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THE PERFECT

#### YOUR OPINION, OUR EFFORTS

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**Sachin joins NCL** ownership group

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CE

# Seven of family killed as fire breaks out

... pg 3



'e name our daughters Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati; we worship the divine feminine power in the temples but oppress, repress and even attack the feminine power amidst us. That is the irony in the way India sees its women.

After the safety of the daylight fades, women are seen as easy prey by the predators of the night. We mark the nine nights of Navratri, the festival of the goddess, by celebrating the dedication and valour of nine real-life women who brave the challenges of the night to pursue their dreams.

## PART-5 **Flying High**

THE PILOT SAYS STAY DETERMINED AND LET YOUR **WORK PROVE YOUR CALIBRE** 

#### By Ruddhi Phadke

She's in the air at any time of the day or night. It could be at 6 AM or even 11 PM. As a captain, her security is assured but before she got her pilot's license, Ankita Dhanavade, 35, worked as a ground staff member. Back then, the 4 AM reporting time at the airport seemed daunting as Dhanavade travelled to the airport on her scooty. "I have had my uncomfortably scary moments every day. Forget humans, even dogs have chased me. Considering the rising number of crimes against women, I always carried a paper cutter with me," she says.

Her training made her feel secure. "It covered self-defence, patiently dealing with passengers, dealing with unruly behaviour and emergencies. We were completely trained for all types of situations from terror attack to emergency landing to dealing with misbe-

haviour," she says. Challenges are not just external. Women, she says, face challenges even in their own home. As a 16-year-old when Dhanavade told her family that she wanted to be a pilot,



CAPTAIN ANKITA DHANAVADE, 35, pilot, Indigo Airlines

about big crimes but every single day, there are several reactions that hamper the self-confidence of a woman. People ridiculed my parents' decision to spend on pilot training for a woman. I chose to not react, ignore and avoid all of those peo-

ple," she says.



unsafe when I worked as a ground staff," she says. Despite people's speculation and her family's concern about how marriageable a woman pilot is. Dhanavade is set to tie the knot in a month from now. But not before facing uncomfortable and chauvinistic questions. "I met many boys through this arranged marriage process. All of them rejected me because I was a pilot. I came across horrible reactions. The most common questions asked were, 'do you cook?' and 'How will you keep yourself available for home',' she says. Times are changing but stereotypes aren't easy to crack as Dhanavade has experienced. "Cooking is just one of the routine home chores which even a man should be able to manage. Rather than being worried about cooking, people must ask if the girl has trained herself in self-defence. That is the need of the hour," she says. Her word of advice to women is-learn self-defence techniques. "Stop relying on others for protection. Women must pull up their socks, stay undeterred, chase their dreams, stay determined and find their own ways to protect themselves," she savs.

#### **By Correspondent**

Mumbai: Seven persons, including three minors, were killed after a fire broke out in a double-storev shop-cum-residential structure in Mumbai on Sunday morning, a fire official said.

The incident took place at 5.20 am at Siddharth Colony in Chembur area, he said.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde later visited the site He announced a high-level probe into the incident and a compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the kin of the deceased

The ground floor of the structure was used as a shop and the upper floor as residence, an official said.

The blaze was confined to the electric wiring and installations in the shop at the ground floor and spread to the upper floor, he said, adding it was a 'level-one' fire.

Seven persons were iniured in the incident. They were taken to the Rajawadi Hospital where all of them were declared brought dead, the official said.



A fire broke out in a double-storey shop-cum-residential structure at Siddharth Colony, Chembur in Mumbai on Sunday. PIC: Bhushan Koyande

CM Shinde visited the

site and met family mem-

bers of the victims.

Fire engines, water tankers and other assistance were rushed to the spot and the blaze was doused by Dharamdev Gupta (60), he 9.15 am, the official said. said

The deceased have been identified as Paris Gupta (7), Manju Prem Gupta (30), Anita Gupta (39), Prem

Gupta (30), Narendra Gupers, he said the incident ta (10), Vidhi Chediram was very unfortunate. Gupta (15) and Gitadevi

The chief minister announced a high-level probe in the incident and a compensation of Rs 5 lakh for the kin of the deceased. The cost of treatment of

Later, talking to reportthe injured persons will be

borne by the government, he said.

If the slum rehabilitation work has run into hurdles, the issues would be looked into, he added.

nied by Union minister Ramdas Athawale.

## Police save Rs 1 cr in 24 hrs

Mumbai: More than Rs 1 crore was saved in the last 24 hours due to action by the Mumbai police against online fraudsters after its 1930 cyber helpline received timely alerts, an officer said on Sunday.

**VP** questions judiciary's powers

New Delhi: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Sunday delved into the issue of separation of

## UN like an old company, not updated: Jaishankar

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday took a critical



The CM was accompa-

powers, saying executive governance by the judiciary is jurisdictionally beyond its constitutional mandate.

He urged the intelligentsia and academia to catalyse national discourse to ensure deference to constitutional essence by the three wings --the executive, the judiciary and the legislature.

Speaking at the felicitation ceremony of veteran Congress leader and former Jammu and Kashmir governor Karan Singh on the completion of 75 years in public life here, he also said the convergence of forces both within and outside inimical to India, and anti-national narratives are matters of deep concern.

view of the United Nations saying it was "like an old company", not entirely keeping up with the market but occupying the space.

During an interaction at the Kautilya Economic Conclave here, he also said that two very serious conflicts are going on in the world. "And where is the UN on them, essentially a bystander," the minister said.

In response to a query on the possible outcome of the US elections, he said the US actually has "made a shift", geopolitically and in its economic outlook, and irrespective of the outcomes in November, many of these trends will "intensify" in the days to come. Jaishankar took part in

the interactive session on

'India and the Globe' and spoke of India's role and challenges amid changing global dynamics.

"So, we are both a lifting tide and a bit of paradoxical one, a ballast as well," Jaishankar said as he enumerated some of the steps India has taken to help other countries, including its neighbours such as Sri Lanka.

Asked about his upcoming visit to Pakistan to at-

tend a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), he again sought to rule out any bilateral talks with his Pakistani counterpart.

"I am going there for a certain job, a certain responsibility. And, I take my responsibilities seriously. So, I am going there to represent India at the SCO meeting, and that is what I am going to do," Jaishankar said.



Thanks to the helpline, police teams intervened in multiple online fraud cases. including that of a "digital arrest" and prevented victims from losing Rs 1,01,58,727 in the last 24 hours, he said. In 2024 so far, the amount

saved from the clutches of cyber fraudsters stands at Rs 114 crore, the officer informed

her choice met with resistance. "The very first reaction from my parents and grandparents was. who will marry you? Being a pilot implies traveling and not being at home for days together. I was denied permission. However, I was very sure. I did not budge. I revolted," she savs. Dhanavade got her pi-

lot's licence in 2010 but had to wait for seven vears before she got hired. That time was very challenging for her—apart from anxiously waiting for a job, nosy relatives and neighbours would criticise her father for spending large amounts of money on her training, particularly because she was a girl. "We only read

#### cutter with me while travelling on my own.



She needed to work so Dhanavade worked as a cabin crew member for one year in Jet Airways and then joined Indigo Airlines as ground staff member where she worked for three years. In 2017, she secured a job as a pilot in Indigo Airlines. Late nights are part of her work profile but her safety is taken care of. "Being a pilot. I am very much secured. Security guards, pick up and drop is very

much sorted for pilots.

However, I felt extremely

## Youth spreads voting awareness in US through Rangoli

#### A MUMBAIKAR CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF AMERICANS WITH HIS SKILLS AS A RANGOLI ARTIST

#### By Correspondent

Mumbai: Doing an awesome job. Mumbai-based Rangoli artist Jayant Sawant drew big portraits of two rival candidates fighting in the US elections. Donald Trump of the Republican Party and Kamala Harris of the Democratic Party, through the traditional art of Rangoli. Significantly, it took three days for Jayant to draw the Rangoli, which became an instant hit with the people visiting the event. The artwork, which created awareness about voting, became the talking point of the event.

D Tribals Foundation, an NGO in the USA, recently organised an 'International Swadeshi Mela,' an Indian

American Trade Fair, at Naperville city in the state of Illinois in the USA. On this occasion. Mumbai-based Rangoli artist Jayant Sawant drew big portraits of two rival candidates fighting in the US elections. Several prominent personalities from Illinois, including

Bill Foster, visited the Ran-

goli and applauded Jayant's

Jayant, a Kandivali resi-

dent, was specially invited

by the D Tribals Foundation

to participate in the

Swadeshi Mela event. "I had

many themes on my mind

for Rangoli. But keeping in

mind the ongoing presiden-

tial elections in the US, I de-

cided to zero in on that par-

artistry.

Democratic Congressman

**Jayant Sawant** 

ticular theme as I was confident it would strike a chord with the Americans. My intuition proved right," he said.

The concept behind choosing the US presidential elections as a Rangoli theme was to create awareness about voting for the polls that will be held in November. he added further.

For someone like Jayant, who has not received formal training of Rangoli, the USA event proved to be a one of its kind experience as he was overwhelmed by the spontaneous response of Americans to his efforts. "I honed my Rangoli skills only by watching other artists and emulating them. It was the first time I was drawing a Rangoli overseas. All the hard work I put in to draw the Rangoli was rewarded by American people's positive feedback. They appreciated my work and congratulated me. Many of them even sought to know more about the art of Rangoli," he pointed out.

Jayant has been a Rangoli artist for a decade now and has participated in several Rangoli exhibitions in Ma-

harashtra and other parts of the country. Although portrait Rangoli is his forte, he is also an expert in wall mural painting, stone painting, canvas painting, sculpture and tattooing. While Jayant continues to follow Rangoli as his passion, he undertakes government and private works for his other skills to make a living.

Arun Sao, the deputy chief minister of Chhattisgarh, also visited the event. Nag Jaiswal, a community leader in Naperville praised Jayant's work on X by saying, "Sand art of Middle Class Kamala and Businessman Trump. The artist from India spent 3 days to complete the art in Naperville, Illinois.'



## THE PERFECT VOICE MAHARASHTRA 2 MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 MUMBAI BJP eyes Kesarkar's home seat for a newbie

#### By Mamta Sen

Mumbai: Sitting MLA and Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar appears to be facing some stiff competition in his home constituency Sawantwadi from none other than the alliance partner Bharatiya Janata Party.

Vishal Parab, Vice President of the BJP's Youth Wing BJYM, has been touring the entire constituency from past few days. The 'new kid on the block' has also been hosting public programmes and rallies ranging from musical concerts for the local youth to distribution of ambulances to garner public support.

Parab is learnt to be keen to contest from Sawantwadi, the home turf of Kes-



**Deepak Kesarkar** 

arkar who has been winning from this seat since 2009. In 2014. Kesarkar had guit the NCP to shift to then undivided Shiv Sena on the grounds that he could not get along with then Congress and now BJP leader Naravan Rane.

The Education Minister is one of the many MLAs who had defected with Eknath Shinde to form a



Vishal Prab government with the BJP. The BJP is one of the alliances in the Maha Yuti and the latter is all set to contest the upcoming state elections together. Though most parties have begun campaigning in their own way, the Maha Yuti has not

yet announced the seat sharing formula as yet. Recently, Parab caught eve balls when he distributed

over half a dozen state-ofthe-art ambulances in Sawantwadi last week amidst much fanfare. Guardian Minister and BJP leader Ravindra Chavan was present at this function. The event which drew packed crowds from all nearby villages of Sawantwadi, Vengurla and Dodamarg was rumoured to be one of the most expensive ones ever witnessed in the city.

#### Son of a rich businessman

According to Parab's office, he hails from a family dealing in the business of timber and real estate. The 36-vear-old leader has been involved in social work for quite some time now. The youth leader has been actively touring the entire

constituency and reaching out to voters as well a fact visible from the hurried activity in his office.

"It is upto the BJP higher ups to decide whether he will get a ticket or not but yes he currently has chances of winning in case he contests," says one of his associates. Sources close to Parab state that he was first keen on contesting from Kudal. He later shifted his base to Sawantwadi since he owns a family home in the vicinity.

Another BJP leader who appears to be interested in contesting from Sawantwadi seat is none other than former member of Maharashtra Legislative Council Rajan Teli. He is also actively touring the constituency.



Ex Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha Sambhaji Raje inspected the site of the proposed memorial of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the Arabian sea during the protest against BJP government on Sunday. Pic: Bhushan Koyande

## Food poisoning: All 50 students discharged

Latur: Fifty female students of a government college who were hospitalised for suspected food poisoning after having dinner at their hostel in Maharashtra's Latur city were discharged on Sunday evening, a senior official said.

The hostel, part of the Puranmal Lahoti Government Polytechnic, has 324 female students.

"At around 7 pm on Saturday, the students had dinner, consisting of rice, chapattis, 'okra' curry and lentil soup. By 8.30 pm, several of them felt nauseous and some of the students

started vomiting. The affected students were immediately taken to Vilasrao Deshmukh Government Medical College and Hospital," an official said.

"Nearly 50 students were admitted to the hospital for treatment by midnight. Treatment started immediately and they were administered saline. Twenty of them were discharged by 3 am and the rest by Sunday evening," GMCH Dean Dr Uday Mohite said.

The polytechnic's princi-

pal VD Nitnawre said

Shivajinagar police was in-

formed about the incident

and they have collected food samples and other items as part of their probe. "The contract for the college mess has been given to

one Manisha Dobgave and police are inquiring with her in connection with this incident," he added. The principal said photo-

graphs of lizards and insects in meals doing the rounds of social media, which are being linked to the incident at the polytechnic, are false. "The reports related to the food samples will be available by Monday," said Resident Deputy Collector Keshav Netke.

## Height norms relaxed for tribals

Thane: The Maharashtra government has issued a notification relaxing the height requirement for tribal candidates during police recruitment, a police officer said on Sunday.

Currently, the minimum height requirement in police recruitment for male candidates is 165 cm and 155 cm for female candidates. He said the move has come following a meeting between Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Vivek Pandit, chairman of the state-level Scheduled Area Review Committee, held in January, during which issues faced by tribals in the state were discussed.

#### New Delhi: Sanjeev Sanyal, a member of Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, on Sunday said he has accepted the Chancellorship of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) Pune, 10

days after Bibek Debroy resigned from the post. EAC-PM chairman Debroy resigned as Chancellor of the GIPE on September 27, a day after the

Bombay High Court extended interim relief to Vice-Chancellor Ajit Ranade, who was earlier removed from his post.

"This is just to state that I have accepted the Chancellorship of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune. Look forward to working with faculty, staff and students to build on GIPE's well-established legacy," Sanyal said in a post on social media platform X.

"For those uninitiated with the structure of academic administration, the Chancellor of a university is somewhat like a 'nonexecutive chairman' - duties relate to broad direction and governance rather than the daily running of the institution. This role does not impact my normal work as a full-time member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Coun-

cil," he added. Debroy was appointed as Chancellor of GIPE, a deemed to be university, in July this year.

In an email addressed to



Ranade, who is also an emi-

nent economist, Debroy

had said he is standing

down from his post with im-

Last month, Ranade was

mediate effect

interim relief till September 23. On Thursday, the HC extended the relief, allowing him to remain VC till October 7. In the email, Debroy congratulated Ranade for get-

High Court challenging his

termination order and got

myperfectvoice@gmail.com

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🔰 @my perfectvoice

ting a stay order and his continuation as VC of GIPE.

"You asserted in your writ petition that I had not applied my mind and the stay order vindicates your position," Debroy stated in the email.

removed from the position of GIPE vice-chancellor af-Under these circumter a fact-finding committee stances, Debroy noted, he set up by Debroy found that has no moral right to conhis appointment violated tinue in his post. "I am University Grants Commisstanding down with immediate effect," he had stated.

Ranade approached the

sion (UGC) norms.

#### **CRIME WATCH**

#### 22 booked for duping bank in Mumbra

Thane: Police have registered a case against 22 persons for allegedly cheating a private cooperative bank in Thane district of Rs 39.25 lakh by mortaging fake jewellery, an officer said on Sunday. The accused obtained loans from the bank's branch in Mumbra area between November 2020 and November 2021 by mortgagng jewellery. Some of accused took multiple loans. Later, during the audit and inspection, it came to light the jewellery mortgaged was not genuine, the officer from Mumbra police station said.



## Social activists against turncoats

#### By Correspondent

Mumbai: While several of those who had joined the BJP between 2014 and 2022 appear to be switching back to their original parties, a group of social activ-

formance during assembly elections, the political nicture of Maharashtra can change. The progressive social activists have always supported the MVA and the INDIA. But if the alliance parties are planning to field turncoats switching over from the BJP, the activists won't support such candidates. the activists have written in a letter sent to Sharad letter. Pawar of NCP (SP) IId-Activists including Tushdhav Thackery of Shiv ar Gandhi, Firoz Mithibor-Sena (UBT), Nana Patole wala, Vishal Vimal and of the Congress as well as Sharad Kadam among oth-MP Varsha Gaikwad and er took a lead in gathering Sanjay Raut. all these activists and sending the letter.

Dr. G.G. Parikh, veterent Gandian Tushar Gandhi, Avinash Patil of the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmulan Samiti, Nitin Vaidva of Rashtra Seva Dal, Dhanaji Gurav of the Vidrohi movement,

#### Three booked for duping businessman

Thane: A case has been registered against three persons from Andhra Pradesh for allegedly duping a businessman in Maharashtra's Thane district of Rs 32 lakh on the pretext of securing CSR funds for him, police said on Sunday. Based on a complaint by the businessman who runs an education services firm, the Kalvan police on Friday registered a case under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code for forgery, cheating, criminal breach of trust and other charges, an officer said. The fraud took place between April and June 2017, he said. The accused, Ratanlal Venu Gopalrao and Sahukari Sunit Shekar, both hailing from Visakhapatnam and Shravani Ramesh Reddy, a resident of Mumbai, promised to secure CSR funds for the complainant, the officer said.

#### Wanted criminal arrested with heroin

Thane: A man wanted for serious offences, including robbery and attempted murder, was arrested with heroin and ganja in Navi Mumbai, police said on Sunday. Acting on a tip-off, a narcotics team of the Navi Mumbai police apprehended the accused, Rajan Bala Rathod (32), on Panvel highway on Friday, an officer said. The team seized 21 gm of heroin, 1 kg of ganja, and other paraphernalia worth Rs 6 lakh from the accused, he said. Rathod, a resident of Govandis, has seven registered cases to his name offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, Arms Act and Indian Penal Code at different police stations in Mumbai, the officer said.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde visits the site of fire at Siddharth Colony in Chembur, Mumbai on Sunday. Pic: PTI

## Suspicious boat triggers police advisory

#### By Correspondent

Palghar: A suspicious boat was spotted off the coast in Maharashtra's Palghar district, prompting the police to issue an advisory, urging law enforcement agencies and the public to remain alert, and a search by the Coast Guard.

Locals saw the boat around midnight on October 3 near Chikhle village in Dahanu taluka and reported the sighting to the police, said the advisory.

The boat, which appeared larger and wider than typical vessels in the area, was near the shore. However, when locals used their mobile flashlights and two-wheeler headlights to guide it to the coast, it ventured deep into the Arabian Sea, said the advisory.

The Coast Guard deployed helicopters to locate the suspicious green and white vessel, it said.

The boat had a high front end and a large cabin at the

rear, distinguishing it from local fishing vessels. The Palghar Superintendent of Police has ordered increased foot patrols in the Sagari and Khadi police station areas

Police officials have been told to communicate with local fishing societies to gather information. The authorities have urged the public to contact police if they spot any suspicious movements or boats matching the description, the ad-

ists has written to the MVA leadership urging them to not to field these turncoats as their candidates in the ensuing assembly elections

The INDIA and the MVA have shown a great resilience and their performance during the Lok Sabha polls too was above expectation. If they are able to show similar per-

Three held

Dalit poet Arjun Dangle, socialist leader Subhash Ware are some of the prominent names among over 60 signatories of the

Veteran socialist leader

## **Underground metro** to run from today

Mumbai: The city's first underground metro will be operational from Monday.

The metro will run between BKC and SEEPZ. There will be following stations - BKC, Bandra Colony, Santacruz, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport T1. Sahar Road, CSMIA T 2, Marol Naka, Andheri, SEEPZ and Aarey Colony JVLR. The Aarey-BKC stretch

(1977), Lt Col Baldev

Anand (1990), Lt Col K

Krishnamoorthy (1994),

Nk Jai Singh (2001),

(2003), Maj Mukesh

Chaurasia (2005), Brig

Rakesh Kumar (2020),

tary intelligence per-

sonnel and officers

sacrificed their lives in

Majority of the mili-

among others.

connects both Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. It also links to the Ghatkopar-Andheri-Versova Metro Line 1 at Marol Naka station. The first train will begin operations from 6:30 am; the last at 10.30 pm. On Sundays, the first service will commence at 8.30 am. The minimum fare will be Rs 10 while the maximum will be Rs 50.

**QUOTE OF THE DAY** 

"How can I face (Sharad) Pawar saheb, who made me a minister in 2009 though I was not even a legislator? I feel guilty about deserting him.



But I did so to ensure the security of my workers. But that doesn't seem to be happening."

> Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar, Leader, NCP

## Park dedicated to unsung heroes of military intelligence

Pune: The 'Satark Park', India's first such structure dedicated to military intelligence operatives, has been inaugurated in Maharashtra's Pune with an aim to showcase some of the most valorous episodes associated with these unsung heroes, officials said.

The park features 40 busts of military intelligence personnel who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. Each bust is accompanied by a brief description of their heroism. Lieutenant General

Pradeep Kumar Chahal,

Saturday.

Colonel Commandant, Inroes were among those who telligence Corps, and Comattended the event.

mandant, MINTSD, inau-Located in Wanwadi area of Pune Cantonment, the gurated the park on 'Satark Park' has been con-Families of the fallen heceptualised and developed

by the Roadways Solutions India Infra Ltd (RSIIL) in association with the Military Intelligence Training School and Depot (MINTSD)

It is inspired by the Capt Jitesh Bhutani Corps of Military Intelligence motto 'Sada Satark' (always alert), as per officials. The park has a wall RS Mehta (2008), Sub with the Intelligence Corps' song, an abstract sculpture of Bharat Mata symbolising the invisible nature of their work along with busts of 40 martyrs, ranging from 1962 to 2020.

the line of duty in Jam-These include Brig RD mu and Kashmir and

Mehta, Nk Mehtab Singh were awarded military (1962), Nk Bipin Chandra honours posthumously, of-(1970), Nk Pratap Singh ficials said.

#### **CHANGE OF DATE**

Ms. Jinal Arvind Waghela of Mumbai, want the general public to know that her date of birth is 30th April 1997 and not 10th June 1996. All documents bearing former date of birth are still valid. as per Maharashtra Gazette No.M-24215942.

## visory added.

over murder Mumbai: The Mumbai police have arrested three persons for allegedly killing a local leader of the NCP, led by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar.

Sachin Kurmi was fatally stabbed allegedly by the trio at the MHADA colony in Byculla of south Mumbai on Friday night. Ananda Ashok Kale, alias Anya (39), Vijay Kakade, alias Pappya (34), and Prafull Patkar (26), attacked Kurmi over past enmity.

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**THE PERFECT VOICE** MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 MUMBAI

## MMR

# Another case against Narsinghanand

#### By Correspondent

Thane: The Thane police in Maharashtra have registered an FIR against controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand, who is already facing multiple cases, over his alleged objectionable remarks against Prophet Muhammad, officials said on Sunday.

The seer allegedly made the objectionable remarks during a programme held at Hindi Bhavan in Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh) on September 29, as per the police.

Based on complaint by the president of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the Mumbra police in Thane registered a case against him on October 3.

The FIR has been loaged under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 196 (promoting enmity between different groups, and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony), 197 (imputations and assertions prejudicial to national integration), 299 (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) and 302 (intentionally uttering words to deliberately wound the religious sentiments of another person), an official from Mumbra police station said.

No arrest has been made in this connection so far, he said.

Police complaints have



against Narsinghanand and there have been demands that he be arrested.

An FIR has also been registered against the priest in Maharashtra's Amravati city, which saw violent protests against his remarks outside the Nagpuri Gate police station in which 21 police personnel were injured and 10 police vans were damaged during stone pelting by a mob on Friday night, according to officials.

Narsinghanand's remarks had sparked protests in Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh and other states

A large crowd gathered outside the Dasna Devi temple in Ghaziabad,

Alliance partner furious at

Shinde over poaching of MLA

where he presides, to protest against him on Friday night after videos of his inflammatory remarks appeared online, following which security was stepped up around the premises.

Narsinghanand has several cases against him, including for allegedly making a hate speech at a conclave in Haridwar (Uttarakhand) in December 2021, and was out on bail. Jamaat-e-Islami Hind

vice president Malik Motasim Khanhas in a release issued on Saturday said they condemn the "blasphemous" remarks by the seer and demanded that he be arrested immediately.

"Muslims must remember that the stature and dignity of Prophet Muhammad cannot be diminished by the vile words of a few ignorant and despicable individuals. We should remain calm in the face of such provocation and should counter these provocations with wisdom, patience, and dignity," he said. "We urge the community

to take meaningful steps to promote the teachings, ethics, and noble qualities of Prophet Muhammad in multiple languages, so that the true message of peace and compassion reaches every corner of the country. Only through such efforts can we hope to build a society rooted in mutual respect and harmony," he added.

SAI signs

**MoU with** 

state govt

By correspondent

## Three MCOCA accused acquitted

Thane: A court in Thane district has acquitted three persons booked under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) in a 19-year-old armed robbery case, citing lack of corroborative evidence.

Special MCOCA judge Amit Shete noted that the prosecution failed to prove the charges against the alleged accused, who needed to be given the benefit of the doubt. A copy of the order

passed on September 25 was made available on Saturday The court acquitted Sel-

varaj Subramaniam Mudliyar (45), Jairam Achhelal Jaiswal (39), and Anil Jasram Chauhan (48). Two other accused died during the pendency of the trial, and the case against them was abated. The court also dis-

charged another person allegedly involved in the crime. The men were booked for

armed robbery and organised crime under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and MCOCA.

As per the case details, a hotel owner on Kalyan-Nashik Road was assaulted and robbed by armed men on August 1, 2005. Defence counsels Sagar

Kolhe and Haresh Deshmukh contested the charges and punched holes in the prosecution and investigations. During the trial, the

judge highlighted that the investigation failed to collect adequate evidence or secure witnesses, which ultimately compromised the integrity of the case -PTI i against the three accused.

## Ladki Bahin payments being made in advance

THE CM EKNATH SHINDE SAYS DECISION **TAKEN IN VIEW OF IMPENDING MODEL CODE** 

#### By Correspondent

Mumbai: Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday said advance payment was being made to beneficiaries of Ladki Bahin Yojana for the months of October and November keeping in mind the impending code of conduct for the assembly polls.

He said the opposition parties may create obstacles in women beneficiaries getting monthly aid under the scheme once the code of conduct kicks in and therefore such a decision has been taken.

Assembly polls are likelv to be held in November. The term of the current assembly will end on November 26

"Anticipating the opposition's possible steps, the Maharashtra government has started disbursing the monthly payment under Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana for October and November." he said at a rally in Chhatra-

pati Sambhajinagar. Under the scheme, women with an annual family income of less than Rs 2.5 lakh get Rs 1500 per month as aid.

Though ongoing schemes are generally not affected by the model code of conduct, the Shinde government is not taking chances, sources said.

Citing legendary singer Asha Bhosale's praise for the Ladki Bahin Yojana, Shinde said it was a slap on the face of the opposition, which has



been spreading fake narratives about the scheme. Hitting out at former

chief minister and Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray, Shinde said under the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government there used to "instalments of extortion".

"My government does not take from the people but gives back to them through various schemes. Ours is a dena bank (donating) and not lena bank (collecting)," Shinde claimed.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar asked the gathering to vote for the ruling alliance to ensure all welfare schemes underway continue.

"We are the ones who follow our words and keep our promises. We do not make decisions with one eve on elections. Do not ever forget us. Consider it (Rs 1500 under the Ladki Bahin scheme) as bhaubeej gift to our sisters," Pawar added.

**Fire at** 

Sewri

industry

Mumbai: A major fire

broke out in a five-storey

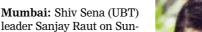
industrial estate in Mum-

bai, a fire official said on

Sunday.

## Modi should also talk about drugs seized in Gujarat: Raut

By Correspondent Mumbai: Shiv Sena (UBT)



more seats BJP will lose in the upcoming assembly elections. Elections to the 288-member state assembly

ter Eknath Shinde, Prahar Janshakti Party leader Bachchu Kadu on Sunday said that the CM has played foul play with me by inducting my party MLA Railumar Patel in Shiv Sena. Shinde has to face the consequences of this move. "I will teach him a proper lesson", Kadu warned.

Mumbai: Coming down

heavily on the Chief Minis-

**By Suyash Padate** 

Patel recently deserted Kadu's party and joined Shiv Sena led by Eknath Shinde. Upset by this move Prahar Janshakti chief virtually lambasted Shinde. When contacted he said, "Patel has gone, I don't care. But in a way Shinde behaved with me and my party and played politics is not fair. Now it's my turn. I will teach him such a lesson that he will repent for his move"

"Everyone has a political interest, so is Patel. May he be happy there. You watch what happens during the election. We have powerful candidates and they will contest and win. Shinde's party will receive a major setback. I am not going to sit quietly. The CM played

#### Bachchu Kadu, Leader, Prahar Janshakti Party

his innings and my innings will begin," he added.

Kadu along with Maharashtra Swaraj Party leader Chhatrapati Sambhajiraje and Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana leader Raju Shetty and other small parties have come together to form the Parivartan Mahashakti Aghadi. This alliance has announced to contest assembly elections independently. Kadu, a member of the state legislative assembly, is prime architect of this alliance. He received a major jolt when one of his MLA quit the party.

A poster of Rajkumar Patel's meeting is going viral, in which the photo of Bachu Kadu and the name

of the party has disappeared. Instead, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's photo is seen on Patel's graphics banner. Rajkumar Patel is the Legislative Assembly member from Dharani (Melghat) constit-

district. Significantly, Kadu's has directly warned Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. This has not gone down well in the Shiv Sena's rank and file. Kadu's statement that Shinde played the game, now it will prove dangerous for them, has raised many eyebrows. So far no reaction from Shinde camp but the temperature in the

uency of Amravati

political circle has started souring.

Mumbai: The Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Sunday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Maharashra Government to develop a National Centre of Sports Excellence in Mumbai.

The MoU signing comes in the wake of Maharashtra Government's recent decision to allocate land at Akurli, Malad and Vadhavan in Kandivali to SAI for the establishment of National Centre of Excellence. SAI a plans to develop modern sports infrastructure of international standards at the said land parcel of 37 acres which has been leased for 30 years at the rate of Re. 1 per annum

The MoU was signed in the presence of union minister and local Lok Sabha MP Piyush Goyal. On this occasion, MLC Pravin Darekar, MLA Atul Bhatkhalkar, Pandurang Chate, Regional Director, SAI & Vishnu Kant Tiwari. Secretary, SAI were present.

day countered Prime Minister Narendra Modi's accusation that the MVA government stalled the Mumbai Metro 3 line work, saying they were not against development but wanted to save the Aarey forest.

Raut also hit back at the PM for claiming that the Congress, a partner in the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), wants to contest polls from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs. PM Modi should also talk about drug busts in Gujarat, he said.

During his visit to Maharashtra on Saturday, Modi said the Uddhav Thackerayled MVA government only knew to stall work. "The Mumbai Metro 3 line work was stopped due to ego and taxpayers' money was wasted as the cost of the project escalated by Rs 14,000 crore," he said

The MVA, which comprises the Congress, Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP), also put hurdles in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train and Atal Setu projects and stopped water supply and

irrigation schemes in the state, Modi said.

Responding to a question about Modi's remarks, Raut said, "Sena (UBT) wanted to save the forest cover in the Aarey area of Mumbai. We never opposed to any development work."

The MVA government had objected to the Metro-3 car shed at Aarey on the ground that it would damage the green patch.

On the allegations against Congress over drugs, the Sena (UBT) leader said, "Modi has been in power for ten years. How can he even level such allegations against Congress? Was he sitting idle (and not taking action) for ten years?'

The Rajya Sabha member region on Saturday. said the more Modi campaigns in Maharashtra, the ment over it," he asked.

will likely be held in November.

BJP and its allies Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar-headed NCP are partners in the ruling Mahavuti coalition in the state. "More than Rs 3.5 lakh

crore worth of drugs have been seized at the Mundra port in Gujarat. Why does Modi not speak about the drugs found at the Adanicontrolled port," he asked.

cabinet, he claimed.

Cabinet minister Sanjay

Rathod has faced allega-

tions of being responsible

for the death of a young

woman in Pune but he is al-

lowed to share the dais with

PM Modi. said Raut. refer-

ring to the PM's visit to

Washim in the Vidarbha

No casualty was report-The Sena (UBT) alleged that a drug ring kingpin ed in the incident which named Lalit Patil had mantook place on Saturday night, he said, adding the aged to escape from Pune's state-run Sassoon Hospital fire was later doused. despite being in police cus-The blaze erupted at tody. The drug racket has 10.21 pm on Saturday at links with people in Chief Bharat Industrial Estate in Minister Eknath Shinde's Sewri area, the official said.

It was a 'level-two' (major) fire and was confined to two shops on the third floor of the structure, he said.

Fire engines, water tankers, ambulances and other assistance were rushed to the spot.

The blaze was extinguished at 1.57 am on Sunday, the official said.

"Why is there no com-The cause of the fire was yet to be ascertained.

#### **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

"Nehru wrote the book while in jail. After he was released, he revised his comments and also apologised. But Fadnavis has still not apologised for the



collapse of Chhatrapati Shivaji's statue in Malvan. He should tell us when he will apologise."

> Nana Patole, President, State Congress

## You have to fight for yourself for growth: Shriya

#### **By Komal Panchamatia**

Mumbai: She has web series such as "Mirzapur", "Guilty Minds", "The Broken News" and "Taaza Khabar" to her credit and Shriya Pilgaonkar says she's now gunning for the big screen, hoping to star in a Sanjay Leela Bhansali period drama

One of the most recognisable faces on OTT, Shriya started her career with the 2013 Marathi film "Ekulti Ek", directed by her father Sachin Pilgaonkar.

The actor, also known for movies across languages "Un plus une", "Fan", and "House Arrest", has two feature films in the pipeline which will be announced soon

"Ideally, I want to keep a balance, which is why today, I'm focusing more on films now. That's perhaps a medium that I've not done enough of or it's not come too much my way... I've been wanting to dance on screen. "I want to do that one big

cinematic period drama, out-an-out all guns blazing,



Sanjay Leela Bhansali film because a lot of my work has been rooted in reality. I want to experience Bollywood masala larger-than-life

films. That is every actor's dream," she told PTI.

It is an exciting time for her, said the 35-year-old, who is ready to get out of her comfort zone.

"You have to take risks and fight for yourself for growth. It's not like things are laid down on a plate. I'm also working with people to build ideas to develop stories for myself.

"Recently, I was on the jury of the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles. I met young writers, aspiring filmmakers, and wonderful ac-

tors and it made me realise that you have to take creative control and create the path for yourself.

Shriya currently stars in the second season of "Taaza Khabar", in which she reprised her role of the sex worker Madhu, whom she described as a dignified and

spunky woman. She credited the Disney+ Hotstar show, fronted by YouTuber-actor Bhuvan Bam, for letting her try her hand at comedy years after "Ekulti Ek".

"Earlier comedians were

stereotyped, but today, the definition of comedy has expanded. Maybe it's subtle, sometimes it's conversational. It may not be slapstick every single time, but I enjoy comedy. I want to do more genres like dark comedies, which are exciting.' "I'm lucky that I didn't

come into the industry just because my parents were there. I honed and trained myself, and that is something I value. I didn't take it for granted, it was an organic way of coming (into the industry)." -PTI

## BUSINESS

## Status quo on interest rate likely

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank is unlikely to cut the benchmark interest rate in its forthcoming bi-monthly monetary policy review later in the week as retail inflation is still a cause of concern, and there is a possibility of the Middle East crisis deteriorating further, impacting crude oil and commodity prices, say experts.

Earlier this month, the government reconstituted the Reserve Bank's ratesetting panel -- Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). The reconstituted panel, with three newly appointed external members, will commence its maiden meeting on Monday. MPC Chairman RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das will reveal the outcome of the three-day discussion on Wednesday (October 9)

The government has tasked the central bank to ensure that Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

In the current context, experts feel that the RBI may not follow the US Federal Reserve, which lowered the benchmark rates by 50 basis points, and the central banks of some developed

**The Reserve Bank** of India (RBI) has kept the repo or short-term lending rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent since February 2023, and experts think some easing could only be possible in December.



#### The unchanged repo rate

nations, which have reduced the interest rates. "We do not expect any

change in the repo rate or stance by MPC. The reason is that inflation for September and October will be above 5 per cent, and the present low inflation is due to the base effect. Besides, core inflation is inching upwards." said Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda.

Further, the recent Iran-Israel imbroglio can intensify, and there is uncertainty here, he said.

"Hence, the status quo is the most likely option even for new members Inflation forecast may be lowered by 10-20 bps and no change in GDP forecast likely," said Sabnavis

The central bank last hiked the reporate to 6.5 per cent in February 2023 and since then, it has held the rate at the same level.

ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said that given the undershooting in the initial first quarter GDP growth relative to the MPC's forecast and the likely sizeable undershooting in the second quarter CPI inflation print as well, "we believe a stance change to neu-



tral may be appropriate in the October 2024 policy review".

This could be followed by a shallow rate-cutting cycle of 25 bps each in December 2024 and February 2025, she added.

The RBI kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent in its August bi-monthly review amid risks from higher food inflation. This was the ninth con-

secutive MPC meeting, which decided to maintain the status quo on the rate front.

SBM Bank India Head Treasury Mandar Pitale believed that the MPC has persistently advocated a restrictive policy until inflation aligns durably to-

wards the 4 per cent target. "With the unfavourable base effect taking the next couple of CPI prints near 5 per cent plus or minus, it will pose a major challenge for MPC to start easing from the October meeting," Pitale said, adding that the MPC is

also expected to deliberate upon the global factors like growth-inflation behaviour

in developed economies. The government has appointed Ram Singh, Saugata Bhattacharya, and Nagesh Kumar as external members of the MPC. They have replaced Ashima Goyal, Shashanka Bhide, and Jayanth R Varma

#### Jewellery brands opt for franchise

#### **By Correspondent**

Mumbai: Indian jewellery retail brands are increasingly opting for franchisee models to expand their retail footprint, according to a report by a domestic brokerage house.

"Organized jewellers were earlier following the COCO (company owned company operated) operating model, and would open 10-15 stores annually: however, they are now increasingly adopting the franchise model FOFO (franchise owned franchise operated) to expand in Tier III & IV centers and take advantage of strong demand there," said the Systematix Institutional Equities report quoting an industry expert.

The franchise model allows them to open more than twice as many stores compared to COCO, without taking on debt, the report said. The Indian jewellery market, worth USD 90 billion consisting of 90 percent gold and 10 percent diamonds, is experiencing a 12 percent compounded annual growth with the organized sector now forming 20 percent of the jewellery industry

Factors like stock market volatility, wedding season, and economic stability have fueled gold demand and the margin differential between company owned and franchise models is around 4-6 percent.

According to the management of Kalyan Jewellers, which has a successful track record in creating substantial demand for franchise stores both inventory and store capex are being done by the franchise partners in -PTI : the second phase.

## **INVESTMENT MATTERS** Why buying high P/E ratio stocks is risky?



By Mangesh Kulkarni

he Indian stock markets have generated significant wealth for investors over the past 3-4 years. The Nifty50 index has seen a return of 48.5 per cent over this period. Similarly, the Nifty smallcap 100 and Nifty midcap 150 indices have shown impressive returns of 76.6 per cent and 96.8 per cent respectively during the same timeframe. However, some individual stocks have underperformed the broader markets. The primary reason for this underperformance is often attributed to their high valuation

To begin with, let's look at the Price to Earnings (P/E) ratio, which is a key valuation metric. This ratio provides insight into how much investors are paying for each dollar of a company's earnings, with higher ratios indicating a more expensive stock. Generally, stocks with a P/E ratio below 15 are considered value stocks, those between 15 and 25 are seen as fairly valued, and those above 25 are deemed expensive. Now, let's examine the stocks in the Nifty 500 index that have significantly fallen short of the index's performance over the last 3 years.

Out of around 500 stocks in Nifty500 index, about 25 have either seen no return or have returned very little. Prominent examples include Bata, Asian Paints, Metropolis, Star Health, Mphasis, SBI Cards, and Jubilant Foodworks, all

of which had a P/E ratio above 25 in September 2021. This data suggests that investing in high P/E stocks can be a risky move, as these stocks often lag behind the overall market

While the P/E ratio shouldn't be the sole consideration for investment, it's undeniably a crucial one. Investors should also look at other



Stock	3 years return	P/E ratio (Sept 2021)
Asian Paints	0%	94.8
Metropolis	-19.3%	64.1
Mphasis	-4.4%	48.8
SBI Cards	-22.9%	106.2
Jubilant Foodworks	-15.4%	143.7
		Source - Screener

financial ratios such as Return on Equity (ROE), Return on Capital Employed (RoCE), and Debt to Equity (D/E) ratio in conjunction with the P/E ratio. Stocks that show consistent profit growth, a healthy ROE, low debt, and a reasonable P/E ratio are more likely to generate above-average returns in the stock market.

## Bhavish Agarwal, Kunal Kamra spar over service quality

New Delhi: A war of words broke out between Ola founder Bhavish Agarwal and stand-up comedian Ku-

over the after sales and service quality of the company's electric scooters. It started when Kamra

to of Ola's gigafactory, by putting a picture of several Ola Electric scooters parked together seemingly

**SBI plans** to increase headcount

New Delhi: The country's biggest lender State Bank of India (SBI) intends to recruit about 10,000 new employees during the current



nal Kamra on Sunday on responded to a post on X by social media platform X

Agarwal, who posted a pho-

#### Kunal Kamra



 $D^{
m o}$  Indian consumers have a voice? Do they deserve this? Two wheelers are many daily wage workers lifeline.

Is this how Indians will get to using EV's? Anyone who has an issue with OLA electric leave your story below tagging all.

Give a total refund to anyone who wants to return their OLA EV & who's purchased it in the last four months. People not being able to get to their workplace need your accountability. Show your customers that you truly care.

waiting for servicing.

#### Bhavish Agarwal

-PTI



 $\mathbf{S}$  ince you care so much come and help us out! I'll even pay more than you earned for this paid tweet or from your failed comedy career. Or else sit quiet and let us focus on fixing the issues for the real customers.

Chot lagi? Dard hua? Aaja service center. Bahut kaam Hai. I will pay better than your flop shows pay you.

We have enough programs for our customers if they face service delays. If you were a genuine one, you would have known

connectivity.

financial year to meet its general banking requirement and foster its technical prowess

The bank has invested significantly in technology to provide seamless customer service as well as to strengthen the resilience of its digital channels.

"We are strengthening our workforce, both on the technology side as well as on the general banking side. We have recently announced around 1.500 technology people recruitment both at the entry level and slightly at the higher level."

#### 2.32.296

Total staff strength of SBI 22,542 No of SBI branches across the country as of March 2024 65.000 No of SBI ATMs

85.000 No of SBI business correspondents

50 crore No of SBI customers



A man sailing a small boat plucks lotus flowers from a water body for sale in a wholesale market during the festive season at Bahiri in Birbhum district, West Bengal on Sunday. Pic: PT

## Priyanka slams govt over IMPCL 'privatisation'

New Delhi: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday slammed the Modi government over the reported plans to privatise the Indian Medicines Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited, and wondered what could be its motive other than "filling the coffers of selected friends". The Congress general secretary's remarks come amid reports that the government's plan to divest the pharmaceutical company has sparked concern among several local residents, whose livelihoods are likely to get affected.

What is the government's intention behind selling the profit-making Mini Ratna pharmaceutical company, Priyanka Gandhi asked. "Indian Medicines Pharmaceutical Corporation Limited (IMPCL) located in 1978 by the Central and state governments together," she said in her post in Hindi.

It is a major factory of Ayurveda and Unani medicines which supplies medicines across the country Mohaan, Almora, Uttaraand abroad, Priyanka Gankhand was established in dhi pointed out.

## Hotel rooms to see robust demand

#### By Correspondent

Mumbai: Hotel rooms in Mumbai are expected to see robust demand for the remaining month of the current financial year due to strong wedding business and release of pent-up demand impacted by the elections and weather disruptions in the preceding quarter, said a report by a domestic brokerage house. Rates have started rising

back to near high single digits and early double digits post the muted perfor-

mance in the first quarter (Apr-Jun) as demand continues to remain strong, said the report by Antique Stock Broking.

During the previous financial year, the hotel industry witnessed a rate growth of 20 percent for large hotel chains such as IHCL, Marriott, and EIH in India, and the momentum is expected to remain solid on the rates front in 2024-25 as well.

According to rating grow by approximately 8-9 agency - CareEdge - the Inpercent, building on the dian hospitality sector is high base of the previous

currently experiencing an vear.

India currently has upcycle, driven by favouraaround 166,000 branded hoble demographics, robust tel rooms/keys and over domestic demand (with supply clearly lagging bethe next five years, the inhind demand growth), industry is expected to add creased investments, and approximately 55,000 ongoing improvements in rooms, with supply regisinfrastructure and tering a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4.5-Revenue Per Available 5.5% during this period.

Room (RevPAR) registered The segment mix is shifting towards Upper Mida strong growth of 14 percent during 2023-24 and for scale and Midscale Econo-2024-25 and is expected to my, with over 60 percent of new supply expected to be added in these segments. This growth is driven by



growing middle class, a significant uptick in business travel (especially from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)), and an expanding scope of business activities into Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 cities, the

rating agency said. Over the past five years, India's travel and tourism sector has contributed approximately 5 percent to the country's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with still relatively low penetration.

#### **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

"If you look at cloud services as a segment, India is one of the fastest-growing countries for Google. We are working with multiple stakeholders



who are essentially using Google Cloud services and then over a period of time, this usage has been incrementally growing."

Bikram Singh Bedi, Vice President, Google Cloud India

several factors, including a

#### myperfectvoice@gmail.com @my perfectvoice WWW.THEPERFECTVOICE.IN

#### **THE PERFECT VOICE** MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 **MUMBAI**

## NATIONAL

## Sonam Wangchuk sits on fast at Ladakh Bhawan

New Delhi: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on Sunday sat on a fast at the Ladakh Bhawan where he was staving after the protesters were denied permission to stage the stir for Ladakh's Sixth Schedule status at Jantar Mantar.

Wangchuk, in a brief interaction with media before starting the fast, said they were forced to stage the protest at the Ladakh Bhawan after failing to find any venue for their stir. The climate activist said

he has been in a "virtual detention" at the Ladakh Bhawan since they were released by the Delhi Police on the night of October 2. On Sunday, he stepped out of the Ladakh Bhawan around 4 pm and announced he was going to sit on a fast.

Soon after, he, and others, sat close to the gate of the Ladakh Bhawan, which has been turned into a fortress with police deployment and limited entries being allowed

The climate activist, who led a march to Delhi demanding sixth schedule status for Ladakh, said they were assured of a meeting with top leadership -- President, prime minister, or home minister -- but they have not yet been given an appointment, forcing them to sit on fast.

"When we ended our hunger strike at Rajghat on October 2, it was on the basis of the assurance that we would get an appointment from the Home Ministry to meet the country's senior



Around 18 people, including Wangchuk, sat close to the gate of the Ladakh Bhawan, singing the Hindi version of 'We Shall Overcome' and raised slogans such as 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai", "Jai Ladakh " and "Save Ladakh, Save Himalaya".

strike.'

were ready for it.

"We even said we can sit

at Jantar Mantar from 10

am to 5 pm and then we'll

were not given any venue.

is the bhawan of the people

of Ladakh where I was in

virtual detention though it

was not full detention. So

we thought since we are not

being allowed to go out, we

Wangchuk said that he

and several protesters

walked over 1,000 km over

32 days to Delhi to meet the

Prayagraj (UP): Sale and

Yogi Adityanath said.

Acharya Bara.

-PTI

country's leadership.

will sit on protest here."

"We were told that we would be given appointments with the President, PM and home minister by October 4. We even called off a 'jan sabha' (public meeting) that we were to hold at Rajghat because we did not want any clash."

Sonam Wangchuk

leaders. We just want to meet our politicians, get assurance and return to Ladakh," Wangchuk told

Wangchuk said, "We just wanted assurance from our leaders and then return to Ladakh. However, it was not carried out after we va-

#### **Performer dies** during Ramlila

New Delhi: A 56-year-old man died after he suffered a heart attack on stage while performing the role of Lord Rama at a Ramlila in Vishwakarma Nagar of Shahdara, police on Sunday said.

According to police, the deceased, identified as Sushil Kaushik, was a property dealer.

Rahul Kaushik, a family member, told PTI that Sushil was one of the founding members of the "Jai Shri Ramlila" committee.

"Uncle had been performing the role of Raja Ram since 1987. He also used to sing," he said. Sushil was performing

Sita's 'swayamvar' scene which required him to break the bow, however, while singing a song, he felt a sudden chest pain and went backstage, where he collapsed, Rahul said.

cated Rajghat and put an end to our hunger strike. So, we were forced to once again observe a hunger He said when police told them that protest at Jantar Mantar is allowed only between 10 am to 5 pm, they

His wife and son, present there, rushed him to a nearby hospital, where he was put on a ventilator

relocate to a designated After one hour, he was place but they rejected that declared dead, Rahul said. as well... We asked them to Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the death give us any place that they could be linked with COVID find appropriate but we vaccine. "So we thought that this

"It is a common discussion that after the COV-ID-19 vaccine, such cases are continuously appearing in India, where young people are dying of heart attacks while walking," he said on X in Hindi.

A video of the incident widely circulated on social media showed Sunil performing the scene and then rushing backstage.

## Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) volunteers during the Vijayadashami Utsav in Patna on Sunday. Hindus must unite for their security: Bhagwat

unite for its security by eliminating differences in language, caste and regional disputes.

He also underlined that the functioning of the RSS is not mechanical but idea-based. Addressing a 'Swayam-

sevak Ekatrikaran' event in Rajasthan's Baran on Saturday evening, Bhagwat said the Hindus consider everyone as their own and embrace everyone.

"We have lived here since ancient times even though the term Hindu came later. Hindus embrace everyone. They live in harmony through continuous dia-

logue," he said. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief stressed the "Hindu society must unite for its security

by eliminating language, caste and regional differ-

He also stressed that discipline in conduct, duty towards the state and dedication to goals are essential qualities.

"A society is not just formed by individuals and their families, but by considering the comprehensive concerns through which one can attain spiritual fulfilment," said Bhagwat.

"The functioning of the RSS is not mechanical but idea based. It is an unparalleled organisation whose values trickle down from the group leaders to the volunteers, their families and to the society at large," he added.

Urging the volunteers to maintain widespread contact within communities, the RSS chief said that efforts should be made to alleviate community defi-

ciencies by empowering the society.

"The focus should be on social harmony, justice, health, education, and selfreliance. The volunteers should always remain active and foster harmony, environmental awareness, indigenous values, and civic consciousness within families, which are the ba-

sic components of a society," said Bhagwat. The RSS chief said India's global reputation and standing is attributed to its strength and the safety of its expatriates is assured only when their nation be-

comes strong. A total of 3,827 RSS volunteers attended the event. The event was also attended by senior RSS functionaries Ramesh Agarwal, Jagdish Singh Rana, Ramesh Chand Mehta and Vaidva Radheshyam Garg, among others.

#### **Muslim cleric** says no to garba

Pic: PTI

Ratlam (MP): A Muslim cleric in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam city has appealed to his community members to stay away from garba (folk dance) events during the ongoing Navratri festival, stating that it goes against their faith.

"I request Muslim young people, mothers, sisters and daughters not to visit fairs and watch garba events. Instead, I call upon you to stay at home keeping in mind the situation," said 'Shahar Qazi' (city Muslim chief cleric) Syed Ahmed Ali in a written message to his community.

Such activities are forbidden in Islam, he said.

The cleric told PTI on Sunday that he made the request "keeping in mind the current situation".

In Ratlam city, the organisers of many garba events have banned the entry of non-Hindus at their venues. They have also put up banners at entry points conveying the decision.

## **Dozens booked** for pelting stones

day after some people who

Saharanpur (UP): Police and deployed additional were put on alert on Sun- police personnel to maintain order. he said



## Rs 1,814 cr MD seized from Bhopal factory

Ahmedabad: Authorities have seized mephedrone (MD) drug valued at Rs 1,814 crore and its raw materials from a factory on the outskirts of Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal and arrested two persons in this

located in Bagroda indus-

**POCSO Act in** 

girl's case

Kolkata: West Bengal

trial estate near Bhopal on Saturday, they said. This is the largest illegal

factory ever busted by the Gujarat ATS. The unit had the capacity to manufacture 25 kg of MD drug per day, the ATS said in a

national market, the ATS said.

(40), were arrested during

Bhopal," the ATS said. Two persons, identified They took the factory on as Amit Chaturvedi (57) rent six-seven months ago, and Sanval Prakash Bane it said.

Three-four months back. they collected the raw material and equipment and started manufacturing MD and selling it, the ATS said. In addition to the contraband, around 5,000 kg of raw materials, comprising chemicals and equipment, used for the production of MD, including grinders, motors, glass flasks, heaters and other apparatus, were also found during the raid, it said.

a factory on the outskirts of

#### Kota: Asserting that India is a Hindu nation, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has ences and disputes" said the Hindu society must

gathered to protest against priest Narsinghanand Saraswati's remarks on Prophet Muhammad pelted stones at the Sheikhpura police post, officers said.

A case has been registered against 21 named and 40-50 unknown individuals under various sections of the law for pelting stones, they said.

A group of people took to the streets outside the police poist in Sheikhpura on Sunday to protest against Narasinghanand's remarks.

Superintendent of Police (City) Abhimanyu Manglik said, "The incident occurred when members of the Muslim community gathered at the Sheikhpura Qadeem post to submit a memorandum. Amid the crowd. some unruly elements began throwing stones at the police post, creating a tense situation in the area."

Police responded promptly, dispersing those involved in pelting stones

Manglik confirmed that no one was injured in the incident and that approximately a dozen individuals have been taken into custody.

Police are now identifying the perpetrators through videos of the incident and have issued a high alert in the district.

Two FIRs have already been registered against him -- one in Ghaziabad and another in Amravati, Maharashtra.

His aides have claimed that Narsinghanand has been detained over allegations of making objectionable remarks against Prophet Muhammad during a programme held at Hindi Bhavan of Ghaziabad on September 29 and his whereabouts are not known.

Police has not confirmed his detention yet.

Heavy police deployment has been made outside the Dasna Devi temple in Ghaziabad where he resides to avoid any untoward incident.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath performs 'Ganga pujan' during his visit to review preparations for the 'Kumbh Mela 2025' in Prayagraj on Sunday. Pic: PTI

## No meat, liquor within **Kumbh** periphery

the Sanatan society.

consumption of meat and He said the government liquor will be strictly prois making efforts to clean hibited within the periphthe rivers, but the cooperation of the sadhu commuery of Maha Kumbh Mela area, Uttar Pradesh CM nity is also expected.

Adityanath said land will soon be reserved in Praya-Aditvanath made the announcement in a meeting graj for the "samadhi" of he held with representathe sadhus who will attain "salvation" during the tives of 13 Akharas, Khak Chowk, Dandi Bara, and Maha Kumbh. He requested the sadhus to not allow The CM said it is necesanyone to stay in their ashsary to impose the ban in rams until they are duly view of the sentiments of verified.

connection, officials said on statement Sunday.

Total 907.09 kg of mephedrone, both in solid and liquid forms, was seized in the raid and search operation carried out jointly by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Delhi, at the factory

A process was underway to manufacture a large amount of the contraband when the raid was carried out, it said.

During the operation, authorities seized 907.09 kg of mephedrone, both in solid and liquid forms, with an estimated value of Rs 1,814.18 crore in the inter-

During their preliminary interrogation, it came to light that Bane was earlier arrested in 2017 in a MD drug seizure case at Amboli in Maharashtra and served five years in jail.

the raid, it said.

"After his release, he conspired with co-accused Chaturvedi to illegally manufacture and sell MD to earn substantial financial profits. and decided to rent

# AAP leader shot, Akali leaders booked

block development and panchayat officer in Fazilka's Jalalabad area on Saturday, they said.

Brar, who is the candidate for the post of Sarpanch from Muhammad Wala village, sustained a bullet injury in his chest. He was rushed to the

Civil Hospital in Jalalabad but later shifted to Ludhiana.

AAP MLA from Jalalabad Jagdeep Kamboj alleged that Shiromani Akali Dal leader Vardev Singh Noni Mann allegedly fired at Brar. The FIR was lodged on a

complaint filed by Gurpreet Singh, who has filed his nomination for the post of Sarpanch of village Chak Suhelewala.

Gurpreet, in his complaint, alleged that he was the target of the attackers but the bullet hit Brar.

-PTI

**QUOTE OF THE DAY** 

"The cases of rape are increasing because of the absence of timely action. The inept handling of the rape and murder that took place in Kar



Medical College, by the West Bengal government, is acting as a fillip to similar gruesome incidents getting repeated in the state."

C.V. Ananda Bose, Governor, West Bengal

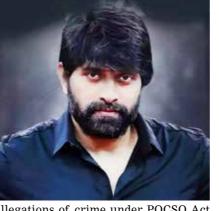
## Jani Master's National Award suspended

New Delhi: The National Film Awards Cell of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has suspended the National Film Award to be presented to choreographer Jani Master citing allegations of sexual assault.

The authorities also withdrew the invitation to the choreographer to attend the 70th National Film Awards in New Delhi on Tuesday.

Jani Master, whose real name is Shaik Jani Basha, would have been felicitated at the ceremony for his work on the song "Megham Karukkatha" from 2022's Tamil movie "Thiruchitrambalam".

In the note, dated October 4 (Friday), the National Film Awards Cell said the letter to attend the National Film Awards was extended to the choreographer "before the



months.

allegations of crime under POCSO Act came to light".

"In view of the seriousness of the allega-

tion and the matter being subjudice, the Competent Authority has decided to suspend the National Film Award of the Best Choreography for the Year 2022 to Shri Shaik Jani Basha for the film Thiruchitrambalam until further orders

"Hence, the invitation extended to Shri Shaik Jani Basha for the 70th National Film Awards Function to be held at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on 8.10.24 is hereby withdrawn," read the note, signed by deputy director Indrani Bose.

A city court on Thursday granted interim bail to Jani Master after he filed the bail application to attend the National Film Awards.

Last month, a woman, who worked as Jani Master's assistant, in a complaint with the police, alleged that the choreographer had sexually assaulted her in 2020 during a work trip to Mumbai and continued sexual harassment and also threatened her not to disclose it to anyone.

On September 15, the Narsingi Police registered a case against the choreographer under sections 376(2)(n), 506, 323 of IPC (related to rape, causing hurt, and other offenses).

On recording her statement, it was disclosed that she was a minor at the time of the alleged offence. Therefore, a relevant section of the POCSO Act, 2012 was added, police said.

Jani Master was apprehended in Goa by the Cyberabad police on September 19 and brought to Hyderabad and produced before a city court which had remanded him to 14-day judicial custody.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday directed the police to register the al-Chandigarh: Shiromaleged rape-murder case of ni Akali Dal leaders Vara 10-year-old girl in South dev Singh Noni Mann, 24 Parganas district under his brother Nardev Sinthe POCSO Act, and ensure gh Bobby Mann and 15that the culprits get capital 20 unidentified persons

punishment within three were booked for attempt to murder in connection Banerjee, while speaking with an attack on a local at the Kolkata Police Body AAP leader in Punjab's Guard Lines after virtually Fazilka district, police inaugurating several Dursaid on Sunday. Aam Aadmi Party leader

ga Pujas, asserted that crime has no colour, caste Mandeep Singh Brar was shot at outside the office of or religion.

## ECOLOGY

THE PERFECT VOICE MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 MUMBAI

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## **Nature's Fury Takes High Toll**



Women wade through floodwaters in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand on Sunday.

Pics: AP/PTI Residents of the waterlogged Kendriya Vihar Apartments are seen after heavy rainfall in Bengaluru.

# L&T eyes role in NASA's successor to International Space Station

New Delhi: After powering IS-RO's space missions for more than five decades, India's largest engineering firm Larsen and Toubro has now set its eyes on the international market, particularly the next International Space Station.

L&T was earlier in talks with Jeff Bezo's Blue Origin for supplving orbital launch capabilities and space habitat solutions but the negotiations ran into some difficulties.

"Some remnants of that dis-

cussion continue till today but now with NASA. So, we are also hopeful that when the US requires its next space station, Indian firms will have a role to play in the supply chain," Vikas Khita, Vice President, L&T Precision Engineering and Systems, told PTI.

Khita, who was speaking on the sidelines of an industry meet organised by Geospatial World, said the firm was also interested in building space ports, space parks and manufacturing clus-



ters, areas which are expected to get a boost considering the government's opening up of the space sector for private participation in 2020.

"In commercial terms, we are

India is set to play a significant role in the future space economy, aiming to capture about eight per cent of the global market by 2033. The global space industry is projected to be worth around USD 1.8 trillion by 2035.

India's space economy is also expected to grow from its current value of around USD 8.4 billion to USD 44 billion by 2033.

looking at a fivefold increase in turnover by 2033 of the space economy and a large part of this increase is to come from the upstream and the downstream sectors," he said.

L&T has been involved in the production of a range of hardware for every project of ISRO, including the Chandrayaan, Gaganyaan, and Mars Orbiter missions.

#### Six children drown while bathing

Sasaram (Bihar): Six children drowned while bathing in Sone river in Bihar's Rohtas district on Sunday, officials said

One child was missing while another was rescued weather patterns and re-

producing five Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV), marking the industry's maiden foray in building rockets for the space agency. The engineering firm is also learnt to have evinced interest in

The Hindustan Aeronautics

Limited-L&T consortium is also

the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV), as ISRO is all set to transfer technology of the newly developed rocket to the private industry.

> **Climate change hits** Kashmir's apple crop

Srinagar: The Kashmir ally dry conditions with valley's apple production high temperatures, folhas witnessed a significant lowed by an unexpectedly decline this year, primarily wet and cool April. due to unprecedented

A prolonged dry spell then set in, severely im-

**UP villagers kill** sixth wolf

Bahraich (UP): The last had killed a wolf in Taone of the pack of six wolves that had created terkilled by the locals in Ta-

machpur village under Ramgaon police station of ror in Mahsi tehsil has been Mahsi tehsil. When we reached there, we found the dead wolf and the bodies of a goat. There were injury marks on the wolf's body and it was bleeding," Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ajit Pratap Singh told PTI.





rescued Gopeshwar: Two foreign women mountaineers, who were stranded at a height of 6,015 metres on way to the Chaukhamba III peak in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, were rescued on Sunday

morning. The mountaineers -- Michelle Theresa Dvorak from the USA and Fav Jane Manners from the United Kingdom -- were stranded since October 3. Two IAF helicopters began a search operation to trace them on Friday. They were joined by mountaineering trained State Disaster Response Force personnel on Saturday to assist in the -PTI  $\stackrel{!}{:}$  operations.

machpur village of this district, officials on Sunday said.

The wolf killed late Saturday night under the Ramgaon police station area is a female and not lame as suspected earlier, they said.

The wolf's body has been sent for post-mortem, the officials said.

"Late Saturday night we got information that people

#### Two killed in animal attacks

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP): Two children were killed in separate incidents of attacks by wild animals in this district, police said on Sunday. The first incident took place in Shardanagar forest range of South Kheri forest division. A wild animal, alleged to be a leopard, took away a 12-year-old child named Sajeb of Gangabehar village while he was pushing his father's bicycle on Saturday evening. The animal killed the child and his dead body was later recovered from a sugarcane field, about 500 meters away from the village, on Saturday night.

"On closer inspection, we found that the dead wolf was an adult female. When we inquired we found out that the wolf had entered the inhabited area and was

carrying away a goat.

Tourists play with snow after the higher reaches of Gulmarg received season's first snowfall at Apharwat on Sunday.

## 10 die in Meghalaya flash floods

Shillong: At least 10 people died, including seven of a family, in rain-induced flashfloods that ravaged Meghalaya's South Garo Hills district in the past 24 hours, officials said.

Incessant rainfall has triggered landslides in Gasuapara region of the district, they said on Saturday. The family of seven were

inside their home in the remote village of Hatiasia Songma when a landslide struck on Saturday, a senior official said The deceased include

three minors. Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma held a review meeting on the situation across the five districts of Garo Hills. He expressed deep sor-

row over the loss of lives, as three persons from Dalu and seven people from Hatiasia Songma were confirmed dead

Pic: PTI

Personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and SDRF have been deployed to carry out search and rescue operations in the worst-affected areas, they said.

by the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF).

"The incident took place in Tumba village when eight children were taking porting a stark 30 to 40 pera bath in Sone river in the cent reduction in apple morning. According to vilproduction across the lagers, the children slipped region. into deep waters," Rohtas District Magistrate Udita Singh told PTI.

"Police officials along with SDRF personnel launched a search operation. The SDRF personnel fished out six bodies and one child was still missing. One child was rescued and taken to a nearby hospital and he is out of danger," Singh added

Search operation is underway to trace the missing child, she said.

"All children were in the disrupted our traditional age group of 10-12 years. We growing season." are trying to ascertain the identity of the deceased. has manifested in various The bodies have been sent ways throughout the growfor post-mortem examinaing season. tion," the official added.

duced precipitation. The pacting fruit development impact is substantial, with during crucial growth the Kashmir Fruit Growstages ers and Dealers Union re-

Local farmers who once viewed climate change with scepticism, now find themselves at the forefront of its effects.

Beyond the quantitative The decline in both decline, farmers are grapquantity and quality has pling with a noticeable desent shockwaves through terioration in fruit quality, Jammu and Kashmir's agfurther compounding their ricultural economy

The apple industry, which employs thousands of families and contributes significantly to the region's economy, faces unprecedented challenges.

Orchards that once produced premium-grade apples are now yielding fruit that barely meets market standards

The combination of rising temperatures, irregular precipitation, and extreme weather events poses a fundamental threat to Kashmir's apple-growing tradition.

## **Death toll from Hurricane Helene rises to 227**

#### Helene is the deadliest hurricane to hit the mainland US since Katrina in 2005

#### **By Bruce Schreiner**

Frankfort (US): The death toll from Hurricane Helene inched up to 227 on Saturday as the grim task of recovering bodies continued more than a week after the monster storm ravaged the Southeast and killed people in six US states.

Helene came ashore on September 26 as a Category-4 hurricane and carved a wide swath of destruction as it moved northward from Florida, washing away homes, destroying roads and knocking out electricity and cellphone service for millions.

The number of deaths stood

at 225 on Friday; two more were recorded in South Carolina the following day. It was still unclear how many people were unaccounted for or missing, and the toll could rise even higher. Helene is the deadliest hurricane to hit the mainland US since Katrina in 2005. About half the victims were in North Carolina, while dozens more were killed in Georgia and South Carolina.

The city of Asheville, in the western mountains of North Carolina, was particularly battered. A week later, workers used brooms and heavy machinery to clean mud and dirt outside of New Belgium Brewing



Company, which lies next to the French Broad river and is among thousands of city businesses and households affected.

So far, North Carolinians have received more than USD 27 million in individual assistance approved by the Federal **Emergency** Management Agency, said MaryAnn Tierney, a regional administrator for the agency. More than 83,000 people have registered

Helene's raging floodwaters shocked mountain towns hundreds of miles inland and far from where the storm made landfall on Florida's Gulf Coast, including in the Tennessee mountains that Dolly Parton calls home.

for individual assistance, according to the office of Governor Roy Cooper.

In Buncombe County, where Asheville is located, FEMA-approved assistance has surpassed USD 12 million for survi-

vors, Tierney said on Saturday during a news briefing.

concerns.

"The situation is dire,"

said Bashir Ahmad Bashir

President of Kashmir Val-

ley Fruit Growers and

Dealers Association. "We

have seen production plum-

met by at least 30 per cent

for the second consecutive

year. The erratic weather

patterns have completely

The changing climate

March brought unusu-

"This is critical assistance that will help people with their immediate needs, as well as displacement assistance that helps them if they cannot stay in their homes," she said.

She encouraged residents impacted by the storm to register for disaster assistance.

"It is the first step in the recovery process," she said. "We can provide immediate relief in terms of serious needs assistance to replace food, water, medicines, other life safety, critical items, as well as displacement assistance if you cannot stay in your home.'

The country music star has announced a USD 1 million donation to the Mountain Ways Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to providing immediate assistance to Hurricane Helene flood victims.

In addition, her East Tennessee businesses as well as the Dollywood Foundation are combining efforts, pledging to match her donation to Mountain Ways with a USD 1 million contribution.

Parton said she feels a close connection to the storm victims because so many of them "grew up in the mountains just like I did".

THE PERFECT VOICE MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 MUMBAI

## Strike on mosque kills 19 as Israel bombs northern Gaza, southern Beirut



A man bangs a drum during a march as pro-Palestinian supporters rally in Sydney on Sunday.

**Deir Al-Balah:** An Israeli strike on a mosque in the Gaza Strip early Sunday killed at least 19 people, Palestinian officials said, as Israel intensified its bombardment of northern Gaza and southern Beirut in a widening war with Iran-allied militant groups across the region.

Displaced people were sheltering at the mosque that was struck near the main hospital in the central town of Deir al-Balah. A further four people were killed in a strike on a school sheltering displaced people near the town.

The Israeli military said Sta both strikes targeted militants, without providing ma evidence.

An Associated Press journalist counted the bodies at the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital morgue. Hospital records showed that the dead from the strike on the mosque were all men. Israel is still battling Ha-

Jabaliya mas in Gaza a vear after the group's attack on Isra-The Israeli military, meanwhile, announced a new el, and has opened a new air and ground offensive in front in Lebanon against Hezbollah, which has been Jabaliya, in northern trading fire with Israel Gaza, home to a densely populated refugee camp along the border since the war in Gaza began. Israel dating back to the 1948 war has also vowed to strike surrounding Israel's creation. It circulated photos Iran itself after Tehran launched a ballistic missile and video footage showing attack on Israel last week. a column of tanks heading The widening conflict toward the area.

risks drawing in the United States, which has provided crucial military and diplomatic support to Israel, as well as US-allied Arab countries that host American forces. Iran-allied mili-



Flames and smoke rise from an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, Beirut, Lebanon on early Sunday.

to see militants regroup. Israel reiterated its call, from the opening weeks of the war, for the complete evacuation of northern Gaza. Up to 300,000 people are estimated to have remained in the heavily destroyed north after earlier Israeli warnings that sent around a million fleeing to the south.

"We are in a new phase of the war," the military said in leaflets dropped over the area. "These areas are considered dangerous combat zones."

Palestinian residents reported heavy Israeli strikes across northern Gaza. The Civil Defence — first responders who operate under the Hamas-run government — said several homes and buildings had been hit

#### Macron responds to Netanyahu's accusations

French President Emmanuel Macron on Sunday reiterated his call for a partial arms embargo on Israel — a demand that prompted an angry response from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

In a written statement, Macron's office said he favours a halt to arms exports for use in Gaza because a ceasefire is needed "to stop the mounting violence, free the hostages, protect civilians and clear the way to the political solutions needed for the security of Israel and the whole Middle East."

Macron's earlier similar remarks led Netanyahu to release a video statement in which he called out the French president by name and referred to such calls as a "disgrace."

Macron's office insisted that "France is Israel's unfailing friend" and called Netanyahu's remarks "excessive."

the airstrikes and mourned

their relatives on social

media. Imad Alarabid said

in a Facebook post that an

and they were not able to reach them because of the bombardment. Residents posted about

#### Heavy bombardment of southern Beirut

GLOBAL

In Beirut, airstrikes lit up the skyline and loud explosions echoed across the southern suburbs, known as the Dahiyeh, throughout the night, as Israel struck what it said were Hezbollah militant sites.

Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said the area was hit by more than 30 strikes overnight, the heaviest bombardment since September 23 when Israel escalated its air campaign.

The targets included a gas station on the main highway leading to the Beirut airport and a warehouse for medical supplies, the agency said. Some of the overnight strikes set off a long series of explosions, suggesting that ammunition stores may have been hit.

Israel's military confirmed it was striking targets near Beirut and said about 30 projectiles had crossed from Lebanon into Israeli territory, with some intercepted. Hezbollah said it successfully targeted a group of Israeli soldiers in northern Israel "with a large rocket salvo, hitting them accurately." It was not possible to confirm the claim.

At least 1,400 Lebanese, including civilians, medics and Hezbollah fighters, have been killed and 1.2 million driven from their homes in less than two weeks. Israel says it aims to drive the militant group away from its border so that tens of thousands of Israeli citizens can return to their homes.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah, the strongest armed force in Lebanon, began firing rockets into Israel almost immediately after Hamas' October 7 attack, calling it a show of support for the Palestinians. Hezbollah and Israel's military have traded fire almost daily. Last week, Israel launched what it said was a limited ground operation into southern Lebanon after a series of attacks killed longtime Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and most of his top commanders. The fighting is the worst since Israel and Hezbollah fought a monthlong war in 2006. Nine Israeli soldiers have been killed in ground clashes that Israel says have killed 440 Hezbollah fighters.

airstrike on his home in Jabaliya killed a dozen family members, including his parents. Saeed Abu

Elaish, a Health Ministry medic, said he was wounded and bleeding. -AP

## Imran's party vows to continue protest

#### By Sajjad Hussain

#### Pope names 21 new cardinals

**Rome:** Pope Francis named 21 new cardinals Sunday, significantly increasing the size of the College of Cardinals and further cementing his



**Islamabad:** The situation remained tense in Pakistan's capital on Sunday as jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party vowed to continue its protest against the government, a day after violent clashes between security forces and his supporters that left one policeman dead and several others injured.

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party, in an overnight meeting, decided that the demonstration would go on until the release of Khan, who has been in jail since August last year.

The situation in Islamabad and neighbouring Rawalpindi, which witnessed the violent clashes on Saturday remained tense. However, there were no reports of violence in

n gradually. The mobile phone sers vices have also been rest stored in the two cities which had been suspended on Friday.

g The political committee of PTI decided that if Gandapur was arrested, senior party leader Azam Swati would lead the protest. If Swati is arrested, a new

The whereabouts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, who is also the protest leader, remained unknown. His government spokesman Muhammad Ali Saif on Saturday first claimed that Gandapur was "arrested", but later in a post on X said that the "KP CM has not been formally arrested".



Israeli forces encircled

Jabaliya as warplanes

struck militant sites inside,

the military said. Over the

course of the war, Israel

has carried out several

large operations there, only

the twin cities on Sunday, leader will be chosen to indicating that the situation was improving to the Dawn newspaper.

The political committee also criticised the disappearance of Gandapur. The committee warned that there would be 'serious repercussions' if he

nmittee was arrested. if Gan- Former National As-

to end the protest. "It was also decided that Azam Swati will lead the protest if Gandapur is arrested." -PTI mark on the group of prelates who will one day elect his successor.

They include a man who will be the oldest cardinal - Monsignor Angelo Acerbi, a 99-year-old retired Vatican diplomat who was once held hostage for six weeks in Colombia by leftist guerrillas — and the youngest - the 44-year-old head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Melbourne. Australia, Bishop Mykola Bychok, named in a nod to the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The new cardinals will get their red hats at a ceremony, known as a consistory, on Dec. 8, an important feast day on its own that officially kicks off the Christmas season in Rome. It will be Francis' 10th consistory to create new princes of the church and the biggest infusion of voting-age cardinals into the college in Francis' 11-year pontificate. Acerbi is the only one of the new intake who is over 80



Italian Police and demonstrators clash during a march in support of Palestinians in Rome on Saturday.

## N Korea, China mark 75th anniversary of ties

**Seoul:** The leaders of North Korea and China marked the 75th anniversary of their diplomatic relations on Sunday by exchanging messages that expressed hopes for stronger ties, as outsiders raised questions about their relationship.

n- The message exchange ly came as North Korea and Russia have been sharply expanding their cooperation while China apparently keeps its distance. Experts say that the level of exchanges and commemorative programs between North Korea and China in the coming months will provide a clue to the exact status of their ties.

Since North Korea and China established diplomatic ties on Oct. 6, 1949, their relationship has often been described as being "as close as lips and teeth." Peninsula. China, North Korea's big- But many observers say

China is reluctant to form a three-way, anti-West alliance with North Korea and Russia as it prefers a stable regional security environment to tackle numerous economic challenges and maintain relationships with Europe and its Asian neighbours. -AP

#### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Kamala Harris is a radical-left Marxist. She is a woman that is not respected in Congress. She was laughed at Congress. Nobody



thought she could win. They did a coup of Biden. Whether you like him or not, I am not a particularly big fan."

**Donald Trump,** Former President, US

## Musk accompanies Trump at rally

#### By Lalit K Jha

Washington: Former US president Donald Trump on Saturday returned to Butler, a city in Pennsylvania where he narrowly escaped an assassination bid 12 weeks ago, and addressed thousands of his supporters in this key battleground state, urging

them to elect him as the next president of the United States.

US Joined by high-profile figures like Tesla owner Elon Musk and his run-

ning mate, Senator J D Vance, Trump (78) made a passionate plea to "defeat" Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate in the November 5 presidential poll.

"We must stop her country-destroying regime, radical-left agenda once and for all. We cannot have it happen. So you must get out and you must vote," Trump said in Pennsylvania, which in this election cycle has emerged as a must-win situation for both candidates. Trump launched a scathing attack on Harris and accused her of being a failure on multiple fronts, including border security and economy. "She imposed a natural gas export ban on Pennsylvania, which is killing your energy workers and your pricing," he said.

The former president said if elected, on the first day of his presidency, he would seal the border and stop the migrant invasion into the country. "We will begin the largest deporta-

tion operation in the history of the United States," he said, adding that 2024 is the most important election in the history of the country.

In his brief speech, Musk said this is a mustwin situation for the country.

"President Trump must win to preserve the Constitution. He must win to preserve democracy in America. This is a must-win situation. So I have one ask for everyone in the audience, everyone who watchHe (Biden) got 14 million (1.4 crore) votes. If you believe in democracy or a system, he got 14 million votes. And she (Harris) got none. She was the first one out, 22 candidates, and she never made it to Iowa. She quit before Iowa, and now she is running. And that is okay. But, you know, we spent USD 150 million beating Biden, and as soon as he was down and out for the count, they said, let us take him out. We will give somebody else to run. Never happened before.

Donald Trump

es this video, everyone in the livestream. This one request is very important. Register to vote. And get everyone you know and everyone you do not know,

gest trading partner and

main aid provider, has been

suspected of avoiding fully

implementing U.N. sanc-

tions on North Korea and

sending clandestine aid

shipments to help its impov-

erished neighbor stay afloat

and continue to serve as a

bulwark against U.S. influ-

drag them to register to vote.... Then make sure they actually do vote. If they do not, this will be the last election. That is my prediction," he said. **-PTI** 

## **OPINION**

## **EDITORIAL Fractured Harmony**

ommunal tensions in Maharashtra are on the rise once again. The most recent flare-up in Amravati is a stark reminder of the fragile social harmony in the state. Twenty-one policemen were injured when a mob demanded action against a Hindu seer who made inflammatory remarks against the Prophet Mohammad in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad district. Although the police assured the crowd that an FIR had been filed against the seer, the protest escalated into violence, with stones being pelted at the police and damage caused to 10 police vans.

This is not the first time Amravati has witnessed communal tension linked to inflammatory remarks. In June 2022, a chemist named Umesh Kolhe was murdered in the city after sharing a social media post in support of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma, who had made controversial comments about Prophet Mohammad. The brutal killing shocked the nation and highlighted how quickly tensions can escalate into violence when religious sentiments are involved.

The tensions are not confined to Amravati. In Bhiwandi, Thane district, unrest erupted after a stone was allegedly thrown at a Ganesh idol during its immersion procession, sparking an altercation between communities. Such incidents of communal violence are getting increasingly frequent, with religious tensions ready to ignite at any provocation. These incidents reflect a growing communal rift that has been exacerbated by political and social factors. Both Hindu and Muslim groups in the state have been mobilizing in response to real or perceived slights, with protests frequently descending into violence.

In the first half of 2023 alone, Maharashtra saw at least seven incidents of communal unrest, triggered by processions, religious sites, and inflammatory social media posts, leading to violent clashes between Hindu and Muslim groups. This recurring violence highlights deeper political, social, and economic tensions intertwined with religious identity. More troubling, however, is the Maharashtra Home Department's failure to pre-empt or mitigate these conflicts. Law enforcement remains reactive, addressing violence only after it erupts, rather than focusing on prevention or fostering dialogue to address the root causes. In November 2021, a riot had again erupted in Amravati, when a curfew had to be imposed after BJP-led protests devolved into stone-pelting and vandalism

The cyclical nature of communal violence means that both Hindu and Muslim groups are locked in a perpetual state of grievance and retaliation. Whether it is remarks against the Prophet or provocations during religious processions, both sides justify their actions as responses to perceived slights by the other. Economic factors have further exacerbated this volatile environment. Unemployment is rising, inflation remains stubbornly high, and rural districts like Amravati face acute economic distress. In such an environment, communal tensions offer an outlet for economic frustration, with religious identity becoming a convenient vehicle for expressing broader societal grievances.

## **GLOBAL AFFAIRS** The Baloch Struggle and



🔵 alochistan, Pakistan's largest province by area, has a rich and complex history. Until its forced inclusion into Pakistan in 1948, Balochistan was an autonomous region comprising princely states with its unique culture and language.

There have been multiple waves of uprisings in the 1950s, 1970s, and early 2000s-seeking greater autonomy or independence, resulting in longstanding tensions with the Pakistani state. Balochistan also witnessed widespread protests in July and August this year

#### The Root Causes of the Conflict

One of the primary grievances of the Baloch people is their demand for political autonomy. Many Baloch nationalists argue that the region has historically been denied a fair share of power within Pakistan's federal structure and that their rights to self-governance have been systematically undermined.

Despite being resource-rich and possessing natural gas, coal, gold, and miner-

In an era where podcasts and social media are reshaping historical narratives, it is crucial to distinguish between informed analysis and reckless revisionism.



als, Balochistan remains one of Paki-

stan's poorest regions. The local

population alleges that the Pakistani

state exploits the province's natural re-

sources while providing minimal eco-

nomic benefits or development for the

Baloch people. The China-Pakistan Eco-

nomic Corridor (CPEC), a key infrastruc-

ture project, has only intensified these

concerns. The local Baloch community

feels that they are being excluded from

economic gains and that the development

is focused more on strategic and commer-

operations aimed at suppressing dissent

and combating insurgent groups. Human

rights organisations have reported alle-

gations of enforced disappearances, ex-

trajudicial killings, and arbitrary arrests

of activists, students, and political lead-

ers. This heavy-handed approach has

deepened the distrust between the Baloch

The Baloch are an ethnic minority

within Pakistan, with their own lan-

guage, culture, and customs. Many Ba-

loch activists feel that the Baloch identity

is being suppressed, leading to a fear of

losing their cultural heritage and

Various Baloch armed groups, such as

the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), have

been waging a low-intensity insurgency

against the Pakistani government. Their

demands range from greater autonomy

and resource control to full independ-

people and the Pakistani state.

**The Current Situation** 

cial interests than on local welfare. Balochistan has seen frequent military ence. These groups have targeted government installations, infrastructure projects, and security forces.

In response, the Pakistani state has deployed military and paramilitary forces. Counter-insurgency operations have focused on dismantling militant networks but have also been criticised for human rights violations. Development projects under CPEC are meant to bring economic growth to the region, but there is concern that they might exacerbate local grievances if not managed inclusively.

Ordinary Baloch citizens often find themselves caught between insurgent groups and state forces. The ongoing violence and military presence have disrupted daily life, contributing to a sense of insecurity and socio-economic stagnation.

#### **The International Angle**

The Baloch struggle has started to receive international attention, partly due to the efforts of the Baloch diaspora. Protests like the recent one in Geneva aim to shine a spotlight on human rights violations and political repression in Balochistan. These protests emphasise the need for global intervention and a diplomatic resolution to the conflict.

The strategic location of Balochistan, particularly with the development of the Gwadar port and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has attracted attention from key international stakeholders like China, which has major investments in CPEC; the United States, concerned about regional security; India,

with its geopolitical interests in the region; and Iran, as a neighbouring country affected by regional dynamics.

China is deeply involved in Balochistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a multi-billion dollar infrastructure project to enhance connectivity between Gwadar Port and China. China's investments in the region make it a key player interested in ensuring stability for the success of its economic ventures.

On the other hand, India views Balochistan through a strategic and geopolitical lens, particularly due to its rivalry with Pakistan. It has expressed concern over human rights abuses in the region and has hinted at supporting the Baloch cause as a counterbalance to Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir.

#### **Future Outlook**

The ongoing insurgency reflects a deepseated frustration over political and economic disempowerment. While some advocate for negotiations and reforms to address Baloch's grievances, others believe the conflict will persist if the demands for autonomy and resource control are not adequately addressed. This divide within the Baloch nationalist movement has broader implications for regional stability, given Balochistan's strategic location and natural resources.

#### A Path Forward

The Baloch conflict is a complex and multilayered issue that must address the root causes-political representation, economic equity, human rights, and cultural preservation. While the protest in Geneva and the international attention it garnered highlight the urgent issue, it remains to be seen whether the global community can play a constructive role in facilitating dialogue and promoting a just and lasting resolution for all parties involved.

(The writer is an IT professional. Views personal.)

## Yemen's Houthis: The New Player in Iran's 'Axis of Resistance'

language.



s Israel was rallying from the shock attack by the Palestinian militant group Hamas on October 7 last year and fending off guided rockets hurled by the Lebanese Shia terror group Hezbollah on October 8, a third player - Yemen's Houthi rebels backed by Iran - entered the arena against the Jewish state.

The Houthi group, officially known as Ansar Allah, kicked-off the socalled 'Red Sea crisis' on October 19 2023 when it launched missiles and armed drones at Israel, demanding an end to the invasion of the Gaza Strip.

Israel has few, if any, direct links to Yemen. The two nations share no borders, and prior to the Houthis' rise, Yemen was a distant concern for Israeli policymakers.

So, what made the Houthi rebels declare war on Israel?

As Middle Eastern expert on the Houthi movement, Allison Minor, noted in a January 2024 Brookings Institution interview, the Houthis are aiming to reinforce a foundational aspect of their ideology, which includes

Once a localized movement, the Houthis are now projecting themselves as a key regional actor, tied to Iran's strategic ambitions and directly engaging in the conflict against Israel.

a vehement call for "death to America and Israel" while looking to project themselves as a significant regional power.

Yemenis today are facing unprecedented oppression and a deteriorating economy, and the Houthis are framing their actions against Isarel as a defense against foreign aggression.

After initial attempts to strike Israel directly fell short, the Houthis turned their focus to maritime attacks. They quickly expanded their targets from Israeli ships to include vessels headed to Israel, those with minimal Israeli connections, and even those entirely unrelated to the country.

This strategy serves a dual purpose: it not only generates headlines that elevate their profile but also allows the Houthis to assert their strength and expand their capabilities in an increasingly complex regional landscape.

#### When and how did this outfit emerge to destabilize Yemen?

The Houthis emerged from the rugged highlands of northern Yemen in the early 1990s, originally as a small, local Zaydi Shia revivalist group. Named after their founder, Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, they initially sought to resist Saudi Arabia's growing influence in Yemen, which was spreading Wahhabi-Salafi ideology into the traditionally moderate Zaydi region. At its core, the movement was driven by socio-religious grievances and regional marginalisation, rather than aspirations for broader geopolitical ambitions.

However, as the group became embroiled in Yemen's internecine conflicts, it began adopting a more stridently anti-Western and anti-Israel posture, aligning itself ideologically with Iran and Hezbollah.

Twenty years ago, the Yemeni government led by former President Ali Abdullah Saleh launched military campaigns against the Houthis to counter their rising popularity. Instead of being quelled, the Houthis emerged as a resilient fighting force during this tumultuous period.

After widespread protests led to



Saleh's ousting in 2011, the Houthis adeptly adapted, participating in the protests and the subsequent transition. In a surprising twist in 2015, Saleh sought to reclaim power by aligning with the Houthis, but this alliance proved disastrous when they killed him in 2017.

Leveraging Saleh's extensive resources and network, the Houthis swiftly expanded their control across northern Yemen. They captured the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014,

overthrowing the transitional government in the process.

Despite a Saudi-led coalition's intervention in 2015, which drove the Houthis out of southern Yemen, the group has maintained signifi-

cant control over northern territories. With Iranian military backing, the Houthis have enhanced their aerial warfare capabilities and consolidated their oppressive regime over the region.

While often viewed as Iranian proxies, the Houthis operate more as partners, asserting their independence in crucial moments when their interests diverge from Tehran's. Their relationship with Iran intensified after the Houthis began posing a threat to Saudi Arabia. Although the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has gained influence in Yemen, it does not dictate Houthi actions, as the group's resistance to foreign intervention drives their desire for self-sufficiency.

Rooted in a unique interpretation of Zaydi Shiite Islam, the Houthis diverge from traditional Iranian beliefs. While they have begun adopting some practices common to Twelver Islam, such as the observance of Ashura, many Zaydi tenets are more akin to Sunni beliefs, particularly those of Yemen's Shafi'i school. Nonetheless, they reportedly benefit from the expertise of Iranian proxies, including

> Hezbollah, and have even sought to fundraise for the group, indicating a growing relationship between the Houthis and these external actors.

Houthi officials have stated that their at-

tacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden are a direct response to Israel's military campaign in Gaza. Their motivations for engaging in this conflict are multifaceted.

As anthropologist Marieke Brandt explains in her exemplary study 'Tribes and Politics in Yemen: A History of the Houthi Conflict' (2017), the civil war in Yemen during the 1960s significantly altered the Sa'dah region, diminishing the power of the former elite, the sādah, while enhancing that of tribal shaykhs. This shift restructured tribal dynamics, paving the way for new influential actors in the Houthi conflict. Empowered by

republican patronage, the emerging tribal elite became vulnerable to cooptation, allowing the Yemeni republic to advance its agenda with minimal state-building. Consequently, this incomplete governance, coupled with economic patronage, fostered imbalances and alienated ordinary tribespeople from their wealthy leaders.

Saudi Arabia's border politics further complicated Sa'dah's tribal and economic landscape, rooted in historical patronage following the 1934 Saudi-Yemeni War. Recent efforts to strengthen borders have strained local tribal loyalty, intensifying tensions with the Houthis.

In recent decades, Yemen's radicalization reflects a failure of the 'Traditionist Project,' aimed at reconciling Sunni and Zaydi-Shia differences. The rise of radical Sunnism provoked Zaydi resistance, driven by cleric Husayn Badr al-Dīn al-Hūthī, who galvanized support for the marginalized Zaydi community. This context elucidates the Houthi movement's dynamics, which led to the expulsion of many shaykhs and a transformation in tribal leadership post-2011.

For Iran, supporting the Houthis against Israel serves multiple purposes. It allows Tehran to open another front against Israel in its broader regional power struggle without direct involvement. Much like Hezbollah in Lebanon and various militias in Syria, the Houthis provide Iran with an asymmetrical tool to pressure Israel and its allies. This also fits within Iran's strategy of using its proxies to challenge American and Saudi influence across the region.

Ever since the Houthis threatened the Red Sea, a decisive response in form of targeted strikes in Yemen was mounted in February this year by the United States and the United Kingdom, along with allies including Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, and New Zealand.

The military actions across Houthicontrolled territories had targeted the rebels' underground weapons storage facilities and missile storage sites among other capabilities. Yet, it failed to deter them.

Just last week, the Houthis conducted drone strikes in Israel's Tel Aviv in support of Hamas and Hezbollah's tussle against the Jewish State.

While the Houthi attacks may be sporadic and largely symbolic, their ability to target Israel underscores the how what was once a localized Yemeni insurgency has metastasized into formidable player in the Middle Eastern arena, intricately linked by ideology, arms, and strategy to the broader Iranian-led axis.

(Tomorrow, we look at why the Arab nations have not really warmed up to the fate of the Palestinians being scorched by the fury of Israel's onslaught on Gaza, and the complex history of the PLO and the Arab states)

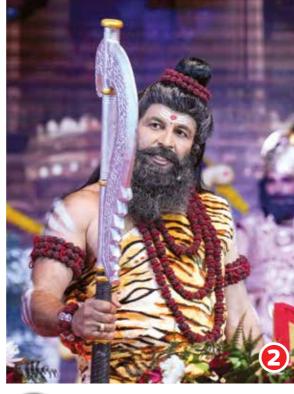
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#### THE PERFECT VOICE MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024 MUMBAI

## REFLECTIONS











- 1. A woman performs 'garba' during 'Navratri' festival celebrations in Jaipur on Saturday night.
- 2. BJP MP and actor Manoj Tiwari, playing the role of 'Parshuram', performs during the 'Ramlila' organised by Lavkush Ramlila Committee at Red Fort ground on Saturday night.
- 3 Fishermen hold 'Kambavala' fishing net, at the Vizhinjam coast in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday.
- 4. Indian Air Force's (IAF) aerobatics team 'Surya Kiran' performs during an air show as part of the 92nd anniversary celebrations of IAF at Marina Beach in Chennai on Sunday.
- 5. A devotee lights a lamp during the 'Lakh Deepam dedication' event organised as part of Navratri celebrations, at Puthiyakavu Shree Bhagavathy Temple in Kozhikode on Sunday.





## FILMS AND ME SECTOR 36 – Could Have Been Stronger



**D**r. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar's vision was influenced by the idea of Hindu Rashtra, a nation that draws its strength from its cultural and civilisational heritage, rooted in Hindu philosophy and culture. The organisation sought to instill a sense of pride in this heritage while addressing social issues such as caste discrimination and untouchability.

In its early years, the RSS focused on building a disciplined cadre of Swayamsevaks to serve the nation. The daily routine of the Swayamsevaks included physical exercises, group discussions on history and culture, and various forms of social service. The RSS also placed a strong emphasis on education, believing that an informed and disciplined populace was essential for nation-building.

#### **Freedom Struggle**

During the Indian freedom struggle, the RSS, while aligned with the broader goal of freeing India from British rule, maintained a distance

The RSS has grown into one of the world's largest voluntary organisations. In this first of a twopart series, we will examine the RSS's origins, ideological foundations, and evolution up to 1980. from the Indian National Congress and other political movements. The RSS believed that the focus on political independence was overshadowing the need forsocial and cultural unity. The RSS was wary of the Congress's policies of appeasement towards the Muslim League and its emphasis on non-violence, which the RSS saw as impractical in the face of British repression.

Despite these differences, the RSS was not completely disengaged from the freedom movement. Many RSS members, including Dr. Hedgewar himself, participated in various nationalist activities. However, the RSS's primary focus during this period remained on character-building and social unity, believing that these would be crucial for India's longterm strength and stability.

#### **Response to Partition**

After India's independence in 1947, the country faced deep divisions along religious and caste lines, with the partition leading to widespread violence and displacement. In response, the RSS saw its mission of promoting social unity and national integration as more critical than ever. It set up camps for refugees, providing food, medical aid, and assistance in resettling displaced families, particularly in Punjab and Delhi. In the aftermath of partition, the RSS intensified its efforts to foster Hindu unity and nationalism, playing a significant role in aiding communities affected by the communal violence.

#### Rebuilding of India

Following independence, the RSS focused on nation-building through grassroots efforts, believing India's strength and prosperity depended on active citizen participation in social and cultural renewal. They established a network of affiliate organisations, the Sangh Parivar, which worked in education, rural development, health, and economic self-reliance.

In 1951, under the leadership of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the RSS established the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the political wing of the RSS that aimed to provide a nationalist alternative to the Congress Party. Although the BJS remained a relatively small party during its early years, it laid the foundation for the eventual rise of the BJP, which would later become the dominant political force in India.

#### **Cultural Initiatives**

The RSS placed a strong emphasis on education as a means of fostering national consciousness and cultural pride. In 1952, the Vidyarthi Parishad (now known as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, or ABVP) was established as the student wing of the RSS. The ABVP aimed to promote national values among students and provide an alternative to leftist ideologies that were prevalent in many Indian universities. In addition to the ABVP, the RSS also established the Vidva Bharati network of schools, which sought to provide an education rooted in Indian culture and values.

#### **Role in Defending Democracy**

A defining moment in the history of the RSS was the Emergency (1975-1977) when then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi suspended civil liberties while the government clamped down on political opposition, censoring the press, and imprisoning thousands of activists and leaders.

The RSS, along with other opposition groups, resisted the Emergency and defended democratic rights. RSS Swayamsevaks were at the forefront of the JP Movement, led by Jayaprakash Narayan, which called for the restoration of democracy and civil liberties. RSS members were arrested and imprisoned, but the organisation continued its activities underground, helping to mobilise public opinion against the government's authoritarian measures.

The RSS's role in defending democratic values earned it widespread respect and legitimacy, even among sections of the population that had previously been critical of it.

> (The writer is a fellow with Vishwa Samvad Kendra in Mumbai. Views personal.)



Shoma A. Chatterji

ditya Nimbalkar makes his directorial debut with a very Challenging subject. Sector 36 is sandwiched somewhere between a psychological thriller and a police thriller. The challenge is further sharpened by the fact that the film is an adaptation of the brutal Nithari killings in Noida in 2005 when 36 small children from a neighbouring slum were lured to the house of a businessman and he, along with his sociopath servant, would not only slaughter the kids to death but would also cook them on a specially made oven and eat their flesh. The tragic outcome of the final verdict in the case was that both the rich businessman and his servant were acquitted of all the crimes for lack of proper evidence! Or was it because the kids came from the slums from families who lived below the poverty line and had no clue how to get the killers sentenced for life or to death? No one knows and now, no one ever will.

The local police inspector Ram Charan Pandey (Deepak Dobriyal) takes charge of the investigation, not really interested in trying to catch the killer/s because, like his colleagues in the force -is disinterested and interested only in commanding his juniors to remind them who is boss. The film does not acquire the definition of a police thriller till we are half-way through the killings of slum kids who go missing and never come back. But he pulls up his socks when, during a Ram Leela jatra in the locality where he is perhaps portraying Ravana, he witnesses his little daughter being carried away by a masked man. Pandey gives hot chase but the killer



runs free. Later, the kid is rescued and brought to her mother.

Prem (Vikrant Massey) is a servant at the home of Balbir Bassi (Akash Khurana), a rich businessman with shady deals and powerful enough to wrap DCP Rastogi (Darshan Jariwalla) round his fat little finger. Prem is a psychopath who is full of so much confidence that he quite plainly narrates his entire series of killings of small children, chopping their bodies, allowing the blood to flow and then, reports that he cooked and consumed them as his abusive uncle had taught him the taste of human flesh enough for him to get addicted.

The psychological tensions come across in scenes of the killings followed by suggestions that Prem is cooking and consuming them, gruesome enough for the lay viewer to take this for a horror film with so much blood, so many pictures of missing children stuck on the walls of the slum, the policeman cringing while crushing a cockroach with his shoe but doing it nevertheless and finally, building up everything to lead to a sad and unexpected anti-climax.

Sector 36 disproves the theory that the whole is more than the sum of its parts because in this film, with an ending that does not justify the build-up is quite disappointing. Vikrant Massey's nonchalant approach to his killings, his kidnapping of the slum kids with chocolates, defines him as the most cold-blooded and pathological serial killer one has seen in recent times. But the tragic back story of the sexual abuse by an uncle weakens his villainy. The young sex worker who is killed and buried in some garden is another bright spot in all that blood and gore.

Deepak Dobriyal, underutilised, is understated and evolving from beginning to end till he goes missing. Akash Khurana and Darshan Jariwalla are as good as they always are. The editing is sharp, jet-paced and the cinematography captures the narrow bylanes of Delhi, the Ram Leela performance-to-be and the spacious interiors of Bassi's palatial home standing in contrast to the place where Prem does his killings offers a good contrast but also adds to the confusion about the location where the heinous crimes are actually committed. The music is quite effective but it was not really needed.

Sector 36 is a sharp, well-etched, character-driven story where the police thriller and the psychological thriller come together to make for an unhappy marriage.

(The writer is a veteran journalist based in Kolkata. Views personal.)

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# Sachin joins NCL ownership group

**10** | **SPORTS** 

#### By Seema Hakhu Kachru and Lalit K Jha

Washington/Texas: Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar has joined America's National Cricket League (NCL) ownership group, a move that is expected to give a big boost to the sport in the United States in the coming years.

"Cricket has been my life's greatest journey and I am pleased to join the National Cricket League at such an exciting time for the sport in the US." Tendulkar said after the NCL announced that the batting legend has joined them.

"The NCL's vision to create a platform for worldclass cricket while inspiring a new generation of fans to resonate with me. I look forward to being part of this new initiative and witnessing the growth of cricket in the US first hand," Tendulkar said. The NCL tournament

This season, the NCL brings together cricket legends like Sunil Gavaskar, Zaheer Abbas, Wasim Akram, Dilip Vengsarkar, Sir Vivian **Richards**, Venkatesh Prasad, Sanath Jayasuriya, Moin Khan and Blair Franklin. The cricketing heroes will mentor and coach the next generation of players.

opens with a performance by singer Mika Singh and features themed nights, bringing a Coachella-like energy, a media release said.

It will also feature toptier players from around the world, including Shahid Afridi, Suresh Raina, Dinesh Karthik, Shakib Al Hasan, Robin Uthappa, Tabraiz Shamsi, Chris Lynn, Angelo Mathews, Colin Munro, Sam Billings, Mohammad Nabi and Johnson Charles.

"We are incredibly excited to welcome Sachin Tendulkar to the National Cricket League family," said Arun Agarwal, chairman of the NCL.

Tendulkar will present the championship trophy to the winning team at the NCL's inaugural tournament, marking a historic moment for the sport's rise in the United States, the



media release said. is comparable to what Pele does in soccer or Babe Ruth in baseball. Sachin's com-

mitment to the game, along with his global appeal, will be key as we introduce cricket to new audiences in America. His involvement highlights the NCL's goal to inspire future generations and establish cricket as a major sport in the US,"



THE PERFECT VOICE

**MUMBAI** 

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2024

football, Tendulkar's influence reached beyond cricket fields, inspiring billions across the world. His presence changes the sport itself, much like how Muhammad Ali became an ambassador of boxing or how Tiger Woods revolutionised golf. Tendulkar was not just a player -- he was the face of cricket's rise into a worldwide phenomenon, his mastery of the game making him a household name far beyond

cricket-loving nations. Headquartered in Dallas, the NCL has introduced an innovative Sixty Strikes format, a fast-paced version of the game.

#### -PTI

## Indian women bag silver in Rugby

Mumbai: Indian women's rugby team clinched a silver after going down to Philippines 5-7 in the final of the Asia Rugby Emirates Sevens Trophy in Kathmandu.

side reached the summit clash after thrashing Guam 24-7 in the semifinal to top the table.

dia had stamped their authority, outclassing Sri Lanka 29-10 and Indonesia 17-10. The tournament was held over Friday and Saturday

Expressing pride in the team's silver medal performance, Indian skipper Shikha said they would strive for gold in future competitions, while also thanking their coach Waisale Serevi and the support staff.

"Winning the silver again is special, but the team is eager to continue the work that each player has been putting in, to convert the colour of this medal to gold," Shikha said in a release. "Personally, I am ex-

the team has played against formidable sides and has showcased great character at a stage as big as this. "This is the most impor-

tant event of the year for the team and we will come home knowing that we gave it our absolute best.

this medal," she added.



The Shikha Yadav-led

In the league round, In-

Indore: Mumbai's Badal Doshi shone in the fourth round of the FMSCI Indian National Rally Sprint Championship for twowheelers, clinching victories in both the premier open and privateer classes

tremely proud of the way here. class, Doshi clocked an impressive 4:35.600 to claim victory, followed by Amarendra Sathe in second place with a time of 4:55.800.

finishing first with a time thank our Head Coach, of 4:37.600 to make it a Waisale Serevi and the endouble. tire supporting staff for

The scooter (up to 210cc) category saw Syed Asif Ali -PTI emerge victorious, com-

(4:59.600)

and Abhishek Pardeshi

Doshi also excelled in the

privateer up to 550cc class,



First place winner Italian rider Francesco Bagnaia of Ducati Lenovo Team, right, talks with 2nd place Spanish rider Jorge Martin of Prima Pramac Racing after the MotoGP race at the Twin Ring Motegi circuit in Motegi.

## **Badal Doshi dominates Sprint Championship**



pleting the course in 5:02.900

a n d

cured first place with a time Muzaffir Ali (5:11.900) of 9:02.300, followed by Pooja Singh in second at and Shamim Khan (5:13.800) took the second 9:55.800. The next round will be in third places

Guwahati November 24 berespectively. In the veterans above  $50 \mathrm{Y}$ fore concluding with the class, Amarendra Sathe finals in Pune or Bangalore took the top honors with a on December 14-15. time of 4:54.600, followed by

#### **Indian Army** beats US Military

-PTI

MD Saeed (5:11.100) in sec-

ond and Mohan Sethiya

the support sprint rally for

The event also featured

In the 131cc up to 165cc

class, Mohd Yasir Ishaq

clinched first place with a

time of 4:40.500, ahead of

Ali Subur (4:52.000) and

Arhman Mohd Khan

category, Anamta Khan se-

In the ladies up to 260cc

(5:47.000) in third.

local participants.

(4:54.500).

Sacramento (USA): The Indian Army arena polo team delivered a gritty performance defeating the US Military in a thrilling test match, marking their first international engagement since 2019. The Indian team, comprising Prithvi Singh, Yatinder Kumar, Mrityunjay Singh and RK Gautam, won 13-10 at the Lakeside Polo Club near here. Mrityunjay, despite sustaining an injury during the second chukker, continued to compete until the fourth chukker before being substituted by Gautam. Arena polo, while quite similar to the outdoor version is played on 300 feet by 150 feet field, enclosed by a wall of four or more feet in height. The regular polo is played on a 10-acre field with just the boundary lines and no walls. A normal game of polo consists of four chukkas of seven-and-a-half minutes each. -PTI

## **Global Chess League** Alaskan Knights stay unbeaten

London: PBS Alaskan Knights continued their unbeaten run, while Ganges Grandmasters secured Gambits, where Alireza Fitheir first win in a dramatic

played two matches on Saturday -- winning the first 15-3 against American rouzja defeated world num-

Triveni remained in sec-

ond place with six match

points and 43 game points,

just six behind the leaders.

pressed, defeating upGrad

place with six match points,

Mumba Masters 12-4.

Alpine Sg Pipers also im-

They now sit in third

Grandmasters.

from three matches leave them behind Triveni. up-Grad Mumba Masters, in fourth place, have only one win from four matches and

"His influence in cricket

day three of the Tech Mahindra Global Chess League here.

The PBS Alaskan Knights extended their lead with a dominant 12-3 win over the Ganges Grandmasters, maintaining a perfect record with four consecutive victories, earning them 12 match points and 49 game points.

Defending champions **Triveni Continental Kings** 



ber two Hikaru Nakamura, 29 game points after losing but narrowly losing the to the Pipers. second to Ganges

#### **Big upset**

The final match saw the surprise of the day with Ganges Grandmasters, led by former World Champion Vishawanathan Anand, finally breaking their losing streak with a 10-8 win over Triveni.

With one win and 24 though their 27 game points game points from four matches, they now sit in fifth place.

Hikaru Nakamura's American Gambits are in last place, with only one match victory and 16 game points from three matches, having been dismantled 15-3 by Triveni.

Anand's team, desperate for their first victory after three crushing defeats, was under immense pressure. -AP



Members of Colla Joves Xiquets de Valls form a Castell or human tower, during the 29th Human Tower Competition in Tarragona, Spain on Sunday. Pic: AP/PTI

#### Vengsarkar academy trials for U14

#### By correspondent

Mumbai: Dream 11 Vengsarkar Cricket Academy will be having selection trial for the under 14 age group for the boys on October 8 and 9 at 3 p.m. at the academy's ground at the Oval maidan, Churchgate.

The players who are born after September 1, 2010 and before September 01, 2013 are eligible to participate. They are required to carry their birth certificate and wear white cricket uniform while coming for the selection trial on the above days.

For more details, contact Amit Jadhav on 9892600155.



India's wicketkeeper Richa Ghosh (second right) celebrates the wicket of Pakistan's captain Fatima Sana (left) with her teammates during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 match between Pakistan and India at Dubai International Stadium, United Arab Emirates on Sunday. India won the match. Pic: AP/PTI

## Varinder shocks top seed Rajpal

#### By correspondent

Mumbai: Playing with plenty of grit and determination Varinder Singh scored an upset win against top seed Sanjay Rajpal recording a fluent 11-7, 5-11, 11-8 and 12-10 victory in the MO50 semifinals of the third Mumbai Masters Squash Championship 2024, organized under the auspices of the Squash Rackets Federation of India and played at the Cricket Club of India courts on Sunday.

In the summit clash, Varinder will challenge UAE's Niraj Makhija who

defeated Dalip Tripathi 11-6, 7-11, 11-9, 11-6 in the second semi-final.

In the MO40 semi-finals, the top two seeds set up a meeting in the final. The numbr one seed Paul Ipe eased past Aditya Maheshwari coasting to a straight game 11-8, 11-2 and 11-6 victory.

Second seed Sanjay Pawar brushed aside the challenge from joint 3-4 seed Abishek Laxminarayan pulling off a 11-8, 6-11, 11-8 and 11-6 win in the second semi-final.

Results (all semi-finals) - MO40: 1-Paul Ipe bt Aditya Maheshwari 11-8, 11-2

11-6: 2-Sanjay Pawar bt 3-4-Abishek Laxminarayan 11-8, 6-11, 11-8, 11-6.

MO45: Praveen Murthy bt Shailendra Pratap Singh 11-7, 7-11, 11-7, 11-6; 3-4-Benjamin Nedarapalli W/o Kuncheria Marattukalam.

MO50: Varinder Singh bt 1-Sanjay Rajpal 11-7, 5-11, 11-8, 12-10; Niraj Makhija (UAE) bt Dalip Tripathi 11-6, 7-11, 11-9, 11-6.

Procoach: 1-Atul Kumar Yadav bt 3-4-Suraj Bhatt 9-11, 11-3, 13-11, 11-4;

3-4-Akhilesh Kumar bt Raja Yadav 11-6, 7-11, 11-6, 11-9.