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INSIDE

SPORTS 11
SALIMA TETE NAMED INDIA
CAPTAIN FOR WOMEN'S
ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY



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Population Census takes off in 2025

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi-led government is set to begin the long-delayed Population Census in 2025, with a target for completion by 2026. This will be followed by a nationwide delimitation process for Lok Sabha constituencies, expected to be finished by 2028. However, no decision has been taken yet on whether Caste Census will also be carried out along with the general Census.

This development comes amid demands from several Opposition parties for a Caste Census. However, the government has not yet made a decision, and the details of the Census process are yet to be made public. The upcoming Census round is expected to include the usual surveys on religion and social class, along with counts of General, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.

According to sources aware of the details, the Government has not yet taken any decision on the Caste Census. The process of tabulating the country's population will begin in 2025 and is expected to conclude by 2026, following which the process of carving out constituencies for the Lok Sabha through delimitation will begin.

The last Census was conducted in 2011, and the following round was initially planned for 2021 but was postponed due to the second wave of COVID-19. The Census cycle is now set to follow a 10-year pattern, running from 2025 to 2035 and later from 2035 to 2045.

The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner had prepared 31 questions to be asked to the citizens during the Census exercise. These questions include whether the head of the household belongs to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe and other family members as asked in the previous Census.

"In all probability, the work for the Census and the NPR will begin early next year and the



population data will be announced by 2026. With this, the Census cycle is likely to be changed. So, it will be 2025-2035 and then 2035-2045 and so on in future," said sources adding all these factors will have to be looked into before any decision is taken on delimitation.

The 31 questions to be asked to each family under the Census exercise include the total number of persons normally residing in the household, whether the head of the household is a woman, the number of dwelling rooms exclusively in possession of the household, the number of married couple(s) living in the household among others. The questions also include whether a family has a telephone, internet connection, mobile or smartphone, bicycle, scooter or motorcycle or moped, and whether they own a car, jeep or a van.

The citizens will also be asked what is the cereal they consume in the household, the main source of drinking water, main source of lighting, access to latrine, type of latrine, waste water outlet, availability of bathing facility, availability of kitchen and LPG/PNG connection, main fuel used for cooking, availability of radio, transistor, television etc.

The Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and several other parties have been demanding that a Caste Census be undertaken. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s alliance partners such as Janata Dal United (JDU) in Bihar have also spoken about the same, but have not put any pressure on the Centre. At the central level, the final decision has been left to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his cabinet.

The BJP's other ally, Telugu Desam Party (TDP), too is of the opinion that the Census must happen, with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu actively advocating for 'Skill Census' for the benefit of the masses, especially the young population.

Continued on page 2

India, Spain partnership soars to new heights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VADODARA

India on Monday set in motion the manufacture of C295, an ultra modern tactical transport aircraft which can carry troops and logistical supplies from main airfields to forward operating airfields of the country. The aircraft will be made in partnership with Spain, and can also operate on short unprepared airstrips as it is capable of Short Take-off and Landing (STOL). The aircraft can additionally be used for casualty or medical evacuation, performing special missions, disaster response and maritime patrol duties while it can operate from short airstrips just 2,200 feet long and can fly low-level operations for tactical missions flying at a low speed of 110 knots according to parent manufacturer Airbus.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez inaugurated the Tata Aircraft Complex in Vadodara, India's first private facility to build these military planes, where C295 aircraft will be produced. PM Modi and Spanish PM Pedro Sanchez on Monday inaugurated the Tata Aircraft Complex for manufacturing C295 aircraft in Vadodara. Noting that the partnership between India and Spain is finding a new direction, Modi said the project would not only strengthen the relations between the two nations but also give momentum to the mission of 'Make in India, Make for the World'.

PM Modi conveyed his best wishes to the team of Airbus and Tata, and also paid tributes to the late Ratan Tata. The Airbus C295 is a medium tactical transport aircraft that



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish PM Pedro Sanchez being briefed about an aircraft as they visit the TATA Aircraft Complex after its inauguration, in Vadodara, Gujarat, Monday, October 28, 2024. Tata Sons Chairperson Natarajan Chandrasekaran is also seen

was designed and initially manufactured by the Spanish aerospace company CASA, which is now a part of the European multinational Airbus Defence and Space division. The C295 can also be used for medical evacuations, disaster response, and maritime patrol duties.

The C295 aircraft factory is a reflection of the new work culture of New India, the PM said, adding India's speed from idea to the execution of any project can be witnessed at the factory, whose foundation stone was laid in October 2022. Emphasising the focus on eliminating unaccounted delays in the planning and execution of projects, PM Modi recalled the setting up of Bombardier train coach manufacturing facility in Vadodara as the Chief Minister of Gujarat. Metro coaches made in that factory are being exported, the

PM said, and expressed confidence that the aircraft made in the facility inaugurated on Monday would also be exported. Quoting the famous Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, PM Modi said, "As we start treading towards the goal, the path towards the goal is created automatically."

A decade ago, the priority and identity of defence manufacturing was about import and none could imagine that defence manufacturing could take place on such a large scale in India, the PM said. "Our government decided to walk on a new path and set new goals for India, whose results are evident today," he said. The transformation of India's defence sector exemplifies how a right plan and partnership can turn possibilities into prosperity, PM Modi said.

Continued on page 2



Terrorists target Army vehicle, religious place in Akhnoor

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

After the 1984 Operation Bluestar, the Indian Army on Monday deployed an infantry combat vehicle for the second time in Jammu and Kashmir to flush out foreign terrorists from inside a famous religious place in Akhnoor. According to ground reports, after targeting an Army vehicle in the Batal area of Akhnoor early Monday morning, a group of heavily armed foreign terrorists stormed a religious place damaging several structures. The elite commandos of the National Security Guard (NSG) were also inducted in the ongoing anti-terrorist operation to neutralise a group of foreign terrorists holed up in the basement area of a religious place. In retaliatory firing, the religious place suffered huge damage. The Army had deployed BMP-II, an Infantry combat vehicle in the operations after a gap of almost 11 years. The Army had earlier used tanks to flush out a group of fidayeen (members of a suicide squad) after they stormed inside the Samba army camp on September 26, 2013.

Continued on page 2

Brave Army canine Phantom martyred

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Valiant Indian Army dog Phantom made the supreme sacrifice on Monday, during an ongoing anti-terrorist operation in the Batal area of Akhnoor. So far one terrorist has been neutralised, while the operation was still going on to flush out the remaining foreign terrorists. White Knight Corps in a post on X acknowledged the supreme sacrifice. "We salute the supreme sacrifice of our true hero-a valiant Indian Army Dog, Phantom", posted White Knight Corps on X, adding "As our troops were closing in on the trapped terrorists, Phantom drew enemy fire, sustaining fatal injuries. His courage, loyalty, and dedication will never be forgotten".



Ayodhya celebrates Ramlalla's first Diwali in new temple

BISWAJEET BANERJEE/ KAMLESH SRIVASTAVA ■ AYODHYA

The city of Ayodhya is abuzz with joy, evoking the divine splendour of Treta Yuga, as it prepares to celebrate a historic Diwali - its first since child Ram (Ramlalla) was ceremoniously enshrined in the grand temple after 500 years.

The city, which holds immense significance in Hindu mythology, mirrors the jubilation of the day when Lord Ram returned to Ayodhya after 14 years in exile. Today, the festivities center around the child Ram, and for the next three days, Ayodhya will glow with joy, attracting devotees from across India to witness this unparalleled celebration.

Ayodhya's grand Diwali celebration kicks off with a world record attempt, illuminating Ram Ki Paidi with 25 lakh earthen lamps on Chhoti Deepawali. Accompanying this spectacular display will be a



Photo: The Pioneer

laser show, projection mapping, and a grand fireworks display, transforming the cityscape into a visual feast.

The Deepotsav festivities are further enhanced by the active participation of residents and pilgrims. The streets and landmarks of Ayodhya are adorned with vibrant decorations. The area from Ram Katha Park to Saket College, the Saryu Ghats, and Ram Ki Paidi is a visual treat, and the Ram Mandir itself is being adorned with 50 quintals of fresh flowers. Grand Toran

gates have been constructed at all four entrances of the temple, adding to the festive aura.

A special highlight of the celebrations is the Ram Darbar, set up in Ram Katha Park, where Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will assume the role of Guru Vashishtha to symbolically coronate Lord Ram. As evening approaches, crowds of devotees and visitors are gathering to admire the city's grand decorations, capturing each stunning view with their cameras.

Continued on page 2

Special joint session to mark Constitution Day, November 26

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is likely to hold a special joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on November 26, to mark the 75th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution. Sources said the Winter Session may start from November 25, and the special joint sitting is likely to be held in the Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan (Old Parliament Building), where the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution in 1949. The Constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950.

The joint session is expected to feature discussions on the Constitution's role in shaping Indian democracy, with participation from leaders of various political parties reflecting on the principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries are expected to address the joint session.

Continued on page 2



Hoax bomb threat calls led to ₹1400 Crore loss

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As the number of hoax bomb threat messages to domestic and international flights crossed over 400, leading to financial loss up to Rs 1200 to 1400 crore to Indian carriers so far. As many as 410 domestic and international flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats in the last 15 days. More than 60 flights of Indian carriers received bomb threats on Monday.

Once a flight is canceled or delayed due to a bomb hoax, a ripple effect of delays and cancellations of other flights occurs adding to financial losses for not the airline but the flying public. The event is not just a safety concern but also means a costly affair for

an airline. "The overall financial damage of the hoax, including costs for unscheduled landing, passenger accommodations, aircraft grounding, and crew replacements, is projected from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 4 crore per incident," said an airline executive, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The overall costs escalate when additional expenses such as unexpected landing charges, hotel accommodations for over 200 passengers and crew, compensation for missed connections, grounding the aircraft for thorough checks, and arranging a fresh crew are factored in. Meanwhile, the airline also faced financial losses from the disruption of its return flight schedule.

Continued on page 2



Stranded vehicles, vendor encroachments eat into road space

Eleven points where local markets create a mess have been identified

BY SAUMYA SHUKLA

A day before Dhanteras, the rush at local markets across the National Capital is at its peak, and commuters are finding it hard to get through the narrow lanes. The jams on the roads leading to the markets such as the popular Kamla Nagar, situated near Delhi University, are a horror story for those thronging here to buy utensils, jewellery, silver coins, clothes, decorative items, flowers, diyas and accessories for Diwali. Hawkers and vendors with their shops on either side of the road for long stretches and people creating chaos while being on a shopping spree makes it extremely difficult for vehicles to wade through. This market is also situated near residential colonies, where the haphazard parking is also a problem for the local residents.

A shopper said, "Authorities need to resolve parking issues in residential

colonies, encroachment and consequent traffic congestion in markets like Kamla Nagar." Another such market is also in the Govindpuri area where the weekly market, where day to day items are sold at affordable prices, on Wednesday creates a complete breakdown of traffic, making it extremely hard for not just vehicles but pedestrians to move.

Further exacerbating the issue, are the encroachments by vendors who set up their shops on the roadsides, and the consumers who lead to limited space on the road for free flow of traffic on a street which is situated close to Govindpuri metro station and residential apartments.

"I live in Govindpuri extension and every Wednesday, the roads that are already narrow due to encroachments and parking on the roadside become even worse. There are vendors with their shops and the customers are standing on the roads making it very



Ranjani Dimri/The Pioneer

hard to move," an office goer said. Another commuter added that the increased presence of e-rickshaws also adds to the misery. "There are so many in such a small stretch that they jam the entire road on a day when there is barely any space for even a pedestrian to move around," he added, stating that when he comes back from office around 9 pm, it becomes a nightmare to pass through the area.

As per the Delhi Traffic police, 11 such points have been identified in the city where these markets create a chaos with vehicles getting stranded or moving at a snail pace. In the Eastern range, they said in the areas of Mother Dairy, Road No. 57, Pusta Road, and GTB Hospital Red Light these issues are prominent.

"There is a weekly market in Mother Dairy while due to heavy vehicular movement of Jagatpuri stone market on Road No. 57 in Shahdara, the traffic problem arises," a traffic cop said,

adding that traffic congestion is also present due to Gandhi Nagar Cloth market in Pusta road and markets are on that route of GTB hospital red light point.

In the Southern range, on BP Marg (Kotla red light to Andrewj Gunj signal) commercial shops (timber and hardware shops) which are located on both sides of the carriageway. "People come to purchase the items and park their vehicles on the roadside as there is no other option of parking," he added. Presence of local markets in Aurobindo Marg (Adhchini Village) and IGNOU Road (IGNOU cut to Zmore) also created traffic jams in the southern range of the city.

In the Western range of the city, heavy footfall in local markets in areas of Uttam Nagar Terminal to Old Palam Road on Najafgarh Road, Road No.201 in Madhu Vihar to Rajapuri on Sector 3/13 Crossing and Phirni Road Najafgarh.

Baramati turns emotional as Sharad Pawar joins grand nephew Yugendra to file nomination

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Baramati, where a mother of all electoral battles is being witnessed in Maharashtra, experienced emotional moments on Monday, as NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar made it a point to be with his grand-nephew Yugendra Pawar, as the latter filed his nomination to fight the November 20 Assembly polls against his uncle and deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar.

working president- daughter Supriya Sule and his other family members made it a point to be 32-year-old Yugendra's side when he took out a procession to file his papers to take on his uncle in the poll. Ajit Pawar is a seven-time MLA, while the US-educated professional Yugendra is debutant in electoral politics. Yugendra is the son of Ajit Pawar's younger brother Srinivas Pawar. Speaking on the occasion, 83-year-old Pawar expressed confidence that the people of Baramati would elect his grandnephew Yugendra with a huge margin of votes against

his estranged nephew Ajit Pawar. "I have known the people of Baramati very well since 1965... I have full confidence in them... The gen-next and others will extend their support to Yugendra," Sharad Pawar said. Supriya, who had defeated cousin Ajit Pawar's wife and her sister-in-law Sunetra by a huge margin of 1.58 lakh votes in the polls in the Baramati Lok Sabha polls - said: "It's truly another emotional moment for us. It has never been a personal fight for me. Even when I contested the Lok Sabha elections I said the same thing. It is never a per-



Sharad Pawar Sahab because he is the founder of the NCP, he is the patriarch of the family and it is because of him that not only Baramati but everybody around also pro-

sonal fight for me. We work for larger cause, On his part, Yugendra said: "This was unfortunate but all of us in the family decided that we need to stay with

pered." Meanwhile, Ajitdada - as Ajit Pawar is known in the State political circles -- was accompanied by his two sons, Parth and Jay, when he filed his nomination for the State Assembly polls. Asking about the NCP (SP)'s decision to field nephew Yugendra against him, Ajit Pawar said: "Everyone has the right to contest. Whenever any candidate is fielded against me I take him or her as a strong candidate and campaign accordingly. This time too, the people of Baramati will elect me and I have faith in them" Ajitdada reiterated that he had

made a "mistake" of fielding his wife Sunetra Pawar against his cousin Supriya Sule in the recent Lok Sabha polls. "I did a mistake by fielding my wife Sunetra Pawar against my sister Supriya Sule in the Lok Sabha polls... I did a mistake... they should not have repeated the mistake... its now up to the people to decide," an emotional Ajitdada said. It may be recalled that he had made a similar statement on August 13, 2024. Meanwhile, Sharad Pawar appealed to the people across the state to support the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) and contribute to the change of government

in Maharashtra "This is not a question for just Baramati, but for the entire Maharashtra. I have toured almost all the districts in the past few months. In the 2024 Lok Sabha, the people supported Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in a big way. MVA won 31 of the 48 LS seats, and I am grateful to the people from the depths of my heart," the senior-most Pawar said. "I have full faith in the people. We have kept up the tempo of the LS elections even for the Assembly polls. We are working for unity and unanimity in all seats being contested by the MVA," the NCP (SP) chief said.

TMC reacts strongly to HM Amit Shah's infiltration claim

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress has strongly reacted to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's trans-border infiltration charges against the Trinamool Congress Government saying by leveling such charges Shah has roundly conceded that the Centre which is tasked with curbing infiltration has failed in its job. "Amit Shah ji has said that peace will return to Bengal only if infiltration stops and infiltration will stop with the ouster of the TMC Government... by saying so he has himself accepted his Government's failure to contain illegal migration at the borders... he has to be reminded that it is not the task of the Bengal Police or the TMC to man the borders... it is the BSF's job to check infiltration in which it has failed if we are to take his (Home Minister) statements seriously," TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said. Questioning as to why the BSF has failed to contain infiltration despite the Centre expanding the jurisdiction of the paramilitary force Ghosh said, "the



jurisdiction of BSF has been expanded from 15 km to 50 km along the border but still they have failed to reign in infiltration... whose failure is this... is TMC or Bengal Police responsible for this." Calling the senior BJP leader a "political tourist" who came during the elections and returns with "failed agenda," Ghosh said "he used to be a daily passenger during the 2021 State elections and 2024 General elections... still the BJP suffered a humiliating defeat... this is because the people of Bengal despise the BJP's culture of hatred and love Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's leadership, her people friendly schemes... As a Home Minister he is an impor-

tant person but in Bengal he is not to be taken more than a political tourist." Accusing the BJP Government of holding back Bengal's "legitimate funds" the TMC leader said how "Amit Shah ji made baseless claims about funds given to the State... but he did not mention about how they have not paid Rs 1.7 lakh crore to Bengal... they collect taxes from this State but do not return its dues." On corruption he said that the BJP leadership repeatedly come and raise charges of corruption but finally fail to prove anything wondering "why the BJP does not look inside its own party... as to how many corrupt leaders it has inducted from other parties." Shah had during a launch of membership drive in Kolkata alleged that trans-border infiltration was the main reason behind the lack of peace in Bengal. "Peace in Bengal will return only when the infiltration is stopped and that will happen only when the BJP comes to power by throwing the TMC out," the Home Minister said.

Post Sitaram, Adhir era no Congress-LF truck in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In what critics consider an upshot of CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury's death and Bengal Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury's getting eased out of his post there seems to be curtains for the Left Front's camaraderie with the tri-colour party in Bengal. That the twain was unlikely to meet in near future under new PCC president Subhankar Sarkar --- considered as a pro-Mamata Banerjee face in the Congress --- was once again proved by both the Left and the tri-colour outfit announcing their separate candidates' list for the November 13 Assembly by-elections to six seats. The six seats where the elections are to be held are Sitai in Cooch Behar and Madarihata in Jalpaiguri district of North Bengal, Naihati and Haroa in North 24 Parganas, Taldangra in Bankura and Medinipur in West Midnapore district. While the Left announced its list on Monday the Congress published its own on Tuesday fielding its nominees in all the



six seats where the Left Front is contesting. The Left is contesting is all but one seat of Haroa which it has set aside for Indian Secular Front. On why there was no alliance between the two parties that jointly contested several elections together since 2016, the new PCC president said since Congress was not a member of the Left Front it had every right to take its own decision. "Is the Congress a part of the Left Front... we had fought together parliamentary elections but situations continue to change in politics... there is no compulsion that every time there has to be an

alliance," Sarkar said. When asked to comment on the CPI(M)'s failure to take the Congress along with it as a bigger party central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty said, there was some communication gap as Sarkar was new in his chair and was getting feedbacks from district leaderships. "There is no problem in the two parties contesting the polls differently... in fact we have been fighting against the corrupt Trinamool Congress and a communal BJP for the past several years and will continue to do so... the Congress' secular demo-

cratic credentials is proven so if today there was no alliance does not mean that doors are shut for ever." Inside sources in the Pradesh Congress however said that unlike in the days of Adhir Chowdhury who has been a vocal Mamata Banerjee baiter there was no proactive step taken from Sarkar's side for an alliance and "as there was dilly dallying from both the sides an alliance could not be stitched." Parallel reports said that while Sarkar who known for his good chemistry with Mamata Banerjee was uninterested in any alliance it was

Chowdhury who has been shifted out to Jharkhand as the Congress' observer in the Assembly polls in that State who called Congress central leader Venugopal asking him the efficacy of rejecting an alliance in Bengal with a party with which it was having a truck in Jharkhand. "We are going with the Left as our partner in Jharkhand whereas we are contesting separately in Bengal... what message it will leave for the electorate in the two States," Chowdhury was quoted as telling Venugopal following which the PCC made a last ditch attempt to reach out to the CPI(M). During a telephonic conversation with Left Front chairman Biman Bose the party demanded Sitai, Madarihata and Naihati seats from the Left which turned down the demand saying things had already been decided and the names of the candidates had already been finalized. Finally it was decided that though the two parties will not contest jointly they will desist from mutual attacks so as to keep the future path of alliances open, sources said.

Russian envoy hails Modi-Xi Jinping meet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Russian envoy to India Denis Alipov on Monday termed the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan as a positive development in bilateral ties between India and China. Asserting that the recently concluded BRICS Summit in the Russian city of Kazan was a "total success," he said the grouping is "not an exclusive but an inclusive platform." "BRICS is not anti-West but non-West," Alipov said during an interaction with reporters here. Asked about the recent meeting between Modi and Xi, and if Russia had any role in it, Alipov said, "We have not played any role in it, but we are



happy that it took place in Kazan... We wholeheartedly welcome the meeting." On October 23, Prime Minister Modi and the Chinese president had endorsed the agreement on patrolling and disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh during their bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit. They had also issued directions to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms, signalling attempts to normalise ties that were hit by a deadly military clash in 2020.

India, Spain partnership soars to new...

From page 1

Stressing on skilling and job creation, PM Modi said projects like the Tata-Airbus factory will create thousands of jobs. He said the factory will support indigenous manufacturing of 18,000 aircraft parts, providing

immense opportunities for MSMEs across India. India is among the largest suppliers of parts for the world's major aircraft companies, the PM said, adding the new aircraft factory will give a big boost to new skills and new industries in India. Highlighting the "unprecedented growth and

transformation" of India's aviation sector in the last decade, the PM said the Government was providing air connectivity to hundreds of small cities in the country, while simultaneously working to make India a hub of aviation and MRO domain. He said this ecosystem will pave the

way for the Made in India civil aircraft in the future. Noting that various Indian airlines have ordered 1200 new aircraft, the PM said the newly inaugurated factory will play a major role from designing to manufacturing civil aircraft to meet the needs of India and the world. He also

mentioned Father Carlos Valles, a Spanish-Indian Jesuit priest and author, who lived in India for five decades and authored various books on mathematics in Gujarati. Father Valles had enriched the culture with his thoughts and writings, PM Modi said, adding the Indian government

had honoured him with the Padma Shri. Under the C295 programme, 56 aircraft are to be delivered out of which 16 are being delivered directly by Airbus from Spain and remaining 40 are to be made in India by Tata Advanced Systems Ltd, an official release said.

Ayodhya celebrates Ramlalla's first Diwali...

From page 1

Adding a touch of modernity to this traditional festival, a high-tech exhibition is being set up on a specially built stage at Ram Katha Park. Nine other stages have been erected at locations such as Gupatgarhat, Badi Devkali, Nayaghat, and Bharatkund. Nearly 900 folk artists from across the country will perform traditional music and dance on these stages, bringing the cultural diversity of India to Ayodhya. Additionally, Ramlila artists from six countries - including Sri Lanka, Nepal, Trinidad, and Laos - will stage performances for next three days from 5 pm to 9 pm at Ram Katha Park and Ram Ki Paidi, adding an international flavor to the event. The spiritual leaders of Ayodhya are filled with a sense of divine joy this Diwali, as they believe that the celebrations are reminiscent of an era when Lord Ram walked the earth. Ayodhya has been adorned with flowers and dazzling lights, with a unique pride surrounding the construction

of the grand temple and the installation of Ramlala. Mahant Vivek Acharya said: "This time, there is joy in Ayodhya due to the grand temple and the Pran Pratishtha of Ramlala. Monasteries and temples will also join in this celebration, lighting up with lamps." Reflecting on the decorations and the atmosphere in Ayodhya, Jagadguru Swami Ramdinesh Acharya said, "This is truly Balram's Diwali. The beautifully decorated city evokes memories of the night when Lord Ram returned, making it feel as if that scene has come alive once again. Every home, street, and corner is adorned to welcome Ram. The consecration of Ramlala symbolizes the upholding of Indian cultural values." With the participation of residents, saints, and leaders, Ayodhya's Deepotsav promises to be a spectacle like no other - a celebration that not only commemorates a historic moment but also revives the spirit of an ancient era, making the divine presence of Lord Ram feel real once more.

Almost November...

From page 1

The IMD officials said the observatory of Safdarjung has measured the lowest temperature of 17.4°C, so far this month. In the remaining three days of this month, the temperature is expected to hover around 20°C and may even breach 21°C, during this period. Safdarjung recorded the lowest minimum of under 15°C for the last four consecutive years in October. The lowest temperature of the last two decades was 12.5°C, recorded on October 29, 2020. Data for the last decade shows Delhi's lowest minimum in October was 12.5°C in October 2020 (October 29). It was 14.3°C last year (October 28); 14°C in 2022 (October 25); 14°C in 2021 (October 29) and 16.5°C in 2019 (October 23). In 2018, the lowest was 15°C (25), 16.1°C in 2017 (26), 15°C in 2016 (29 and 30), 15.3°C in 2015 (29) and 15.6°C in 2014 (17). The lowest ever temperature in October was 9.4 degree Celsius, recorded on October 31, 1937. The average for the month of October 2024 is likely to hang around 21.3 degree celsius, which could be one of the warmest in the last two decades or more. Also, it has been completely dry this month, so far. In the recent past, the years 2007, 2011, 2017 and 2018 also remained totally dry and 2024 will increase this tally. According to the IMD, the day temperature also exceeds the normal reading at this time of the year. "The winter chill is yet to arrive and is not likely to be anytime soon," it said.

Terrorists target Army vehicle, religious place in Akhnoor

From page 1

A targeted attack on an Army ambulance was the third such attack after the formation of the Omar Abdullah-led government on October 16. Swift retaliation by the Army prevented any loss of lives in the surprise attack. In the ensuing encounter that followed one terrorist was neutralised. The encounter that erupted shortly after 7 am, was still going on till the time of filing the report. Preliminary reports suggested the group of foreign terrorists infiltrated from across the line of control in the wee hours and at daybreak they came across a group of students passing through the Batal area. As terrorists approached them and asked for a mobile phone the students raised an alarm. Before local villagers could gather the terrorists ran toward a local religious place in the Asan area. After carefully assessing the ground situation the joint team of security forces cordoned off the entire area to flush out the terrorists from their safe hideout. During the day the security forces exchanged intermittent fire with the battle-hardened terrorists. The residents in the area were stunned to see the

excessive use of firepower from both sides. The media teams were also kept at a safe distance from the site of the encounter. The operation was put on hold late evening while additional forces were rushed to the area to maintain a tight cordon. Additional Director General of Police, Jammu range Anand Jain along with senior Army officers were camping at the site to supervise the anti-terrorist operations. The Pakistan-based handlers of terrorist outfits have been using the same route in the past for infiltration inside the Indian territory. Similar attempts of infiltration were made in the first week of August 2024, official sources said. Two soldiers and two porters were killed in action in the ambush near the Bota Pathri area of Gulmarg in Baramulla on October 24. On October 20, seven people, including one doctor and six other employees of the construction company, were killed after terrorists opened fire at a construction site in the Sonamarg area in the Ganderbal district. On October 18, terrorists killed Ashok Chauhan, a migrant worker from Bihar, in Shopian district. Chauhan's bullet-riddled body was found in the Waduna area of Zainapora by the locals.

Population Census takes off in 2025

From page 1

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) too is in favour of Caste Census so long as it's not being done for gaining political mileage by any party. Many states in the South, especially Tamil Nadu, have followed a strict population policy and therefore, the government is also considering a proposal to see that no unfair treatment is meted out to them via the delimitation process. The Census of India is recorded every decade, with the first one being held in 1872. The first Census post-Independence was recorded in 1951 and the last one in 2011. According to the 2011 data, India's population stands at 121.1 crore of which 52 per cent are males and 48 per cent are females. It was during this

Census that the transgender numbers were taken into account for the first time in India's history. In the 2011 Census, 31.2% of the population lived in urban areas (377.1 million or 37.71 crore), and 68.8% resided in rural areas (833.8 million or 83.38 crore). Additionally, 453.6 million (45.36 crore) people, or 37.8% of the total population, were classified as migrants. The religious composition in 2011 was as follows: Hindus made up 79.8% (964.6 million or 96.46 crore), Muslims 14.2% (172.2 million or 17.22 crore), Christians 2.3% (27.8 million or 2.78 crore), Sikhs 1.7% (20.8 million or 2.08 crore), Buddhists 0.7% (8.4 million or 84 lakh), Jains 0.4% (4.5 million or 45 lakh), and other religions 0.9% (10.9 million or 1.09 crore).

Special joint session...

From page 1

Earlier, November 26 used to be celebrated as National Law Day, but in 2015 the Narendra Modi government announced it as Constitution Day, marking the 125th birth anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar. Sources said elaborate planning is under way and a series of activities have been planned, including the making of documentaries, translating the debates of Constituent Assembly in nearly two dozen languages, and a public march to mark the significance of the Constitution. In the run up to Lok Sabha elections this summer both the National Defence Academy (NDA) and

Congress-led INDIA Bloc parties engaged in verbal duel in projecting themselves as guardian and disciple of the Indian Constitution framed by Dr Ambedkar. While INDIA Bloc has been slamming Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for "destroying" the Constitution and constitutional values, the ruling party and its allies have been targeting Congress on the same issue, saying the Congress grouping has destroyed the value of Constitution. On the schedule, may be the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, to be passed in Parliament's winter session. The Bill aims to ensure transparency in Waqf board operations.

NGT issues notice to Police Chief, Traffic Commissioner over air pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
The National Green Tribunal has sought responses from the Delhi police chief and the special commissioner of traffic management about measures taken to mitigate air pollution due to vehicular movement and parking issues. It also observed that a transparent process should be followed to invoke different stages of anti-pollution measure Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). The green body was hearing the issue of deteriorating air quality in the National Capital Region

(NCR), necessitating the invoking various stages of GRAP. In an order dated October 24, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said, "Now, the winter has started, and we find that the Air Quality Index (AQI) on October 23 in Delhi was 364 in the very poor category which reflects that there is a lapse on the part of the authorities in preventing the dip in the air quality in NCR." The bench, also comprising judicial-member Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel, noted a report by the Commission

for Air Quality Management (CAQM) dated October 23 about the GRAP schedule being "comprehensively reviewed" and that Stage I of GRAP was invoked when the average AQI of the national capital was higher than 200 for a "sufficiently long duration." Expressing its dissatisfaction, the tribunal said, "It is not disclosed as to the average of how many days are taken to invoke stage I and it is also not disclosed what duration is treated to be sufficiently long." "We feel that the objective criteria need to be applied, and a transparent process needs to be adopted for invoking the



different stages of GRAP," it added. The NGT noted that vehicular pollution was among the major contributory factors for air pollution and the responsibility of controlling the traffic, parking issues, enforcing the ban on unauthorised and old vehicles was of the police. The tribunal then impleaded the police commissioner and the special commissioner of traffic management as parties or respondents. "Let notices be issued to the newly added respondents for filing the response by way of affidavit disclosing the steps which have been taken at the ground

level to mitigate the contributory air polluting factors relating to vehicular movements and parking," the tribunal said. It directed that the field staff and teams deployed by the Delhi government and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to check violations had to be strengthened and monitored by competent officers to ensure they worked effectively at the ground level. The tribunal asked the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi government and MCD to widely publicise their mobile phone applications to check pollution.

"The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has also filed the reply affidavit which discloses the existing ambient air quality monitoring stations in NCR and proposed stations. So far as Delhi is concerned, there is no proposed ambient air quality monitoring station," it said. The tribunal also directed the CAQM to disclose the steps taken from January to September 2024 to ensure that the air quality does not dip in the winter months. The matter has been posted for further proceedings on November 5.

Government to deploy 10,000 CDVs terminated last year: CM Atishi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Atishi on Monday announced that the Delhi government will deploy 10,000 civil defence volunteers, who were terminated from service last year while working as bus marshals, to aid in implementing measures related to mitigation of pollution. The national capital woke up to a "very poor" air quality on Monday although the Air Quality Index (AQI) improved marginally from a day before. According to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the aqi at 9 am was 327, comparatively better than 359 on Sunday. Further, at 9 am, no station recorded more than 400 aqi. In the 'very poor' category, a total of 29 stations crossed the 300 mark including Anand Vihar (356), Ashok Vihar (360), Bawana (368), Burari (360), Jahangirpuri (363), Mundka (365), Nehru Nagar



Ranjan Dimri

(387), Punjabi Bagh (356), Rohini (354), Sonia Vihar (366), Vivek Vihar (355), and Wazirpur (358). Atishi, in a press conference, said that following a meeting of officials, it was decided to reintroduce the bus marshals and volunteers to assist in pollution mitigation efforts. "The civil defence volunteers will be deployed in collaboration

with various agencies, including the Transport Department and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC)," she said. Volunteers will focus on ensuring compliance with pollution control measures and will play a crucial role in monitoring vehicle emissions, preventing end-of-life vehicles from entering the city,

and supporting public transport management to reduce reliance on private vehicles, Atishi said. "The bus marshals will be deployed across 13 pollution hotspots and other high pollution area. They will also assist with inspections at 1,000 PUC (Pollution Under Control) centres to prevent any irregularities," the chief

minister added. Meanwhile, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva stated, "The Civil Defense volunteers, whom Chief Minister Atishi is calling Green Warriors, have suffered due to the chaotic governance of Arvind Kejriwal." He mentioned that the Kejriwal government appointed these volunteers as bus marshals without following administrative procedures and made no provisions for their permanent employment. "When the matter got stuck in vigilance investigations, it was Arvind Kejriwal himself who ordered their dismissal as bus marshals," he said. The state BJP president said that in light of the hardships faced by these volunteers, the BJP facilitated a meeting between their delegation and the Lieutenant Governor. "At the volunteers' request, the Lieutenant Governor reappointed them to work on anti-pollution initiatives," Sachdeva added.

BJP delegation visits Mann's residence demanding halt to stubble burning in Punjab

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
A Delhi BJP delegation visited the official residence of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann at Kapurthala House in Delhi to submit a memorandum, demanding a halt to stubble burning in the neighboring state of the national Capital amid increasing levels of air quality index (aqi) in the city. However, the senior BJP leaders stated that since Mann refused to meet the delegation, the party submitted the memorandum to the Punjab Resident Commissioner's office instead. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva said, "Incidents of stubble burning and the area affected are increasing in Punjab, contributing significantly to pollution across North India, including Delhi. Despite repeated requests, the Delhi government's Environment Minister Gopal Rai did not engage with Punjab on this issue."



Ranjan Dimri

He added that when they heard that Mann was in Delhi, our leaders sought a meeting with him to raise this matter, but regrettably, he refused. Attacking the ruling party South Delhi BJP MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said, "Until 2021, Arvind Kejriwal blamed Punjab for Delhi's pollution. Now, after coming to power in Punjab, he defends the state and blames other regions." Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta called the AAP run Delhi government insensitive and said,

"It is unfortunate that the government refuses to discuss serious issues like pollution. Today, even the Punjab CM's refusal to meet us demonstrates the AAP's lack of commitment to addressing pollution." In the memorandum, the Delhi BJP stated, "We are reaching out not for political reasons, but as concerned citizens of Delhi. The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi has already reached 400, with no signs of improvement. With winter approaching, the situation could become even worse."

LG approves prosecution sanction for probe by ACB into five PWD engineers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved Prosecution Sanction under Section 17A of POC Act, 1988 (amended in 2018) for conducting investigation by Anti-Corruption Branch against five Engineers of Electrical Division, Public Works Department (PWD). The engineers are Subhash Chandra Das, Assistant Engineer (AE), Subhash Chand, AE, Abhinav, Junior Engineer (JE), Raghuraj Solanki, JE and Rajesh Aggarwal, JE, of Health Zone, PWD as mentioned in FIR No. 08/2024 dated 06.05.2024 under sections 7/13 Prevention of Corruption Act r/w 420/406/468/471/120-B/34 Indian Penal Code against PWD officials and the private firms/contractors. This scam involving works in Delhi Government hospitals is estimated to have caused a loss of Rs.200 Cr. to the government exchequer. The matter relates to complaints against the above Assistant Engineers and Junior Engineers of PWD wherein it is alleged that they helped in awarding tenders to different companies, favorable to them in the name of



Emergent Works at various Hospitals of Delhi Government i.e. LokNayak Hospital, Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Science, GB Pant Hospital and Maulana Azad Medical College. According to officials, the alleged scam took place in government-run hospitals in Delhi during the COVID-19 pandemic wherein the private firms got paid for incomplete work and generated forged invoices as proof of work. During enquiry conducted so far, it is revealed that the payments were cleared by the above said officials of PWD to the firms / contractors, against forged / fake bills which caused huge loss to the Government. Forged signatures and manipulation in the Spot Quotation was done by the alleged PWD officials in order to give benefit to their favorite contractors /

firms. This led to a loss of about Rs. 200 Cr. to the exchequer. During the course of the investigation, ACB conducted a comprehensive scrutiny and analysis of various works in the Delhi government. Hospitals were awarded to different private firms and contractors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several large-scale irregularities, malpractices and embezzlements of government funds have been found on the part of concerned PWD officials, hand-in-glove with these private firms/contractors. At the outset, major discrepancies have been listed which include Anil Kumar Ahuja, Retd. ADG/PWD, (the then Chief Engineer/Health) gave approval to 56 Works subsequently awarded to 10 alleged firms during COVID-19 without differentiating between Emergent and Urgent Work. Desired certificates to this effect were found missing from the concerned files. Ever since taking over, Saxena has taken a very serious view of corruption in government offices and recommended strict action against delinquent persons involved in matters of corruption.

Rai writes to LG, seeks immediate action against those involved in illegal sale of firecrackers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Amid rising pollution concerns and with Diwali just three days away, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai has written to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena urging immediate action against those involved in the illegal sale and distribution of firecrackers. The Delhi government had earlier issued a directive on October 14, banning the manufacturing, storage, sale and bursting of all types of firecrackers in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi until January 1, 2025. In his letter to the LG, Rai stressed that firecrackers worsen air pollution and pose health risks to children, the elderly and individuals with respiratory issues. "Despite the ban, reports indicate that firecrackers are still being sold in various Delhi markets, with supplies entering the city from Haryana and Uttar Pradesh," the minister noted. He said these firecrackers are entering Delhi through borders connecting the national capital to Haryana and Uttar Pradesh and added that the Delhi Police and other enforcement agencies have not effectively implemented the



ban, with vendors openly flouting the restrictions. Rai urged immediate and stringent action against those involved in the illegal sale and distribution of firecrackers, warning that their use during Diwali will worsen air pollution and endanger the health of the residents. Regular inspections of the wholesale and retail firecracker vendors by the Delhi Police and enhancing vigil on various Delhi borders by way of barricading to check the illegal influx of crackers from the neighbouring states is necessary at this stage to prevent deterioration of Delhi's air quality and to safeguard people's health, Rai's letter said. Delhiites breathed in "very poor" air on Monday, with some monitoring stations recording air quality in the

"severe" category. For over a week now, the capital has been grappling with poor air quality which is consistently falling in the red zone. The Aam Aadmi Party claimed on Monday that there has been a significant decline in stubble burning in Punjab after the formation of its government in the state. Addressing a press conference, AAP MLA Dilip Pandey said, "Due to the meaningful efforts of the Bhagwant Mann government in Punjab, there has been a significant decline in the number of stubble-burning cases in Punjab." Citing data of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Pandey claimed the number of stubble-burning cases in Punjab has come down to 1,866 from almost 8,000 in October 2022.

Delhi Nyay Yatra to be organised next month to interact with city people: Congress

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav on Monday said a 'Delhi Nyay Yatra' will be organised next month on the lines of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, to interact with the people of the city and learn about their issues and problems. The march will start on November 8 from Rajghat and conclude on December 4, ahead of the assembly elections in Delhi. During a launch event of the 'Delhi Nyay Yatra' at the Constitution Club here, Yadav said it will have four phases. "During the yatra, we will interact with the people of Delhi to learn about the issues and problems they have been facing for the last 10 years. The yatra will start on November 8 from Rajghat. It will have four phases and in the first phase, we will cover 16 assembly segments," he said. "In the second phase from November 15 to 20, we will cover 18 constituencies. We will cover 16 constituencies in the third phase from November 22 to 27 and 20 constituencies in the fourth from November 29 to December 4," Yadav added. Former Delhi Congress President and former Chandni



Chowk MP Jai Prakash Agarwal launched the Nyay Yatra logo while former Speaker of Delhi Assembly Subhash Chopra launched the Nyay Yatra T-shirt. A video on the failures of the AAP government was also screened, which will also be played during the yatra. The Delhi Congress chief claimed, "In the past 11 years, none of the issues affecting the people was addressed by the Kejriwal Government, which came to power by making rosy promises, but ended up looting the public without fulfilling any of the promises. Neither the Modi Government fulfilled its promises." Yadav asserted that people were now looking upto the Congress party to come to power in the upcoming Assembly elections in Delhi, as people have put their trust and faith in the Congress slogan, "Haath Badlega Halath".

Father-son duo held for assaulting SHO in Jamia Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
A father-son duo was arrested for attacking a Delhi Police inspector and a constable after officers stopped their Bullet motorcycle and objected to its modified noisy silencer in southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar. According to police, both the accused have been arrested. The incident took place on Saturday when Station House Officer (SHO), Inspector Narpal Singh of the Jamia Nagar police station was on night patrol with his team. The police on Monday said that both the accused have been arrested, who have been identified as 24 year old son Asif and father Riyazuddin. The fateful incident intervened on Saturday at 8:45 pm when a Royal Enfield motorcycle was making excessive noise beyond the permissible levels. According to a video that surfaced on social media, the fight broke out Saturday evening when the local SHO, along with two constables, stopped a Royal Enfield motorcycle for an



exhaust check. The video showed SHO Narpal Singh asking the man to rev his motorcycle to check the bike's exhaust, certain types being banned in the city for noise pollution. "On Saturday, Inspector Narpal Singh, SHO of Jamia Nagar police station, along with team was on patrolling duty in the area. At about 8:45 pm, while he along with the patrolling staff reached Batla House in Jamia Nagar, he noticed a

Bullet motorcycle, heading from Kabristan Chowk towards Zakir Nagar market, creating a loud noise," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Ravi Kumar said. Taking notice of this, the police inspector instructed the staff to stop the motorcycle for inspection. "During the inspection, it was confirmed that the motorcycle's silencer had been unlawfully modified, enhancing noise beyond permissible limits and thereby contravening the

Motor Vehicles Act," the officer stated. Even as the police attempted to initiate legal action over the matter against the bike rider, the son, namely Asif called his father to the spot. However, the father instead of cooperating in the matter threatened the police and attempted to forcefully take away the motorcycle saying, "Just settle it here and let him go, or else things won't go well." The video doing rounds on social media also shows that as the argument escalated, the man called his father, both of whom got into a scuffle with the policemen in the crowded southeast Delhi locality. This led to an altercation followed by a scuffle, during which Riyazuddin allegedly caught hold of the SHO while Asif punched him in the face close to the eyes. The father-son duo also attacked Constable Ramkesh and other police personnel. However, the police personnel managed to overpower the man and his son.

The injured SHO and constable were taken to Holy Family Hospital for treatment and are stated to be stable. "Both of them were overpowered by the staff and SHO along with constable Ramkesh were shifted to Holy Family Hospital for treatment. Now, the condition of both the above officers is normal," the DCP added. The officer said, "In this regard, a case has been registered against accused Asif and his father for obstructing a public servant from performing his official duties and physically assaulting the SHO and the other police officers on duty," adding that both the accused have been arrested in the case and investigation of the case is underway. A senior police official said they are collecting footage from CCTVs, as well as mobile phones, to know what transpired before the fight. The father and son were later pushed into a police van. This act too was recorded in a video that turned up on social media.

Brothers held for beating financier's head with brick during drunk argument

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI
The Delhi Police arrested two people for smashing the head of a man with a brick in the wee hours of Monday in Dwarka area. According to the police, on Monday at around 12:26 am, a PCR call was received at Dwarka South police station wherein it was mentioned that, "My husband has been beaten with a brick and he is unconscious." The injured has been identified as Jai Prakash Yadav, resident of Sector 18 Dwarka, Pink City Apartments, who is a private financier and provides cash finance to e-Rickshaws. He had financed Rs 1 lakhs to Bunty alias Shakti Soni and Rs 35,000 to Prem Soni. Both are brothers and residents of Bagdola Village Sector 8, Dwarka. DCP Dwarka Ankit Singh said, "The injured were drinking with the two brothers at



Metro Station, Gate No. 1, Sector 9, Dwarka and some argument ensued amongst them. The injured started beating the alleged persons with a belt after which, the alleged persons pushed him in the scuffle and the injured fell down on the road and sustained some injuries." Further, the brothers started beating the injured with a piece of brick lying on the road and with one piece of wood stick wherein Bunty smashed the head with brick and Prem Soni with stick.

"The accused then came to the police station with some injuries and stated that they had been beaten by Jai Prakash Yadav. Medical examination of both was conducted at Indira Gandhi Hospital," Singh added. In the meantime, a PCR call was received, which was made by the wife of the injured, who was with one Bhola Ram. "Bhola Ram informed the injured wife and she took him to Vekateshwar Hospital. The injured is unconscious and is having serious head injury," another police officer said, adding that he has been beaten with intention to murder him, hence a case under section 109, 351(2), 3(5) of BNS has been registered. "The alleged persons Shakti Soni and Prem Soni have been arrested in the case. The scene of crime was inspected by FSL and exhibits were collected, further investigation is in progress," the DCP stated.

PM Modi to launch ₹12,850 crore development projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch development projects worth nearly Rs 12,850 crore on Tuesday and also extend his government's flagship health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat to all senior citizens aged 70 years and above.

Modi has chosen to unveil the major health sector push on the occasion of the ninth Ayurveda Day and the birth anniversary of Dhanvantari, considered the god of medicine.

At a separate event, he will also distribute more than 51,000 appointment letters to the youth as part of his government's 'Rozgar Mela', an official statement said. Noting that it has been the constant endeavour of the prime minister to provide quality healthcare services in the country, another statement said Modi will inaugurate Phase II of India's first All India Institute of Ayurveda in the national capital. It includes a Panchakarma hospital, an ayurvedic pharmacy for drug manufacturing, a sports



medicine unit, a central library, an IT and start-ups incubation centre and a 500-seat auditorium among others.

He will also inaugurate three medical colleges at Mandasaur, Neemuch and Seoni in Madhya Pradesh.

Further, the prime minister will inaugurate facility and service extensions at various AIIMS -- Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh, Kalyani in West Bengal, Patna in Bihar, Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, Guwahati in Assam and in New Delhi -- which will also include a Jan Aushadhi Kendra.

He will also lay the foundation stones of five nursing colleges in Shivpuri, Ratlam, Khandwa, Rajgarh and Mandasaur in Madhya Pradesh, 21 critical care blocks at Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan under Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM), and several facilities and service extensions at AIIMS in New Delhi and in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh.

Among other projects, he will inaugurate an ESIC hospital at Indore in Madhya Pradesh and lay the foundation stone for ESIC hospitals at Faridabad in Haryana,

Bommasandra and Narasapur in Karnataka, Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, and Atchutapuram in Andhra Pradesh.

These projects will bring healthcare benefits to around 55 lakh ESI beneficiaries. In an innovative usage of drone technology to enhance service delivery and make healthcare more accessible, Modi will launch drone services at 11 tertiary healthcare institutions.

These are AIIMS Rishikesh in Uttarakhand, AIIMS Bibinagar in Telangana, AIIMS Guwahati in Assam, AIIMS Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, AIIMS Jodhpur in Rajasthan, AIIMS Patna in Bihar, AIIMS Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh, AIIMS Raebareilly in Uttar Pradesh, AIIMS Raipur in Chhattisgarh, AIIMS Mangalagiri in Andhra Pradesh and RIMS Imphal in Manipur.

He will launch a helicopter emergency medical service from AIIMS Rishikesh, which will help deliver medical care speedily.

The prime minister will also launch the U-WIN portal that seeks to benefit pregnant

women and infants by fully digitalizing the vaccination process.

Among many other projects whose foundation stones will be laid are one central research institute in yoga and naturopathy each at Khordha in Odisha and Raipur in Chhattisgarh and four centres of excellence at NIPER Ahmedabad in Gujarat for medical devices, NIPER Hyderabad in Telangana for bulk drugs, NIPER Guwahati in Assam for phytopharmaceuticals, and NIPER Mohali in Punjab for anti-bacterial anti-viral drug discovery and development.

In a major boost to the Make in India initiative in the healthcare sector, the prime minister will inaugurate five projects under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for medical devices and bulk drugs at Vapi in Gujarat, Hyderabad in Telangana, Bengaluru in Karnataka, Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh and Nagalgarh in Himachal Pradesh, the statement said.

These units will manufacture high-end medical devices, such as body implants and critical care equipment, along with important bulk drugs.

Congress blames BJP on shifting projects from Maharashtra to Gujarat

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Accusing Narendra Modi of taking away Tata-Airbus C-295 aircraft and several other important projects and government offices out of Maharashtra, the Opposition Congress said on Monday that the people of the state would give a befitting reply to the "non-biological Prime Minister" and his colleagues in the Assembly polls "for betraying the state".

The Congress' attack against the Prime Minister came on a day when Modi, accompanied by Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, inaugurated the Tata-Airbus C-295 aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodra.

"It (Tata-Airbus C-2950 was the same project that was supposed to be set up in Nagpur, but it was shifted to Gujarat on the eve of Gujarat assembly elections in 2022. Due to which Maharashtra was deprived of this important investment. One can certainly imagine the politics behind the scenes for that," AICC General Secretary in-charge Communications Jairam Ramesh said.

In the first combative state that came from the Congress a day ahead of the close of nominations for the State Assembly polls, Jairam Ramesh charged that under the direction of the "non-biological Prime Minister" the Centre and the BJP-led MahaYuti government had completed surrendered Maharashtra's interests in getting new projects or getting support from the Centre in that regard.

Citing other instances of how Modi "betrayed" Maharashtra, Jairam Ramesh took to micro-blogging site "X" to recall how then Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh of the Congress in 2006 tried to set up the International Financial



Services Center (IFSC) in Mumbai, but the current Prime Minister moved the project to his home state of Gujarat.

"The IFSC has now been set up only in GIFT City, Gujarat. In 2006 Dr. Manmohan Singh had tried to set it up in Mumbai and reserved space for the IFSC in the Bandra Kurla Complex. But those efforts were thwarted and a potential 2 lakh jobs in Mumbai were lost," Congress' Rajya Sabha member said.

"Mumbai and Surat have worked together to develop India's diamond industry for decades, with Surat handling cutting and polishing, and Mumbai handling trading and export. However, a new Bharat Diamond Bourse was built in Surat. It is another matter that this move has failed entirely, with many diamond merchants moving their operations back to Mumbai," Jairam Ramesh said.

"Apart from the Tata-Airbus manufacturing project, the (now failed) Vedanta-Foxconn chip project was also shifted from Maharashtra to Gujarat," he said.

"Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) remains a major hub for textiles and the textile commissionerate office, which has been in Mumbai for 80 years and more, was suddenly shifted to Delhi last year for no apparent

reason," Jairam Ramesh said. "Dattopant Thengdi National Labor Education and Development Board was also shifted from Nagpur to Delhi in 2021," he said.

Quoting an instance of how the BJP-led government at the Centre played politics in matters relating to Maharashtra, Jairam Ramesh said: "The demand for the status of a classical language to Marathi was pending with the government for ten years and was met only on the eve of the assembly elections due to persistent pressure from the Indian National Congress and civil unions in Maharashtra".

"(We) @INCIndia and Mahavikas Aghadi believe in equal development of the entire country without prejudice. New infrastructure projects, special investment zones and modern industries should benefit not just the state but all Indians," he said. "During Gujarat's period of industrialization in the 1970s and 80s, projects such as Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (GSFC), Gujarat Refinery and IPL were not poached from other states but were newly established," he said.

"The people of Maharashtra will give a befitting reply to the non-biological Prime Minister and his colleagues for betraying the state," Jairam Ramesh said.

Delhi court defers bail decision for MP Engineer Rashid

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi court has adjourned the bail order of jailed Baramulla MP Engineer Rashid, noting his case could go to a special court meant to try lawmakers now that he was an MP. Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh, who had reserved the bail order in an alleged terror funding case, underscored he would first consider the issue of jurisdiction and whether or not to transfer the case to a special court meant to try lawmakers, considering Rashid was now an MP.

The judge would consider the issue of jurisdiction on November 13 while the order has been posted on November 19.

"Since we are considering the jurisdiction issue whether the matter will be heard by this court or the designated MP/MLA court of National Investigation Agency (NIA), keep it (bail order) post that," said the court.

Rashid, in the meantime, surrendered before Tihar jail

authorities on Monday, after the completion of his interim bail period.

On September 10, the court had granted interim bail to Sheikh Abdul Rashid, alias Engineer Rashid, to enable him to campaign for the J&K assembly elections and deferred the order on his regular bail plea.

Rashid's interim bail was previously extended till October 28 on the ground of his father's poor health and after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) didn't oppose the plea after verifying documents.

The newly-elected MP has been lodged in Tihar jail since 2019 after the NIA arrested him under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terror funding case.

Elections to the 90-member J&K Assembly were held in three phases between September 18 and October 1. The National Conference-Congress alliance were declared winners with 48 seats on the day of results on October 8.

Congress seeks clarity on caste enumeration and state representation in next census



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress on Monday sought an all-party meeting to get clarity on whether the next census would include a detailed enumeration of all castes and whether the census will be used for determining the strength of each state in the Lok Sabha. Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said the extension of the tenure of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner has been notified and it means that the long-delayed Census that was due in 2021 will finally be conducted soon.

"But there is still absolutely no clarity on two crucial issues. Will this new Census include a detailed enumeration of ALL castes in the country, in addition to that of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes that has been done in every Census since 1951?

According to the Constitution of India, such a Caste Census is the sole responsibility of the Union Government," Ramesh said in a statement.

"Will this Census be used for determining the strength of each state in the Lok Sabha as provided for in Article 82 of the Constitution of India (which says that the first Census taken after the year 2026 and the publication of its results will be the basis of any such reconstitution)? Will this work to the disadvantage of states that have been pioneers in family planning?" the Congress leader said.

It would be most appropriate if an all-party meeting is held soon to get clarity on these two vital issues, Ramesh asserted. The central deputation of Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, currently serving as Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, has been extended till August

2026, paving the way for him to lead the team to carry out the much-delayed decadal census of India.

"The President is pleased to extend the central deputation tenure of Shri Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, IAS (UP:1995), Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Ministry of Home Affairs beyond 06.12.2024 for a period up to 04.08.2026 or until further orders whichever is earlier.

The Headquarters of Mritunjay Kumar Narayan, IAS (UP:1995) will be New Delhi," according to an official notification. Narayan is a 1995 batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre and is holding the key post under the Ministry of Home Affairs since 2020.

The house listing phase of the census and the exercise to update the National Population Register (NPR) were scheduled to be carried out across the country from April 1 to September 30, 2020 but were postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The census operation continues to be on hold and the government has not yet announced the new schedule. The government is expected to announce the schedule for the much-delayed exercise soon.



Indian mountaineers create history

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DEHRADUN

A team of 20 mountaineers led by Colonel Anshuman Bhaduria has created history, scaling 11 previously unscathed and unnamed peaks in the border region of Mana in eight days.

Colonel Bhaduria is the principal of Uttarkashi-based Nehru Institute of Mountaineering. The team planned its ascent overcoming harsh weather, high winds, snow and fluctuating temperatures, NIM Registrar Praveen Kumar said.

The team climbed five 6,000-metre high mountains in just eight hours and reached the summits of all 11 peaks in eight days creating two new records in the history of mountaineering, he said. "This accomplishment not

only highlights the technical prowess and physical fitness of the team members but also their remarkable teamwork and determination," Kumar said.

Located close to the India-China border in Chamoli district, Mana is known as the gateway to the Himalayas and has long attracted adventurers. The peaks remained unscathed because of the rugged and untamed nature of the area, the university official said.

"This expedition is significant for several reasons. It showcases the unexplored beauty of the Mana region, serves as an inspiration to aspiring mountaineers and adds a proud chapter to India's mountaineering legacy," he said. The expedition began on July 1 and concluded on August 7.

RaGa escalates attack on Government, alleging cronyism and wealth concentration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Stepping up his attack over conflicts of interest allegations against SEBI chief Madhabi Buch, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday said the current regime is no longer merely encouraging monopolies but actively concentrating the nation's wealth in the hands of a few.

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, made the remarks in his post along with a video featuring him and Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera in which they talk about the alleged conflicts of interest of SEBI chief Buch.

"Institutional collapse has now given way to a more dangerous form of cronyism -- Adani Bachao. The current regime is no longer merely encouraging monopolies, it's actively concentrating the nation's wealth in the hands of a few," Gandhi said.

The Madhabi Buch scandal goes deeper than initially imagined, he said, adding that it may be that Buch, entrusted with safeguarding retail investors, has been manipulating the system to protect Adani's interests and his inflated valuations. Those entrusted with protecting common Indians



and their investments have abrogated their responsibilities and are indulging in wide scale corruption and malpractice, he alleged.

The Congress has consistently raised these issues, is investigating these scams, and exposing the truth to the public, Gandhi said.

In the video, Khera is seen explaining to Gandhi the various conflicts of interest allegations against Buch and how there were powers behind her that were at work, an apparent reference to the Adani Group. Sharing the video, the party

said the role of SEBI chairperson is to maintain the security of the stock market and ensure investments of common Indians are not at risk.

However, when the chairperson is involved in manipulating the market to benefit a single player - like the Adani Group - then everyone's money is at risk, it said. "That is what is happening with the Madhabi Buch Scandal. She has been placed in this position by PM Modi and HM Amit Shah to give Adani a clean chit in allegations of stock manipulation," it said.

JP Nadda calls for unity, urges participation in 'run for unity' event

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president JP Nadda on Monday urged people and all public representatives, including MPs, MLAs, office bearers and workers of his party, to take part in the 'Run for Unity' event. He asked the BJP workers to promote Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's ideals during Tuesday's event by sharing his thoughts and contributions with the #Sardar150 hashtag on social media.

"As Bharat Ratna Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's jann jayanti (birth anniversary) coincides with Diwali this year, the 'Run for Unity' event will take place tomorrow, Tuesday, October 29," Nadda said in a statement. "I urge everyone to participate in large numbers and spread the message of national unity as well as the importance of fitness," he said. The BJP chief asked



party workers to make "every effort" to ensure the event's success.

"Additionally, I request all public representatives, including BJP MPs and MLAs, along with all party office bearers, to participate in this event and honour Sardar Patel ji," Nadda said. Sardar Patel's unparalleled role in ensuring the unity and integrity of India will always serve as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for all of us, he added.

"This year marks the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Patel ji. BJP karyakartas (workers) must share his thoughts and contributions on social media with the hashtag #Sardar150 to promote and spread Sardar Patel's ideals and values," Nadda said. "Every karyakarta, official and representative of the BJP should promote Sardar Patel ji's mantra of national unity alongside the message of fitness everywhere," he said.

SC extends interim bail to ex-Chhattisgarh CM's deputy secretary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has extended the interim bail granted to former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel's deputy secretary, Saumya Chaurasia, who is an accused in a case linked to the alleged coal-levy scam.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan posted the hearing on November 27. "Interim order to continue meanwhile," the bench said in its October 25 order.

The top court had on September 25 granted interim bail to Chaurasia while noting she had been in custody for over a year and nine months, and charges hadn't been framed against her before the trial could begin.

While directing the Chhattisgarh government not to reinstate Chaurasia in service till further orders, the



top court ordered her to appear before the trial court whenever required and not influence any witnesses.

Chaurasia has challenged an August 28 high court order refusing her bail. On December 14, 2023, the top court had dismissed Chaurasia's bail plea, saying she was prima facie involved in money laundering. It had said the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had

collected sufficient evidence to conclude Chaurasia was actively involved in the offence of money laundering defined in Section 3 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The federal probe agency had, in 2022, alleged a "grand conspiracy" in the natural resources-rich state to perpetrate a "coal-levy scam", which saw an "extortion" of about Rs 540 crore over the previous two years.

The money-laundering case stems from a complaint lodged by the income-tax department.

The ED investigation relates to "a massive scam in which illegal levy of Rs 25 was being extorted for every tonne of coal transported in Chhattisgarh by a cartel involving senior bureaucrats, businessmen, politicians and middlemen", alleged the ED.

Sangh parivar rallies behind BJP for victory in UP By-elections

BISWAJEET BANERJEE
LUCKNOW

As the crucial by-elections for nine assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh approach, the Sangh Parivar has mobilised its cadre to ensure a decisive victory for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Booth-wise teams of RSS workers have been activated in the respective constituencies, working discreetly yet determinedly to lay the groundwork for BJP's success. These teams, while keeping a distance from BJP's official events, are reaching out to various communities to propagate the message of national interest and communal unity, guided by the mantra of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath: "Katoge to batoge".

The renewed involvement of the Sangh Parivar follows a period of strained relations between the BJP and its ideological mentor, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The tension had escalated earlier this year when BJP President JP Nadda remarked that the party had grown strong enough to operate independently, without the need for RSS support. This statement led to a lull in the Sangh's activities, resulting in a perceived weakening of the Hindutva



agenda and a fragmentation of Hindu communities. The BJP felt the repercussions of this during subsequent electoral setbacks. However, the recent decline in the unity of Hindu voters has prompted the Sangh to reassess its strategy. According to insiders, both the RSS and BJP have realized the importance of mending their alliance to ensure a favorable outcome in the upcoming by-elections, as well as in the assembly elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand. The BJP has since sought the support of the Sangh to reinforce its grassroots campaign in Uttar Pradesh.

Now, with a renewed sense of purpose, the RSS has re-engaged its network to prepare the electoral field for the BJP. Ground-level contact programs have been initiated to build public support. The campaign hinges on CM Yogi Adityanath's slogan, "Katoge to batoge", emphasizing the need for unity among Hindus in the face of caste divides. The Sangh's workers are focusing on small gatherings, meeting with groups of 5-10 people, where discussions revolve around national interest, Hindutva, governance, development,

and local issues. Although the Sangh's teams refrain from overtly endorsing the BJP in these meetings, the subtle shaping of public opinion aligns closely with the BJP's electoral goals. The Sangh Parivar's renewed efforts are not limited to Uttar Pradesh. Meetings held in Lucknow, as well as in other states where elections are imminent, have laid out a comprehensive strategy to replicate this approach in other regions. The blueprint reflects the success achieved in the Haryana assembly elections earlier this year, where the RSS teams conducted nearly

1.25 lakh small meetings across the state. These gatherings, aimed at countering the then Congress government's Jat-centric policies and addressing local concerns like the Agneepath recruitment scheme, played a crucial role in turning public sentiment in favor of the BJP. In Uttar Pradesh, the RSS has prepared similar teams for the 10 assembly seats that are part of the upcoming electoral contest, even though voting will occur on nine seats. The grassroots approach is designed to bolster BJP's standing among all sections of society, aiming to bridge divides and consolidate votes under a broader narrative of Hindutva and national unity. As the by-elections loom, the Sangh Parivar's behind-the-scenes efforts are expected to play a pivotal role in determining the outcome. The by-elections are widely seen as a test of the BJP's organizational strength and the resonance of its campaign themes, as well as the effectiveness of its alliance with the RSS. A victory in these by-elections would not only boost the BJP's momentum in Uttar Pradesh but could also set the tone for the party's performance in the upcoming assembly elections in other states.

UP CM meets custody death victim's family

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday met the family members of trader Mohit Pandey, who died in police custody due to alleged assault, and announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for them, officials said. The government will also take care of the education expenses of the children of the deceased, they said. Pandey (30) died on Saturday after being allegedly beaten by police personnel following his arrest in connection with a case, according to his family. Following an uproar, the authorities on Sunday ordered an FIR against the police station's personnel on charges of murder and criminal conspiracy. The in-charge of the police station, among those booked, has been suspended. According to a statement, the chief minister offered his condolences to the bereaved family members and instructed officials to provide them with an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh, housing, free education for the children and access to various government schemes. He also assured the family that those responsible for Pandey's death would face strict consequences and promised that the culprits would not be spared. The opposition has been attacking the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh over the recent incidents of custodial death. On Monday, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav fired a fresh salvo. "I wish those who take life could give life in



compensation. Those who have extinguished the light of someone's house on Diwali, it is hoped that they will not light the lamps of lies, they will not try to remove the deep darkness of their rule with false light. The public is asking, will a bulldozer be used on the person who died in custody? Condemnable! Yadav posted on X in Hindi. Pandey's mother Tapeshwari Devi along with his wife and children visited the chief minister's official residence on Monday morning. After the meeting, the family expressed a sense of relief. "We are satisfied after meeting the chief minister. He assured us that he was fully aware of the case and that there would be no leniency. Once the investigation is complete, strict action will be taken against those found guilty," said Tapeshwari. Bakshi Ka Talab MLA Yogesh Kumar Shukla and councillor Shailendra Verma were also present during the meeting. Pandey, a resident of Jainabad in the Chinhat area, died at a hospital in police custody. His family members have claimed that police brutality was the cause of his death. The incident has triggered a major political furor, with the Samajwadi Party, the Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party

slamming the BJP government. Earlier Sunday, Akhilesh Yadav had said the term "police custody" should be changed to "torture house", while Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra alleged the BJP has "established such a jungle raj in the state where police have become synonymous with brutality". BSP chief Mayawati termed the incident "highly condemnable" and said the government must take effective steps to provide justice to the victim's family. According to the police, Pandey was rushed to a community health centre after he became unwell at the police station. From there he was referred to a bigger facility where he died, they said. However, Shobharam, the victim's brother who claimed that he was also briefly held in custody, alleged that the police thrashed Pandey "mercilessly" in front of him and sent him to the hospital only after he died. A CCTV clip surfaced on the Internet on Sunday, purportedly showing Pandey lying inside the lockup. The family members of the deceased accused the police of deliberately leaking only a small portion of the footage to save their back, claiming that Pandey was beaten to death.

Mahila congress chief demands legal action against Irfan Ansari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
RANCHI/ NEW DELHI

Mahila Congress chief Alka Lamba on Monday condemned the alleged derogatory remarks by her party leader and Jharkhand minister Irfan Ansari against BJP's Sita Soren and demanded legal action over the matter. She said that the Congress governments in various states have made strict laws for crimes against women. Soren, who is contesting from Jamtara assembly constituency against Ansari, on Sunday broke down while speaking about the derogatory remarks allegedly made by Ansari. Ansari allegedly made the derogatory remark about Soren after filing his nomination papers on Thursday. Asked about Ansari's



remarks, Lamba told reporters, "Whether it is a person inside the party or outside, crime should be seen as crime. If you have said something verbally, caused physical harm, all kinds of laws have been made in the Congress government after the Nirbhaya incident. "We never support this (comment). Whether it is Irfan Ansari, the woman belongs to any party, we

condemn this (comment), oppose it, demand legal action on it," she said. Lamba said when the next government is formed, the Congress will ensure a fair action and punishment in this case. The Jharkhand BJP on Friday filed a complaint with the Election Commission against Ansari for allegedly making derogatory remarks against Soren who is a prominent figure in the tribal community. The BJP's complaint claimed that Ansari's remarks insult both the tribal community and widows in the state. The party requested the commission to prevent Ansari from filing his nomination and to register a criminal case against him. Soren shared a video of the alleged remarks on X, requesting an apology from the Congress minister.

Pappu Yadav seeks enhanced security from Amit Shah on threat call from Bishnoi gang



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
PATNA

Bihar Lok Sabha MP Rajesh Rananjan alias Pappu Yadav has written to Home Minister Amit Shah, seeking enhanced security in view of a "threatening call from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang". The Purnea MP shared with the media his two-page letter to Shah, copies of which have been marked to the chief minister of Bihar and other top officials in the state. The letter, dated October 21,

was made public on Monday when a section of the media also played an audio clip of the call from a purported aide of Bishnoi "made from a Dubai number". Besides seeking upgradation of his "Y" security cover to "Z", Yadav also demanded "police escort" at all functions he attends across Bihar, warning "if I get murdered, the blame shall fall upon the Centre as well as the state government". Meanwhile, Purnea SP Kartikeya Sharma said, "We have come to know about the MP's charge through the media. We are looking into it, and also ensuring that arrangements are made for his safety in accordance with his 'Y plus' security cover". Yadav, a gangster-turned-politician, claimed that the caller was upset over his social media outbursts against Bishnoi, who is lodged in a Gujarat jail. After the assassination of NCP leader Baba Siddiqui in Mumbai, Yadav had declared on X that "if permitted by law", he would "finish off within 24 hours the entire network" of Bishnoi, who is alleged to have been behind the killing. A few days later, he twisted the knife by expressing solidarity with Bollywood actor Salman Khan, who is in the cross hairs of Bishnoi over killing of blackbucks, which are held sacred by the community to which the jailed gangster belongs.

Dhananjay Munde faces Maratha challenge in Parli elections

PTI ■ CHHATRAPATI SAMBAHAJINAGAR

Maharashtra agriculture minister Dhananjay Munde will have to effectively counter the Maratha vote consolidation in Parli assembly segment, the hometown of late Gopinath Munde which interestingly won't have a BJP nominee in the fray after decades. Elections to Maharashtra assembly will be held on November 20 and votes will be counted three days later. Just four months ago, the Maratha factor contributed to the narrow defeat of BJP candidate Pankaja Munde, cousin of Dhananjay, from the Beed Lok Sabha constituency which includes the Parli constituency. The Maratha quota sentiment remains a strong factor to reckon with in Parli, a rural constituency dominated by issues like MSP for soybean crops and unemployment. Political observers feel Dhananjay will have to ensure the support of the OBC community to blunt the resentment in Marathas against the BJP-led government. In a strategic move, Sharad Pawar has fielded Rajeshaheb Deshmukh as NCP (SP) nominee against Dhananjay Munde, an Ajit Pawar loyalist and NCP candidate. Parli is the hometown of the late Gopinath Munde, credited for expanding BJP's footprint in the Marathwada region. With BJP nominating Pankaja as an MLC and Dhananjay already a member of the NCP camp, the Parli constituency won't have a BJP representative this time. Pankaja Munde had scored two victories in Parli in 2009 and 2014 polls. She missed a hat-trick in 2019 when Dhananjay Munde defeated her by 30,701 votes. The brother and sister duo have buried their differences over the last five years. NCP (SP) nominee Deshmukh claimed Dhananjay had failed to resolve farmers' issues in Parli. He alleged local people are living in an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. Dhananjay, however, feels that the intensity of the Maratha factor has reduced over the months. Speaking to PTI, he said the caste politics witnessed in the Lok Sabha elections was an aberration, highlighting the victory of candidates of various castes from the Beed

parliamentary constituency in the past. He acknowledged that Beed is not unaffected by Maratha quota agitation, without mentioning reservation leader Manoj Jarange. "My fight for Maratha reservation was not considered during Lok Sabha polls. Reservation was not the only issue. There are other factors including a limited discontent among farmers," Dhananjay said analysing the Lok Sabha poll outcome. "The intensity of the quota agitation that existed in general elections has decreased," he claimed. Queried on whether Beed district witnessed maximum suicides by farmers, the minister listed various initiatives undertaken by the agriculture ministry headed by him. "The government has paid the insurance premium for farmers. I have also demanded that the import duty on soybean oil be raised. The government has also started centres for purchasing soybeans from farmers," he added. Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) is confident to maintain the momentum it got in the recent general elections. NCP (SP) candidate Bajrang Sonawane had defeated Pankaja from Beed by a thin margin of around 6,000 votes. The consolidation of Maratha votes in favour of Sonawane is evident as the BJP and the NCP (SP) each had secured the lead from three out of six assembly segments under the Beed parliamentary seat. Deshmukh said he would establish the rule of law if elected from Parli. He alleged local businessmen are relocating as fake offences are being registered. When asked about Pankaja securing a lead in votes from the Parli assembly constituency, Deshmukh said Lok Sabha and assembly elections are distinct. "Factors like Pankaja Munde's work and sympathy for being Gopinath Munde's daughter benefited her. On the contrary, Dhananjay Munde had betrayed Gopinath Munde. Dhananjay has done no work. Farmers are awaiting payment of crop insurance for years," he claimed. Parli resident Chetan Saundale feels the Maratha quota issue won't affect the electoral outcome.

Nitish Kumar hosts NDA meeting ahead of Bihar elections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
PATNA

Aiming for a fifth consecutive term in office, Bihar's longest-serving Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday hosted a meeting of the ruling NDA to ensure "better coordination" in the run-up to state assembly polls due next year. Leaders of all five NDA partners in the state, BJP, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), Hindustani Awam Morcha and Rashtriya Lok Morcha, besides the JD(U) that Kumar heads, turned up at 1, Anne Marg, the Chief Minister's official residence, on the occasion. Emerging from the meeting that lasted for over an hour,

leaders told journalists that Kumar urged the attendees to ensure that similar interactions be henceforth held regularly in all districts and assembly constituencies. "The chief minister has vowed to lead the NDA towards another victory in 2025. He has also called for exposing the opposition Mahagathbandhan, stating that he felt cheated by that coalition," State BJP president and minister Dilip Jaiswal said. Notably, Kumar had walked over to the Mahagathbandhan in August 2022, alleging that the BJP had tried to weaken his party with the help of the then LJP chief Chirag Paswan, now a Union minister who had

staged a revolt during the assembly polls of 2020, causing the JD(U)'s tally to crash. Kumar also played a pivotal role in bringing together, from across the country, parties opposed to the BJP, which led to the formation of the INDIA bloc but grew disillusioned and returned to the NDA in January this year. His key aide and JD(U) working president Sanjay Kumar Jha said, "The chief minister has thanked the Narendra Modi government at the Centre for its generous assistance to the state. He has urged all leaders present at the meeting to apprise the people, especially youngsters who may not be aware of the state's dismal past, of the

great leap the state has taken ever since the NDA came to power." The JD(U)-BJP combine had first achieved power in Bihar in 2005 when it had ended the decade-and-a-half rule of Lalu Prasad's RJD. NDA leaders emerging after the meeting shared the enthusiasm of the chief minister, now 73 years of age, who called upon the coalition to aim for a tally of "200 plus" in the 243-strong assembly. Those who attended the meeting included Rashtriya Lok Morcha president Upendra Kushwaha, a Rajya Sabha MP who quit the JD(U) last year alleging that Kumar had capitulated before the RJD, his then ally, by virtually declaring the then

Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav as his successor. Another ally who turned up at the meeting was Union minister and Hindustani Awam Morcha founder Jitan Ram Manjhi, who had quit NDA two years ago expressing solidarity with Kumar but returned last year alleging that the JD(U) supremo was putting pressure for a merger of the party, a move which helped his son Santosh Suman getting re-inducted into the state cabinet in January this year. NDA leaders remained tight-lipped over the absence, at the meeting, of former Union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras, who heads Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party and has been sidelined since the Lok

Sabha polls which saw weightage being given to Chirag Paswan, his nephew with whom he has a running feud. However, Raju Tiwari, who is the state president of Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), assured journalists that the young leader's brinkmanship was a thing of the past and lauded Kumar for giving a clear signal to cadres of all parties, well in advance of the assembly polls. Other prominent leaders who attended the meeting were Union ministers Rajiv Ranjan Singh "Lalan" (JDU) and Giriraj Singh (BJP), Deputy Chief Ministers Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha (both BJP).

Muslim poets recite urdu Ramayana in Bikaner

PTI ■ JAIPUR

In a unique event leading up to Diwali that has been fostering goodwill for over a decade, Muslim poets in Bikaner recite an Urdu version of the Hindu epic Ramayana that was composed 89 years ago. Dr Ziya Ul Hasan Quadri, an Urdu teacher and poet, who along with two other Muslim poets recited the Urdu Ramayana at a function on Sunday said that the objective of the event is to give a positive message of harmony and brotherhood. "Paryatan Lekhak Sangh" and



"Mehfil-e-Adab" jointly organise the event 'Urdu Ramayan Vaachan' every year in Bikaner

since 2012. Quadri said that the couplets vividly describe scenes from

Ramayan like Lord Ram's exile, victory against Ravan and his return to Ayodhya, capturing the emotions depicted in the epic which is greatly appreciated by audiences in the city. Maulvi Badshah Hussain Rana Lakhnavi of Bikaner composed the poetic version of Ramayana in Urdu language in 1935 for a competition organised by the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) on the birth anniversary of Tulsidas. It won the gold medal following which the erstwhile ruler of Bikaner, Maharaja Ganga Singh, organised a ceremony to listen to Rana Lakhnavi's version.

Tej Bahadur Sapru presented the gold medal to Rana Lakhnavi on behalf of the BHU in this programme. The poets, who take part in the recitation in Rajasthan's Bikaner before Diwali, now want to take the practice at the national level and plan to organise the recitation programme in the national capital next year. "Things have drastically changed from the time when it was composed. Today, communal harmony is under threat. Lord Rama is revered by all and belongs to all, but today he has been limited which is disappointing," Quadri said.

He said that Muslim poets recite the Urdu Ramayan and the audience comprises of both Hindus and Muslims. Quadri said that initially, the event used to be organised in the open but later the venue changed and now it is held in a hotel so that things are well arranged. He said that Maulvi Badshah Hussain Rana Lakhnavi worked for Maharaja Ganga Singh from 1913 to 1919, during which he translated orders issued by the Mughal rulers from Persian to Urdu. In 1920, he was appointed as the teacher at Dungar College by Ganga Singh.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Scammed!

An increasing number of people are falling victim to online scammers who exploit fear to extort money

Digital scams are evolving into a growing menace, targeting people across India and robbing them of their hard-earned money. As more people rely on online platforms for communication and transactions, fraudsters are exploiting the digital landscape to orchestrate sophisticated schemes. A recent warning from Prime Minister Narendra Modi has highlighted the alarming rise of a new scam known as the 'digital arrest.'



This scam involves tricking victims into believing they are under legal scrutiny for their misdeeds and asking them to remain isolated. The victims are placed under a 'digital arrest,' by the fraudster posing as a police officer. To get out of this they must cough up the money to drop the fabricated charges. The 'digital arrest' scam preys on fear and confusion. The term 'digital arrest,' sounds like a legitimate legal procedure. Recognising the severity of the issue, Prime Minister Modi issued a national warning to educate citizens about this fraudulent scheme. He clarified that the concept of a 'digital arrest' does not exist under Indian law, and no government agency would ever request personal details via phone or video call.

PM Modi also provided a three-step action plan for anyone targeted by digital scammers: Victims should not panic but try to record the interaction if possible, which could help authorities trace the criminals later. No official agency will threaten or make demands online. Any such approach should be treated with suspicion. And lastly, Citizens should immediately report the incident to the national cyber helpline and local police. Several cases of 'digital arrests' have emerged across the country, underlining the scam's rapid spread. Recently, Malayalam film actor Maala Parvathi fell victim to the scheme when fraudsters, posing as Mumbai police officers, accused her of smuggling drugs to Taiwan. Fortunately, she recognised the ruse before any money was exchanged.

The cases of digital arrest scams are just tip of the iceberg. Everyday millions of people are getting calls from scamsters and losing their money. Digital scams like the 'digital arrest' are effective because they exploit common fears about the legal system. The scammers often impersonate authoritative figures such as police officers, Central Bureau of Investigation officials, or representatives from the central bank, making their threats seem credible. The use of deepfake technology, fake ID cards, and well-crafted backdrops adds to the authenticity of their claims, convincing many to comply out of fear. PM Modi's alert is timely, however the efforts must be made by the enforcement agencies to ramp up cyber security and nab these fraudsters. Cyber security must be given top priority at the highest level as it also concerns national security as well. The Government and law enforcement agencies must put their act together to combat the surge in digital scams. Awareness campaigns, cybercrime helplines, and increased collaboration with technology companies must be employed to take on these scamsters.

PICTALK



Women compete in a boat race at the Dal Lake, in Srinagar

Chasing votes at the cost of social harmony



J S RAJPUT

In a nation as diverse as India, the relentless pursuit of electoral gains has overshadowed efforts to foster genuine unity and social cohesion

It is indeed disconcerting that every aspect of life in India is impacted by the process of garnering votes in the next election, and the unscrupulous politician never hesitates to use it to create a wedge between people of varied religious pursuits. I say this as I reflect upon the Bahraich clashes, these were indeed communal whether we like to use that term or not! And these are a continuation. Reports of stone pelting on religious processions are now considered routine, except by the real victims, no one cares much about what media reports with adequate caution. It is indeed disappointing to recall that the culture of wasting time and human resources that could better be utilised for deliberations on national concerns and issues is deliberately wasted, for presumed petty political gains.

When parliament is disrupted, when the Supreme Court finds time to listen to frivolous repeated petitions from politicians who fight cases on public funds, the national interest ipso facto gets relegated to the background. One could go on citing instances of the decline in the conduct of leaders - exceptions apart - who enter politics just to look after themselves, their family and their clan! They hardly care for the loss of public credibility of the elected representatives amongst people and the public! Not many would even be aware of the resignations of KD Malaviya, TT Krishnamachari and Lal Bahadur Shastri? Over the last seventy-five years people have learnt to comprehend the real intentions of the politicians of different hues, their proclamations notwithstanding, they know who is communal and who is not! This incisive analytical skill emerges from the realisation that India abounds in the presence of diversity, be it of races, climate, language, cultures, flora and fauna, and most prominently and importantly, of religions and faiths. The beauty lies in the presence of harmony, bonhomie and lasting unity that makes this nation unique in multiple ways. It is a robust democracy that was ushered in after independence and has survived a couple of upheavals, uncertainties and even the dreaded Emergency of 1975-



77. What makes India click? It is the eternal strength of the ancient culture that guides the organisation of the personal and social lives of individuals, families and communities through high moral, ethical and philosophical inputs that possess the strength to accept the universal unity of humankind. It prepares people to value caring for others including nature, the learned of the past and present, and remain ever grateful to the family, parents, community and the nation. The culture so strengthened exhorts the individual to remain ever prepared to sacrifice personal good for the community good. The Indic religions accepted, and propagated the philosophy of the 'Search for Truth' - the ultimate human pursuit of the ultimate perfect - by each religion being one of the many available paths to reach the same goal! If one accepts this premise, then there is no scope for any bitterness or any of the induced, lured or enforced religious conversions! Every Indian, irrespective of his religious persuasion, needs to realize that conversions were not part of ancient Indian philosophy and thought, as acceptance of diversity based on equality makes it irrelevant and irrational. Organised efforts to convert people to one's religion were non-existent before the arrival of the Abrahamic religions. The tragedy of the current-day



WHY NOT FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIALS OF DEMOCRACY, POSITIVE AND FORWARD-LOOKING ASPECTS OF THE NATIONAL POLICIES THAT WOULD BETTER THE LIVES OF THE LAST MAN IN THE LINE WHO WAS THE FOCUS OF GANDHI?

political discourse in India is its total concentration on irrelevant negativity and its total targeted focus on votes in elections. Gandhi ji had mentioned in 1922 that 'defects of elections' would weigh heavily on our people once the British left India! The citizens realise it, but politicians do not! Why not focus on the essentials of democracy, positive and forward-looking aspects of the national policies that would better the lives of the last man in the line who was the focus of Gandhi? The right path to be followed is known to all those in power, and also those eagerly awaiting people's mandate to grab the power again! Thus, the fact remains that apart from the memories of invasions communal hatred persistently ignited by the British, India could maintain social cohesion and religious amity. It is also a fact that to disrupt it, sustained attempts by the inept religious leaders to widen the wedge persist. They exploit the chilling scars of partition to augment the perceptions of 'being different' between the two communities. There are external agencies that openly interfere in disrupting the religious fabric of India. India opted for a secular state while Pakistan, created on communal lines, opted to become a theocratic state, mischievously pretending to give equal rights to the followers of other religions. The

partition of Pakistan created the possibility of minorities being treated better in Bangladesh. It has proved a myth after the recent change of government here. Hindus are being subjected to targeted killing and violence. Overall, it seems to be an irretrievable, human ingenuity could always find a way out, and it must do so. I interact with intellectuals who practice Islam and know its basic philosophy. They are convinced that Islam is being wrongly understood not only by persons of other faiths but unfortunately by numerous practitioners of Islam, including the devout religious persons! This they tell me unhesitatingly, is because of the firm foothold of the clergy unwilling to accept that times are changing fast, and dynamism is a compulsory component of human civilisation. May be, universal spread of modern education could help. Educated young persons shall have to shoulder a big responsibility. It is the initial home and family education that sows the seeds of acceptance of diversity in the child's psyche, and that determines his future approach and attitude towards other religions. It is well known that Pakistan is seriously deficient on this count. India too has worked to do on this front. (The writer works in education, social cohesion and religious amity. He is an Atal fellow with the PMML, New Delhi; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DHARMA NEEDS REFORM

Madam — The Vice President of India has said that inequities have no place in a society ruled by Dharma (October 27). This statement requires a wider range of discussions and even debates. If his statement holds good, then the scene prevailing in the country disproves his statement. As per Puranas, the society in the country since ancient times has been under Sanatana Dharma. Social and economic inequalities were there, perhaps in their worst forms, that the persons from certain castes were not entitled to even enter the areas where the people of upper castes were living. The majority of the people were living under poverty, and dharma recommends providing alms as an integral part of life. The ruling dispensation of this day firmly believes in Sanatana Dharma. But inequities are abnormally present on the social as well as economic front. This negates the statement that links Dharma and inequities. This also means propagating Dharma is just an academic course and has nothing to do with ruling or shaping society. In most of the countries, religious scriptures are quoted but not adhered to. Such discourses seem to be to numb the victims and keep them under fear of being punished for raising voices of dissent. Therefore, if the society has to remain in peace, the social inequalities should be removed without any of their traces left unattended and the policy of the rulers should be shaped to ensure equal distribution of national wealth, unlike the present scene marked by producing one billionaire every five days and leaving 81 crore poor to continue to live in poverty with just 5 kg of free rice a month. Religion is an innate affair, but ruling is a public affair. Let us not confuse ourselves.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

HIGH POLLUTION LEVELS IN DELHI

Madam — It is with reference to the news article "BJP Chief hospitalised after taking dip in toxic Yamuna" (October 27). In the months of October and November, Delhi grapples with the stark dual challenge of

Threats disrupt flights



Since October 14, airlines have been receiving threats through social media and other platforms. IndiGo, Air India, Akasa, and Vistara Airlines are still receiving these threats, causing confusion at airports and delayed flights. Due to these rumours, a total of 255 flights have been affected, leading to an estimated loss of 600 crore rupees in the aviation sector. This seems to be the first time such frequent threats have been heard. As

a result, the number of air marshals at airports has increased. The rise in social media usage has also led to an increase in "social issues" or problems, as those issuing threats are utilising these platforms. The Ministry of Civil Aviation is considering adding individuals identified for issuing bomb threats to a "no-fly" list. But what about the 600 crore loss? There should be a mechanism to recover damages by seizing the assets of those individuals or organisations responsible for such threats. Stringent action is expected against those who deliberately disrupt national transportation. Additionally, platforms like X and Meta play a role in spreading such rumours, so it's time for us to decide how much we should trust social media.

Dattaprasad Shirodkar | Mumbai

CONGRESS ACCOMMODATES SP

Madam — Having lost the Haryana polls to the BJP in the recently held Assembly elections, Congress has announced giving up claims for its share of seats in favour of SP, the lead partner in the INDI alliance in the state. The withdrawal can be termed a tactical move from the alliance point of view, as the Congress hardly has any presence in the state, holding just two seats out of 403 seats in the UP Assembly. The reason advanced for the move that it wants to defeat the BJP to save the constitution and reservation does not hold any water as they have not followed the same strategy in Kerala in choosing to contest against CPI (M), their alliance partner in INDI alliance where as the alliance winning Lok Sabha seat is more important for their declared objective of 'saving the constitution and saving the reservation'. Congress's priority seems to be projecting Priyanka Vadra to the limelight.

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Why small steps matter in the battle against plastic

Many of us struggle to take even the simplest steps—like avoiding single-use plastic or segregating waste — essential for sustaining our planet

The natural resources of the planet are a treasure directly impacting our environment and climate. We need to withdraw judiciously and invest wisely for sustained growth. We can incorporate daily practices to grow this wealth. We live in a high-rise condominium complex. There was an animated discussion on the community WhatsApp group about a few residents feeding cows immediately outside the main exit. This causes the cattle to assemble when officegoers are in a hurry to exit. It is a potential traffic hazard. One gentleman rightly pointed out that the food dumped in plastic bags was also a health hazard. A few vehement voices of protest were raised. For them, feeding the bovine was an age-old tradition. We need to think differently to address issues of concern. A national campaign for a complete ban on single-use plastic was launched a few years back. Many of our smaller states have been conscious of the need for a long time. I travelled to



Sikkim a few years back. The shopkeeper rummaged through his shelves. He could barely manage a few old newspapers to wrap my provisions. Plastic bags have been banned in the state since 1998. We were also advised to bring empty bottles since packaged mineral water bottles were banned in north Sikkim. Individually we fail to be responsive to the urgent needs. Many residents in our complex still demand plastic bags from the fruit and vegetable vendors and the grocery stores. Despite repeated instructions, many stores refuse to do away with single-use plastic. My wife has been carrying cloth bags for the last 15 years whenever she steps out to buy groceries or vegetables, and even to the malls. Municipal

authorities in several cities have successfully implemented the management of segregated waste at the household level. I stayed in Indore for a couple of days a few years back. I was intrigued by a song following me when I stepped out for the morning walk. I noticed people coming out of homes with garbage bags in their hands. It was the garbage collection vehicle playing the melodious song. The song exhorted residents to segregate waste. The song was also a knock on the door about the van's arrival. I had heard so much about the unique model of Indore towards a cleaner and environment-friendly city. This was the living proof. I was surprised to notice construction and demolition debris stacked in front of the houses under construction or renovation. I was told that the municipal department collected waste from the doorstep and disposed of the same at designated sites. All of this has not happened overnight. Someone took the first step. Others joined, to make it a mass

movement. We have been struggling to implement waste segregation within our society for the past 8 years. The rules mandate it. We still manage to find reasons to justify inaction. Even the neighbours are not doing it, segregation is cumbersome, the timing for waste collection does not fit into the routine, and an individual cannot make a difference, are only a few of the excuses for not doing it. The first step is the most difficult to take. We spent a couple of days recently in Alibaug. My wife is passionate about the cause and does not get disheartened easily. I was surprised when she remarked, "It seems that we might not see a cleaner country in our lifetime!" I would remind her and others about Barack Obama's words, "We are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change and the last generation that can do something about it." (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA



FIRST COLUMN

WORKPLACE BULLYING:
THE SILENT EPIDEMIC

It often leads to a toxic work culture that diminishes productivity and erodes employee morale



SAKSHI SETHI

Various studies have quite often revealed that around 30 per cent of employees experience bullying at every step they take at their workplace, while a significant portion of the workforce witnesses it without intervening. Unlike harassment, which is more likely to be reported due to the legal and policy frameworks that exist around it, bullying often lacks formal channels for redress. Workplace bullying is a serious and pervasive issue that affects individuals and organisations across various industries. It has become a silent epidemic where the victim's personal life as well as professional performance are often declined regarding mental health resulting in loss of self-esteem. Not only does the employee suffer but for the organisation too the consequences are equally severe. The stress of enduring repeated harassment results in physical health issues such as headaches, insomnia and a weakened immune system leading to decreased employee engagement and productivity. Now, workplace bullying manifests in numerous ways, from overt actions like public humiliation to covert tactics such as excluding someone from important meetings or withholding critical information. It may also involve power dynamics, where a manager targets a subordinate or senior staff and manipulates their junior colleagues. Unlike occasional conflicts or disagreements, this type of bullying is systematic and persistent, leading to a toxic environment for the targeted individuals. However, the psychological impact of bullying can be profound. Victims often experience stress, anxiety, and depression because of the ongoing harassment. This stress further manifests



in physical symptoms that include headaches, fatigue and even cardiovascular issues, as the body's stress response becomes consistently triggered. In extreme cases, the trauma can even lead to severe mental health conditions, affecting victims' self-esteem and overall sense of well-being. Over time, employees or the victim may develop symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) if the harassment is severe or prolonged. The victim may start avoiding their workplace altogether, resulting in absenteeism and some cases, may even resign to escape the toxic atmosphere.

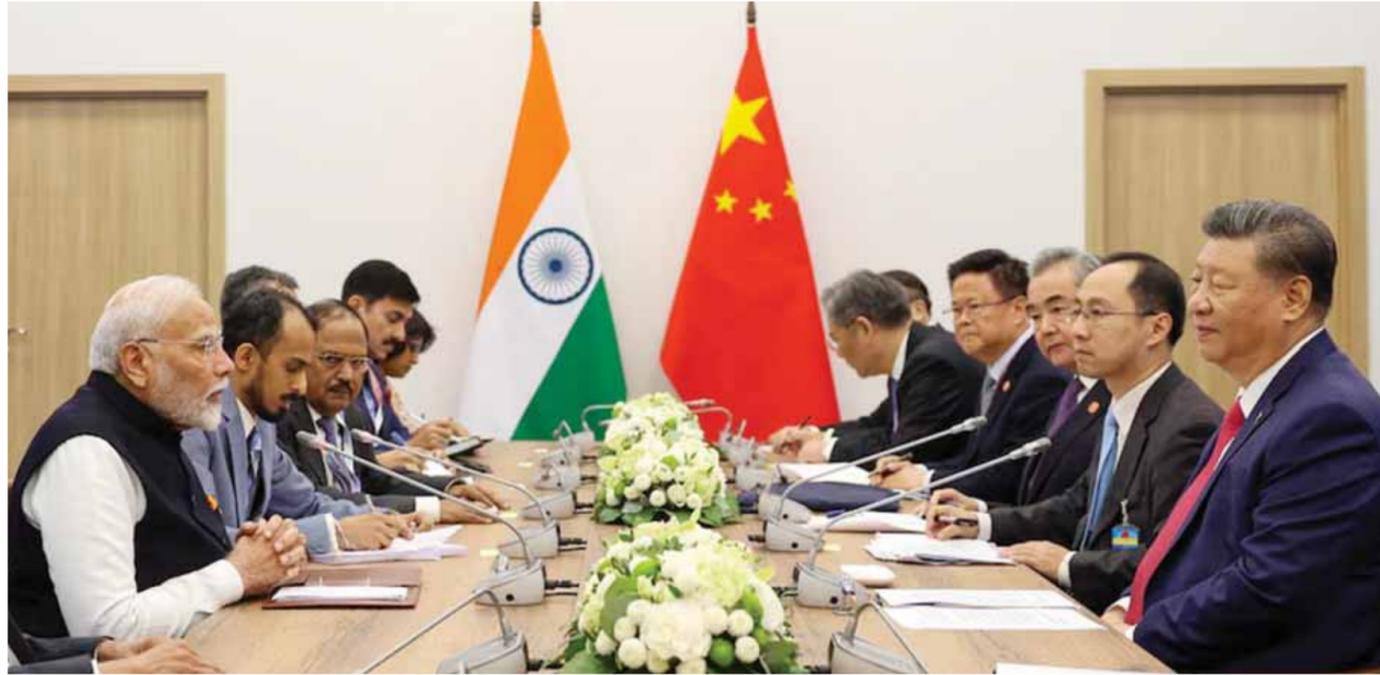
This stigma, combined with the fear of being perceived as weak or incapable, can even prevent them from reaching out for help. The resulting isolation allows bullying to continue unchecked and causes the victims to suffer without the support they need. This isolation further perpetuates the silence surrounding workplace bullying, thereby turning it into a pervasive yet hidden problem. This reduction in productivity doesn't only affect the targeted individual but can also disrupt team cohesion, workflow, and project timelines. This culture of fear can sooner or later result in a breakdown of trust and respect among team members, reducing collaboration and open communication. As more employees become disengaged or demoralised, the organisation's overall culture will suffer, leading to lower employee satisfaction and retention rates. It can't be ignored that workplace bullying is a pervasive issue with wide-reaching effects on individuals, team dynamics and organisational success. Clear anti-bullying policies, coupled with effective reporting mechanisms, can empower employees to come forward without fear of retaliation. Organisations should also invest in regular training to help employees recognise and address bullying behaviours in themselves and others, fostering a workplace culture that discourages mistreatment. Only when an organisation emphasises respect, accountability, and open communication, can the incidence of bullying be reduced thereby leading to a more positive, productive and healthy work environment. Preventing workplace bullying will benefit not only the victims but the organisation too, reinforcing a work culture that values employee well-being and mutual respect.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

India-China border pact:
A cautious step forward

PARUL CHANDRA

India's path to restoring normalcy with China is fraught with challenges, including a significant trust deficit and complex border disputes



Now that India and China have reached an agreement on disengagement and patrolling in Depsang and Demchok in a step towards resolving the over four-year-long military confrontation in eastern Ladakh, can New Delhi sit back with a quiet sense of achievement? More importantly, can China be trusted to do what it has promised during bilateral meetings, including the recent one between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the margins of the recent BRICS summit? The answer is a firm 'No'.

For, even though the two Asian giants have seemingly buried the hatchet for now with the new pact being endorsed by their top leaders at Kazan in Russia on October 22, the yawning trust deficit that now marks bilateral ties is unlikely to be bridged any time soon. To be sure, there is not going to be a repeat of the bonhomie witnessed during the Modi-Xi informal summit meetings in Wuhan and Mamallapuram in 2018 and 2019, respectively. When the two leaders met in Kazan, there was expectedly none of the warmth seen during the informal summits. The thaw may have happened, but a long road lies ahead for bilateral ties to warm up. Instead, what Beijing has to deal with now is a hard-nosed New Delhi that's wised up to China's perfidious territorial aggression. India has done well in standing up to Chinese belligerence in eastern Ladakh and in conveying to Beijing that it cannot be business as usual in the face of its brazen flouting of all bilateral border accords. The ongoing eastern Ladakh military confrontation, part of the larger boundary dispute along the 3,488 km long Line of Actual Control (LAC), is nowhere near de-escalation to the pre-April 2020 situation. While the phased disengagement at



WHAT HAS BEEN EQUALLY WORRYING FOR NEW DELHI IS CHINA'S TERRITORIAL AGGRESSION WITH NEIGHBOURING BHUTAN TOO. IT HAS SOUGHT TO BULLY THE TINY HIMALAYAN KINGDOMS AND APPROPRIATE ITS TERRITORY

Depsang and Demchok is a welcome development, New Delhi should not let its guard down. It can do so only at its peril, given Chinese machinations along the LAC and its "salami-slicing" tactics to grab disputed territories. In any case, disengagement is just the first step with de-escalation and finally de-induction of troops being part of India's roadmap for the restoration of status quo ante. It's also laid out the red line for Beijing - the need for "peace and tranquility on the border".

What has been equally worrying for New Delhi is China's territorial aggression with neighbouring Bhutan too. It has sought to bully the tiny Himalayan kingdoms and appropriate its territory. With such moves posing a strategic threat to India, the Indian Army stepped in to block Chinese troops from building a road in the Doklam plateau area near the Sikkim-Bhutan-Tibet trijunction in 2017. The rival troops had disengaged after a 73-day face-off, but China has permanently deployed troops in north Doklam since then. What the Chinese PLA sought to do in eastern Ladakh with multiple incursions in the summer of 2020 too was part of its salami-slicing tactics. Bilateral ties went into a deep freeze soon after the bloody clashes in Galwan on June 15, 2020, which left 20 Indian soldiers and an unspecified number of Chinese personnel dead.

With the slight easing of tensions now, India will need to tread cautiously. Normalcy in ties seems a long way off but even some measure of stability in the relationship between the two Asian rivals will be a positive development.

For India, this is especially important as it also has a nuclear-armed hostile neighbour in Pakistan on its western borders. A two-front military challenge can bog India down in the region, hobbling its aspiration to be a global powerhouse.

The China-Pakistan collusive axis queers the pitch for India. With frosty ties with Pakistan, New Delhi must begin mending ties with Beijing. Towards this end, Modi and Xi have agreed to resume the meetings of the Special Representatives (SRs) of the two countries "to oversee the management of peace and tranquility in border areas and to explore a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question". The SRs mechanism was set up in 2003, with 22 rounds of talks being held till now. It has not been met since 2019. However, given the complexity of the boundary question and Beijing's own feet dragging on a resolution, the SR mechanism at best serves as a means for the two sides to remain in dialogue.

As New Delhi and Beijing work to bring down tensions, the boundary question will continue to bedevil ties. India's level of mistrust of China will remain high given that it has failed to adhere to previous agreements to maintain peace and tranquility on the border.

Beijing, on its part, will remain watchful and wary of India's deepening ties with the US as well as other Quad members. Its active role in the Indo-Pacific construct and Quad - both seen as a counter to China's growing hegemony - has Beijing worried. That said, India knows it has no

option but to deal with China, owing to its geographical proximity as well as Beijing's economic-industrial clout. The bilateral economic and trade relations are heavily tilted in China's favour. India imported \$101.7 billion worth of goods from China in 2023-24, way more than from any other country. On the other hand, India's exports to China were worth only \$16.7 billion, a mammoth trade deficit for New Delhi. India depends heavily on imports from China in many sectors, like industrial machinery, telecom, electronics, electrical equipment, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, iron, steel and the like. In certain sectors, like pharmaceuticals, Indian manufacturers will find it difficult to operate without imports from China.

Despite many steps and policy decisions taken by the Indian government to move towards greater balance in trade, more so after the current border problem erupted, the imbalance has only further accentuated. In this, economics is trumping politics or national sentiment.

On the military front, India should not slacken in dealing with China with a firm hand, as it has done since the Galwan clashes.

It should also redouble efforts to push for a resolution of the different issues, including the border question. With the festering territorial dispute having long-term strategic implications for India, it needs to strike the right balance between rebuilding trust and proceeding with caution.

(The writer is a senior journalist who writes on strategic affairs; views are personal)

Embracing Ayurveda: Bridging tradition with modernity on Ayurveda Day

Rooted in the principles of balance and harmony, Ayurveda guides individuals to achieve holistic wellness

World Ayurveda Day, celebrated each year on the auspicious occasion of Bhagwan Dhanvantari Jayanti, offers a profound opportunity to honour Bharat's rich heritage of health and well-being. This year, on October 29, 2024, we come together to recognise Ayurveda - not just as an ancient healing practice but as a living tradition that continues to inspire and transform lives worldwide.



PRATAPRAO JADHAV

Rooted in the principles of balance and harmony, Ayurveda guides individuals to achieve holistic wellness by understanding their unique mind-body constitution and aligning with nature's rhythms. Its timeless knowledge promotes preventive care, natural treatments, and a lifestyle that sup-

ports physical, mental, and spiritual health. Ayurveda's reach has grown from ancient India to touch people across the globe, embodying Bharat's gift of wellness to the world. As we celebrate Ayurveda Day, let us commit to embracing and preserving this invaluable heritage. Ayurveda, the revered "science of life," represents one of the oldest and most comprehensive systems of

holistic medicine.

Originating in ancient India, Ayurveda focuses on achieving balance within the body, mind, and spirit. In recent years, Ayurveda has gained remarkable global recognition, a testament to PM Modi's visionary approach to integrating AYUSH practices, including Ayurveda, with modern healthcare.

His leadership, underscored by the establishment of the Ministry of AYUSH as an independent entity in 2014, set the stage for Ayurveda's transformation into a mainstream, globally respected healthcare approach. The government has since pioneered several initiatives to promote and expand Ayurveda's reach. Through partnerships with research institutions, academic centres,

and healthcare organisations worldwide, India has emphasised evidence-based studies, technological advancements, and policy support to bring Ayurveda to a broader audience.

Moreover, the government's efforts to encourage innovative collaborations and cross-cultural exchanges have fostered an international appreciation of Ayurveda's preventive and holistic benefits. As we witness Ayurveda's evolution on a global scale, its emphasis on wellness, natural healing, and preventive care resonates more than ever, addressing modern health challenges and reasserting Bharat's invaluable contribution to the world of medicine and wellness. Ayurveda, often regarded as the "science of life," is deeply rooted in



ancient Indian philosophy, drawing from the foundational ideas of Sanatan philosophical schools around the 2nd century BCE. Its development was heavily influenced by the Vaisheshika school, known for its focus on natural principles and the categorisation of elements, and the Nyaya school, which emphasised logic, reasoning, and structured analysis. These schools laid a framework that allowed Ayurveda to

develop a systematic approach to health, emphasising diagnosis, observation, and inference based on natural laws. Furthermore, Ayurveda's conceptual foundation aligns with Samkhya philosophy, a school that delves into the nature of existence, consciousness, and the duality of mind and matter. Samkhya's insights into the interaction between Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (matter) provided Ayurveda with a comprehensive understanding of the body-mind connection, integral to its approach to health and wellness. Together, these philosophical influences cultivated Ayurveda's holistic view of human life, wherein health is perceived as an intricate balance between mind, body, and environment.

This synthesis not only strengthened Ayurveda's theories of doshas (biological energies) but also fostered an awareness of how lifestyle, diet, and mental states directly impact physical well-being. Thus, Ayurveda emerged as an interdisciplinary science, rooted in empirical observation yet deeply philosophical, ultimately offering a framework of healing that remains both relevant and insightful in understanding modern health.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been a pivotal force in promoting the integration of Ayurveda with contemporary health sciences, fostering a healthcare model that values both preventive and holistic approaches. His vision underscores a sustainable healthcare framework where traditional

systems of medicine, such as Ayurveda, play an essential role in enhancing the quality of life. This approach aligns with his broader agenda of sustainable health solutions for all, recognising Ayurveda's unique preventive and curative strengths rooted in millennia-old wisdom. Central to this vision are initiatives like the National AYUSH Mission and the establishment of Ayush Health and Wellness Centres (AHWCs), now known as Ayush Arogya Mandirs. These initiatives aim to reshape India's healthcare landscape, making AYUSH a socially viable, affordable, and complementary alternative to allopathic medicine.

(The writer is Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare of India; views are personal)

Israel says it detained 100 suspected militants in raid on Gaza hospital

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel's military said it detained 100 suspected Hamas militants in a raid on a hospital in northern Gaza over the weekend. Israeli forces raided Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya on Friday, detaining 44 male staff, according to the World Health Organisation. Palestinian medical officials said the hospital, which was treating some 200 patients, was heavily damaged in the raid. Israel has raided several hospitals in Gaza over the course of the year-long war, saying Hamas and other militants use them for military purposes. Palestinian medical officials deny those allegations and accuse the military of recklessly endangering civilians.

The Israeli military has called on Palestinians to evacuate northern Gaza, where it has been waging a large offensive for more than three weeks. The UN said earlier this month at least 400,000 people are still in northern Gaza

X suspends new account of Iran's supreme leader

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The social platform X has suspended a new account on behalf of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that posted messages in Hebrew.

The account was suspended early Monday with a brief note appended to it saying: "X suspends accounts which violate the X Rules".

It wasn't immediately clear what the violation was. The Elon Musk-owned social media company did not respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

The move came after Israel openly attacked Iran for the first time this weekend. Khamenei said in a speech on Sunday that Israel's strikes — in response to Iran's ballistic missile attack this month — "should not be exaggerated nor downplayed", while stopping short of calling for retaliation. The X account opened Sunday with a message in Hebrew reading: "In the name of God, the most merciful," a standard Islamic greeting.

Khamenei's office has maintained multiple accounts for the 85-year-old supreme leader on X for years and has sent messages in a variety of languages in the past.

A second message corresponded to a speech Khamenei gave on Sunday and was sent on his English account as: "Zionists are making a miscalculation with respect to Iran. They don't know Iran. They still haven't been able to correctly understand the power, initiative, and determination of the Iranian people." The message referred to Israel's attack Saturday on Iran.

This isn't the first time Khamenei has seen a suspension or removal from social media. In February, Meta removed Facebook and Instagram accounts for the supreme leader over his support of the militant group Hamas after its October 7, 2023, attack on Israel.

Social media platforms like X and Facebook have been blocked in Iran for years, requiring Iranians to use virtual private networks to access them.

Macron visits Morocco after change in his Western Sahara plan

AP ■ RABAT (MOROCCO)



French President Emmanuel Macron arrived Monday in Morocco, where he is expected to meet with the North African kingdom's leaders and discuss partnerships regarding trade, climate change and immigration.

During the president's three-day visit to Rabat, he is scheduled to meet with King Mohammed VI and Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch and address Morocco's Parliament.

It comes months after Macron changed France's long-standing public position and backed Morocco's autonomy plan for the disputed Western Sahara. The move endeared the country to Morocco and alienated it from Algeria, which hosts refugee camps governed by the pro-independence Polisario Front and has long pushed for a UN-organised referendum to solve the conflict.

In the days leading up to the visit, Moroccan publications lauded the "warm reunion" and a "new honeymoon" between the two countries while French flags were hung throughout Rabat.

France and Morocco have historically partnered on issues ranging from counterterrorism to Western Sahara. Morocco is the top destination for French investment in Africa and France is Morocco's top trade partner. Morocco imports French cereals, renewable ener-

gy infrastructure like turbines and weapons. Morocco exports goods to France including tomatoes, cars and airplane parts.

Moroccans are among the largest foreign-born communities in France, where North African immigrants are a key political constituency and a focal point of debates about the roles of Islam and immigration in French society. In recent months, France's new Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau has pushed for the country to take a hard-line approach toward immigration and seek deals with countries like Morocco to better prevent would-be migrants from crossing into Europe.

On Macron's last visit to Morocco, he and King Mohammed VI inaugurated Al Boraq, Africa's first high-speed rail line, made possible by French financing and trains manufactured by the French firm Alstom.

Despite close ties, relations have at times been fragile between France and Morocco, which was a French protectorate from 1912 to 1956. In 2021, Morocco suspended consular relations France momentarily reduced the number of visas offered to Moroccans in protest of its refusal to provide documents needed to deport people who migrated to France without authorisation.

Relations between the two countries soured further that year when a 2021 report revealed Morocco's security services had used Israeli spyware to infiltrate the devices of activists and politicians, including Macron. Morocco denied and sued over the allegations.

Security Council schedules emergency meeting

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council scheduled an emergency meeting Monday afternoon at Iran's request on Israel's air strikes against the country.

Switzerland, which holds the council's rotating presidency, announced the meeting on Sunday and said the Iranian request was supported by Russia, China and Algeria, the Arab representative on the council.

Meanwhile, in Dubai, head of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard made his first public comments Monday after Israel's weekend attack on the country.

Gen. Hossein Salami, in a condolence message to Iran's regular military, called Israel's strike "illegitimate and illegal." Four soldiers in Iran's air

defense network were killed in the attack on Saturday, as was one civilian, Iranian state media say.

The attack was "a sign of miscalculation and the inability" of Israel on the battlefield with Iranian-backed militants "particularly in Gaza and Lebanon."

The "bitter consequences will be beyond the imagination of the occupiers," Salami added, referring to Israel.

Iranian president vows to respond appropriately' to Israeli strikes: Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian says his country will respond to Israel "appropriately", after Israel openly attacked Iranian military sites for the first time this weekend.

"We are not seeking war, but we will defend the rights of our nation and country and

will respond appropriately to the Zionist regime's aggression," Pezeshkian was quoted by state TV on Sunday as saying. Pezeshkian also said the US had promised Iran to stop the war in Gaza and Lebanon if Iran restrained. "They had promised to end the war in response to our restraint, but they did not keep their word," he said.

The Iranian president also warned tensions will escalate if Israel's aggression continues, adding, "We know that the United States is encouraging Israel to commit these atrocities."

Meanwhile, Iran announced on Sunday that a civilian had been killed in Israel's attack on the country, without offering any details on the circumstances of his death.

The state-run IRNA news

agency identified the dead man as Allahverdi Rahimpour and said he lived in a suburban area of southwestern Tehran.

While offering no details on what he was doing or where he was killed, IRNA made a point to say he was not a member of Iran's armed forces.

Iran has offered few details on the attack and the damage caused by them so far.

Iraq submits protest to UN saying Israel violated its airspace in Iran attack: Iraq has submitted a memorandum of protest to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the UN Security Council saying Israel violated its airspace in carrying out its attack on Iran over the weekend, the Iraqi prime minister's office said in a statement.

The statement said that Israeli "aggressor aircraft violat-

ed Iraq's airspace and sovereignty and used Iraqi airspace to carry out the attack on the Islamic Republic of Iran on October 26."

It added that Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani had directed Iraq's foreign minister to discuss the matter with the United States. The two countries recently reached an agreement to begin winding down the mission of a US-led coalition formed to fight the Islamic State militant group and to withdraw many of the US troops who remain in the country.

On Sunday, the Iran-backed Iraqi militia Kataib Hezbollah issued a statement accusing the US of coordinating with Israel to use Iraqi airspace to launch the attack on Iran and threatening retaliation against US forces.

Seven killed in Nigerian building collapse

AP ■ ABUJA

At least seven people died when a building collapsed in a suburban area of Nigeria's capital over the weekend, a local official said Monday.

"We have called off search and rescue because we excavated and there was nobody left in the rubble," said Nkechi Isa, a spokesperson for the Abuja city emergency department.

Building collapses are becoming increasingly common in Nigeria, with more than a dozen such incidents recorded in the last two years. Authorities often blame such disasters on failures to enforce building safety regulations and on poor maintenance.

The building that collapsed Saturday, located in the Sabon-Lugbe area, had already been partly demolished and its structure was further compromised by scavengers looking for scrap metal.

UK to support India hub for female-led businesses as part of C'wealth drive

PTI ■ LONDON

The UK has unveiled a package of measures designed to boost intra-Commonwealth trade and investment, including a Commonwealth Investment Network and a hub in India to support female-led businesses.

At the conclusion of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa last week, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in a statement on Sunday set out Britain's vision to increase "shared prosperity" for the 56-member organisation made up of some of the world's fastest-growing economies.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Foreign Secretary David Lammy attended the summit which concluded on Friday.

"UK announcements included funding for a Commonwealth Investment Network to encourage greater investment within

small and climate-vulnerable Commonwealth countries, and support to establish hubs in India and Sri Lanka to support female-led businesses," the FCDO said.

The UK has also indicated plans to increase its military and economic presence in the Indo-Pacific to support regional stability, including proposals for increased navy patrols to boost maritime security, combat illegal fishing and respond to natural disasters in the region. "My visit to the Pacific this week has only reinforced how important this part of the world is to the United Kingdom's prosperity and security, and I know across business, trade and defence we play a vital role in supporting the region too," Starmer said in a statement.

"As responsible international players, we cannot turn a blind eye to the challenges faced by our friends and partners on the other side of the world, so my message today is clear: this is

just the beginning of our commitment to the Indo-Pacific," he said.

With a focus on empowering young people with access to education and skills, supporting democratic governance, human rights and the rule of law and helping protect vulnerable countries from the impacts of climate change, the UK's package of measures also includes additional funding for technical support from trade advisers to help small and vulnerable Commonwealth member states negotiate within the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

A new scheme to train tax advisors to help developing Commonwealth economies boost their domestic tax revenue, support for Powering Renewable Energy Opportunities in six Pacific Island Countries, testing the application of clean energy technologies, and a new commitment to promote food security, climate resilience and eco-

nomical growth in the Caribbean through the Inter-American Development Bank's new One Caribbean fund are among some of the other measures.

Funding for a Commonwealth programme supporting countries to ratify the United Nations Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) and increased UK support for the Commonwealth's work to support democratic governance and the rule of law, which includes the deployment of election monitoring missions in Commonwealth countries, have also been finalised.

Meanwhile, in a joint communique issued by Commonwealth leaders at the end of the summit, it was agreed that the "time has come" for a conversation about reparations for the slave trade and holding "inclusive conversations" to address the wrongs of the past.

Four Indians killed in road mishap in Canada

PTI ■ OTTAWA

Four Indian nationals were killed and one injured when the car they were travelling in crashed and burst into flames in Canada's Ontario province, authorities said.

The accident occurred last week on Thursday in the Lake Shore Boulevard East and Cherry Street area of Toronto city, police said in a press release. The five people, between the ages of 25-32, were travelling in a Tesla when it "lost control and struck the guard rail and then a concrete pillar" before bursting into flames, the press release said.

"We have gathered some evidence so far to suggest that speed was a factor," Toronto Police Duty Inspector Phillip Sinclair was quoted as saying by the Toronto Sun newspaper.

Four of the car occupants were pronounced dead on the scene by the police officials responding to the accident, the press release said. The fifth occupant, a 25-year-old woman, was transported to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

She was rescued by a passing motorist who stopped to help, according to the report.

"Heartfelt condolences on tragic loss of Indian nationals in car accident that took place yesterday in Toronto," the official handle of the Indian Consulate in Toronto said in a post on X.

The post added that the consulate was in regular touch with local authorities and affected families in Canada and India.

Georgia's oppn to protest against poll outcome

AP ■ TBILISI (GEORGIA)

Opposition supporters in Georgia planned to hold a protest in the country's capital on Monday against the official results of a weekend parliamentary election in which the governing party was declared victorious amid voting irregularities and allegations of Russian meddling.

Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili said Sunday she did not recognise the official results and that the country had fallen victim to a "Russian special operation" aimed at pulling it back into Moscow's orbit and derailing its plan to join the European Union.

Zourabichvili, a fierce critic of the governing party, urged Georgians to rally on the main street of the capital, Tbilisi, on Monday night to protest what she called a "total falsification, a total stealing of your votes", raising the prospect of more political turmoil in the South Caucasus nation.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on the social media platform X that "the Georgian people embraced democracy yesterday" and urged Georgia's political leaders to "respect the rule of law, repeal legislation that undermines fundamental freedoms, address deficiencies in the electoral process, and move Georgia toward its Euro-Atlantic future." The Central Election Commission said Sunday that the governing

Georgian Dream party received 54.8 per cent of Saturday's votes with almost all ballots counted. The party — established by Bidzina Ivanishvili, a shadowy billionaire who made his fortune in Russia — has become increasingly authoritarian over the past year, adopting laws similar to those used by the Kremlin to crack down on freedom of speech.

The EU suspended Georgia's membership application process indefinitely because of a Russian-style "foreign influence law" passed in June. Many Georgians viewed Saturday's vote as a pivotal referendum on the opportunity to join the EU.

The election campaign in the nation of 3.7 million people, which borders Russia, was marked by a bitter fight for votes and allegations of a smear campaign. European electoral observers said the election took place in a "divisive" environment marked by intimidation and instances of vote buying, double voting and physical violence.

During the campaign, Georgian Dream used "anti-Western and hostile rhetoric... promoted Russian misinformation, manipulations, and conspiracy theories," said Antonio López-Istúriz White, the head of the European Parliament monitoring delegation.

The election observers said instances of intimidation and electoral violations were particularly noticeable in rural areas.

NATO confirms N Korea sent troops to join Russia's war

AP ■ BRUSSELS

NATO on Monday confirmed that North Korean troops have been sent to Russia to aid in its almost three-year war against Ukraine and that some have already been deployed in Russia's Kursk border region, where Russia has been struggling to push back a Ukrainian incursion.

"Today, I can confirm that North Korean troops have been sent to Russia, and that North Korean military units have been deployed to the Kursk region," NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte told reporters.

Rutte said the move represents "a significant escalation" in North Korea's involvement in the conflict and marks "a dangerous expansion of Russia's war."

His remarks came after a high-level South Korean delegation

including top intelligence and military officials as well as senior diplomats briefed the alliance's 32 national ambassadors at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Rutte said NATO is "actively consulting within the alliance, with Ukraine, and with our Indo-Pacific partners," he said, and that he is due to talk soon with South Korea's president and Ukraine's defence minister. "We continue to monitor the situation closely," he said.

Adding thousands of North Korean soldiers to Europe's biggest conflict since World War II will pile more pressure on Ukraine's weary and overstretched army, as well as stoking geopolitical tensions in the Korean Peninsula and the wider Indo-Pacific region, including Japan and Australia, Western officials say.

Russian President Vladimir

Putin is keen to reshape global power dynamics. He sought to build a counterbalance to Western influence with a summit of BRICS countries, including the leaders of China and India, in Russia last week.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, citing intelligence reports, claimed last Friday that North Korean troops would be on the battlefield within days.

He previously said his government has information that some 10,000 troops from North Korea were being readied to join Russian forces fighting against his country.

Days before Zelenskyy spoke, American and South Korean officials said there was evidence North Korea had dispatched troops to Russia.

The US said around 3,000 North Korean troops had been deployed to Russia for training.

Trajectory of Ukraine war hangs on outcome of US election

AP ■ KYIV

There is no doubt that the US election will determine the trajectory of the war in Ukraine.

The status of military aid from Kyiv's chief international backer is dependent on who becomes president, as is any prospect for a cease-fire that could benefit Ukraine.

Some in Kyiv say the country's very existence hinges on who wins the White House.

As Americans vote, exhausted and outnumbered Ukrainian soldiers are holding defensive lines under constant Russian fire, knowing the results will dictate their future.

The war in Ukraine is one of the most divisive issues of the November 5 election: Former President Donald Trump, the Republican nominee, and Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, advocate very different views on how much support the US should continue to give Ukraine.

After a whirlwind Western tour, Kyiv's leaders have tried to promote their version of what President Volodymyr Zelenskyy calls his "victory plan." They hope key decisions will be made — including Ukraine's bid for NATO membership — by the new administration.

For now, they have no choice but to wait.

"We believe that regardless of the last name of the future president of the US, the country of the United States will not give up global dominance, global leadership as such. And this is possible only through the support of Ukraine and through the defeat of the Russian Federation," said Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelenskyy.

Harris would likely continue Biden's policies: Harris, who has decried President Vladimir Putin's "brutality," would likely carry on President Joe Biden's policy of support, albeit within the strict limits on Ukraine's ability to strike deep inside

Russian territory that have frustrated Kyiv's leaders.

"President Biden has made it clear from the beginning of this conflict that his top priority has been to avoid an all-out war with Russia. I think that remains the top American priority," said Malcom Chalmers, deputy director general at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

The US has provided Ukraine more than USD 59.5 billion in military weapons and assistance since Russia invaded in February 2022. But throughout, Kyiv has been captive to fraught American politics that often undermined its battlefield potential.

Ukraine lost territory and manpower as weapons stocks dwindled during the six months it took the US Congress to pass an aid package. Even promised military assistance has failed to arrive on time or in sufficient quantities.

Ukraine is still hoping for Western approval of strikes inside Russian territory with

longer-range weapons supplied by its allies. It also holds hundreds of square kilometres in Russia's Kursk region after an incursion in August.

Still, Biden's commitment to support Ukraine has never wavered. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin announced a USD 400 million package during his recent visit. Zelenskyy said he expects another worth USD 800 million, the first tranche for Ukraine's production of long-range capabilities. Still another USD 8 billion is expected by the end of the year.

Trump's vague vows and praise for Putin: Trump has repeatedly taken issue with US aid to Ukraine, made vague vows to end the war and has praised Putin.

He also is considered highly unpredictable.

Some Ukrainian officials even privately welcome this quality, saying it could bring about results quicker. But so much is unknown about what decisions Trump would make.

"He has emphasised that he has a very different approach to Ukraine than Kamala Harris. And if what he's saying now is translated into action, then it's going to be a very rocky period for Ukraine," Chalmers said.

"Donald Trump is raising the very distinct probability that the United States will cut off most if not all military aid to Ukraine, which given that the situation on the ground, although deadlocked, is one which Russia currently has the advantage, could tip the balance in Russia's favour," he added.

Podolyak said Trump "understands the logic" of Zelenskyy's plans after meeting with him. "Mr. Trump realised that there is no way to agree on something in this war, because it is necessary to ensure Russia's compulsion to understand what a war is, what consequences Russia will have in this war. That is, Russia can be forced to do something, but not asked."

US voters concerned about post-election violence, efforts to overturn results: AP-NORC poll

AP ■ WASHINGTON

American voters are approaching the presidential election with deep unease about what could follow, including the potential for political violence, attempts to overturn the election results and its broader implications for democracy, according to a new poll.

transfer of power. About 4 in 10 registered voters say they are "extremely" or "very" concerned about violent attempts to overturn the results after the November election. A similar share is worried about legal efforts to do so. And about 1 in 3 voters say they are "extremely" or "very" concerned about attempts by local or state election officials to stop the results from being finalised. Relatively few voters — about one-third or less — are "not very" or "not at all" concerned about any of that happening. Trump has continued to lie about fraud costing him reelection four years ago and is again forecasting that he can lose this time only if the election is rigged against him, a strategy he has deployed since his first run for office. His allies and the

Republican National Committee, which he reshaped, have filed lawsuits around the country that are a potential prelude to post-election legal challenges should he lose. "I thought after January 6 of 2021, the GOP would have the sense to reject him as a candidate," Aostara Kaye, of Downey, California, said of Trump. "And since they didn't, I think it just emboldened him to think he can do anything, and they will still stick with him."

Nearly 9 in 10 voters said the loser of the presidential election is obligated to concede once every state has finished counting its votes and legal challenges are resolved, including about 8 in 10 Republicans. But only about one-third of voters expect Trump to accept the results and concede if he loses. Democrats and Republicans have widely divergent views on the matter: About two-thirds of Republican voters think Trump would concede, compared to only about 1 in 10 Democrats. The same concern does not apply to Harris. Nearly 8 in 10 voters said Harris will accept the results and concede if she loses the election, including a solid majority of Republican voters.

divided on who would weaken democracy: Members of both parties have broad concerns about how American democracy might fare depending on the outcome of the November election. Overall, about half of voters believe Trump would weaken democracy in the US "a lot" or "somewhat" if he wins, while about 4 in 10 said the same of Harris. Not surprisingly, Americans were deeply divided along ideological lines. About 8 in 10 Republicans said another term for Trump would strengthen democracy "a lot" or "somewhat", while a similar share of Democrats said the same of a Harris presidency. About 9 in 10 voters in each party said the opposing party's candidate would be likely to

weaken democracy at least "somewhat" if elected. Kaye, a retired health care system worker, called Trump an "existential threat to the Constitution". One prospect she said frightens her is that if Trump wins, he likely will not have the guardrails in his new administration that were in place in the last one. Republican voter Debra Apodaca, 60, from Tucson, Arizona, said it's Harris who is a greater threat to democracy. She said President Joe Biden's administration has placed too great a priority on foreign aid and shown a lack of concern for its own people. "Our tax dollars, we're just sending it everywhere. It's not staying here. Why aren't we taking care of America?" she said.

"Why should we pay taxes if we're just sending it away?" That lack of concern also includes the border, she said, adding that a Harris win would be "the end to the Border Patrol".

information that they're given", leading to another such attack. Giovanna Elizabeth Minardi of Yucaipa, California, said other issues are more important in this year's election. She said her chief concern is the economy and feels that high prices, especially in her home state, are chasing off businesses and creating a dependency on government. It's a dependency Harris wants to continue, said Minardi, a children and family services advocate. Views about the January 6 attack are not the only ones where voters split along ideological lines. Following Trump's lead, a majority of Republicans maintain that Biden was not legitimately elected. Nearly all Democrats and about 7 in 10 independents believe Biden was legitimately elected.

Trump's event features crude, racist insults

AP ■ NEW YORK

Donald Trump hosted a rally featuring crude and racist insults at New York's Madison Square Garden, turning what his campaign had dubbed as the event where he would deliver his closing message into an illustration of what turns off his critics. With just over a week before Election Day, speakers at the rally Sunday night labelled Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage", called Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris "the devil", and said the woman vying to become the first woman and Black woman president had begun her career as a prostitute. "I don't know if you guys know this, but there's literally a floating island of garbage in the middle of the ocean right now. I think it's called Puerto Rico," said Tony Hinchcliffe, a stand-up comic whose set also included lewd and racist comments about Latinos, Jews and Black people, all key constituencies in the election just nine days away. His joke was immediately crit-

icised by Harris' campaign as it competes with Trump to win over Puerto Rican communities in Pennsylvania and other swing states. Puerto Rican music superstar Bad Bunny backed Harris shortly after Hinchcliffe's appearance. The normally pugna-cious Trump campaign took the rare step of distancing itself from Hinchcliffe. "This joke does not reflect the views of President Trump or the campaign," senior adviser Danielle Alvarez said in a statement. But other speakers also made incendiary comments. Trump's childhood friend David Rem referred to Harris as "the Antichrist" and "the devil" Businessman Grant Cardone told the crowd that Harris "and her pimp handlers will destroy our country." The marquee event reflected the former president's tone throughout his third White House campaign. Though he refrained from doing so Sunday, Trump often tears into Harris in offensive and personal terms himself, questioning in recent weeks her mental stability and her intelligence as well

as calling her "lazy", long a racist trope used against Black people. The event was a surreal spectacle that included former professional wrestler Hulk Hogan, TV psychologist Dr. Phil McGraw, former Fox News host Tucker Carlson, politicians including House Speaker Mike Johnson and Reps. Byron Donalds and Elise Stefanik, and an artist who painted a picture of Trump hugging the Empire State Building. And that was all before Trump was to take the stage, running more than two hours late. After being introduced by his wife, Melania Trump, in a rare public appearance, the former president began by asking the same questions he's asked at the start of every recent rally: "Are you better off now than you were four years ago?" The crowd responded with a resounding "No!" "This election is a choice between whether we'll have four more years of gross incompetence and failure, or whether we'll begin the greatest years in the history of our country," he said.

At least 40 soldiers are killed in attack on military base, Chad's president says

AP ■ DAKAR (SENEGAL)

Chad's presidency said at least 40 soldiers were killed by unidentified assailants during a Sunday night attack on a military base in the country's west. President Mahamat Deby Itno visited the base early Monday morning and announced the launch of a military operation to track the assailants. Chad has long battled with an insurgency in the country's west, near the border with

Nigeria. In June nine people were killed and more than 40 injured when a fire set off explosions at a military ammunition depot in the capital, N'Djamena. In March, an attack the government blamed on Boko Haram killed seven soldiers, reviving fears of violence in the Lake Chad area after a period of peace following a successful operation launched in 2020 by the Chadian army to destroy the extremist group's bases there. Schools, mosques and

churches reopened and humanitarian organizations returned. Boko Haram, which launched an insurgency more than a decade ago against Western education, seeks to establish Islamic law in Nigeria's north-east. The insurgency has spread to West African neighbors including Cameroon, Niger and Chad.

Prominent HR lawyer, husband held in Pak

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's prominent human rights lawyer Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir and her husband Hadi Ali were arrested on Monday for allegedly creating a security situation by interfering in the official work. Imaan and Ali were arrested after they tried to remove barriers installed by the police on the occasion of a recently concluded test match between England and Pakistan. "Taking legal action, Islamabad police have arrested Imaan Mazari and Hadi Ali as per the law and regulations for creating a security risk by interfering in state duties during an international cricket team's visit," the police said in a post on X. A case has been registered against them, and Imaan

was transferred to the women's police station, police said. Imaan's mother, former human rights minister Shireen Mazari, said that her daughter was arrested in the morning. "Imaan Mazari has been arrested this morning. State fascism in full swing," she said in a post on X. She claimed that the Islamabad police on Friday had "swung a steel barrier deliberately into her, assaulting her", referring to a purported video being shared on X. She also alleged that the police action had "injured" her daughter. It is not the first time that Imaan has been arrested. In August last year, Imaan was arrested by the Islamabad police along with former lawmaker Ali Wazir in a seditious case over a rally made at a speech.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Ms. Shalini Panhotra / Mr. Mukesh Panhotra having address at -Hno A 034 DLF New Town Heights Sec-90 Nr Manesar Gurgaon-122001/H-66-First Floor Residency Greens Sec-46 Green Wood City Opp Unitech Cyber Park Gurgaon-122001 Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 3 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Ms. Shalini Panhotra / Mr. Mukesh Panhotra calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Ms. Shalini Panhotra / Mr. Mukesh Panhotra within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Mrs. Tamanna is the owner of plot area measuring 24 sq. yds. out of Khara No.894, new No.115, situated in old Lal Dora Abad of village Alpur, Tehsil Alpur, Distt. North Delhi-110068 through Sale Deed dated 22.02.2023 as doc. No.557 executed by Mr. Ashutosh Goyal and Mr. Prateek Goyal in favour of Mrs. Tamanna. Mrs. Tamanna is in the process of mortgaging the said properties with SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Credit Co. Ltd.). Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised with respect to 07 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 07 day period will not be considered and will be treated as if they are not the properties or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07 days period by contacting Legal Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301. Landline No. +911020-203101683, e-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Suchita Kaushik W/o Mr. Pawan Kumar Kaushik who is the owner of Plot No. 214, 28/1, Nagar Nigam No. 207, area measuring 68.35 sq. yds., situated at in Mohalla Javadra, Meerut, (U.P.) from Mrs. Rita W/o Mr. Deepak Sharma who was the owner by virtue of Sale Deed registered on dated 04.12.2023 (Doc. No. 31368) in the City of Meerut. Mrs. Suchita Kaushik is now the owner of the said property and she is in the process of mortgaging the same against the financial assistance from Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited, Original Sale Deed dated 30.07.1982 (Doc. No. 10377) in favour of Mr. Shankar, at S/o Mr. Deepan Singh is not available with seller i.e. Mrs. Rita W/o Mr. Deepak Sharma. To comply the requirements of BANK/NRFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or calling marriage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days at below address. NDR LAW ASSOCIATES (Advocate), A-98, Sector-9, New Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad, (U.P.) 201009, Mob. Nos. 9999711152/999982627

PUBLIC NOTICE

(In case of deceased) NOTICE is hereby given that one Smt. Goma Sharma was owner of Front Side First Floor, "saiid floor", without roof right, area measuring 60 sq. yds., situated at Plot No. 150, situated in the area of Village Bindapur, Delhi State Delhi, Colony Known as B-Block, Nand Park, Ustam Nagar, New Delhi, India. The said property is being mortgaged to the financial assistance from Shubham Housing Development Finance Company Limited, Original Sale Deed dated 30.07.1982 (Doc. No. 10377) in favour of Mr. Shankar, at S/o Mr. Deepan Singh is not available with seller i.e. Mrs. Rita W/o Mr. Deepak Sharma. To comply the requirements of BANK/NRFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or calling marriage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days at below address. NDR LAW ASSOCIATES (Advocate), A-98, Sector-9, New Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad, (U.P.) 201009, Mob. Nos. 9999711152/999982627

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to general public at large that my client Indusind Bank Ltd, having one of its Branch at New Tower, 12th Floor, Hyatt Regency Complex, Block-A, Distt. Centre Bhikai Cama Place, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-110066 intends to grant Loan facility to Sh. Anjeev Saxena against security of Residential Flat bearing No. A-1106 on 11th floor, having super area measuring 1550 Sq. Ft. in Tower No. A, situated in the Group Housing Complex known as "KDP Grand Savanna", situated at Raj Nagar Extension, NH-58, in the revenue estate of Village Noor Nagar, Pargana Laxi, Ghaziabad (U.P.) hereinafter referred to as "Said Property". Sh. Ranbir Singh was the Owner of the Said Property by virtue of Sale Deed dated 07.05.2012. Thereafter, Sh. Ranbir Singh died intestate on 09.12.2024, leaving behind only the following legal heirs viz:-Smt. Sukhinder Kaur, 2) Miss Mehar Mekan & 3) Miss Jesika Mekan, who claim to be the Joint-Owners of the Said Property by way of Hindu Succession Law consequent to the demise of Sh. Ranbir Singh, Now 1) Smt. Sukhinder Kaur, 2) Miss Mehar Mekan & 3) Miss Jesika Mekan intends to sell the said property to Sh. Anjeev Saxena & Smt. Rookmani Saxena. Any person(s) has/have any objection regarding ownership and/or calling marriage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within all with supporting documents in respect of their claim(s) objection(s). If no such claim is received with a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, then it will be presumed that no one has any paramount right, title, or interest in the said property, and if someone has any claim/objection, he/she/they have given up the same. Himanshu Ahuja (Advocate) Contact No.: 9810310373, 011-41830049 E-mail Address: alohgal@rediffmail.com

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora having address at - C-971 Sushant Lok-1, Gurgaon-122002 with Sector - 14, Gurgaon Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 9 years and the rent is also due for the last 7 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that my clients Sh. Deepak Kumar S/o Sh. Om Parkash and his wife Smt. Santosh Kumar, both R/o D-311 First Floor, Vijayee Veer Awas, Sector 18A, Dwarka, New Delhi-110078 have served all their relations with their son Sh. Yash Gaudas due to their misconduct, hostile behavior and disobedience. Both of my above-named clients have also disowned and rebared his said son from all their movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with Sh. Yash Gaudas will do so at his/her/their own risk and responsibilities and my clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Sh. Yash Gaudas. DHANKAR LAW ATTORNEYS, Ch. 845, Lawyers Chamber, Dwarka Court Complex, New Delhi-110075

PUBLIC NOTICE

Re: Residential Plot No. 107/377, total area measuring 50 sq. yds. i.e. 41.80 sq. mtr., Situated at Jawahar Park, Village Pasosda, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad (UP). (Hereinafter referred to as the "Said Property"). Be it known to all that our clients, Mohd. Javeed & Mrs. Alisaba (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intend to purchase the said property from Mr. Shubhinder (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 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 G.P.A, registered as Doc No. 28446 dated 15.05.1998, ATIS and will executed by Mr. Madan Singh (Attorney of Mr. Rupal Singh), in favour of Mrs. Anta in respect of the said property is not traceable and seem to have been lost. This document is hereinafter called the "Lost Document" and is a part of chain documents. An FIR regarding loss of the said document has been lodged by the seller with Delhi Police Crime Branch vide LR No.2248516/2024 dated 27.10.2024.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar having address at - U-25-27 Pink Town House DLF Ph-3 Gurgaon-122002 Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar calling upon him to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned is not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal having address at - 982-E First Floor C-2 Block Palam Vihar Near Blossoms School Gurgaon-122001 Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain having address at - B-601 Alaknanda Apartments GH H-5 Sec-56 Gurgaon-122002/C-1-3A 1-Flr Ardee City Sec-52 Gurgaon-122001 Haryana India Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora having address at - C-971 Sushant Lok-1, Gurgaon-122002 with Sector - 14, Gurgaon Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 9 years and the rent is also due for the last 7 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Harpreet Singh Hora / Ms. Ankita Hora within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is known to all that the allottee of Group Housing AWHO Flat No. 459 Type VI, 2nd Floor, Arun Vihar, Sector-28, NOIDA, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) was Lt. Col. Shyam Rattan S/O Late Sh. Ram Rattan R/O C-82, Niti Bagh, New Delhi, has sold through Power of Attorney basis as under:-

1. A Power of Attorney was executed on dt. 09.03.1994, in favour of SH. RAVINDER SINGH S/O SH. Ram Kumar R/O R-65C, Dilshad Garden, Delhi-95 which is regd. in the office of Sub-Registrar Office, NOIDA-IV, Book No.IV, Volume No. 1650/1659 Page 58/597 to 602 Doc. No. 189, date 09.03.1994 and the Agreement to Sell was not executed in favour of any person. Because the Agreement to Sell was not executed/regd., so with the help of this notice, it is informed that the transfer of the above flat on the basis of Power of Attorney goes in favour of his son SH. PARTH SUNGER S/O SH. RAVINDER SINGH R/O 459, Sector-28, Noida If anyone has any objection, he/she will submit his/her objection in the O.S.D. (GHP) Section of Noida Authority within 30 days of the publication of this notice. SH. RAVINDER SUNGER

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar having address at - U-25-27 Pink Town House DLF Ph-3 Gurgaon-122002 Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar calling upon him to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned is not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Anikod Vishwanathan Ramkumar within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal having address at - 982-E First Floor C-2 Block Palam Vihar Near Blossoms School Gurgaon-122001 Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Ms. Preeti Gupta / Mr. Puneet Agarwal within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

NOTICE

Locker Hired by Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain having address at - B-601 Alaknanda Apartments GH H-5 Sec-56 Gurgaon-122002/C-1-3A 1-Flr Ardee City Sec-52 Gurgaon-122001 Haryana India Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. SCO-16, Ground Floor, Sector - 14, Gurgaon - 122 001. remains un-operated since past 10 years and the rent is also due for the last 3 years. All the 3 letters earlier sent to Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain calling upon them to operate the locker has return unreserved and the aforementioned are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice, if the said locker is not operated by Mr. Amit Jain / Ms. Nishi Jain within 90 days from the date of issuance of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done as per the extant process of the bank on January 29, 2025 at around 12:00 PM.

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences

Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203 Ph.01639-256232, 256236 E-TENDER NOTICE E-tender are invited for the procurements of following items upto 18.11.2024 1) Procurement of BOD Incubator for Microbiology department 2) Fully Automated Chemiluminescence Immunoassay system on Rental Basis 3) Fully automated Clinical Chemistry Analyser on Rental Basis 4) Providing of Housekeeping services 5) SSMA Services of various photocopier machines 6) Purchase of LAN Networking 7) Operation of Canteen/Tuck shops at various locations at Guru Gobind Singh Medical Hospital, Faridkot 8) Providing of Pest control services 9) Rate contract for procurement of Xerox Toner and Copy Cartridges for Xerox make photocopier machine 10) Supply and installation of Skin graft Mesher. E-tender are invited for the procurements of following items upto 20.11.2024 1) Procurement of Drugs & Surgical Material 2) Procurement of High Speed Electric Drill in the department of Neurosurgery 3) Replacing damaged roof of 10 nos. Garages at GG5 Medical Hospital, Faridkot 4) Sign of Rates contract for Radiopharmaceuticals items for Nuclear Medicine department 5) Procurement of NCT machine 6) Procurement of Electrocoagulation 7) Procurement of Dental chairs. 8) Procurement of Radiofrequency Ablation machine 9) Patient Bath Trolley 10) Rate contract of Implants material 11) Procure of Automatic Liquid Waste Management Processor 12) Procure of Bed Sheets for Hospital. Terms and conditions can be downloaded from <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. The tenders will be accepted in E-Tender mode only. Bidder can also download tender notification and document from the University website i.e. www.bfuhsc.ac.in Registrar 00/12/314/2023/38634 Dated CHD :- 10/28/2024

U GRO Capital Limited

4th Floor, Tower 3, Equinox Business Park, LBS Road, Kuria, Mumbai 40070 POSSESSION NOTICE APPENDIX IV (See rule 8(1)) (For Immovable Property) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of UGRO Capital Limited, having its registered office at 4th Floor, Tower 3, Equinox Business Park, LBS Road, Kuria, Mumbai 40070 & Poonawalla Fincorp Limited, having its registered office at 601, 6th Floor, Zero One IT Park, Survey No. 79/1, Ghorapudi, Mundhwa Road, Pingle Wasti, Pune-411036, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with interest thereon, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 on the day, month and year mentioned below. The borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of UGRO Capital Limited for the amount mentioned in the notice together with interest thereon. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Borrower Details	Demand Notice	Mortgaged Property	Possession Date
1.Convercis India 2.Mrs. Mamta Mongia 3.Mr. Suresh Chand 4.Mr. Karan Mongia	Demand Notice dated 05.08.2024 for an amount of Rs. 1,19,64,109/- as on 05.08.2024	All that piece and parcel of mortgaged property being 1/2 portion (back side) of entire third floor, 1/4th undivided share of Terrace/Roof above the 3rd floor (facing terrace side), area measuring 599 sq. ft. and shop bearing no. private No. 7, area measuring 200 sq.ft (opposite Gita Bhawan Mandir) on the 4th Ground Floor of property bearing No. 1/1, admeasuring 1598 Sq. Ft., situated at Mahiya Nagar New Delhi.	26-10-2024

U GRO Capital Limited

4th Floor, Tower 3, Equinox Business Park, LBS Road, Kuria, Mumbai 40070 SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE OF 15 DAYS FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSET(S) ["SECURED ASSET(S)"] UNDER THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISION TO RULE 8 AND 9 OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Secured Asset(s) mortgaged / charged to U GRO Capital Limited ("Secured Creditor"), the possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer of Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is what is" and "As is where is" and "Whatever there is" on the date and time mentioned herein below, for recovery of the dues mentioned herein below and further interest and other expenses thereon till the date of realization of amount, due to Secured Creditor from the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below. The Reserve Price, Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and last date of EMD deposit is also mentioned herein below.

Details of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)	Details of Demand Notice	Details of Auction
1. Akshat Enterprises 2. Vinod Yadav 3. Pramod Yadav 4. Sunita Yadav 5. Aditya Plastic 6. Shanti Yadav	Date of Notice: 19-10-2023 Outstanding Amount: Rs. 2,39,30,103/- as on 18-10-2023 Loan Account Number: HCFDELSCE0001042323	Reserve Price: Rs. 2,44,21,500/- EMD: Rs. 24,42,150/- Last date of EMD Deposit: 16-11-2024 Date of Auction: 18-11-2024 Time of Auction: 11 AM to 01 PM Incremental Value: Rs. 1,00,000/-

Description of Secured Asset(s): All that Piece and Parcel of immovable property being Entire Free-Hold Property No. 109 & 110, Each, admeasuring 25.90 Sq. Meter, Block-H, Pocket - 1, Sector-11 Situated in the Layout, Plan of Rohini Residential Scheme Rohini, Delhi.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in U GRO Capital Limited/Secured Creditor's website. i.e. www.ugrocapital.com or contact the undersigned at authorised.officer@ugrocapital.com Date: 29-10-2024, Place: Delhi SD/- Soham Bhattacharya, Authorised Officer, UGRO Capital Limited

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM PUBLIC WORKS ROADS DEPARTMENT

O/O THE CHIEF ENGINEER (EAP) ARR&TI CAMPUS, FATASIL AMBARI, GUWAHATI-25, Email-id: as-ce.asbjp@assam.gov.in RFB No CE/EAP/ARRBP/02/TENDERS/2024/30 REQUEST FOR BIDS (RFB) E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE - Open Competitive Bidding (Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)

The Government of Assam through Government of India has applied for financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Assam Resilient Rural Bridges Program (ARRBP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds to the eligible payment under the contract. Bids are invited online from the eligible bidders from India for the 16 (Sixteen) packages in the district of Kokrajhar, Dhubri, South Salmara Mankachar, Kamrup (M), Goalpara and Bapeta for a total amount of Rs. 5725.89 Lakhs (approx). Details may be seen at website <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> and also at the office of the undersigned during office hours. The bidding documents are available online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> from 30/10/2024 to 30/11/2024. Bidders will be required to register on the website which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC). Bids must be submitted online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> or before 14:00 Hours on 30/11/2024. Other details can be seen in the bidding document. The method of paying Bid Security, Tender Processing fees as indicated in the table above of this e-procurement shall be required to be submitted online on <http://www.assamtenders.gov.in> by selecting "Pay Online" option.

Chief Engineer(EAP) PWRD Janasanyog/CF/2007/24/29-Oct-24 Assam, Fatasil Ambari, Guwahati-25

BSES BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, New Delhi

TENDER NOTICE

Date: 29.10.2024

Sealed tenders under two Bid System (Unpriced & Priced) is invited for following job from all bidders.

NIT No.	Brief Tender Description	Estimated Cost (₹)	Cost of EMD (₹)	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Opening
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India and Saudi to discuss ways to boost cooperation



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The global economic and industry Minister Piyush Goyal will discuss ways to increase cooperation with Saudi Arabia in areas like renewable energy, digital infrastructure, and manufacturing during his two-day visit, an official statement said on Monday. The visit to Riyadh will begin on Tuesday. The commerce and industry ministry said Goyal will participate in the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, a crucial platform that brings together global leaders, investors, and innovators. His participation will highlight India's rapid economic growth, its focus on sustainable development, AI, and the immense opportunities in sectors like renewable energy, digital

infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing, it said. On the sidelines of the FII, the minister will engage with prominent global investors. "These interactions aim to strengthen investor confidence, facilitate investment flows, and promote India as a preferred global investment destination," it said. He will also hold bilateral meetings with key Saudi ministers, including the Minister of Commerce, Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, Minister of Investment, and Minister of Energy, to discuss collaborative efforts in energy transition, digital transformation, and trade facilitation. Further, he will co-chair the second ministerial meeting of the Economy and Investment Committee under the India-

Saudi Strategic Partnership Council, focusing on sectors like agriculture, food security, energy, technology, and infrastructure. India is the second largest trade partner for Saudi Arabia whereas Saudi Arabia is India's fourth largest trading partner. The bilateral trade between the two countries stood at USD 43 billion in 2023-24 as against USD 53 billion in 2022-23. Over 2,700 Indian companies are registered as joint ventures/100 percent owned entities, with investments worth about USD 2 billion in the Kingdom. Major Indian companies and corporate groups such as L&T, TATA, Wipro, TCS, TCIL, Shapoorji & Pallonji have established a strong presence in Saudi Arabia. Saudi direct investments in

India amounted to USD 3.22 billion during April 2000 and June 2024. Major Saudi investment groups include ARAMCO, SABIC, ZAMIL, E-holidays, and Al Batterjee Group. The strengthening of India's financial sector. The soundness of our banking system marked by low levels of NPAs (nonperforming assets) and enhanced provisioning for bad loans reflects the reforms we have undertaken to improve asset quality," she said. She added that by 2047, as India celebrates 100 years of independence, "we will have a chance to define a new era of prosperity, not just for our own citizens, but for the global community as well. India's role in the world is expanding, and we stand ready to engage constructively with the international community, sharing our innovations and contributing to global peace and prosperity," she said, as she cited the example of the COVID-19 pandemic during which India supplied vaccines developed and manufactured by it to nations across the world. "The coming decades will be defined by how effectively India manages its demographic dividend, strengthens its global partnerships, and navigates the complexity of a rapidly changing world," she said.

Transformer steel shortage could impact India's energy ambitions: GTRI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shortage of Cold-Rolled Grain-Oriented (CRGO) steel used for making transformers and electric motors could impact India's ambitious power sector expansion plans, think tank GTRI said on Monday. The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that India's power sector is facing a 30 per cent shortage of CRGO steel, essential for electric motors and transformers. With domestic production meeting only about 10-12 per cent of demand, India relies heavily on imports, it added. It said the immediate cause of the CRGO steel shortage is import uncertainty caused by the delayed license renewals by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) for many foreign suppliers from Japan, South Korea and China. Many of the licenses are set to expire soon, causing shortages and uncertainty in the power sector, it said, adding that foreign suppliers require BIS certification under a Quality Control Order, which ensures quality but restricts options to a few approved grades and vendors. The entire BIS process needs an urgent review by independent auditors, the think tank said. "In the long term, India must prioritise local production, as CRGO is now considered a strategic material, and supply may remain limited. Without action, this shortage could



jeopardise India's ambitious energy goals," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said. CRGO's grain orientation reduces energy loss, making it essential for transformer cores, which are central to India's power distribution network. In FY 2024, India, one of the largest consumers of CRGO steel, required 400,000 tonnes. With only 50,000 tonnes produced domestically, it had to import 239.2 thousand tonnes from countries like China, Japan, Russia and South Korea. After exporting 11.4 thousand tonnes, only 277.8 thousand tonnes were available for local use, leaving a shortfall of 122.2 thousand tonnes, or 30.6 per cent of total demand, it said.

need small amounts of this steel, are hit hardest, as prices have soared due to uncertain supplies," he added. To address the CRGO steel shortage, immediate and long-term measures are essential, he said, adding that the BIS should expedite its approval process for CRGO imports to prevent license expirations and ensure a steady supply. Additionally, BIS should expand the list of approved CRGO grades and suppliers to support smaller manufacturers and MSMEs, who are the most vulnerable to these shortages, he added. "At the government level, support for domestic production is crucial, and allowing zero-duty imports of raw materials for CRGO production, as seen in countries like China, the US and Germany, could boost local output," it said. Building a CRGO plant would require significant investment of around USD 400-USD 600 million for a facility with an annual capacity of 100,000-150,000 tonnes and could take 3-5 years to complete, with potential government incentives supporting this development, it said. The Quality Control Order (QCO) for CRGO steel, implemented by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) in 2020, mandates that all CRGO steel imported for use in India must meet specific performance standards under BIS certification, it added. It added that India's CRGO demand is expected to grow by 10-12 per cent annually, driven by the expanding power sector and the goal to integrate 500 GW of renewable energy into the grid by 2030. Srivastava said that the demand will also grow as the Bureau of Energy Efficiency has mandated a star-label upgrade for distribution transformers starting January 1, 2025, pushing the industry to seek higher-grade CRGO steel. "This CRGO shortage could impact energy and manufacturing targets. This shortage also limits India's transformer and motor exports. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), who

Consumers exploring both luxury, sustainable mobility alternatives: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Consumers are exploring both luxury and sustainable alternatives, setting the stage for a new era in the Indian automotive sector, according to a survey by Grant Thornton Bharat. As per the survey -- "Shifting Gears: Understanding Passenger Vehicle Market Trends", 85 per cent of the respondents were considering premium models and there is an increasing preference for hybrid vehicles over electric vehicles (EVs). The survey gathered insights from over 3,500 respondents across the country. According to the survey, 40 per cent of respondents now prefer hybrid vehicles, compared to only 17 per cent favouring EVs. In contrast, 34 per cent still lean toward petrol vehicles, reflecting the transitional nature of the market, it said. This growing alignment with hybrids suggests that consumers are exploring sustainable options, while waiting for more robust EV infrastructure and incentives, the survey found. Therefore, with hybrid vehicles gaining traction, they are expected to act as a bridge, building consumer familiarity



with alternative technologies and ultimately accelerating future EV adoption, it opined. This trend underscores the need for automakers to focus on both hybrid and electric solutions to meet evolving consumer expectations and prepare for a sustainable automotive future, as per the survey findings. "As market dynamics evolve, automakers must adapt to shifting consumer preferences," Grant Thornton Bharat Partner and Auto & EV Industry Leader Saket Mehra said. Elaborating on further findings, he noted that the festive season, which typically accounts for 30-40 per cent of annual sales, is critical for the Indian automotive industry. However, high inventory levels, weather disruptions, and regional elections have tempered growth this year, he added. The utility vehicle (UV) and

sports utility vehicle (SUV) segments have continued to drive the market, witnessing 13 per cent year-on-year growth and now making up 65 per cent of passenger vehicle (PV) sales, he said. Despite a muted first half of FY25, with overall domestic sales rising by just 0.5 per cent, the sustained demand for SUVs and UVs reflects the growing consumer preference for versatile vehicles, Mehra said. However, inventory levels remain a challenge, with 7.9 lakh units worth Rs 79,000 crore stockpiled as of September 2024, he added. Automakers have an opportunity to meet rising consumer demand through substantial festive discounts, with nearly 90 per cent of respondents expecting such offers, Mehra said. The survey also found that subscription models launched by companies are also gaining traction. Besides, there is an increased demand for safety features in the car models. Growing consumer awareness has shifted the focus to vehicle safety, with advanced safety features becoming a top priority for buyers, overtaking traditional factors like design or performance, it said.

Waaree Energies' shares make remarkable debut

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Shares of solar panel maker Waaree Energies Ltd on Monday listed with a premium of nearly 70 per cent against the issue price of Rs 1,503. The stock made its market debut at Rs 2,550, reflecting a jump of 69.66 per cent from the issue price on the BSE. It further surged 72.98 per cent to Rs 2,600. At the NSE, the stock listed at Rs 2,500, surging 66.33 per cent. The company's market valuation stood at Rs 67,866.35 crore. The initial public offer of Waaree Energies Ltd garnered 76.34 times subscription on the last day of share sale on Wednesday, helped by strong participation from institutional buyers. The Rs 4,321.44-crore initial share sale had a price band of Rs 1,427 to Rs 1,503 per share. The IPO was a combination

of a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating to Rs 3,600 crore and an Offer-for-Sale (OFS) of 48 lakh equity shares worth Rs 721.44 crore, at the upper end of the price band, by a promoter and existing shareholders. Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used for setting up the 6 GW (gigawatt) of the Ingot Wafer, Solar Cell and Solar PV module manufacturing facility in Odisha. Besides, a portion will be used for general corporate purposes. Waaree Energies, one of the major players in the solar energy industry in India, is focused on PV module manufacturing with an aggregate installed capacity of 12 GW as of June 30, 2023. It operates five manufacturing facilities with one factory each, located at Surat, Tumb, Nandigram and Chikhli in Gujarat, and the IndoSolar Facility, in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

Air India gets DGCA nod to carry out in-house modifications of aircraft interiors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approved a proposal from Air India to carry out modifications in aircraft interiors in-house as the Tata Group-owned airline works on revamping its fleet and expanding operations. The full-service carrier has a collaboration with Tata Technologies to enhance aircraft interiors in its fleet. In a release on Monday, Air India said the Design Organisation Approval (DOA) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will enable the airline to independently make design changes in-house and implement modifications to its aircraft interiors more efficiently. "DOA is a transformative step towards enhancing Air India's in-house capabilities, which has been bolstered by decisions to set up its own engineering, maintenance and training facilities. This will enhance operational efficiency and make the airline more self-reliant," it added. An official said the approval will also allow Air India to offer the services to other



Indian airlines in the future. Air India is the first Indian airline to attain this level of authorisation, accelerating its ability to execute restoration tasks for continuous improvement of its fleet, the release said. Air India Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Campbell Wilson said the approval reaffirms its capabilities to maintain the fleet and commitment to enhancing the customer experience of its aircraft interiors. "By leveraging our global aerospace expertise, we are committed to delivering next-generation aircraft interiors that not only meet the highest standards of functionality and safety but also enhance customer satisfaction," Tata Technologies Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Warren Harris said. The approval also comes at a time when Air India is retrofitting its legacy planes

and has also placed significant orders for new aircraft. According to the release on Monday, the partnership with Tata Technologies will help Air India streamline its operations by integrating innovative digital thread solutions and smart maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services. "This will improve operational efficiency, reduce downtime, and ensure that Air India's fleet remains fit to fly, further enhancing passenger safety, comfort and operational reliability," the release said. Tata Air India Group has three airlines -- Air India, Air India Express and Vistara, which is a joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines. Air India and Air India Express together have more than 230 planes. Vistara, which has a fleet of 70 planes, is set to be merged with Air India on November 11.

India remains highly dependent on imports of critical minerals: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India remains highly dependent on imports for minerals critical to accelerating its energy transition, with a full reliance on shipping in lithium, cobalt and nickel, according to a report released Monday. The report, published by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), said that India's demand for critical minerals is expected to more than double by 2030, while domestic mining operations may take over a decade to start producing. It stresses that India needs a carefully crafted import strategy to mitigate potential trade risks while balancing international relationships to secure these essential minerals. IEEFA's report examines five critical minerals (and their compounds) - cobalt, copper, graphite, lithium and nickel - from the perspectives of import dependency, trade dynamics, domestic availability, and global price



fluctuations. The findings show that India remains largely import-dependent for these minerals and their compounds, with 100 per cent import reliance for minerals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel. "India should strive to de-risk its critical minerals sourcing by identifying new international resources and expediting domestic production. A concerted effort to partner with and foster bilateral relations with mineral-rich nations should be a priority for India," said the report's co-author Charith Konda, Energy Specialist, IEEFA. "The country can also explore investment opportunities in resource-rich, friendly nations, such as Australia and Chile, as well as African countries like Ghana and South Africa," he added. The report said India depends heavily on China for synthetic graphite and natural graphite and it should explore cooperation initiatives with countries like Mozambique, Madagascar,



Brazil and Tanzania which are some of the highest graphite producing countries. "As part of the Global South cooperation initiatives, these countries could be favourable partners for India for graphite trading," said the report's co-author Kaira Rakheja, Energy Analyst, IEEFA. India is also highly import-dependent for copper cathodes and nickel sulphates from just two countries - Japan and Belgium. The report suggests India could look at the US, the fifth

largest producer of copper in the world, to diversify its suppliers and enhance supply security. For minerals like lithium oxide and nickel oxide, the dependency is low on one country, but overall imports largely come from Russia and China, both countries with potential trade risks. "Developing domestic lithium refining capacity will help India integrate with the global lithium supply chain," said Rakheja. The report also notes the significant efforts that the

Indian government is making to improve domestic production of critical minerals with the auctions by the Ministry of Mines and the planned Critical Minerals Mission. "The critical minerals mining block auctions can serve as an opportunity for India to focus on building refining and processing capabilities to emerge as a global value-adding hub," said Rakheja. "Government support in the form of viability gap funding and technology development will help promote such auctions and ultimately the domestic production of critical minerals. A stable supply of critical minerals is imperative for India to achieve its renewable energy goals," Konda said. India has committed to achieving 500 gigawatts (GW) of non-fossil fuel-based electricity installed capacity by 2030. Currently, the country's renewable energy installed capacity stands at 201 GW, with solar energy accounting for 91 GW.

This Dhanteras, buy: Hallmark for purity

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) urged consumers to adopt a more thoughtful approach to gold and silver buying that is backed by the enduring trust of Hallmark. Traditionally, Dhanteras marks the time when families invest in gold, a symbol of good fortune, wealth, and future security. BIS has been instrumental in driving this transformation, encouraging consumers to make informed purchases by promoting the importance of hallmarked gold and silver jewellery. Pramod Kumar Tiwari, Director General, BIS said "We are committed to safeguarding consumers' gold investments during Dhanteras and beyond with BIS HUID based Hallmark. With BIS Hallmark and the easy-to-use BIS CARE App, consumers can be assured of the authenticity of their jewellery purchases."

INBRIEF

DRIBBLING TOWARDS A BRIGHTER FUTURE
PATPARGANJ: BSES' mission extends beyond delivering electricity. Through its CSR initiatives, the company is committed to energizing the future of its communities. In line with this vision, BSES has launched the BSES Basketball Academy, in partnership with Dribble Academy. This initiative aims to inspire, engage, and empower young athletes, both boys and girls, to reach their full potential.

CEREMONY FOR MBBS BATCH 2024 AT SRM MEDICAL COLLEGE
KATTANKULATHUR: We are pleased to share the highlights from the recent welcome ceremony for the MBBS Batch of 2024 at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (SRM MCH&RC). This event underscored our commitment to delivering world-class medical education and nurturing compassionate, skilled healthcare professionals.

OBSERVATION OF VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK AT NFR
MALIGAON: N. F. Railway will be observing the 'Vigilance Awareness Week' from 28th October to 03rd November, 2024, throughout all its Divisions, Workshops and Construction field units. The theme that will lead this awareness week of 2024 will be based on "Culture of Integrity for Nation & Prosperity". The oath will be administered by Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava, General Manager, Northeast Frontier Railway and Shri Arun Kumar Chaudhary, General Manager, N. F. Railway (Construction) at the premises of GM's office, Maligaon and GM (CON)'s office,

CHIRAG CHIKKARA CLINCHES GOLD AS INDIA SHINES WITH NINE MEDALS

PTI ■ TIRANA (ALBANIA)
Chirag Chikkara became only the third Indian to become Under-23 world champion as India capped a rich haul of nine medals, including a gold and silver each, at the age group tournament here. Chikkara, competing in the men's freestyle 57kg category, eked out a narrow 4-3 in the closing seconds of the final win over Abdymalik Karachov of Kyrgyzstan. He becomes the second Indian man, after Paris Olympics bronze medallist Aman Sehrawat, to win the gold at the U23 Championships. Sehrawat had achieved the feat in the same category in the 2022 edition of the meet while Reetika Hooda had become the first Indian woman to bag a gold at the tournament when she won in the 76kg category

last year. Ravi Kumar Dahiya had also won a silver in the U23 World Championships in 2018. Chikkara reached the final after a series of dominant performances, defeating Gaokoto Ozawa 6-1 in the pre-quarterfinals, Lunus Iavlatirov 12-2 in the last eight stage and Allan Oralbek 8-0 in the semifinals. India's medal haul in the men's freestyle category also included two bronze medals, placing the nation fourth in the team standings with 82 points, trailing Iran (158), Japan (102), and Azerbaijan (100). India also won two more bronze in men's freestyle taking the country's medal count in the category to four that secured the nation a fourth place in the team rankings. Iran topped the team rankings with 158 points followed by Japan (102), Azerbaijan (100)



and INida (82). Vicky defeated former U20 World Championships silver medalist and European junior champion Ivan Prymachenko of Ukraine with a convincing 7-2 margin to win bronze in the men's 97kg freestyle event. It is the highest weight category at which India have medalled at this tournament. Vicky had defeated Merab Suleimanishvili of Georgia via fall in round of 16, Radu Lefter of Moldova 5-0 in quarterfinal before losing to Mahdi Hajiloueiian Morafah of Iran in semifinals. Having narrowly missed a final berth the other day, Sajeet Kalkal bounced back from being 0-4 down to beat Mustafa Akhmedov of Tajikistan 13-4 and win bronze in men's 70kg freestyle. Sajeet had beaten Georgi Antoanov Zhizgov 10-0 in round of 32, Tugsjargal Erdenebat 7-4 in pre-quarters, Narek Pohosian 6-1 before losing to eventual gold medallist Magomed Basir Khaniev 4-8 in the final seconds of the semifinal. Abhishek Dhaka had earlier won a bronze as India finished with four medals (one gold and three bronze), bettering their previous year's performance where they had bagged two bronze in the freestyle category. The Indian women's wrestling team also excelled earlier, bringing home one silver and three bronze medals: Anjali claimed silver in the 59kg category, while Neha Sharma (57kg), Shiksha (65kg), and Monika (68kg) each secured bronze. Additionally, Vishvajit More earned a bronze in the men's 55kg Greco-Roman category, rounding off India's impressive tally at the championships.



Salima Tete named India Captain for women's Asian Champions Trophy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Salima Tete was named captain of the 18-member Indian women's hockey team announced on Monday for the Asian Champions Trophy scheduled to be held from November 11 to 20 at the newly-developed Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Bihar. Navneet Kaur will serve as Tete's deputy. India enter the competition with high expectations, having clinched the title at last year's edition in Ranchi. The team will face stiff competition from five other nations, including reigning Olympic silver-medallists China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand, in the battle for continental supremacy. India will open their campaign against Malaysia on November 11. Speaking on the team selection and their preparation for the tournament, dynamic midfielder Tete said: "It's an incredible feeling to lead the team into another major tournament, especially as defending champions. "We have trained rigorously and have a strong unit with both experienced players and young talent. Our goal is to defend our title and play with the same passion and determination we showed last year." The goalkeeping duties will be shared between the experienced Savita and rising talent Bichu Devi Kharibam. The defence will be anchored

by a solid line-up, featuring Uditia, Jyoti, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, and Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke. In the mid-field, captain Tete will be supported by Neha, Sharmila Devi, Manisha Chauhan, Sunelita Toppo, and Lalremsiami, all known for their dynamic play. The forward line-up boasts firepower with Navneet Kaur, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Preeti Dubey, and Beauty Dungdung leading the charge. Notably, Sushila and Beauty Dungdung make their return to the team after successfully completing their rehabilitation. "We are confident in our preparation and the chemistry we've built within the team. Playing in front of our home crowd is a huge boost, and we are ready to face tough competition from the best teams in Asia," vice-captain Navneet said. "Working alongside Salima has been great, and we are determined to make this tournament a memorable one," she added.

INDIA:
Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam.
Defenders: Uditia, Jyoti, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Ishika Chaudhary.
Midfielders: Neha, Salima Tete, Sharmila Devi, Manisha Chauhan, Sunelita Toppo, Lalremsiami.
Forwards: Navneet Kaur, Preeti Dubey, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Beauty Dungdung.

Perez job in jeopardy as Red Bull boss refuses to confirm Mexican driver will finish F1 season

AP ■ MEXICO CITY
Sergio Perez climbed into his car for the Mexico City Grand Prix as nearly 155,000 fans at his home race shouted "Checo! Checo! Checo!" in adoration of the wildly popular Formula 1 driver. It was a critical race for the slumping Perez - he said repeatedly all weekend it is his favorite event of the year - and he knows his job is in danger because of his lack of performance. Alas, Perez could not deliver for his hopeful fans or for Red Bull Racing. After a 17th-place finish Sunday, team principal Christian Horner would not guarantee Perez will finish the season. Horner had been emphatic two days earlier that the contract extension Perez signed earlier this year was valid for 2025. But he has performance clauses in his existing contract, and when The Associated Press asked Horner directly if Perez would finish this season, Horner refused to endorse the driver for the final four races. "There comes a point in time that difficult decisions have to be made," Horner said. "We're now third in the constructors championship." Horner did say Perez would be in the car next weekend in Brazil. Horner admitted the Mexican "had a horrible weekend" that started when he was eliminated in the first round of Saturday qualifying, relegating him to an 18th-place starting position. Perez was then outside his box at the start and received a five-second penalty. He later got into a wheel-to-wheel battle with Liam Lawson of Red Bull sister team RB, and the contact caused damage that made Perez's car



uncompetitive. A win by Carlos Sainz moved Ferrari ahead of Red Bull for second in the lucrative constructor standings and the two-time reigning champions of the prize that pays an estimated \$150 million is now a longshot to win it for the third consecutive year. Red Bull's slip in that category is largely because of Perez's failures. He's eighth in the standings, winless on the year, and crashed out of three races. "He knows Formula 1 is a results-based business, and you know, inevitably, when you're not delivering, then the spotlight is firmly on," Horner said. "When anyone is underperforming, there is always going to be scrutiny on that. You know, as a team, we need to have both (drivers) scoring points."

Max Verstappen has scored 362 points this season; Perez has scored just 150. "We're working with him as hard as we can to try and support him," Horner said. "We've done everything that we can to support Checo, and we'll continue to do so in Brazil next weekend. But there comes a point in time that you can only do so much." Perez, although disappointed with his weekend, didn't sound like a driver worried about his job. "This has been a complicated weekend," he said. "I always say it's my dream to win the grand prix in Mexico and I'll try again next year. After all of the support from all of these fans, it's incredible. They have given me so much, it's all worth it for them. We'll try again for them next year stronger."

His future - or lack of one in F1 - could be a problem for the Mexico City race, which heads into the final year of its current contract seeking an extension. The race this weekend drew a record 404,958 spectators and was sold out for the ninth consecutive year. But many of the fans who attend come to see Perez, and attendance could slip if he or another Mexican driver isn't on the F1 grid. Event president Alejandro Soberon said tickets for this weekend went on sale two weeks after Perez crashed out of last year's race seconds after it started and still sold out in two hours. Tickets for 2025 will again go on sale in two weeks, and it is unclear if Perez's status for next year will be determined even though Horner

had been adamant Friday he was under contract for 2025. Soberon believes the race will have high demand. "There's very few races who have a local driver. Everybody of course would love to have a local driver, but the first year we did the race here 50% of the fans were in a red T-shirt, so Ferrari has a wonderful following here," he said. "We have no more capacity. We could have drawn 600,000 if we had unlimited capacity, we could have another 200,000 here, but we cannot put them. "That's why it sold out so fast in one year in advance. Probably without Checo maybe a drop of 20%, 25%, naturally, (but) still would be a sellout." Soberon also said the Mexico City Grand Prix is so unique - it embraces the Mexican culture and incorporates it in the paddock and throughout the venue - and is a destination race for F1 fans outside of the country. He noted that the event is a boon for the local economy, with everything from hotels, restaurants and transportation services fully booked all week. "The Mexican crowd, the fandom, is very strong for F1 in general. Obviously, Checo is a great enhancement for this," he said. "But Mexico has been very close to the heart of F1. We have a much better show on track today to what we had five years ago. I think competition and quality of the spectacle at the track is going to be enough to sustain the interest of the crowd, so we as a promoter of the race, we're very excited trying to figure out a way to extend our (F1) contract regardless of Checo."

AP ■ MUNICH
Harry Kane scored his 15th goal of the season as Bayern Munich eased to a 5-0 win over Bochum in the Bundesliga to lift some of the gloom from its heavy midweek loss at Barcelona. Jamal Musiala scored a header and set up Kane's goal in Musiala's first start since Oct. 2 following a hip injury in a win that looked like a return to Bayern following one win from its previous five games in all competitions. "We just want to take a step forward in every game and we enjoy scoring goals," Musiala told broadcaster DAZN. Of the 4-1 loss to Barcelona on Wednesday, he added: "It was really bitter and it hurt us, but we're looking ahead." Michael Olise got Bayern

Harry Kane scores his 15th goal of the season as Bayern Munich cruises to 5-0 win at Bochum



started when he lofted a free kick over the wall and into the net in the 16th minute, before Musiala headed in for 2-0 soon after. Musiala dribbled past a defender and passed for Kane to score in the 57th. The England captain has nine Bundesliga goals this season, making him the league's joint-top scorer with Eintracht Frankfurt's Omar Marmoush. Leroy Sané, who's struggled for fitness in recent months, came off the bench to score his first Bundesliga goal in nearly a year in style with a drive into the top-left corner. Kingsley Coman made it five with a shot that bounced in



off the crossbar. Bayern reclaimed top spot on goal difference ahead of Leipzig, which had moved up

to first Saturday with a 3-1 win over Freiburg. A 3-2 loss at Bochum last season helped lose Bayern

competitions, and has named coaches Markus Feldhoff and Murat Ural in joint charge "until further notice." **UNION BERLIN MISSES OUT:** A tight video-review offside call in added time denied Union Berlin a potential winner that would have sent it to third place in the Bundesliga. Union was held to a 1-1 draw with 10-man Eintracht Frankfurt. Mario Götze had given Frankfurt the lead early on but Benedict Hollerbach leveled the score for Union - though only after VAR overturned an offside call. Frankfurt lost defender Arthur Theate to a second yellow card in the 77th. Union is fourth and Frankfurt sixth. Also Sunday, Heidenheim is 10th after drawing 0-0 with 15th-place Hoffenheim.

Liverpool fights back for draw at Arsenal after Man United loses again

AP ■ LONDON
As the weeks go by, Liverpool is showing the quality and resilience to be Manchester City's chief title rival in the Premier League this season. Liverpool twice came from behind to draw 2-2 at Arsenal on Sunday, with Mohamed Salah scoring the second equalizer in the 81st minute at Emirates Stadium. It's just one loss in 13 games in all competitions for Liverpool under new manager Arne Slot this season. A testing past week has seen the Reds beat Chelsea 2-1 in the league, eke out a 1-0 win in Leipzig in the Champions League, and now battle back for a draw at Arsenal - the other likely challenger for City's crown. If Liverpool's inner belief is

growing, then doubts might be increasing about Arsenal's durability in the title race after finishing runner-up to City for the past two seasons. The biggest concern might be the list of injuries, to which defenders Gabriel and Jurrien Timber were added after they came off in the second half. With defensive linchpin William Saliba missing through suspension, Arsenal finished the game with a makeshift back four and paid the price as a long ball forward from Trent Alexander-Arnold found Darwin Nunez, who crossed for Salah to sidefoot home. It left Liverpool in second place, a point behind City, and Arsenal five points off the pace after nine games. Arsenal winger Bukayo Saka said his teammates were a "bit

disappointed." "We just felt we didn't show our best selves for the 90 minutes," said Saka, who opened the scoring in the ninth minute on his return from a hamstring injury. Virgil van Dijk equalized with a header from a corner, only for Spain midfielder Mikel Merino to head in Declan Rice's free kick to put Arsenal back in front. Saka's equalizer meant he has scored against Arsenal in eight straight seasons and remains Liverpool's man for the big occasion. As for Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta, he was left to bemoan his team's lack of "courage" in the second half as the attacking intent faded and defensive injuries took. By the end, a midfielder, Thomas Partey, was playing at



right back and 18-year-old rookie Myles Lewis-Skelly was at left back. Arteta said Gabriel, who went down with a left knee injury, "can't run" and would be assessed. **TEN HAG FRUSTRATED:** If seeing a player miss an open goal wasn't bad enough for Erik ten Hag, the Manchester United manager then had to endure the VAR overturning an on-field decision to give a stoppage-time penalty that plunged his team to a 2-1 defeat at West Ham. Jarrod Bowen converted a highly disputed penalty in the second minute of added-on time after a foul by Matthijs de Ligt as United counted the cost of a string of wasted chances, notably when Diogo Dalot sidefooted over when faced with an empty net in the first

half. "We have to score, we created so many chances," said Ten Hag, whose United team has lost four of its nine games and is languishing in 14th place in the 20-team standings. Crysenio Summerville put West Ham ahead against the run of play in the 74th before Casemiro equalized for United at Olympic Stadium. **PALMER SHINES:** With an exquisite pass and the winning goal, Cole Palmer shone again for Chelsea in a 2-1 victory over Newcastle. It was the England playmaker's curling 50-meter pass behind Newcastle's defense that sent away Pedro Neto down the left to set up Nicolas Jackson for Chelsea's 18th-minute opener. Alexander Isak equalized but Palmer drove home his seventh goal of the season in

the 47th to secure the victory for Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. With five assists, too, Palmer has a league-leading 12 goals involvements this campaign. "It is the reason why people pay (to come), they want to see that kind of player," Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca said of Palmer. **PALACE FINALLY WINS:** Crystal Palace finally claimed its first league win of the season by beating Tottenham 1-0 thanks to Jean-Philippe Mateta's goal to climb out of the bottom three. It lifted the pressure on manager Oliver Glasner, whose arrival in February inspired Palace to a strong finish to last season but who struggled to get the best out of the team in the first two months of this campaign.

INDIA WOMEN NEED TO RESOLVE BATTING VULNERABILITIES TO SEAL SERIES AGAINST NZ

PTI AHMEDABAD
India will be hoping to resolve their batting brittleness in their quest to win the third and final women's ODI and seal the series against New Zealand here on Tuesday.
It was clear from the first match, which the hosts won by 59 runs through a fine effort by the bowlers, that India's batting is not in top shape, and the second one-dayer underscored that reality. India's batting went a notch down on Friday as they were bundled out for 183 while chasing 260.
It was a tough target indeed, but not improbable in nature as Indian batters succumbed to spot-on White Ferns bowlers and to their own indiscretions. It required a record ninth-wicket stand of 70 runs between Radha Yadav and Saima Thakor to add a touch of



respectability to India's run chase. Even the overall picture is not a rosy one, as Indian batters are yet to score an individual fifty across two matches. Radha's 48 in the second ODI is the highest individual score from India's side during this series, and the home team will require a drastic turnaround in the final match. For that, India's power troika upfront -- openers Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur -- will have to fire in unison. It can have a ripple effect in a strong-on-paper middle-order consisting of Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma and

Tejal Hasabnis. Mandhana's form continues to be a bit of concern as she hardly looked a pale shadow of her customary gracefully dominant batter. She is yet to reach two-figure score against New Zealand, and a series decider could be a perfect occasion for her to rewrite the script. On the other hand, Indian bowlers continued their good effort despite conceding 259 in the previous match. At one stage, the visitors were 87 for no loss in 14 overs and 139 for 3 in 30 overs, but the Indian bowlers did well to rein them back and limit to a total less than 280-290 that at one stage looked achievable. The left-arm spinner Radha has once again been impressive with a four-wicket haul to go with the three wickets she plucked in the first game. She will need to be at her best once more to keep the free-flowing New Zealand batters in check. New Zealand have also been bolstered by the presence of veteran pacer Lea Tahuu who replaced injured Moly Penfold in the eleven and immediately impressed with a three-wicket haul.

THE TEAMS (FROM):
India: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (WK), Pooja Vastrakar, Renuka Thakur Singh, Radha Yadav, Meghna Singh, Devika Vaidya, Amanjot Kaur, Anjali Sarvani, Taniyaa Bhatia, Yastika Bhatia.
New Zealand: Sophie Devine (C), Suzie Bates, Maddy Green, Lauren Down, Brooke Halliday, Katey Martin (WK), Hayley Jensen, Jess Kerr, Fran Jonas, Hannah Rowe, Molly Penfold, Lea Tahuu, Izzy Gaze, Georgia Plimmer.



Gary Kirsten resigns as Pakistan's limited-overs coach

PTI KARACHI
Pakistan's white-ball coach Gary Kirsten on Monday stepped down after developing a rift with the country's cricket board within six months of his appointment. The 56-year-old South African, who coached India to victory at the 2011 ODI World, was appointed by the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) in April end this year. "The Pakistan Cricket Board today announced Jason Gillespie will coach the Pakistan men's cricket team on next month's white-ball tour of Australia after Gary Kirsten submitted his resignation, which was accepted," the PCB posted on 'X'. Red-ball coach Gillespie, however, has made it clear to the PCB that he can only manage things for the white-ball tour of Australia which starts November 4 and is not interested in a permanent role as the limited overs coach, a reliable source aware of the development said. "Gillespie has informed the board they should look for a replacement for Kirsten for the white ball games in Zimbabwe and onwards," he added. Though the PCB didn't give the reason for Kirsten's sudden resignation, the source confirmed that it was because he was not involved when the board announced the squads for the Australia and Zimbabwe tours and the new captain of the white ball format on Sunday. The PCB has withdrawn the coaches selection powers. Selection is now exclusively the domain of the selection committee. "Kirsten was not happy with the abrupt manner in which the board took away his powers in selection and other team matters and made this very clear to Chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday before sending in his resignation," another insider said. He expressed fear that even Gillespie might end up resigning soon as he is also not happy with the current shift in how teams are selected now solely by the selection committee and coaches have no role in this. Kirsten had been working as a batting coach with the Indian Premier League franchise Gujarat Titans before taking up the role in Pakistan. The team is riding high on a come-from-behind 2-1 triumph over visiting England in a Test series that concluded last week.



Rayhan Thomas finishes seventh in Thailand

PTI BANGKOK
India's Rayhan Thomas registered a second top-10 finish on the Asian Tour, ending up tied-seventh at the International Series Thailand after being three off the lead after 54 holes. The UAE-based golfer was unable to replicate the magic of the second and third rounds of 63-64 as he shot 2-under 68 on the final day to total 16-under. He had four birdies, three of them between the 14th and the 17th. Among the other Indians, Gaganjeet Bhullar (67) finished tied 19th and Karandeep Kochhar (67) tied-24. Chinese-Taipei's Lee Chieh-po finally claimed his maiden title on the Asian Tour after sensationally overtaking hot favourite Peter Uihlein at the very end. Lee birdied the final two holes at the Thai Country Club to beat Uihlein, after the American had led from the second day. The champion, playing in the penultimate group, fired a seven-under-par 63 to finish on 21-under, while Uihlein closed with a 67 to tie for second place with Canadian Richard T. Lee, who carded a 62. The 29-year-old grew up playing golf with Kevin Yu, a winner on the PGA Tour this year, and sees him as an inspiration. For Richard T. Lee it was yet another near miss. Since the Tour resumed after the global pandemic, he finished second twice, third on three occasions and has been in the running on numerous occasions. Last week's winner of the Black Mountain Championship Michael 'MJ' Maguire closed with a 62 to tie for fourth, three behind the winner, along with fellow Americans Paul Peterson, in with a 63, and Christian Banke, who fired a 64. The action shifts to next week's BNI Indonesian Masters where India's Gaganjeet Bhullar is the defending champion.

T20I Australia Captain vs Pakistan yet to be name



PTI SYDNEY
Australia have rested their Test regulars for their home T20I series against Pakistan with a captain yet to be named, choosing to focus on the marquee Border-Gavaskar series against India next month. Australia host Pakistan for three ODIs starting November 4, followed by the three-match T20I series, from November 14. The series concludes on November 18, just four days before the first Test against India in Perth. With T20I captain Mitchell Marsh, Travis Head and ODI and Test skipper Pat Cummins unavailable, Australia are yet to appoint a captain for the series. None of the players named in the squad announced on Monday have captained Australia in any format before but the

likes of Glenn Maxwell, Adam Zampa, Matthew Short and Aaron Hardie have led their sides in the Big Bash League. Josh Inglis is also in the mix to lead the side. Pacers Xavier Bartlett (side strain), Nathan Ellis (hamstring) and Spencer Johnson (side strain) return to the squad after recovering from injuries. "It is particularly encouraging to have Xavier, Spencer and Nathan back in the national setup," said selection chief George Bailey. "It's another opportunity for them to continue to show their ability on the international stage, as they have done in the past." Andre Borovec will serve as the coach for the team, a position he held during a five-match T20I series against India that followed last year's ODI World Cup.

AUSTRALIA T20I SQUAD
Sean Abbott, Xavier Bartlett, Cooper Connolly, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Josh Inglis, Spencer Johnson, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa.

Inglis 'in mix' for Test debut in Border Gavaskar Trophy: Chief selector Bailey

PTI SYDNEY
In red-hot form, Australian white-ball wicketkeeper-batter Josh Inglis is "in the mix" to make his Test debut as a specialist batter in the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy next month, hinted chief selector George Bailey on Monday. India, unbeaten in the marquee series on the previous four occasions, will face Australia in a five-Test series beginning in Perth on November 21. "There's no doubt that the form is really fantastic at the moment... The ability to jump back into domestic cricket and dominate has been fantastic," Bailey told reporters. "I think in different series at different times of the year, he would firmly come into the mix purely as a batter the way he's been going." "If the right opportunity opened up throughout the summer, in the spots where we think he's most capable of performing, I think he'd be firmly in that conversation as well." The 29-year-old, who is Australia's incumbent keeper in ODI and T20Is, has scored four centuries in last seven Sheffield Shield matches. But with Australian Test wicketkeeper Alex Carey in



rich form, Inglis has emerged as a specialist middle-order batter, but not for the vacant opening slot, Bailey said. Australia's move to promote Steve Smith at the top following David Warner's retirement did not work out and with Cameron Green ruled out of the India series because of a back injury, there's a vacancy alongside Usman Khawaja. However, Bailey has ruled out Inglis for the opener's role. "I've spoken to Josh on this. Not in the short term, I don't think that he's someone that we would be looking to place at the top of the order," Bailey said. Inglis, in fact, is one of the contenders to lead Australia's T20I side in the upcoming three-match series against Pakistan. All-format players, including regular T20 skipper Mitchell Marsh, are sitting out of the Pakistan series to prepare for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "We've been really clear that we are prioritising the preparation for individuals around the Test summer and that will be the first time that we get that group together," said Bailey. "So, rather than switching guys in and out and becoming quite messy, it was just deemed more appropriate for a number of reasons to separate them out." This will be Australia's first Test series in the ongoing WTC cycle since defeating New Zealand 2-0 in a two-match away series in March.

Rinku, Rana shine as UP gain control over Punjab

PTI MULLANPUR
Rinku Singh and Nitish Rana powered Uttar Pradesh to a commanding position against Punjab with entertaining fifties on day three of their Ranji Trophy Group C match here on Monday. After opener Madhav Kaushik's career-best 163, the visitors came up with four more half-centuries to declare their first innings for a massive 556/9, taking a lead of 346 runs. At stumps, Punjab were struggling at 49/1, trailing by 297 runs. The Kolkata Knight Riders duo of Rana and Rinku laid the foundation with a crucial 120-run partnership for the third wicket. Rana struck an aggressive 66 off 106 balls, hitting 11 fours, while Rinku made 68 off 131 balls, with eight fours and a six. Saurabh Kumar joined the onslaught with a brisk 67-ball 69, smashing three sixes and five fours, while Shivam Sharma contributed an



unbeaten 50 off 58 balls, including four sixes and two fours, to further frustrate the Punjab attack. Harshal, Yuzi lift Haryana past MP. In Indore, Harshal Patel's unbeaten 72 at No. 9 and Yuzvendra Chahal's gritty 27 off 142 balls helped Haryana secure a vital first-innings lead over Madhya Pradesh. Responding to MP's 308, Haryana ended the day at 431/9, with Patel still at the

crease alongside last man Aman Kumar (4). Opener Lakshay Dalal hit his maiden century (105 off 271 balls), while Dheeru Singh fell just short of three figures with a well-crafted 94. Himanshu Rana (90) also missed his hundred in the nineties, but Dalal and Dheeru's 143-run partnership for the fourth wicket laid a solid foundation. However, a collapse ensued before Patel steadied the innings with his resilient knock. For MP, left-arm spinner Kumar Kartikeya was the standout bowler, finishing with 4/117. Kerala fight back after Porel High 5. In Kolkata, Bengal pacer Ishan Porel took 5/83 to secure his fifth five-wicket haul in first-class cricket, reducing Kerala to 83/5. However, Kerala's middle-order, led by seasoned campaigner Jalaj Saxena, staged a resilient recovery to reach 267/7 at the Jadavpur Salt Lake Campus ground. Saxena's fighting 84 off 162 balls, alongside a determined 64 from Salman Nizar, added 140 for the seventh wicket, frustrating Bengal's bowlers. Nizar, who faced 205 deliveries, was accompanied by wicketkeeper-batter Mohammed Azharuddeen (30 off 48 balls) at close of play. Porel's disciplined bowling proved effective on a

Man United fire manager Erik ten Hag after troubled start to season

AP MANCHESTER
Manchester United fired Erik ten Hag on Monday after a troubled start to the season left the 20-time English champions in 14th place in the Premier League and the club's new leadership unimpressed with the pace of change under the Dutchman. Ten Hag, who was hired in 2022, paid the price for leading United to just three wins in nine league games in the opening months of the campaign. There have been four defeats, the 2-1 loss at West Ham on Sunday being his last game in charge. United finished in eighth place last season, its lowest in the Premier League era, and appears to have little hope of challenging for the title this campaign. It already leaves the storied team in danger of missing out on qualification for the lucrative Champions



League once again. "We are grateful to Erik for everything he has done during his time with us and wish him well for the future," said United, which added that Ruud van Nistelrooy, one of Ten Hag's assistants, would be taking over as interim head coach while a permanent head coach is recruited. Ten Hag joined from Ajax and was tasked with the responsibility of bringing the good times back to a club that has been in decline since former manager Alex Ferguson retired in 2013. Despite winning the League Cup and the FA Cup in Ten Hag's first seasons at Old Trafford, United was showing no sign of improving on its worst league campaign in 34 years. Ten Hag only held onto his job following an unexpected victory over fierce rival Manchester City in the FA Cup final in May and an extensive end-of-year review by United. He was then handed a one-year extension to his contract to 2026. His departure comes amid a period of major change at United under new minority owner Jim Ratcliffe. The British billionaire has taken over control of United's soccer operations, with a new CEO, sporting director and technical director all installed in recent months. Ten Hag was United's fifth permanent manager since Ferguson's departure, following David Moyes, Louis van Gaal, Jose Mourinho and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.