maximum number of JV partner is 2 (two). No key personnel of the Associated partner or sub-consultant shall be allowed

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS)** method set out in the Consultant selection Guidelines of the World Bank.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours i.e., 1000 Hrs. to 1700 Hrs.

Expressions of interest must be uploaded in the website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> on or before 1400 Hrs. (IST) on **18.11.2024**.

**Chief Engineer (EAP) PWRD**  
**ARRTI Complex: Fatasil Ambari,**  
**Guwahati-781025, Assam, India**

**Janasanyog/CF/1865/24/20-Oct-24**

# Moldovans vote to choose Prez

**AP ■ CHISINAU**

Moldovans have started casting ballots in two key votes Sunday that could determine whether the European Union candidate country, which neighbours Ukraine, remains on a pro-western path amid ongoing allegations that Russia has tried to undermine the electoral process.

Incumbent President Maia Sandu is the favourite to secure another term in office in a presidential race in which 11 candidates are running. Voters will also choose "yes" or "no" in a referendum on whether to enshrine its path toward the 27-nation EU.

Polls by WatchDog, a Chisinau-based think-tank show a clear majority of more than 50 per cent support the EU path. The referendum needs a one-third turnout to be valid.

Polling stations opened at 7 am (0400GMT) and are expected to close at 9 pm (1800GMT). If Sandu fails to win an outright majority on Sunday, a run-off will be held on November 3 which could pit her against Alexandr Stoianoglo, a Russia-friendly former prosecutor general who is polling at around 10 per cent. The two pivotal ballots are held amid ongoing claims by Moldovan authorities that Moscow has intensified an alleged "hybrid war" campaign to destabilise the country and derail its EU path. The allegations include funding pro-Moscow opposition groups, spreading disinformation, meddling in local elections, and backing a major vote-buying scheme. US national security spokesman John Kirby echoed those concerns this week, saying in a statement that "Russia is working actively to undermine Moldova's election and its European integration". Moscow has repeatedly denied it is inter-

fering in Moldova. "In the last several months, Moscow has dedicated millions of dollars to influencing Moldova's presidential election," Kirby said. "We assess that this money has gone toward financing its preferred parties and spreading disinformation on social media in favour of their campaigns." In early October, Moldovan law enforcement said it had uncovered a massive vote-buying scheme orchestrated by Ilan Shor, an exiled pro-Russia oligarch who currently resides in Russia, which paid 15 million euros (USD 16.2 million) to undermine the two ballots. Shor, who was convicted in absentia last year to 15 years in jail on fraud and money laundering in the case of USD 1 billion that went missing from Moldovan banks in 2014, denied allegations, saying "the payments are legal" and cited a right to freedom of expression. Shor's populist Russia-friendly Shor Party was declared unconstitutional last year and banned. On Thursday, Moldovan authorities foiled another plot in which more than 100 young Moldovans received training in Moscow from private military groups on how to create civil unrest around the two votes. Some also attended "more advanced training in guerrilla camps" in Serbia and Bosnia, police said, and four people were detained for 30 days. A pro-Western government has been in power in Moldova since 2021, a year after Sandu won the presidency, and a parliamentary election will be held next year. Moldova, a former Soviet republic with a population of about 2.5 million, applied to join the EU in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of neighbouring Ukraine on February 24, 2022, and was granted candidate status that summer, alongside Ukraine. Brussels agreed in June to start membership negotiations.



Kyiv launches more than 100 drones over Russia

Missile strike in Ukraine injures 17

AP KYIV



Russian air defences shot down more than 100 Ukrainian drones on Sunday over Russia's western regions, Moscow officials said...

Subianto takes oath as Indonesia Prez

AP JAKARTA

Prabowo Subianto was inaugurated Sunday as the eighth president of the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation...

The thousands of supporters calling his name and chanting 'Good luck Prabowo-Gibran, filling the road leading from the parliament building to the presidential palace.

Abdullah II bin Al-Husseini was expected to attend Sunday's ceremony, but cancelled at the last minute because of escalating Middle East tensions...

Bangladesh SC reinstates Supreme Judicial Council

PTI DHAKA

Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Sunday reinstated the Supreme Judicial Council with authority to investigate allegations of judicial misconduct...

Libyan man 'planning' attack on Israeli Embassy in Germany held

AP BERLIN

German authorities said on Sunday that they have arrested a Libyan national with suspected ties to the extremist group Islamic State who was allegedly planning a firearms attack on the Israeli Embassy.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

TBCSR WORKS IN ALIPURDUJ DIVISION: E-Tender No. 96/W-21/APJ...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

NOTICE: NOTICE is hereby given that the Certificate(s) for the undermentioned securities...

PUBLIC NOTICE: General Public is hereby informed that my client Smt. Menka Kohli...

PUBLIC NOTICE: General Public is hereby informed that my client Mr. Anil Kumar Wilson...

GAURAV SADANA (Advocate) Enrl. No. D/6524/2021

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

LOST & FOUND: I, Dinesh Kumar R/o B-74/104 Brahmputra Enclave Siddharth Vihar Sector-10...

PUBLIC NOTICE: My clients Haider Ali Ansari and his wife Nazra Akbari...

LOST & FOUND: I, Mohd. Hashim, S/o Late Mohd Shauf Usmani, R/o 1544, First Floor, Kucha Dakhni Rai, Pataudi House, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110002...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Be it known that our client Mr. Manish Pahuj purchased/acquired Entire GP Portion...

PURCHASE AND STORE SECTION: JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA New Delhi - 110025

AUCTION NOTICE: The Auction of unserviceable / broken items of Iron, Plastic and Wooden like, desert coolers, steel chairs etc...

NOTICE: In respect to Property bearing No.7 Sector-6-P, Huda Near Gas Agency Hansi Haryana...

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice is hereby given to all concerned that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that Ms. Farahum Hussain had acquired Built-up Property bearing Plot No. 88, area 31.5 sq. yards...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

SUPPLY & INSTALLATION, MODIFICATION WORKS: Tender Notice No.: M-TSK-2024-16...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PROVISION OF OHE MODIFICATION WORK: Tender Notice No. RT4-EL-RNY-TRD-01-24-25...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

PUBLIC NOTICE: It is to inform to the public at large that LATE SHARDA PRASAD DUBEY S/O LATE RAMLAKHAN DUBEY R/O VILLAGE PURA...

RUNNING OF 04 (FOUR) SPECIAL DIESEL JOYRIDE TRAINS ON DARJEELING HIMALAYAN RAILWAY. It has been decided to run of 04 (four) Special Diesel Joyride Trains on Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Section...

# CNG price may go up on input supply cut

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has slashed by up to 20 per cent the supplies of cheaper domestically produced natural gas to city retailers -- a move that may result in Rs 4-6 per kg hike in the price of CNG sold to automobiles, unless excise duty on the fuel is cut, sources said.

Natural gas pumped from below the ground and from under the seabed from sites ranging from the Arabian Sea to Bay of Bengal within India is the raw material that is turned into CNG for sale to automobiles and piped cooking gas to households.

Production from legacy fields, whose price is regulated by the government and which are used to feed city gas retailers, has been falling by up to 5 per cent annually due to natural decline that has set in. This has led to supply cuts to city gas retailers, four sources in know of the matter said.

While the input gas for piped cooking gas that households get is protected, the government has cut supply of raw material for CNG. Gas from legacy fields used to meet 90 per cent of the demand for CNG in May 2023 and has progressively fallen. The supply was cut to just 50.75 per cent of the CNG demand beginning October 16 from 67.74 per cent last month, they said.

City gas retailers are forced to buy imported and costlier liquefied natural gas (LNG) to make up for the shortfall, which will lead to a hike in CNG prices that varies from Rs 4-6/kg.

The gas from legacy fields is priced at USD 6.50 per million British thermal unit (mBtu) as against imported LNG that costs USD 11-12



per mBtu.

For now, the retailers have not raised CNG rates as they are engaged with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to find a solution, sources said.

One of the options is for the government to cut excise duty on CNG. Currently, the central government levies a 14 per cent excise duty on CNG, which translates into Rs 14-15 per kg. If this is cut, the retailers will not have to pass on the increased cost to consumers, they said.

CNG price hike is also a political issue since Maharashtra goes to the polls next month and elections are also due in Delhi soon. Delhi and Mumbai are among the biggest CNG markets in the country.

Sources said the gas supplies to city gas retailers had to be cut after the government decided to restore fuel to ONGC-promoted OpaL petrochemical plant in Dahej, Gujarat.

The plant was originally allocated 4.12 million

standard cubic meters per day of domestically produced natural gas. However, the allocation for various reasons was cut to 1.95 mmscmd and during Covid was halved.

Lack of promised domestic gas was the main reason for OpaL running into losses, sources said, adding that the government has now approved a package to revive the unit. This package includes promoter Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) infusing additional Rs 10,501 crore as equity and the unit being made available domestically produced natural gas.

The Union Cabinet approved the allocation of 3.44 mmscmd of domestic gas -- mostly coming from new wells of ONGC. This led to lesser gas being available for city gas retailers.

Girish Kadam, Senior Vice President & Group Head - Corporate Ratings, Icrs Ltd, said, "The APM gas allocation has been reduced for the CGD sector by 20 per cent of

the current domestic gas consumption by the sector. The reduction in APM allocation will have to be replaced by more expensive HPHT gas or (imported) LNG, which will push the overall gas costs for the sector."

"To maintain contribution margins at existing levels, CNG prices will have to be increased about Rs 5-5.5 per kg.

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, which retails CNG in the national capital, and Mumbai-based Mahanagar Gas Ltd in regulatory filings stated that supplies of domestically produced gas, which was available at a capped rate half of the imported price, has been cut.

"The company gets domestic gas allocation for meeting the requirement of CNG sales volumes at the pricing fixed by the government (presently at USD 6.5 per million British thermal unit). Based on communication received by the company from GAIL

(India) Ltd (the nodal agency for domestic gas allocation), this is to inform that there has been a major reduction in domestic gas allocation to the company effective from October 16, 2024," IGL said in a filing.

The revised domestic gas allocation to IGL is about 21 per cent less than previous allocation, "which will have an adverse impact on profitability of the company", it said, adding that it is in discussions with key stakeholders to minimise the impact. Separately, MGL said as per Policy Guideline dated August 10, 2022, issued by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, domestically produced Administrative Price Mechanisms (APM) natural gas is to be allocated to city gas distribution (CGD) companies for priority segments, specifically domestic piped natural gas and CNG (transport).

The policy states that the supply of domestic gas to CGD entities will be made only up to the quantity available and allocated to GAIL (India) limited for these segments.

"...The company is exploring options of sourcing gas through domestically produced high pressure high temperature (HPHT) gas, new well/well intervention gas (NWG) from ONGC and benchmark-linked long-term gas contracts, so as to continue to provide gas to its customers with price stability," MGL added.

Adani Total Gas Ltd -- the other significant city gas retailer -- in its filing said the APM priced domestic gas allocation to the company has been reduced by about 16 per cent, effective October 16, 2024, compared to the earlier allocation.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's biotechnology sector is witnessing remarkable growth, with the country's bioeconomy now valued at USD 150 billion but there is still significant untapped potential in innovation and product development, which could further elevate India's global standing in the sector, Dr Jitendra Kumar, Managing Director of the government's Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), said.

BIRAC is a not-for-profit public sector enterprise set up by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) under the government that supports and promotes innovation, entrepreneurship, and research in the sector.

In an interview with PTI, Kumar highlighted India's significant contributions to global healthcare, with 40 per cent of the world's generic medicines being supplied by Indian companies.

"We have enormous potential and capability, but when it comes to the value of our bioeconomy, we are ranked 14th globally. This is because much of the value stems from patented, innovative products -- an area where India still needs to improve," Kumar said.

"So that emphasis effort from the government and BIRAC side is to actually promote that which is why we will now be promoting innovations... That is why the biotech industry is concentrating on promoting new innovations and promoting and nurturing them," he said.

To address this gap, BIRAC is emphasising innovation and nurturing startups through various programmes designed to convert academic



research into marketable products.

"Our goal is to promote academic conversion into enterprise. Through initiatives like the Promoting Academic Conversion to Enterprise (PACE), we're helping scientists move their research out of labs and into the market," he said.

Since its formation in 2012, BIRAC has played a critical role in creating a biotech innovation ecosystem, he said.

Kumar shared that the number of biotech startups in India has grown exponentially from about 300 to over 8,000, with significant government support driving this expansion. Additionally, the bioeconomy has surged from USD 35 billion to USD 150 billion in just a decade.

A key achievement of BIRAC, Kumar said, has been the creation of bio-incubation centres across India, providing crucial infrastructure for startups to develop proof-of-concept products.

"Startups often face challenges in finding laboratory space. Our bio-incubation centres offer 'plug and play' laboratories, which have made it easier for startups to carry out their research and development," he added.

However, despite these advancements, India still lags in research and development (R&D) spending, investing

just 0.8 per cent of its GDP in R&D compared to developed nations like the US and China, which spend over 2 per cent.

Kumar stressed that increasing private-sector investment in R&D is essential for India to realise its potential as a global biotech leader.

"We are working on programmes that encourage industries to invest in R&D alongside government funding. For instance, our Biotech Industry Partnership Program requires co-funding from industry players," he said.

Kumar also acknowledged regulatory challenges faced by biotech startups but emphasised that BIRAC is working to alleviate these issues through regulatory advocacy and policy initiatives. "Many startups face difficulties due to a lack of understanding of regulatory processes. We have created a Regulatory and Policy Advocacy Cell to guide startups and engage with regulatory bodies to ease these challenges," he noted.

Kumar said he is optimistic about India's biotech future. The government's commitment to increasing R&D investment through initiatives like the National Research Foundation and its efforts to align regulatory frameworks with global standards will be key drivers of future growth.

## Mansukh Mandaviya to launch eShram-One Stop Solution

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will launch 'eShram-One Stop Solution' for unorganised workers on Monday, the labour ministry said in a statement.

eShram-One Stop Solution will act as a mediator to ensure that unorganised workers have easy access to a variety of government schemes/programmes, it stated.

This initiative will help unorganised workers become aware of the schemes designed for them, it said.

According to the statement, in keeping with the vision of the recent Budget Announcement on developing eShram as a one-stop solution for unorganised labour sector to have access to various social sector schemes, Union Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs and Sports will launch the 'eShram-One Stop Solution' on October 21.

eShram-One Stop Solution

aims to integrate information of beneficiaries of all social security and welfare schemes meant for unorganised workers in an effective manner through a single platform.

eShram as a one-stop solution will help facilitate identification and implementation of the social security & welfare schemes for the unorganised worker and to help saturation of the schemes in the fast and effective manner.

Consequently, 12 schemes of different central ministries/departments have already been integrated/mapped with the eShram.

Since the launch of the e-Shram on August 26, 2021, over 30 crore unorganised workers have been enrolled and it has demonstrated widespread appeal among the unorganised labour.

This achievement underscores the social impact of the initiative and the government's commitment to support the nation's unorganised workers, it said.

## India's solar imports may hit \$30 Billion by 2030

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's target of installing 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030 may push solar equipment import bill to about USD 30 billion per year and increase dependence on Chinese goods, think tank GTRI said in a report on Sunday.

It said developing a self-reliant solar manufacturing industry in India will require significant investment to create an integrated supply chain, especially in areas like polysilicon and wafer production.

Without this, India may continue to face high import costs and struggle to meet its renewable energy goals.

India installed 15 GW of solar capacity in 2023-24, raising the total to 90.8 GW by September, compared to just 2.8 GW in 2014, it said.

To meet the government's target of installing 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030, India needs to significantly ramp up installations to 65-70 GW each year, with over 80 per cent of this target expected to come from solar power, according to the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI).

"This target seems ambitious,

particularly given India's reliance on imports, which could push solar import to USD 30 billion annually," it said.

In 2023-24, India imported USD 7 billion worth of solar equipment, with China supplying 62.6 per cent.

China controls 97 per cent of global polysilicon production and 80 per cent of solar module manufacturing, making it difficult for India or any country to compete due to lower prices from China.

GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said while initiatives like the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme aims to boost local manufacturing, impact is limited as it relies on large scale use of imported inputs.

The report said India's solar manufacturing industry is in early stages, with most projects relying on imported ready-to-use modules.

During the last fiscal year, ready-to-use solar modules imports reached USD 4.4 billion. The country also imported solar cells worth USD 1.9 billion and USD 1 billion worth of other essential parts such as inverters, and cables, junction boxes, transformers, and other electrical components needed for solar installations.



"Local production is import-dependent and mainly focuses on the final two stages. 90 per cent of solar manufacturing in India involves assembling solar modules from imported cells with 15 per cent local value addition," it said.

It added that few Indian companies manufacture commercial scale solar cells from imported polysilicon or wafers that add 30-40 per cent value locally and no one produces solar cells from scratch-using silica sands.

"To cut down on imports, India needs to produce solar cells starting from silica refining, which involves costly and energy-intensive polysilicon production and requires advanced technology," Srivastava said.

He added that cheap imports disrupt local pricing and the country has to also locally produce aluminum frames, glass, and other materials, which will require strong R&D efforts and government support.

According to the report, China is India's largest supplier, providing USD 3.89 billion worth of solar cells and modules, which accounts for 62.6 per cent of total imports. It is followed by Vietnam (USD 1.02 billion -- 16.5 per cent), Malaysia (USD 549.8 million -- 8.9 per cent, and Thailand (USD 248.8 million -- 4 per cent).

To reduce dependency on Chinese imports, India imposed a 40 per cent customs duty on solar modules and a 25 per cent

duty on solar cells. However, imports from Vietnam, Malaysia, and Thailand are exempt from these tariffs under the India-ASEAN free trade agreement (FTA), provided they add at least 35 per cent value to the imported inputs used in their export products.

The think tank has suggested seven steps to boost domestic manufacturing and cut imports and that includes pushing investments in upstream solar production, from raw materials like silica sand to finished solar panels, reducing dependency on imported wafers, polysilicon, and cells.

There is also an urgent need to focus on building local production capacity for aluminum frames, glass, and other critical materials used in solar panel manufacturing.

It asked to expand the scope of initiatives like the PLI scheme to cover early-stage solar manufacturing and provide targeted subsidies to attract private investment; and create a skilled workforce capable of managing large-scale solar installations and manufacturing processes.

"India should partner with the US, the EU, and Japan to establish large-scale solar manufacturing facilities,

fostering an independent and resilient solar industry," Srivastava said, adding that the country's current import duties on solar modules and cells should be reassessed to ensure they promote local manufacturing without raising costs for consumers.

Further he said the global shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy, led by the US, EU, Japan, and India, hinges heavily on solar power, which makes up 50-80 per cent of the renewable energy mix in most countries.

China now dominates over 80 per cent of global solar production and exports, controlling 97 per cent of the world's polysilicon supply. In 2023, China exported 227 GW of solar modules worth USD 39.5 billion and 38 GW of solar cells worth USD 4.2 billion, it said.

Producing solar panels involves six stages, from mining silica sand to assembling the final panel. Most countries import fully assembled solar modules, preferring this route over building domestic capacity.

Due to this dependence, it said the US, the EU, India, and Japan can consider establishing global-scale solar cell manufacturing facilities, starting from scratch.

## Automobile exports from India rise 14 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile exports from India in the first six months of the current fiscal year rose 14 per cent year-on-year, led by gains in shipments of passenger vehicles and two-wheelers.

According to Siam data, the overall exports in the April-September period stood at 25,28,248 units, up 14 per cent as compared with 22,11,457 units in the year-ago period.

"Key markets like Latin America and Africa, which had slowed down for various reasons, have bounced back. This has been the main reason for exports coming back," Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) President Shailesh Chandra said.

He was replying to a query on the reasons for the bouncing back of vehicle exports in the April-September period.

Various African nations and



other regions faced challenges due to devaluation of currencies. This impacted the vehicle shipments as the nations focused on import of essential items.

Automobile exports declined 5.5 per cent in FY24 due to the monetary crisis in various overseas markets.

Overall exports stood at 45,00,492 units in the last fiscal year as compared with

47,61,299 units in FY23.

Total passenger vehicle shipments rose 12 per cent year-on-year to 3,76,679 units in the first half of the current fiscal year as against 3,36,754 units in the September quarter of FY24.

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki led the vertical with shipments of 1,47,063 units, an increase of 12 per cent over 1,31,546

units in the year-ago period.

Hyundai Motor India exported 84,900 units, a drop of 1 per cent, as against 86,105 units in April-September period of the previous fiscal year.

Two-wheeler exports rose 16 per cent year-on-year to 19,59,145 units in the April-September period this fiscal year as compared with 16,85,907 units in the year-ago period.

Scooter shipments increased 19 per cent to 3,14,533 units while motorcycle exports rose 16 per cent to 1,64,1,804 units during the period under review.

Commercial vehicle exports rose 12 per cent year-on-year to 35,731 units in the first six months of the fiscal year.

Three-wheeler shipments, however, declined 1 per cent during the period to 1,53,199 units as compared with 1,55,154 units in the April-September period of the 2023-24 fiscal year.

## Mcap of most valued firms

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Four of the top-10 most-valued firms together added Rs 81,151.31 crore in market valuation last week, with ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest gainers. Last week, the BSE benchmark declined 156.61 points, or 0.19 per cent.

While HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, and the State Bank of India were the gainers, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) suffered a combined erosion of Rs 76,622.05 crore from their market valuation.

ICICI Bank added Rs 28,495.14 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 8,90,191.38 crore.

The valuation of HDFC Bank jumped Rs 23,579.11 crore to Rs 12,82,848.30 crore.

State Bank of India's market

valuation climbed Rs 17,804.61 crore to Rs 7,31,773.56 crore and that of Bharti Airtel went up Rs 11,272.45 crore to Rs 9,71,707.61 crore.

On the other hand, the market capitalisation (mcap) of Infosys slumped Rs 23,314.31 crore to Rs 7,80,126.10 crore.

The valuation of Reliance Industries declined Rs 16,645.39 crore to Rs 18,38,721.14 crore.

The mcap of Hindustan Unilever tumbled Rs 15,248.85 crore to Rs 6,38,066.75 crore and that of TCS diminished by Rs 10,402.01 crore to Rs 14,91,321.40 crore.

LIC's valuation went lower by Rs 8,760.12 crore to Rs 5,91,418.91 crore.

The mcap of ITC dipped Rs 2,251.37 crore to Rs 6,08,682.29 crore.

Reliance Industries continued to remain the most-valued domestic firm.

## INBRIEF

**KHALSA COLLEGE & SHAHZADA NAND COLLEGE WON CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHIES**

**AMRITSAR:** 'A' Zone Zonal Youth Festival of Amritsar district colleges affiliated to the Guru Nanak Dev University concluded in Dasmesh Auditorium of the University. In 'A' Division Khalsa College, Amritsar bagged the first position, Guru Nanak Dev University secured the second position.

**BHAIRABI - SAIRANG RAILWAY PROJECT PROGRESSING TOWARDS COMPLETION**

**MALIGAON:** Indian Railways is significantly contributing towards transforming North-eastern states by executing several new railway line projects. The Bhairabi-Sairang New Line Railway Project to connect the capital of the North-eastern state of Mizoram to the rest of the country is one such project which is at an advance stage of completion.

**FINANZA 2024 CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD INVESTOR WEEK**

**AMRITSAR:** The Dinerio Finance Club of Guru Nanak Dev University organised FINANZA 2024, an inter-department Finance Fest in association with Career Launcher and Black Swan Stock Market Academy.



# THE REVELATIONS OF 'THE LIVING PLANET' REPORT 2024'

With population as a threat in Asia including India and the Pacific, recorded 60% average decline in wildlife writes ABHI SINGHAL

World Wide Fund's 15th biennial edition of the 'The Living Planet Report 2024' (LPR) reveals that there has been a catastrophic 73% decline in the average size of monitored wildlife (mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish) populations over just 50 years (1970-2020). The Living Planet Report (LPR) is a study of trends in global biodiversity and the health of the planet. There has been a strong decline seen, with the highest in the freshwater populations (85%), followed by terrestrial (69%) and marine (56%) populations. Declines in wildlife populations can act as an early warning indicator of increasing extinction risk and the potential loss of healthy ecosystems. When ecosystems are damaged, they can become more vulnerable to tipping points - being pushed beyond a critical threshold resulting in substantial and potentially irreversible change. There have been



...India is home to the largest population of wild tigers globally and the All-India Tiger Estimation 2022 recorded a minimum of 3,682 tigers, a significant increase from the 2,967 estimated in 2018



six global potential tipping points, such as the dieback of the Amazon rainforest and the mass die-off of coral reefs, could create shockwaves far beyond the immediate area impacting food security and livelihoods. Commenting on the effect of adverse climate, Kirsten Schuijt, Director General of WWF International said, "The linked crisis of nature loss and climate change are pushing wildlife and ecosystems beyond their limits, with dangerous global tipping points threatening to damage Earth's life-support systems and destabilize societies. The catastrophic consequences of losing some of our most precious ecosystems, like the Amazon rainforest and coral reefs, would be felt by people and nature around the world." The report also shows the alarming decline of the three vulture species in

India i.e. the white-rumped vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), Indian vulture (*Gyps indicus*), and slender-billed vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*) between 1992 and 2002. The research tells that despite a decline in many wildlife populations in India, some populations have stabilised and shown recovery, largely due to proactive government initiatives, effective habitat management, and robust scientific monitoring, combined with community engagement and public support. It found that India is home to the largest population of wild tigers globally and the All-India Tiger Estimation 2022 recorded a minimum of 3,682 tigers, a significant increase from the 2,967 estimated in 2018. On being asked if with such circumstances, we still have a chance of conserving the endangered wildlife species, the LPR panel said that it depends a lot on the species and the status of the species. They have seen it with some species like with the rhinos, tigers and if the action comes on the right time, at the right scale, and if the species itself is a species which can biologically recover, then we will see that change. The efforts need to be increased, and also some bit of scientific monitoring of this population. Long term monitoring is required, because currently, most of the monitoring that is happening there, they're voluntary or NGO actions.



The LPR states that the only way to make progress on the global goals of halting and reversing nature loss by 2030 and addressing the drivers of climate change is by transforming our energy, food and finance systems. At the same time, we must scale-up effective and inclusive conservation action, taking account of the rights, needs and values of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Ecosystem based adaptation (EbA) - approaches which benefit biodiversity, climate and human well-being at the same time - hold enormous potential.

## DIABETIC RETINOPATHY: A SERIOUSLY OVERLOOKED DISEASE

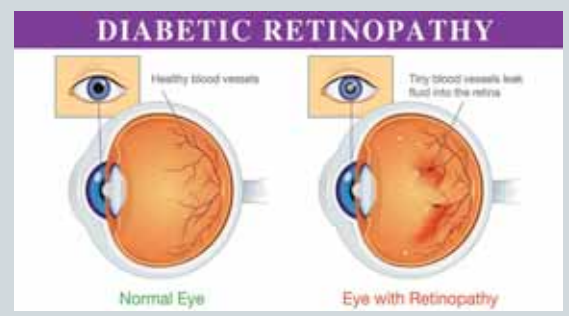
Early screening can prevent vision loss in diabetic patients, says ABHI SINGHAL

There are over 101 million people affected with diabetes in India and the number is expected to grow to 225 million by 2030. Studies also predict that one in five adults will be diagnosed with diabetes in their working age in coming years. This has resulted in the simultaneous and sharp rise in the prevalence of diabetes-related preventable vision loss. Diabetes-related elevated blood sugar is the cause of diabetic retinopathy. Over time, high blood sugar levels can harm your retina, which is the portion of your eye that senses light and uses the optic nerve (located in the back of the eye) to transmit signals to your brain. All over the body, blood vessels are harmed by diabetes. One might notice changes in their vision, like trouble reading or seeing faraway objects as a symptom. In the later stage blood vessels in the retina begin to leak into the vitreous, the gel-like fluid that fills your eye, as the disease progresses.



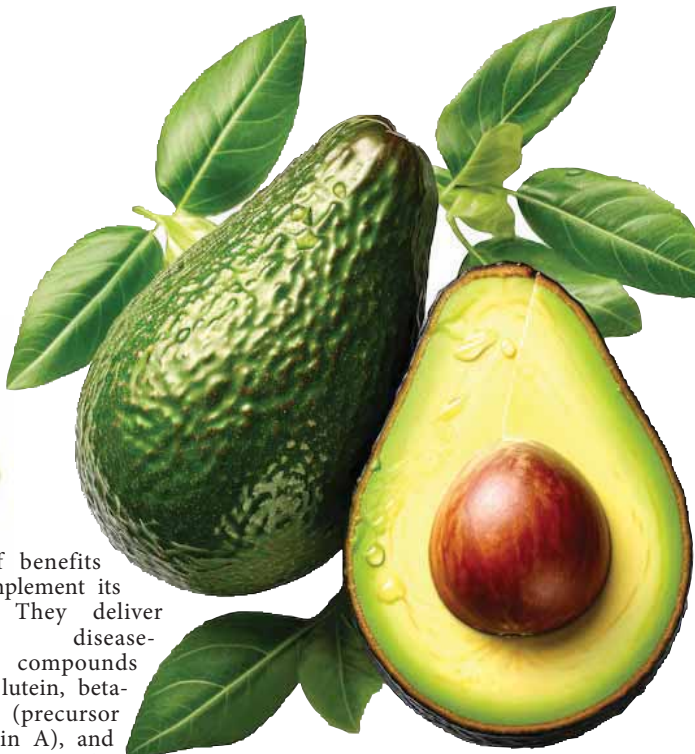
initial eye examination recommended 5 years following diagnosis of type 1 diabetes mellitus. Type 2 diabetes mellitus should be recommended for initial eye examination at the time of diagnosis of type 2 diabetes mellitus. The patients with pregnancy with diabetes mellitus the eye examination prior to conception and early during 1st trimester is recommended and follow-up should be individualised based on severity and recent changes in retinopathy.

"It is important to realise that earlier, diabetes was considered a disease of the elite, but it is no longer like that. It is equally affecting all stratas of the society. We are having an equal prevalence of diabetes, both in rural and urban settings of our country," said Dr. Manisha Agarwal, General Secretary, Vitreoretinal Society of India. A diabetologist plays an important role in timely screening for diabetic retinopathy and referring to an ophthalmologist for its management. With the increasing prevalence of diabetes and the associated risk of diabetic retinopathy, early screening and timely interventions for the same are crucial. It's essential for individuals with diabetes to schedule regular eye exams and for healthcare providers to follow the VRSI and RSSDI guidelines. Together, we can prevent vision loss and improve the quality of life for millions of people in India.



## WHY AVOCADOS

# Everything you need to know!



BY KAVITA DEVGAN

With the search for healthy foods picking up pace, it is no surprise that we are looking ever more intently at what we are eating. That search has taken us far and wide - and one of the emerging options is something that is quite flavourful as well! Some Indians are familiar with the trendy avocado toast and its nutty deliciousness, but the benefits of the avocado go well beyond.

There is no doubt about the fact that avocados are delicious. But how much do we know about this fruit? Avocado (*Persea americana*) a native of South America, also known as alligator pear or avocado pear, is actually a large berry with a rather oily exterior containing a single large stone. Domesticated and harvested locally in Latin America for thousands of years, it comes in a number of variants that range in size, colour, and texture. The trees are native to the tropics, and are today cultivated across continents. What has led to the popularity of the fruit is its soft buttery texture combined with their unusual alluring taste. However, it also packs

AVOCADOS ARE ALSO A SOURCE OF 'GOOD FATS', AND ITS REGULAR CONSUMPTION IS LINKED TO LOWER LEVELS OF BAD (LDL) CHOLESTEROL. IT ALSO CONTAINS A LOT OF FIBRE, WHICH IS GOOD FOR DIGESTIVE HEALTH. AVOCADOS ALSO CONTAIN MINERALS SUCH CALCIUM, MAGNESIUM, AND SODIUM, ALL ESSENTIAL FOR THE HUMAN BODY'S HEALTH

a lot of benefits that complement its flavour. They deliver multiple disease-fighting compounds such as lutein, beta-carotene (precursor to vitamin A), and vitamin E. Results have shown that 1 serving of avocado has 114 calories, and is a rich source of several B vitamins (such as pantothenic acid) and vitamin K, with moderate contents of vitamin C, vitamin E, and potassium. Avocados are also a source of 'good fats', and its regular consumption is linked to lower levels of bad (LDL) cholesterol. It also contains a lot of fibre, which is good for digestive health. Avocados also contain minerals such calcium, magnesium, and sodium, all essential for the human body's health. It is also packed with antioxidants. The human heart needs special attention, and avocados are fortunately a fabulous heart-friendly fruit. They are loaded with health-promoting MUFA

(Monounsaturated fatty acids) that are great for our heart, and potassium, a mineral that helps regulate blood pressure, and even the elusive folate, which again is a wonderful heart health nutrient. Nutrient-rich avocado oil has a multitude of uses for salads or cooking and is also being used increasingly in cosmetics and soap products. The most common way to have it however remains as a nutritious addition to a meal. So next time instead of just eyeing this perfect blend of taste and health on other people's Instagram feeds, or at the supermarket, get them home and cook with them. Go on and make the most of avocado's health.

The author is a leading dietitian and holistic health consultant.



Natasha Moor in collaboration with Nykaa at her masterclass in New Delhi.

# New Zealand win by Eight wickets for first Test win in India in 36 years

**PTI ■ BENGALURU**

New Zealand survived a hostile Jasprit Bumrah spell to foil India's attempt to add a final-day twist to an absorbing series-opener, slaying the cricketing giants at home by eight wickets and ending a 36-year long wait to taste Test success in the country, here Sunday. This is Kiwis' first Test win on the Indian soil after the John Wright-led outfit towelled India by 136 runs at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, way back in 1988. Even hunting a modest 107 on the fifth day against a world-class attack could be nerve, and New Zealand did that after some initial scares. Will Young (48 not out) and Rachin Ravindra (39 not out) fuelled their chase with a 75-run stand for the third wicket, handholding their side a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. However, the Indians will not be an entirely despondent lot despite the defeat as they showed admirable spunk to

claw back from the depths of getting bowled out for 46 in the first innings. They will need to build on it and pretty quickly too as the second Test at Pune starts on October 24. The Rohit Sharma-marshalled side will also have to think deeply about retaining Sarfaraz Khan, who made a 150 in the second dig, as Shubman Gill is poised to return after recovering from a stiff neck. The other point they will moot long is whether to go back to the three-pacer strategy or continue three spinners, a move which backfired here spectacularly, in Pune. New Zealand victory did not come without its share of drama once the day's play started at 10.15am, a wet outfield pushing back the proceedings by an hour. Bumrah (2/29), operating from the dressing room end, found appreciable movement and Tom Latham fell in the first over of the day itself for



his overnight naught. Latham was behind the ball to cover the in-dipper but it swung back further to thud on to his pads as umpire Michael Gough raised his finger after vociferous appeal from the bowler and the crowd. The New Zealand captain reviewed the decision more in hope than in conviction and the DRS confirmed his worst fears as well, and he had to walk back. India might just have felt the absence of a third pacer as both Bumrah and Siraj found movement and carry to trouble the Kiwi batters under a largely overcast skies. Kuldeep Yadav, who gave away 26 runs in three overs, had replaced Akash Deep in the eleven for this Test after India went with a three-pronged pace attack against Bangladesh recently. Devon Conway, the other

overnight batter, was shaky throughout his stay and would consider himself fortunate to have found a last-minute edge on a Bumrah skidder that otherwise would have trapped him plumb in front. But as luck would have it, the ball beat the gully fielder and raced to the fence. However, the left-hander eventually reached the road's end when Bumrah, operating from around the stumps, caught him right in front of the wicket with another one that skidded and swung back into him. The on-field umpire did not relent but the DRS upheld India's appeal to send Conway (17) back. New Zealand were 35 for two at that point, and one would say the match in balance as a couple of more strikes could have left the cat among the pigeons. But Young and Ravindra, the first-innings centurion, found some solidity to resist the Indian charge. Once the sun came out for a while, the ball-movement was much more predictable and the Kiwi batters used favourable conditions to rack in a few boundaries to ease the pressure. Ravindra Jadeja, who started with a no-ball, too did not make much of an impression, conceding 14 runs in his first two overs. There was not much on the Chinnaswamy pitch for him to exploit either as the 22-yard track did not disintegrate on the final day, courtesy rain and cooler climes here. With the margin getting reduced alongside each run, the New Zealand batters became more daring and brought out their shots from the shelf, such as a clean hoist over mid-wicket for a six off left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep. The defining moment came when Will Young turned Jadeja for two to collect the winning runs as Kiwis' dressing room turned into a hub of celebration.

## India U17 squad picked for Asian Cup Qualifiers

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

India U17 men's national team head coach Ishfaq Ahmed, on Sunday, named a 23-member squad for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025 Qualifiers to be held in Thailand from October 23-27. India are placed in Group D, where they will meet Brunei Darussalam (October 23), Turkmenistan (October 25) and hosts Thailand (October 27). There are 10 groups in the qualification phase, from which the group winners and five best second-placed teams will join hosts Saudi Arabia at the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2025. **Goalkeepers:** Aheibam Suraj Singh, Rohit, Nandan Roy. **Defenders:** Karish Soram,

Mohamed Kaif, Chingtham Renin Singh, Brahmacharimayum Sumit Sharma, Thougamba Usham Singh, Yaipharemba Chingakham, Jodric Abranches. **Midfielders:** Abdul Salha Sheergoji, Ahongshangbam Samson, Kh Azlaan Shah, Levis Zangminlun, Mahmud Sami, Manbhakup Malngiang, Md Arbash, Ningthoukhongjam Rishi Singh, Vishal Yadav, Ngamgouhou Mate. **Forwards:** Bharat Lairenjam, Prem Hansdak, Hemeichung Lunkim. **Head coach:** Ishfaq Ahmed; **Assistant coach:** Ramachandran Govindaraju Mileswamy; **Goalkeeper coach:** Zakeer Hussain Mohammed Strength and conditioning coach: Chelston Pinto.

## That day belonged to Nadeem: Neeraj on Paris Olympics javelin final

**PTI ■ LUCKNOW**

Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra says nothing went wrong in his silver-winning performance in the Paris Olympics final earlier this year and Pakistani Arshad Nadeem emerged champion as the "day belonged to him". Chopra became the first Indian track-and-field athlete to win two successive Olympic medals by clinching a silver with a throw of 89.45m on August 8, but the day belonged to Nadeem, who destroyed the field with a new Olympic record effort of 92.97m for his country's maiden individual gold at the showpiece. "Nothing was wrong, everything was right. The throw was also good. Getting a silver (medal) in the Olympics is also not a small thing. There was disappointment. But, I feel that the competition was very



good, and it was tough," Chopra told PTI in an interview. "The gold medal is won by the person to whom the day belongs to. That day was (Arshad) Nadeem's day." Chopra was in Lucknow on Saturday to inaugurate Under Armour's larger, new format brand house store at the Phoenix Palassio Mall. He brushed aside any notion of India-Pakistan rivalry in javelin throw competition replacing the same seen in cricket and hockey. "In javelin, there are no two teams (playing against each other), but there are 12 athletes from different countries, who are competing with each other. I have been competing with Nadeem since 2016, and it is for the first time that he has won," said the 26-year-old athlete from Khandra village in Haryana's Panipat district. "He (Nadeem) is a nice

person, speaks in a good manner, gives respect, so (I) feel good." Chopra said it was a sudden moment when he picked up the javelin for the first time in his life when he was boy. "It (taking up javelin throw) was a sudden moment. I did not know anything about it. When I went to the ground, at that time, it was decided," said

that time, I was quite young, and do not remember things much. "At that time, I had come by train. Now, a good airport has been built. Good mall has been built. And, it is for the first time that I am able to see the city so much by travelling. I felt very nice," he said. Chopra also had tea at a famous outlet ('Sharma ke Chai') in Lucknow's Lalbagh area, and took selfies with people. Giving a piece of advice to the youth, Chopra said, "To the youth, I would say that they should not assume in the starting itself that they would be bagging medals. They should exercise patience, because sports consume a lot of your time. "Your body needs time to grow, your muscles become strong in a good manner. Have patience, and work on your techniques."

## Juyal's unbeaten century, Rinku's fiery 89 keep UP in game vs Haryana

**PTI ■ LUCKNOW**

Young skipper Aryan Juyal continued his fine form to slam an unbeaten century, while Rinku Singh smashed a brisk fifty as Uttar Pradesh reached 267/6 in reply to Haryana's 453 in their Ranji Trophy Group C match here on Saturday. Rinku hit 89 off 110 balls with 10 fours and three sixes, scoring 25 off 20 balls against Yuzvendra Chahal, who went wicket-less in 11 overs for 57 runs. Juyal, who missed a century by eight runs in their last match against Bengal, got to his fourth first class hundred and was unbeaten on 118

from 196 balls (13x4, 1x6) as UP cut their deficit to 186 runs on the third day. On a forgettable day for Chahal, Aman Kumar, Harshal Patel and Jayant Yadav bagged two wickets apiece for Haryana. Earlier, Chahal added 10 runs to his overnight total before Hayana's innings ended at 453 with Shivam Sharma dismissing the India leg-spinner to return figures of 4/95. At Mullanpur, opener Jaskaranvir Singh Paul shone with an unbeaten 117 on debut, leading Punjab to a commanding position against Madhya Pradesh. Building on their 70-run first

innings lead, Punjab posted 265/3 at stumps on day four, extending their overall lead to 335 runs. Jaskaranvir's patient 273-ball knock, studded with nine fours and one six, was instrumental in keeping MP's attack comprising Avesh Khan, Kumar Kartikeya, and Kulwant Khejroliya at bay. He forged a solid 109-run opening partnership with Abhay Choudhary (46 off 129 balls) before two quick wickets fell. Anmolpreet Singh then provided valuable support with a brisk 72 off 108 balls (7x4), helping Punjab consolidate their position.

**Brief Scores**  
**In Lucknow:** Haryana 453; 191.2 overs (Himanshu Rana 114, Dheeru Singh 103, Ankit Kumar 77, Sumit Kumar 61, Yuzvendra Chahal 48; Shivam Sharma 4/95, Vipraj Nigam 3/129, Yash Dayal 2/56). Uttar Pradesh 267/6; 70 overs (Aryan Juyal 118 batting, Rinku Singh 89).  
**In Mullanpur:** Punjab 277 and 265/3; 90 overs (Jaskaranvir Singh Paul 115 batting, Anmolpreet Singh 72, Abhay Choudhary 46). Madhya Pradesh 207.  
**In Alur:** Kerala 161/3; 50 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 63, Sachin Baby 23 batting) vs Karnataka.

## Djokovic tops Nadal before Sinner beats Alcaraz for title at the Six Kings Slam exhibition

**AP ■ RIYADH (SAUDI ARABIA)**

Jannik Sinner beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-3 for the championship in the Six Kings Slam exhibition Saturday after Novak Djokovic topped Rafael Nadal 6-2, 7-6 (5) in the third-place match. While Sinner and Alcaraz probably have plenty of future matchups in store, Djokovic and Nadal may have been playing for the final time in one of tennis' great rivalries. Djokovic won the match between rivals who have combined for 46 Grand Slam singles titles. Nadal, who won 22 Slam titles, is planning to retire after playing for Spain next month in the Davis Cup. They shared a warm embrace



at the net after Djokovic's victory. He also beat Nadal in the Olympics and had a 31-29 lead in their head-to-head. "The last dance was an epic one," Djokovic wrote on social media. "And of course emotional. I'll cherish our rivalry forever, (at)rafaelnadal. Tennis will miss you." Sinner then emerged with a victory over Alcaraz in a matchup between the winners of all four major titles this season. The top-ranked Sinner, who had lost all three meetings this season, collected \$6 million for the

win. "Until now, every match was very, very good, but we will always hope this rivalry will last as long as possible," Sinner said. Alcaraz beat the Italian on Oct. 2 to win the China Open in Beijing, along with semifinal victories at the French Open and Indian Wells. The Spaniard has a 6-4 lead in their head-to-head on Tour. "I will try to do my best every day ... To hopefully make this rivalry better and better over the years," Alcaraz said. Alcaraz defeated Nadal and Sinner topped Djokovic in the previous round of the exhibition event that awards money but not ATP ranking points in Saudi Arabia's latest foray into tennis.

## Arsenal stunned by Bournemouth and Garnacho sparks Man United comeback

**AP ■ MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)**

Arsenal blew the chance to go top of the English Premier League after a shock 2-0 loss to Bournemouth on Saturday. In one of the biggest upsets of the burgeoning season, 10-man Arsenal lost for the time. Mikel Arteta's team finished runner-up in the last two years and could have leapfrogged leader Liverpool and defending champion City in second place with a win at Bournemouth. But Arsenal's chances were hit after William Saliba was sent off in the first half at Vitality Stadium. Bournemouth took full advantage with Ryan Christie scoring in the 70th minute and Justin Kluivert converting a penalty nine minutes later.

Third-placed Arsenal is a point behind Liverpool and level with City, having played a game more than its rivals, who are both in action on Sunday. Meanwhile, Manchester United picked up only its third league win by beating Brentford 2-1. Fourth-placed Aston Villa tightened up the top of the standings by moving to within a point of Liverpool and level with Arsenal after beating Fulham 3-1. Brighton was three points off the pace after winning at Newcastle 1-0. Tottenham scored three times in eight minutes in a 4-1 win over West Ham. Garnacho stunner Alejandro Garnacho scored from a brilliant volley as United fought back to beat Brentford. The Argentina international fired home from a tight angle

when connecting with Marcus Rashford's cross just after halftime. It sparked a comeback that saw Rasmus Hojlund hit the winner and ease the pressure on manager Erik ten Hag. "In this team you see its togetherness and there is a fighting spirit," Ten Hag said. "And today we add some determination to score goals and that is what we needed." United was reeling from its worst season start in the Premier League era heading into Saturday's game and it looked like being another disappointing day for Ten Hag, who was angered when Ethan Pinnock opened the scoring for Brentford in contentious circumstances in first-half added time. United defender Matthijs de Ligt was ordered off for medical attention on his



bleeding head from a collision. It left the home team down a man as Brentford prepared to take a corner and Pinnock headed over the line in the fifth minute of added time. United responded quickly after the break thanks to Garnacho's goal in the 47th. Hojlund flicked past Brentford goalkeeper Mark Flekken for the winner in the 62nd. "We don't score enough, we are not clinical enough. But today we scored two brilliant goals," Ten Hag said. "It's only one win, but it can help us." Villa rises Villa was up to fourth after coming back from going a goal down at Craven Cottage when Raul Jimenez fired Fulham in front in the fifth minute. Morgan Rogers quickly leveled four minutes later and

Ollie Watkins made it 2-1 in the 59th. An Issa Diop own goal in the 69th completed the scoring. Southampton collapses Leading 2-0 after 28 minutes at St Mary's Stadium, last-placed Southampton looked on course for its first league win. Leicester had other ideas. Second-half goals from Facundo Buonanotte, Jamie Vardy from the penalty spot, and Jordan Ayew secured an unlikely comeback that left Southampton rooted to the bottom of the table and moved Leicester six points clear of the relegation zone. Also, Everton won at Ipswich 2-0 to move five points above the relegation zone. Brighton flying Brighton's impressive start under coach Fabian Hurlzeler continued with the

win at Newcastle. Hurlzeler, born in Texas, has made his presence felt in England's top flight following his appointment in the offseason. Hurlzeler is also working wonders with Danny Welbeck, who scored in the 35th at St James' Park, his fifth goal of the season. Spurs comeback Tottenham trailed to Mohammed Kudus' 18th-minute goal at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium but powered back with a brilliant second-half performance. Dejan Kulusevski leveled in the 36th and after the break the home team took control. Yves Bissouma struck in the 52nd and Alphonse Areola scored an own goal three minutes later. Son Heung-min added a fourth on the hour mark.