

THE PERFECT VOICE



In Kolhapur, Rahul Gandhi attacks BJP over true respect to Shivaji Maharaj ... pg 2



Chhattisgarh forest minister defends coal mining ... pg 6



Tanush Kotian shines as Mumbai seal 15th Irani Cup ... pg 10

Exit polls say Congress in Haryana, J&K

OMAR CALLS IT TIME-PASS, BJP REMAINS HOPEFUL OF WIN

New Delhi: Several exit polls on Saturday predicted a clear majority for the Congress in Haryana and gave an edge to its alliance with the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, with the regional partner emerging as the single largest party.

The BJP has been in power in Haryana since 2014 with Manohar Lal Khattar as chief minister for over nine years. The BJP's second term in office in 2019 was in alliance with the JJP, with Dushyant Singh Chautala as deputy chief minister.

Khattar and Chautala quit in March ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, making way for Nayab Singh Saini, a prominent OBC face of the BJP, as chief minister. Chautala's JJP also snapped ties with the BJP.

The Congress is hoping to make a comeback in Haryana with former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda leading the poll campaign.



BJP leader Naveen Jindal arrives at a polling station riding horse to cast his vote for Haryana Assembly polls in Kurukshetra on Saturday. Pic: PTI

Most of the exit polls predicted that the Congress-NC alliance has an advantage in the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir but the BJP remained hopeful of forming the government in the Union territory.

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah, however, described the exit polls as "just time pass" even though the results are in favour of his party.

"I'm amazed channels are bothering with exit polls es-

J&K: Total seats – 90		
Agency	NC-Congress	BJP
C-Voter-India Today	40-48	27-32
Dainik Bhaska	35-40	20-25
Peoples' Pulse	46-50	23-27
Republic-Gulistan	31-36	28-30

Haryana: Total seats – 90		
Agency	Congress	BJP
'Dainik Bhaskar'	44-54	15-29
C-Voter-India Today	50-58	20-28
Republic Bharat-Matrize	55-62	18-24
Red Mike-Datansh	50-55	20-25
Dhruv Research	50-64	22-32
Peoples' Pulse	49-60	20-32

pecially after the fiasco of the recent general elections. I'm ignoring all the noise on channels, social media, WhatsApp etc. because the only numbers that matter will be revealed on the 8th of Oct. The rest is just time

pass," Abdullah, a former chief minister, wrote on X.

Several exit polls gave an edge to the NC-Congress alliance and predicted that the regional party could emerge as the single-largest party in J&K.



We 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 - 4

Never felt unsafe

THE SINGER SAYS THERE HAS BEEN A GENERATIONAL CHANGE OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES

By Aditi Pai

Work has no timings for Aisha Sayed. Sometimes, she begins her studio recording at 12 AM and finishes by 5 AM; at other times, concerts and live shows start at 9 AM and she's done by midnight. In her field of work as a performer and singer, Sayed is used to not getting a night's sleep and often returning home when most of the city is set to wake up. "I have been travelling at night but I have never, ever, felt unsafe in Mumbai," says the singer-performer who began her career at the age of 13 years. Her father spotted her talent for music and took her to meet a sound engineer who was their neighbour in Bandra. The family helped her get opportunities and from there, her career began.

Being among the top contenders in Indian Idol, season 3, in 2007 catapulted her to fame and it opened up a world of new performance opportunities across the country. "I was just 20 years then and I was travelling the world, performing at the most lavish weddings, staying at the most luxurious hotels and performing at big corporate gigs," she says. Safety, while on work, is has never been an issue for her for the organizers arrange a security detail for the performers. "They escort us until we reach the room. And since we travel with our team in a big group, there is always safety in numbers," says Sayed, who sings in 10 languages. Her peers have faced instances of audience members being rowdy. "Once in Delhi, a group of drunk men followed my colleague to her room and kept banging on her door late into the night. But I have been fortunate," she says.

Work assignments have taken to varied places, from the most luxurious international destina-



AISHA SAYED, singer, performer, Mumbai

tions to far-off venues in the hinterland of India where she's travelled through dark, dense forested areas. "I have driven through areas where the only light is that of your car's headlights. Turn around and you see pitch darkness," says Sayed. She's always got a little prayer on her lips when travelling through these remote areas for miles together. She recalls a show

bouts," she says.

While her agreements state that proper security at all times, Sayed says that she drives her own car if she's out at night for parties or personal work but insists that the people of Mumbai are largely helpful and cooperative. A rickshaw driver who once drove to home in the wee hours of the night, after a recording, waited at her gate until the watchman let her in. Friends and colleagues have dropped her home several times.

Mumbai, she feels, has changed—and it's for the better, in the past two decades. "Earlier, on buses and trains, men would use the crowd as an excuse to touch women inappropriately. That has gone down. There is a generational change that I see," says Sayed. She used to take the BEST buses and trains to her training classes and for recordings in the early days of her career.

Her timings are inconsistent and her shows take her to various cities and towns. But the Mumbai-bred girl emphasizes that her city is very safe for women, despite the various incidents of violence. "Mumbai is the only place where a woman can wear what she wants, wear bright red lipstick, leave her hair open and look glamorous and still be safe."

There's no place as safe as Mumbai for women. If you're outside the city at night, travel in groups only.



Shooter Manu Bhaker at Sreebhumi Durga Puja Pandal during Durga Puja festival in Kolkata on Friday. Pic: PTI

Mob hurls stones, 21 cops injured, 1,200 booked

Amravati: Twenty-one policemen were injured after a mob hurled stones at them in Maharashtra's Amravati city to demand registration of a case for a Hindu seer's "objectionable" remarks against Prophet Mohammad, police said.

The police later registered a case against the Hindu seer, Yati Narsinghanand Maharaj from Ghaziabad, for his remarks against the prophet, they said.

At least 10 police vans were damaged in the stone-pelting incident that took place on Friday night outside the Nagpuri Gate police station in Amravati city, they said.

A case against 1,200 persons has been filed in this connection and the police have identified 26 of them, an official said.

"A huge mob, including

members of some organisations, came to the Nagpuri Gate police station around 8.15 pm to press for their demand of registration of a case against Yati Narsinghanand Maharaj of Ghaziabad," Amravati Police Commissioner Navin Chandra Reddy told reporters.

The in-charge of that police station told the mob that one FIR has already been registered in connection with their demand and inquiry is on, following which the mob went back, he said.

"But as some people circulated the video of the Hindu seer's remarks, a large group of persons returned to the Nagpurigate police station. But when the police officers were trying to persuade the crowd, the mob suddenly started

throwing stones at the police personnel," Reddy said. Seniors police officers handled the situation well and dispersed the crowd. Extra police force was sent to the spot, he said.

"Some police personnel and officers got injured in the attack and police is taking action against the mob," he said.

The police have issued a prohibitory order under section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) barred the assembly of five or more people in Nagpuri Gate area, he said.

Another senior police official said that 21 cops were injured and 10 police vans were damaged in the stone-pelting incident.

"A case has been registered against 1,200 persons, of whom 26 have been identified so far. They have been booked under various sections of the BNS.

Won't discuss Indo-Pak ties in Islamabad, says EAM

New Delhi: A day after India announced that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will travel to Islamabad to attend a key meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) mid-October, he said he was going to Pakistan for a "multilateral event" and not to discuss Indo-Pak relations.

He said this in response to a query during an interaction after he delivered the Sardar Patel Lecture on Governance organised by IC Centre for Governance here.

"Yes, I am scheduled to go to Pakistan in the middle of this month, and that is for a meeting of the SCO Heads of Government. Normally, prime ministers go to high-level meetings of heads of state, and one of the ministers goes for the heads of government meeting, so it's in line with the tradition,"

he said. "It so happens that the meeting is taking place in Pakistan, because like us they are a relatively recent member," Jaishankar said.

Pakistan is hosting the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting on October 15 and 16.

It will be for the first time in nearly nine years that India's external affairs minister will travel to Pakistan even as the ties between the two neighbours remained frosty over the Kashmir issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

During the interaction, Jaishankar was asked if he was preparing for his visit to Pakistan for the SCO meeting, and what was his anticipation from it.

"Am I planning for it? Of course, I am planning for it. In my business, you plan for



everything which you are going to do, and for a lot of things that you are not going to do, and which could happen also, you plan for that as well," he said.

"So, I expect there will be a lot of media interest, because of the very nature of the relationship is such... I think, we will deal with it," he added.

The external affairs minister said his visit is for a "multilateral event, I am not going there to discuss India-Pakistan relations, I am go-

ing there to be a good member of the SCO".

"But, since I am a courteous and civil person, I will behave myself accordingly," he said.

The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017.

In July 2023, Iran became the new permanent mem-

ber of the SCO at an India-hosted virtual summit of the grouping.

In his address, Jaishankar said, "Today the world is again in the midst of a great churn, and that world order that had just emerged in Patel's time, has now run its course."

"We are seeing the emergence of multi-polarity, and the return to the natural diversity of the world," he underlined.

He said there is "no model, no text book that is going to guide us in this era".

"What we need is a right combination of self-belief, realism, preparations, nationalism, the very qualities of Sardar Patel that I spoke about. We need them to prepare for a Viksit Bharat. Sardar Patel will always be an inspiration to that endeavour," Jaishankar said. -PTI

IndiGo fliers face tough time

Mumbai: Thousands of IndiGo passengers faced a tough time on Saturday as the airline faced system outage for more than seven hours leading to long queues, longer waiting time for check-ins and baggage drop process at airports.

Passengers shared pictures of crowds at airports and handwritten boarding passes.

At a little past 6 pm, the airline said while airport systems are up and running, it may take a little time to achieve full normalcy.

The systems of the country's largest airline, which operates more than 2,000 flights daily, started facing slowdown in the morning.

NIA arrests 10 for alleged JeM connection

Guwahati/New Delhi: Ten people were arrested from Assam in the nationwide crackdown on terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) on Saturday, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

In the massive pan-India crackdown, NIA conducted searches at 26 locations across five states -- Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir

In a massive pan-India crackdown against JeM, the NIA on Saturday conducted searches at 26 locations in five states and arrested one person and questioned several suspects involved in motivating youth into committing violent terror attacks across the country, according to an official

statement. Sheikh Sultan Salah Uddin Ayubi alias Ayubi was taken into custody after searches at 26 locations in Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir, it said.

The accused was arrested on account of his incriminatory role in the conspiracy case, said the statement issued by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

He will be produced before the NIA special court, Patiala House, New Delhi, it added.

In addition, "several other suspects" have also been rounded up for questioning, the NIA said.

The suspects were engaged in radicalising individuals associated with Pakistan-based JeM. -PTI

In Kolhapur, Rahul Gandhi attacks BJP over true respect to Shivaji Maharaj

NO USE OF BOWING BEFORE CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ AFTER SCARING PEOPLE, SAYS THE CONGRESS MP

By Correspondent

Kolhapur: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-led government, saying there was no use of bowing before Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj after scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country.

He also alleged that Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue collapsed in Sindhudurg district as the intentions and ideology of those in power were wrong.

Gandhi was addressing a public meeting before unveiling a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha empire, in Kolhapur.

"There is no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country," he said.

His comments were apparently targeted at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had apologised to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maha-



raj and those hurt by the collapse of his statue.

"Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is not just a name or a king. For us, he is our deity. Today, I bow my head at his feet and apologise to my deity," Modi had said on August 30 during his visit to Maharashtra.

The 35-foot statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, which collapsed on Au-

gust 26, was unveiled by the PM on December 4, 2023, on the occasion of Navy Day.

"There are two ideologies in the country - one which protects the Constitution that talks of equality and unity. This is Shivaji Maharaj's ideology. The second ideology is the one that is into destroying the Constitution," Gandhi said.

Plan to destroy Constitution

"They get up in the morning and plan how to destroy the Constitution, which is based on the ideals of the Shivaji Maharaj. They attack the institutions of the country, scare and threaten people and then bow before Shivaji's statue. There is no use of it. If you pray before Shivaji's statue, then you



Apologise for Nehru's insult of Shivaji Maharaj: Fadnavis

Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday asked Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to apologise for the "insult" of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj by the country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Rahul Gandhi is in Kolhapur today to inaugurate a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. He is remembering Shivaji Maharaj now. But he should first apologise for the insult of Shivaji Maharaj by Nehru in his book," Fadnavis said.

This is the second time Fadnavis has accused Nehru of insulting the warrior king. He has claimed that Nehru had shown Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in a "poor light" in his book 'The Discovery of India'.

The BJP leader first targeted Nehru over the issue when Congress held a protest against the collapse of a statue of Shivaji Maharaj in Sindhudurg district, nearly eight months after it was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Congress has accused Fadnavis of spreading fake narratives. "Fadnavis should answer when he read the book. Nehru had revised his first edition and written to historians in 1936 to send him inputs to make necessary revisions. He was an intellectual giant and had accepted that the first edition was written while he was in jail and had no access to reference material," Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera had said earlier.

have to protect the Constitution," Gandhi said.

He said the intentions are visible and cannot be hidden. "They built Shivaji Maharaj's statue and in a few days it collapsed. Their intentions were not right. The statue gave them the message that if you built Shivaji Maharaj's statue then you have to follow his ideals. Which is why the statue collapsed because their ideology is wrong."

When Shivaji Maharaj was to be coronated, it was the same ideology that did not allow his coronation. This is not new, he said.

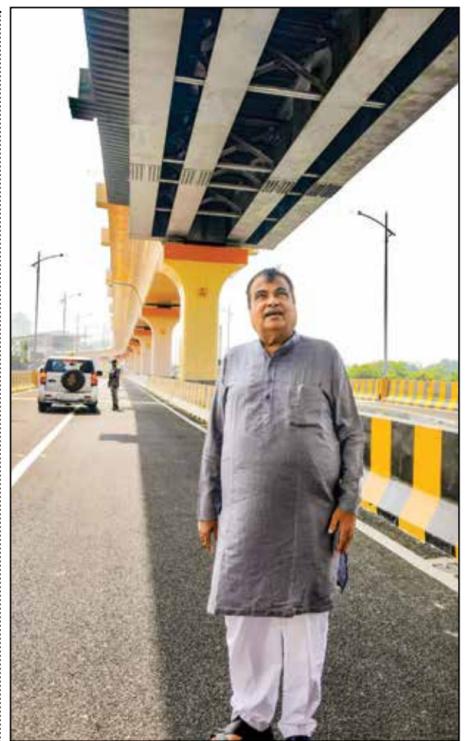
"This is the same ideology that Shivaji Maharaj fought with. Congress is fighting with the same ideology that Shivaji Maharaj fought with," Gandhi

added. Chhatrapati Shivaji's message to the world was that the country belongs to everyone. The Constitution is a symbol of his ideals, he said.

"If people like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and social reformer Shahu Maharaj were not there, the Constitution also would not have existed," the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said.

On his arrival in Kolhapur this morning, Gandhi was welcomed by top Congress leaders in Maharashtra, including the party's state unit chief Nana Patole, former minister Balasaheb Thorat.

Gandhi also interacted with Ajit Sandhe, a tempo driver.



Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari after inauguration of the double-decker flyover from LIC Square to Automotive Square in Nagpur on Saturday. Pic: PTI

Teacher booked for beating student

Pune: The Pune police on Saturday registered a case against a teacher for allegedly thrashing and injuring a Class 6 student at a private school after he failed to tuck in his shirt, an official said.

Based on a complaint by the boy's father, a case was registered at the Swargate police station under section 115 (2) (voluntarily causing hurt) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and provisions of the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 (Care and Protection of Children), the official said.

The incident occurred on September 27 at a private school in the city's Maharashtra area, he said.

According to the FIR, the accused teacher, Sandesh Bhosale, allegedly thrashed the student for not tucking in his shirt. The boy sustained injuries and was bleeding.

A notice has been issued to the teacher, the official said. Meanwhile, activists of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena staged a protest against the teacher and demanded strict action against him. -PTI

Removing 50 pc cap on quota necessary

Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said removing the existing 50 per cent cap on reservation is necessary to protect the Constitution.

Speaking at the 'Samvidhan Samman Sammelan' here, he also said the Congress and the INDIA bloc will ensure passage of laws to remove this 50 per cent limit.

"We will ensure the passage of law on caste census in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and no power can stop it," he said.

The history of Dalits or backward classes was not being taught in schools, he said, alleging that efforts are now being made to erase that history.

The Congress leader said the public sector is being privatised, and noted that it should be termed as de-reservation.

He accused the RSS and BJP of doing this for years. Gandhi claimed that the Agnipath scheme in the armed forces is a ploy to snatch pension from 90 per cent of people.

"The reality of the Agnipath scheme is that the pension of Indian youth, compensation, canteen facilities and respect has been snatched from him," the former Congress president said.

CRIME WATCH

Fire at godown of logistics firm

Thane: A major fire broke out at the godown of a logistics company in Maharashtra's Thane district in the wee hours of Saturday, and no one was injured in the incident, a fire official said. The blaze erupted around 2.35 am at a godown in Valshind village in Bhiwandi on the Mumbai-Nashik Highway, the official from the civic fire control room said.

Two fire engines from Bhiwandi and a few more from neighbouring Kalyan and Mumbai are involved in the firefighting operations, and the blaze has not been brought under control yet, he said.

The smoke billowing from the premises could be seen from far away, the official said, adding that the cause for the blaze is yet to be ascertained.

Six held for stealing equipment

Thane: The police in Maharashtra's Thane district have arrested six members of a gang allegedly involved in stealing equipment from mobile towers and recovered goods worth Rs 40 lakh, an official said on Saturday.

The gang was allegedly involved in 20 cases of thefts in the jurisdiction of different police stations, including Achole, Valiv, Pelhar, and in Bihar, an official said.

The accused hail from Mumbai, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, he said. The police were probing into the thefts of AZNA cards essential for the functioning of 5G networks, and they expanded the investigation to the Mira-Bhayander and Vasai-Virar areas, the official said. With the help of technical and intelligence inputs, the police tracked down the gang and recovered 36 stolen cards from them.

Gang of kidnappers arrested

Palghar: The police in Palghar district have arrested a gang of six persons involved in abducting children and rescued two boys, police said on Saturday.

A team of policemen on patrolling duty spotted a group of people squabbling with each other under the Charoti bridge on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Highway on Friday night, an official said. The team intervened when the altercation turned violent and found two boys aged eight and five with them. The children informed that the gang had abducted them from Kalyan.

Summons to Rahul in defamation case

By Correspondent

Pune: A special court in Pune has summoned Rahul Gandhi in a criminal defamation case filed by the grandnephew of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, accusing the Congress leader of making objectionable remarks against the Hindutva ideology.

The court issued the summons to Gandhi on Friday, asking him to appear before it on October 23.

Last year, Savarkar's grandnephew, Satyaki Savarkar, had lodged a complaint against the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha in this connection in a Pune court. Last month, the case was transferred to the special court for MPs and MLAs from the Judicial Magistrate First Class (FMFC) court.

Advocate Sangram Kolhatkar, who represents Satyaki Savarkar, told PTI that the special court for MPs and MLAs, presided over by Joint Civil Judge and Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Amol Shinde,

issued the summons against Gandhi stating that his attendance is necessary to answer a charge punishable under section 500 (defamation) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in the case, and he is required to appear in person before the court on October 23.



In his complaint, Satyaki Savarkar alleged that Gandhi, in his speech made in London in March 2023, claimed that V D Savarkar had written in a book that he and five to six of his friends once beat up a Muslim man and he (Savarkar) felt happy. Satyaki Savarkar said no such incident ever took place, and that V D Savarkar never wrote any such thing anywhere. He termed Gandhi's allegation as "fictitious, false, and malicious".

The court had asked the police to investigate the allegations and file a report. The Vishrambag police station had carried out the inquiry and said that there is a prima-facie truth in the complaint.

Two fishermen drown in Sindhudurg

By Correspondent

Mumbai: Two fishermen died after their boat capsized in the Arabian Sea off the Sindhudurg coast in Maharashtra in the wee hours of Saturday, police said.

The incident occurred around 2 am off the Nivati beach in Sindhudurg, a police official said.

"There were a total of 14 fishermen on board the boat. They had gone fishing when their boat capsized. While two fishermen drowned, 12 others managed to reach a safe place," he said.

The deceased fishermen were identified as Raghunath Dharmaji Yeraji (49) and Anand Pundlik Paradkar (52).

They were residents of Vengurla taluka of Sindhudurg district, he added.

An accidental death report has been filed at the Nivati police station in this connection, and investigation is underway, the official said.

Apart from fishing, Nivati beach is frequented by tourists as a popular tourist destination. The police have cautioned against - PTI

ASHA workers given task for Ladki Bahin event

By Correspondent

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar: The civic authorities in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar have asked ASHA workers to bring 50 women each for the programme on the Ladki Bahin scheme to be held in the city on Sunday, an official said on Saturday.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde will address the programme on the Ladki Bahin Yojana, a financial assistance scheme for

women. In a letter issued by the medical health officer of the Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar Municipal Corporation, ASHA (accredited social health activist) workers have been asked to bring 50 women each for the event.

Buses have been arranged to transport women to the venue, and ASHA workers have been asked to co-ordinate, the official said.

At least 3,650 women

will be ferried to the venue, and 48 ASHA workers have been tasked with this responsibility, he said.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition in Maharashtra Legislative Council Ambadas Danve slammed the authorities for burdening ASHA workers.

In a post on X, he said ASHA workers perform many duties for a meagre salary, and now, burdening them with this responsibility amounted to exploitation.

Wife claims threat to Sadavarte

Mumbai: The wife of lawyer Gunaratna Sadavarte, who had led the MSRTC staffers' strike in 2022, on Saturday approached the police claiming that he had received a death threat over the phone, an official said.

According to the Bhoiwada police official, a person identifying himself as Rahil called up Sadavarte on his mobile on Friday and threatened to harm him. The lawyer had received a similar call in May too.

The call came from an international number, the

official said, citing the police complaint.

Speaking to the media, his wife attributed the threat call to Sadavarte's statements concerning a redevelopment project in Worli in south Mumbai. She also claimed that her husband would be taking part in a television reality show.

The Bhoiwada police are looking into the matter. In April 2022, Sadavarte was arrested after a group of MSRTC employees protested at NCP chief Sharad Pawar's bungalow here.

NCP leader stabbed to death

Mumbai: A leader of the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) was stabbed to death by unidentified persons in south Mumbai, police said.

Sachin Kurmi (43) was attacked with sharp weapons in the MHADA colony area in Byculla late on Friday night, an officer said.

Kurmi was rushed to JJ Hospital, where he was declared dead. The body has been sent for post-mortem, he said.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Narendra Modi is not the prime minister of the country, but only of a section of the BJP. Many of his cabinet colleagues and party leaders may not consider him the prime minister."



Sanjay Raut, MP, Shiv Sena (UBT)

Dengue, malaria death cases on rise

By Swapnil R Mishra

Mumbai: Nearly two dengue and malaria-related deaths are being recorded across Maharashtra every month this year, according to the data provided by the state health department. Moreover, there was also a surge in cases related to water-borne diseases during the same period. However, health experts have attributed this to several factors including excess rains, and ongoing construction sites.

"We have come across five cases of malaria plasmodium vivax and all tested positive during the rapid antigen tests. This indicates a rise in all vector-borne cases in the city, highlighting the need to intensify the control measures and surveillance. However, all the patients were mild symptomatic and recovered," said doctors.

Malaria mostly spreads to people through the bites of infected female Anophelis mosquitoes. Symptoms can be mild or life-threatening in rare cases and high-risk patients. Mild symptoms include fever, chills and headache. Severe symptoms include fatigue, confusion, seizures, and difficulty breathing.

Another doctor on anonymity, said, as many as three cases of malaria have been reported since September at our hospital and the patients complained of symptoms like fever, fatigue, headache and chills.

"There has been a definite increase in the number of dengue and chikungun-



ya cases this year. Our college has taken several measures to raise awareness and prevent these vector-borne diseases," said a senior health officer.

According to the World Health Organisation

(WHO), the dengue-causing virus is spiking. On the occasion of World Mosquito Day (August 20), it said close to over 6 million cases and more than 7,000 dengue-related deaths were reported in over 80 countries and territories in 2023.

Meanwhile, infectious disease consultants believe that the increase in the number of cases of malaria and dengue was majorly due to the increase in rainfall. "I saw around two to three dengue patients and one or two malaria patients

daily," he said. "As we always state, the basic precautions to be taken are the use of mosquito nets, mosquito creams like Odomos and mosquito spray."

Dr Madhukar Gaikwad, consultant physician said that a single Zika virus case ought not to be a prime concern at the moment. "But we should be wary about the fact that this virus exists and take precautions just as mentioned for malaria and dengue—keep as far away from mosquitoes as possible," he said.

Congress most corrupt party being run by urban Naxals: Modi

BY Correspondent

Thane/Washim: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged Congress is run by a "gang of urban Naxals" and called for people's unity to defeat the "dangerous agenda" of the "most corrupt and dishonest party".

Modi addressed rallies in Washim in east Maharashtra and Thane city, the home turf of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, launching and laying foundation stones for development projects costing more than Rs 50,000 crore in various sectors in the poll-bound state.

Prominent among these projects are the Thane Integral Ring Metro Rail and Elevated Eastern Freeway Extension.

Modi inaugurated the BKC to Aarey JVL R section of Mumbai Metro Line 3, costing around Rs 14,120 crore, and took a ride from BKC station to Santacruz and back.

Prayers at Jagdamba Mata temple

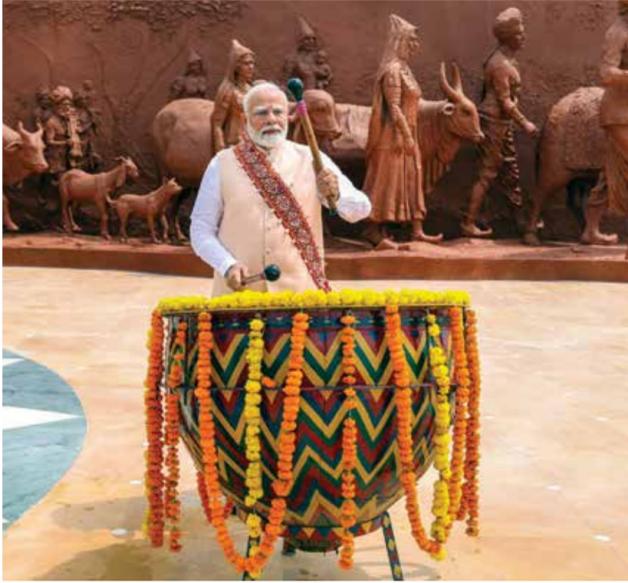
Earlier in the day, Modi offered prayers at the Jagdamba Mata temple at Poharadevi, the revered deity of the Banjara community, in Washim. He also paid tributes to Banjara saints and inaugurated the Banjara Virasat Museum.

Modi played a nagara (drum) during the inauguration ceremony, hailing the significance of the musical instrument in the great Banjara culture.

Addressing a rally, he accused the Congress of insulting Banjaras and making the lives of farmers miserable during its rule. He also dubbed the opposition Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi "anti-development".

"Congress only knows how to loot the poor and keep them poor for its selfish politics. It only knows how to divide people. We have to be alert and

PM BLASTS AT MVA, CALLS THEM AN ENEMY OF DEVELOPMENT



Language should be the vehicle of ideas

Narendra Modi said on Saturday that the classical language status will boost research and education in Marathi.

Addressing a function in Mumbai, two days after the Union Cabinet approved the classical language tag for Marathi and four other languages, Modi said it was a "golden moment" for the Marathi language. "Marathi is a historical language whose knowledge sources have guided several generations. The Marathi language showcased literature, religion, social reforms, the freedom movement etc., over the years. The culture, history, literature, and folk art are linked to the language," the prime minister said.

He said the classical language status would help boost research and education in the Marathi language and appealed to Marathi speakers to ensure that the language reaches a global audience. Modi emphasised that the Union government always encouraged imparting education in the mother tongue.

As per the National Education Policy, medical and engineering studies can be pursued in the Marathi language, he added.

He said the BJP-led government at the Centre ensured that the operative part in court judgements is given in the mother tongue.

"Language should be the vehicle of ideas," he said.

Noting that translations can break the language barrier, Modi proposed using technology to popularise the Indian languages in the world.

"It is the responsibility of every Marathi-speaking person to contribute to developing the language," Modi added.

remain united. Congress is run by a gang of urban Naxals," Modi said.

Everyone can see how closely Congress stands with those people who do not harbour good intentions for India, he said.

"Drugs worth thousands of crores of rupees were seized in Delhi recently. A Congress leader is suspected to be the kingpin. Congress wants to contest elections from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs," he said.

The Indian Youth Congress said on October 3 that Tushar Goel, the suspected kingpin, was expelled from the organisation on October 17, 2022, for anti-party activities, soon after BJP spokesperson and MP Sud-

hanshu Trivedi charged the opposition party with having links with the drug dealers.

Foreign thinking

Modi alleged that Congress' thinking has been foreign from the very beginning.

"Like the British rule, this Congress family also does not consider Dalits, backward and tribals as their equals. They feel that India should be ruled by only one family. That is why they have always maintained a derogatory attitude towards the Banjara community," he said.

Interestingly, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was in Maharashtra on Saturday.

Modi accused the Congress governments of continuing the British legacy of harassing Banjaras and keeping them away from the mainstream.

"People in Telangana are still waiting for the loan waiver. In Karnataka, the Congress government stopped the irrigation schemes started by the BJP regime," he said.

MVA, a speed breaker

He said the erstwhile Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi government put a speed breaker in the work to uplift the Poharadevi pilgrimage centre, which began when Devendra Fadnavis was CM.

"The MVA worked with only two agendas - to stop the projects related

to farmers and to commit corruption in the money of these projects. The funds sent by the Centre were being diverted away from the beneficiaries by that government," Modi said.

He said farmers in Maharashtra, especially Vidarbha, faced big hardships for many decades.

Modi hailed the Ladki Bahin Yojana the flagship scheme of the state government - as a major initiative for women empowerment.

Congress most dishonest

Addressing a gathering in Thane, Modi dubbed the Congress the "most dishonest and corrupt party in the country whose character never changes".

"One CM is involved in a land scam, one minister from that party is abusing women and a Haryana leader is caught with drugs. The party promises huge things to win polls and then loots people after coming to power," Modi said.

Citing the toilet tax imposed in Himachal Pradesh, Modi said the Congress is identified with "loot, jhoot, and kushasan" (corruption, lies and misgovernance).

He said the people of Thane and Mumbai were suffering from problems of population and traffic under Congress regimes, and there was a time when Mumbai's development had come to a halt.

The MVA also put hurdles in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train and Atal Setu projects and stopped water supply and irrigation schemes in the state, he said.

"The MVA is the enemy of development and people must keep the opposition alliance miles away (from power). In Maharashtra, the Congress is showing its true colours. It is opposing 'Ladki Bahin Yojana' wherein women get monthly aid of Rs 1,500 and the distribution of three free LPG cylinders every year," the PM said.

Targeting Uddhav Thackeray

Without taking the name of Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, Modi said parties that spoke of nationalism are now busy with appeasement politics.

"They oppose the Waqf Amendment Bill but stay silent on Congress insulting Veer Savarkar. When the Congress says it will bring back Article 370 in Jammu-Kashmir, these parties don't react. If the ghost of the Congress enters somebody's body, its ideology gets destroyed because of power," Modi said.

Modi attended a thanksgiving event after the Marathi language was given the classical language status.

Ketan Tanna seeks to quash case to 'undo herculean error'

THE BUSINESSMAN HAD FILED EXTORTION COMPLAINT AGAINST PARAM BIR SINGH

BY Correspondent

Mumbai: A businessman who had lodged a complaint of extortion against former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh, has moved the Bombay High Court seeking quashing of the case, claiming that he was coerced into complaining against the extort cop.

The complainant - Ketan Tanna - in his petition claimed he was also threatened to be implicated in false cases if he did not lodge a police complaint against Singh, and added that he now wants to "clear his conscience" by undoing the "herculean error" committed by him.

Tanna filed the petition earlier this week and it is likely to be heard on October 8.

The businessman in his plea alleged that at the time when Singh was embroiled in a controversy with the then Maharashtra government being ruled by the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance, a conspiracy was

being hatched against the senior IPS officer.

Tanna claimed that he was called outside the bungalow of the then state home minister Anil Deshmukh and was informed by Sanjay Pandey, the then Director General of Police (DGP) that he had to lodge a complaint of extortion against Singh.

In July 2021, Tanna had lodged a complaint with the Thane police alleging that between January 2018 and February 2019, when Singh was Thane police commissioner, he extorted Rs 1.25 crore from him by summoning him to the office of the Anti-Extortion Cell and threatening to frame him up in serious criminal cases.

Tanna in his plea said he was "under pressure to lodge the complaint and could not come out with the truth but wants to now clear his conscience" and hence seeks for the case to be quashed.

The plea sought the HC to undo the "herculean error" committed by Tanna and quash the case.



CRY reclaims lost playground

BY Correspondent

Mumbai: In a victory of sorts, child rights NGO, Child Rights and You - CRY has reclaimed the Chikuwadi playground in Mankhurd which was earlier in the grip of substance abuse, transforming it into a secure and constructive environment for children. In 1997, residents of Chikuwadi, who had been living in proximity to the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), were relocated to the newly established RBT Colony in Mankhurd West in order to safeguard them from the hazards of the centre. Initially, temporary housing was provided, which subsequently evolved into permanent residences. Among the newly constructed facilities was this large playground. However, over

time, this playground became a meeting place for individuals engaged in substance abuse transforming it into a hazardous area, particularly for women and young girls. The increase in drug-related activities instilled a sense of fear and anxiety within the community, leading to the playground being regarded unsafe.

CRY took proactive measures in addressing the issues by initiating awareness campaigns designed to inform residents about the risks associated with substance abuse and to promote the revitalisation of the playground. One of the initiatives was installation of adequate lighting systems that were set up throughout the playground to enhance visibility during evening hours, thereby increasing safety and mini-

mizing inappropriate activities. It also underwent significant maintenance, removal of overgrown grass, which improved its overall condition and making it more conducive for sports and recreational activities.

Today the playground has evolved into a lively centre for constructive activities where children come together to participate in sports like cricket and football and the area has hosted numerous competitions, fostered community involvement, and encouraged healthy pursuits among the younger generation. A sense of ownership has been fostered within the community. Residents have taken responsibility for maintaining the playground, ensuring its continued safety and use for future generations.

PM Modi takes ride in Mumbai's newest metro

THE PM TALKS TO STUDENTS, LADKI BAHIN BENEFICIARIES, LABOURERS

BY Correspondent

Mumbai: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday inaugurated the BKC to Aarey stretch of Mumbai Metro Line 3 and took a ride till Santacruz station and back, during which he interacted with students, beneficiaries of the Maharashtra government's Ladki Bahin Yojana and labourers involved in constructing the underground line.

He launched the Metro-Connect3 app designed to enhance the travel experience for commuters and also unveiled a coffee table book containing spectacular photos of the underground metro journey.

He was accompanied by Maharashtra Governor CP Radhakrishnan, Union minister Manohar Lal, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde as well as deputy CMs Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar.

The 12.69 kilometre stretch between Aarey Colony and BKC is part of the 33.5 kilometre Colaba-Seepz-



Aarey Metro Line 3, which received the final clearance from the Commissioner of Metro Railway Safety (CMRS) earlier this week.

The New Corridor

The corridor between BKC and Aarey that the PM inaugurated during the day has 10 metro stations. These are BKC, Bandra Colony, Santacruz, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) T1, Sahar Road, CSMIA T 2, Marol Naka, Andheri, SEEPZ and Aarey Colony JVL R, which is the only station at grade.

The Aarey-BKC stretch

provides connectivity to both Terminal 1 and 2 of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport as well as the Ghatkopar-Andheri-Versova Metro Line 1 at Marol Naka station.

Once fully operational between Aarey to Colaba in south Mumbai, Line-3 will cater to around 13 lakh passengers daily with train frequency of about 3-4 minutes. It will ferry approximately 2500 passengers in each rake of eight coaches. The estimated daily ridership in the first phase will be four lakh, as per the MMRC.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"After one-and-half months, these traitors will come to us for jobs because they will be jobless. I am not going to give a job to any traitor after the polls."



Uddhav Thackeray,
President, Shiv Sena (UBT)

'Mission Brain Attack' in Navi Mumbai

BY Correspondent

Mumbai: The Indian Stroke Association (ISA) has launched 'Mission Brain Attack', an initiative aimed at enhancing the awareness, education, and training of healthcare professionals in stroke prevention, immediate treatment, and rehabilitation. This campaign addresses the alarming rise in stroke cases across India, emphasising the urgent need for specialised training and resources to improve stroke care nationwide.

Strokes are one of the leading causes of death and disability in

India, affecting approximately 1.8 million people annually. As the second most common cause of mortality and the third leading cause of disability, strokes have had a significant impact on the country's healthcare system. Despite this, awareness about stroke symptoms and timely intervention remains low.

'Mission Brain Attack' seeks to close this gap by offering healthcare providers critical training on recognizing stroke symptoms early and implementing effective care protocols to improve patient outcomes.

The golden hour for stroke



treatment is 4 hours and 30 minutes. Prompt medical treatment within this period can reverse the effect of stroke. The 'Mission Brain Attack' initiative is designed to equip physicians and medical practitioners with criti-

cal information and practical training on recognising stroke symptoms early, implementing effective treatment protocols, and delivering comprehensive care for patients experiencing strokes. The program will include workshops, webinars, real-time case studies, and access to cutting-edge online resources.

The initiative includes a comprehensive program of workshops, webinars, real-time case studies, and access to online resources. "Given the rising burden of strokes in India, swift action is necessary," said Dr. Nirmal Surya, President of the ISA.

"Through 'Mission Brain Attack', we are equipping healthcare professionals with the skills they need to respond effectively when a brain attack occurs, which can significantly impact a patient's recovery and chances of survival."

According to Dr. Pawan Ojha, a senior neurologist, "Stroke cases are increasing, especially in younger populations due to risk factors like hypertension and diabetes." The ISA invites healthcare professionals across India to join this life-saving mission, which aims to improve stroke survival rates and recovery outcomes.

Modi inaugurates Mumbai Metro Line 3

LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF THANE RING METRO



By Correspondent

Thane: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday laid the foundation stones of various initiatives of over Rs 32,800 crore including the Thane Integral Ring Metro Rail Project and Elevated Eastern Freeway Extension.

He also laid the foundation stone of the Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA) project at an event in Thane.

The prime minister inaugurated the BKC to Aarey JVLR section of Mumbai Metro Line 3 costing around Rs 14,120 crore.

This ambitious infrastructure project is a key initiative to address the growing transportation needs of Thane, a major industrial and commercial hub in Maharashtra.

The NAINA project costing around Rs 2,550 crore comprises the construction of major arterial roads, bridges, flyovers, underpasses and integrated utility infrastructure.

The PM also laid the foundation stone of Thane Municipal Corporation to be constructed at around Rs 700 crore.

MMRDA offers Thane contract to J. Kumar

By Correspondent

Mumbai: MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) has offered letter of acceptance to J. Kumar Infraprojects Ltd for construction of elevated road from Anand Nagar to Saket on eastern express highway for Rs 1,847.72 crore, excluding GST, the company said in its filing with the stock exchanges.

The contract also includes designing of the elevated road and the tenure would be 48 months.

The project is part of the elevated Eastern freeway extension from Chhedanagar to Anand Nagar, Thane worth cumulatively around Rs 3,310 crore, for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday laid the foundation stone.



The project will provide seamless connectivity from South Mumbai to Thane.

The other part from Chhedanagar to Kopri/Saket has been awarded to Hyderabad-based Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd for Rs 2,682 crore.

The two projects, once ready, would provide for seamless travel from Orange gate in South Mumbai to Thane.

The urban mobility projects were part of several infrastructure project that were either inaugurated or foundation stone were laid on Saturday including the Thane internal ring metro, a 29-km project costing Rs 12,200 crore with 22 stations.

MONEY MATTERS

Nine Financial Tips for a Prosperous Navratri



By Kaustubh Kale

As we approach Navratri, I wish you all a joyous and prosperous festive season ahead. To help you stay on track with your financial goals during this time, here are nine essential financial tips to ensure your journey towards financial freedom is smooth and secure.

Build an Emergency Fund

Ensure you have at least six months' worth of living expenses saved in a bank fixed deposit or a debt mutual fund. This serves as your emergency fund for unforeseen situations and ensures you are financially prepared for any rainy days ahead.

Review Your Asset Allocation

Revisit your financial plan to make sure your investments align with your financial goals. For goals within three years, consider bank fixed deposits/recurring deposits/debt mutual funds. For longer-term goals (beyond three years), a combination of hybrid mutual funds, equity mutual funds, direct equities and gold should be preferred.

Do Sufficient SIPs

Ensure you are investing enough through systematic investment plans (SIPs). Ideally, at least 25-30 per cent of your in-hand monthly income should be allocated towards SIPs in mutual funds/stocks/gold to help you build wealth consistently over time.

Make Lumpsum Investments

In addition to SIPs, consider making voluntary lump sum investments in



the above longer term assets, whenever possible. Periodic lump sum contributions can significantly boost your overall wealth.

Increase Your SIPs Annually

As your income grows, so should your investments. Make it a point to increase your SIP amounts every year to keep up with your rising income. Again, aim for at least 30% of your monthly income towards investments.

Stay Invested

One of the most important rules of investing is to stay invested until your financial goals are met. Avoid treating your investments like an ATM. Pausing or redeeming your investments frequently disrupts their growth potential. Instead, try to raise an overdraft loan against your investments, to help whenever needed.

Health Insurance

Ensure that you and your family are adequately covered with comprehensive health insurance that includes necessary product features. A mini-

mum cover of 25 lakhs per family member is recommended to safeguard against any major health-related expenses. Never solely rely on your employer's health insurance.

Term Life Insurance

A term life insurance plan is essential for the financial security of your loved ones. Ensure you have a cover amounting to 10 times your annual income, plus any outstanding loans. Avoid combining insurance with investment plans—stick to a pure term insurance policy for adequate coverage.

Consult a Financial Advisor

Seek the help of a well-qualified, full-time financial advisor for making a financial plan and executing it. They will make your job easy. Never do-it-yourself in the case of wealth creation, financial goals, and investing.

Wishing you a financially secure and prosperous Navratri!

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant and CFA (USA). Financial Advisor. Views personal.)

NMMC extends solid waste contract

By Correspondent

Mumbai: Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) has extended its door-to-door collection and transportation contract for municipal solid waste in its city for a consideration of Rs 908 crore for a concession period of nine years to Antony Waste Handling Cell Ltd subsidiary - AG Enviro Infra Projects Pvt Ltd, the company said in its statement.

The company had a 15-year contract earlier with the city municipal corporation, that generates around 760 tons of waste per day.

"Our partnership with NMMC, which has flourished over the past 15 years, has been centered on delivering innovative solutions tailored to the city's evolving needs. Our collaborative efforts have consistently helped NMMC achieve the top ranking in the Swachh Bharat within the category, underscoring our dedication to excellence," said Jose Jacob, Chairman & Managing Director, Antony Waste Handling Cell.

In its journey of two decades of managing municipal social waste, Antony

Waste Handling Cell has worked with over 23 municipal corporations.

The company is also involved in reusing, recycling and converting the waste collected into usable energy when possible. Processing plants of the company are located at Kanjurmarg and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

In the recently concluded Apr-Jun quarter, the company reported a net profit of Rs 21.3 crore on a total revenue of Rs 227 crore, managing around 1.18 million tons of waste.

Among its other initiatives on waste and scrap, the company is planning for 50-60 vehicle scraping per day and intends to increase it to 100-150 vehicles per day in five years at an investment of Rs 20 crore. It also has plans to set up a tyre scrapping at an investment of Rs 5-7 crore, said a report by Progressive Shares.

The concept of circular economy is anticipated to gain importance going forward as well with increased tonnage to be handled in the coming years and the company continues to explore other revenue stream in the core domain as well, said the Progressive report.



DRDO successfully flight-tests 4th Generation Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) at Pokhran Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan. Pic: PTI

Farewell to 182-year-old horse racing tradition

By Gurdeep Singh

Singapore: Land-scarce Singapore bade farewell to a 182-year-old British-era tradition of horse racing on Saturday, as the iconic racecourse closed its doors to make way for housing and other development projects.

Thousands of racegoers turned out at the Kranji facility for one last hurrah on Oct 5, ahead of the closure of the Singapore Turf Club (STC), The Straits Times reported.

Home of Singapore horse

racing since 1842, the STC marked the end of its 182-year chapter in local history with a grand farewell featuring 10 races, culminating in the SGD 1.38 million Grand Singapore Gold Cup.

The 124-hectare land will be returned to the government by March 2027 and is set to make way for housing and other development.

Horse racing was introduced to Singapore over 180 years ago by Scottish merchant William Henry Macleod Read, who founded the Singapore Sporting

Club which was later renamed to STC in 1924.

To accommodate the growing interest in racing, the STC sold its Serangoon Road (Farrer Park) racecourse and built a new facility in Bukit Timah in 1933, before it finally moved to Kranji in 1999. The Bukit Timah Racecourse was officially opened by Sir Cecil Clementi – the governor of Singapore – on Apr 15, 1933.

Over the years, it has hosted dignitaries, including late Queen Elizabeth II, as well as events such as the Youth Olympic Games.

Road logistics revenues may go up

New Delhi: The domestic road logistics industry is expected to register a growth of up to 9 per cent in revenues in the ongoing 2024-25 financial year, according to ICRA.

The organised road logistics sector had witnessed a growth 4.6 per cent in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the ratings agency said in a report.

As per ICRA, the industry logged a revenue of Rs 23,273 crore in FY24.

"ICRA expects the revenues of the Indian road logistics industry to grow by a moderate 6-9 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in FY25," it said.

Srikumar Krishnamurthy, Senior Vice President & Co-Group Head Corporate Ratings, ICRA Ltd, said, "In FY24, the growth was subdued on account of a relatively muted demand amid high inflation, an uneven monsoon, a relatively lacklustre festive season and the rising interest rate regime."

"We expect the operating profit margins to remain in the range of 11-12 per cent in FY25, with the organised players expected to maintain the pricing premium amid an overall inflationary cost scenario," he said.

CG Power forays into semiconductor design

By Correspondent

Mumbai: CG Power and Industrial Solutions has forayed into semiconductor design by entering into a pact to acquire the radio frequency (RF) component business of U.S. based Renesas Electronics Corporation, the company, part of Murugappa group said in a statement.

An asset purchase agreement for the business was executed without disclosing any consideration between CG Power and Industrial Solutions Limited and Renesas Electronics America Inc., a subsidiary of Renesas, and other affiliated entities of Renesas, that have assets in the RF components business.

Through this transaction, CG will acquire Intellectual Property (IP), tangible assets and select transferring employees across various functions such as semiconductor design, marketing, applications, etc. related to the RF components business.

India has announced ambitious plans to become semiconductor powerhouse as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set a goal to propel the coun-

try's electronics sector to USD 500 billion from the current levels of USD 155 billion

Vellayan Subbiah, Chairman of CG Power and Industrial Solutions Limited, said, "Through this acquisition, we aim to enhance India's presence in the semiconductor design & development space."

Davin Lee, Senior Vice President and General Manager of the Analog and Connectivity Group at Renesas, added, "This agreement with CG will provide the opportunity for our RF team to expand. For Renesas, this move sharpens our focus on the strategic segment of our analog and connectivity business, enabling us to further scale to better serve customer demand."

With annual revenue of Rs 8,046 crore (USD 964 million), CG Power manufactures Traction Motors, Propulsion systems, Signalling Relays etc., for the Indian Railways, and wide range of Induction Motors, Drives, Transformers, Switchgears, and other allied products for the Industrial and Power sectors.

AI's transformative impact on B2B SaaS industry

By Correspondent

Mumbai: Artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the software procurement and sales process, as highlighted in the 2024 Buyer Behaviour Report titled "Proving Value in the Age of AI," from G2, the premier and reputable software marketplace globally. G2 stands as the world's leading and most dependable platform for software transactions. It serves over 90 million users each year, including representatives

from all the Fortune 500 companies, who rely on G2 to make more informed software choices through genuine peer evaluations.

Regarding the evaluation of return on investment (ROI) for AI software investments, the report indicates that employee productivity is considered the most critical factor by nearly half of the respondents. Among those who have acquired an AI platform in the past three months, 83% have observed a positive ROI from their



investment. "AI is transforming and will fundamentally alter the processes of software research, acquisition, and distribution," stated God-

ard Abel, Co-founder and CEO of G2. "Consumers are seeking the most suitable tools for their business needs and expect value from these tools more

quickly than ever. In this evolving landscape, vendors have the chance to meet these heightened expectations by moving at the pace of AI, delivering new innovations and immediate ROI for their clients."

The 2024 Buyer Behaviour Report uncovered that 65% of global software purchasers intend to increase their spending on AI software in the upcoming year, with this figure rising to 81% among buyers in India, highlighting the growing impact of AI on purchasing

decisions and the shifting dynamics between purchasers and suppliers.

G2 unveiled these insights as part of its yearly Buyer Behaviour Report, which is based on a survey of over 1,900 B2B software buyers worldwide, during the G2 Live 3.0 conference and awards event in Bangalore. According to G2's evaluation criteria, BrowserStack and Freshworks emerged as the top-ranked solutions, based on Satisfaction and Market Presence scores.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Food is also very closely associated with conviviality and mirth, so we are witnessing demand for bulk orders when families and friends get together. The festival season is perhaps the best time to launch bulk service."



Sidharth Bhakoo, National Business Head, Swiggy

Naxal encounter: 1,500 security personnel, 48-hour operation

Dantewada: A 10-km motorcycle ride through fields and dirt track followed by a 12-km climb of a hilly terrain take one to the site of Chhattisgarh's most successful counter-insurgency operation that eliminated 31 Naxalites.

About 1,500 security personnel covered this arduous route as part of their 48-hour operation in the forest along Narayanpur and Dantewada districts border to inflict a crushing blow to Maoists, said officials on Saturday.

This was the highest number of fatalities suffered by Maoists in a single operation since the state's creation 24 years ago and the offensive comes more than five months after 29 Naxalites, including higher-ranking cadres, were neutralised in an encounter with security personnel in Kanker district.

Nearly 1,500 jawans of District Reserve Guard (DRG) from Dantewada and Narayanpur and Special Task Force were involved in the offensive, Dantewada Additional Superintendent of Police RK Barman told PTI.

The crackdown was launched based on inputs about the presence of Maoists belonging to their company No. 6 and east Bastar division on the hills of Ga-



Jawans after an encounter with Naxals in Dantewada on Saturday.

Pic: PTI

vadi, Thulthuli, Nendur and Rengawaya villages, he said.

The operation, launched on October 3 and lasted for two days, turned out to be the biggest ever successful counter-insurgency operation in the state, he said.

The gunfight broke out between security forces and Naxalites at around 1 pm on Friday and ended late in the evening in a forest between Nendur and Thulthuli villages, he said.

While bodies of 28 Naxalites were recovered from the encounter site on Friday, three more bodies were found on Saturday, he said, adding that the slain Naxalites were in "uniform".

Reinforcement by the Central Reserve Police Force helped the search operation and the Naxalites' bodies are being brought to Dantewada, he said.

Maoist posters could be seen at some locations along the heavily forested and hilly stretch. To enter the area, considered a Naxal den, one has to cross the

Indravati river at Chhindarnar village where an over-a-kilometre-long bridge has been constructed, said officials.

"The identity of the Naxalites is yet to be ascertained but prima facie, it appears they belonged to PLGA (People's Liberation Guerilla Army) company No. 6, Platoon 16 and East Bastar division of Maoists," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Bastar Range Sundarraj P told PTI.

The input, which triggered the operation, was about the presence of DK-SZC (Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee) members, Kamlesh and Neeti, and other senior cadres like Nandu and Suresh Salam, the IPS officer said.

Whether they are among those killed will be known after ascertaining the identities of the neutralised Naxalites, he said.

A DRG jawan sustained injuries in a blast in a shell of an Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (BGL) fired by Naxalites during the

gunfight, the official said.

Along with the bodies, a cache of weapons, including an AK-47 rifle, one SLR (self-loading rifle), one IN-SAS rifle, one LMG rifle and one .303 rifle were also recovered from the encounter spot, the IGP said.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, who assumed office in December last year, hailed security forces for carrying out the successful operation and said the 'double engine' government (BJP government in the state and at the Centre) is determined to eliminate the Naxal menace.

After the latest encounter, 188 Maoists have been gunned down by security forces in separate gun battles in the Bastar region comprising seven districts, including Dantewada and Narayanpur, so far this year, police said.

On April 16, as many as 29 Naxalites, including some higher-ranking cadres, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Kanker district. -PTI

Murder accused shot in leg

Amethi (UP): Police shot a man accused of gunning down an entire Dalit family in Amethi in his leg early Saturday while they were recovering the pistol used in the killing at his instance.

According to police, the incident happened when Sub-Inspector Madan Kumar Singh of Shivratnaganj Police Station was taking possession of the pistol found near a canal track.

Just when Singh was inspecting the pistol and its magazine, Chandan Verma, the accused, snatched Singh's gun from his holster and fired at him intending to kill him, police in a statement said.

In defence, Inspector Sachchidanand Rai fired a gunshot which hit Verma in his right leg, they said.

Verma was arrested near a toll plaza in Noida Friday night while fleeing to Delhi. Sunil Kumar, 35, a government school teacher, his 32-year-old wife Poonam, and the couple's two daughters, Drishti and Suni, aged six and one, were shot dead in the Ahorwa Bhawani area of Amethi.

Poonam had once accused Verma of harassing her and also filed a police complaint against him.

Police have seized a country-made pistol and a black Enfield Bullet used in the crime.

Verma was sent to Tiloi Community Health Centre for treatment. -PTI



Posters seeking Bharat Ratna for Nitish seen

Patna: Posters demanding the highest civilian award Bharat Ratna for Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar were on Saturday put up by his Janata Dal (United) at several places in the state capital.

One such poster was seen right next to the entrance gate of the JD(U) office at Birchand Patel Marg where, incidentally, the party supremo was attending its state executive meeting.

A senior party leader, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "We cannot say that demand for Bharat Ratna is the JD(U)'s official stand. Maybe, out of a sense of modesty, our leader would even frown upon such vehemence. But deep within every JD(U) worker believes that Nitish Kumar deserves the highest honour".

Kumar is the longest-serving chief minister of the state, who has been in the highest seat of power since 2005, except for a few



months when Jitan Ram Manjhi, now a Union minister, had occupied the post.

Kumar, who is set to lead the NDA in the assembly polls due next year, had formerly enjoyed a successful stint as Union minister, with key portfolios like agriculture and Railways, in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee cabinet.

Meanwhile, the opposition RJD tried to drive a wedge between the JD(U) and its ally BJP, accusing the latter of sabotage.

"Nitish Kumar is under pressure from the BJP to vacate his chair. The JD(U) meeting has been called to find a way out. The posters demanding Bharat Ratna are proof that the party is in disarray", claimed RJD spokesman Mrityunjay Tiwary.

Notably, the JD(U) and the BJP realigned in January this year when Kumar snapped his less-than-two-year long alliance with the RJD, Congress and the Left combine. -PTI

Cop suspended over suicide

Jaipur: A Rajasthan Police circle officer was suspended on Saturday in connection with the alleged suicide of a rape accused man inside a police station, officials said, a day after the entire staff of the station was line attached.

A judicial inquiry has also been initiated into the matter to ascertain lapses on the part of the personnel at Phalodi district's Dechu police station where Fool Singh allegedly hanged himself to death on Thurs-

day night.

Singh was accused of raping a hearing and speech impaired minor girl.

In the latest action in the matter, Lohawat Circle Officer Shankar Lal Chhaba, an officer of the Rajasthan Police Service, was suspended and attached with the Police Headquarters, Jaipur.

Rajasthan Director General of Police (DGP) Utkal Ranjan Sahoo suspended him with immediate effect, a police spokesperson said.

Chargesheet in PLFI case

Ranchi: The NIA on Saturday charge-sheeted two accused in a case related to attempts to revive and strengthen the banned Maoist outfit People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI). The supplementary charge sheet filed in Ranchi named Kapil Pathak alias Rana Singh alias Arjun Rana alias Pandit Ji of Assam's Dhemaji district and Binod Munda alias Sukhu alias Dahura of Khunti.

Girl's body found, violence erupted

Kolkata: The body of a 10-year-old girl was found in a marshy land in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district on Saturday, triggering arson by locals at a police outpost there.

Villagers alleged that the minor, who was missing since Friday evening, was raped and murdered, and the police did not act on their complaint immediately.



As the body of the girl was recovered by locals in Jaynagar area early this morning, a mob torched the Mahismari police outpost and pelted the policemen with stones.

They also vandalised several vehicles parked outside the outpost and the policemen were forced to leave the premises, a senior officer said.

A huge police force was sent to the area and tear gas shells were fired to quell the mob which tried to confine the SDPO and other senior personnel at the spot.

"The family members of the girl lodged an FIR at the Mahismari outpost in the area but the police did not act on the complaint immediately," a local claimed.

The police responded in the same manner as they did after the body of a woman doctor was found at R.G. Kar hospital in August, another villager said.

"We will continue our agitation till all those accused in the rape and murder of our minor daughter are punished. We also demand action against those who responded to the complaint late, which might have resulted in her death. Had the police acted promptly, the girl could have been rescued," Ganesh Dolui, a local, said.

The police, however, said the action was taken immediately after the complaint was received and an accused was arrested in connection with the alleged rape and murder of the girl. -PTI



Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj with other MLAs holds a foot of BJP MLA Vijender Gupta, asking his support for the reinstatement of bus marshals in New Delhi. Pic: PTI

Narsinghanand detained, security stepped up

Ghaziabad: Controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand has been detained for allegedly making objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammed, his aides claimed on Saturday even as the police here remained tightlipped on the issue.

A large crowd had gathered outside the Dasna Devi temple here, where he presides, protesting against him on Friday night after videos of his inflammatory remarks appeared online, following which security

was stepped up around the premises.

His close aide and general secretary of Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati Foundation Uditia Tyagi claimed he has been detained over allegations of making objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammed during a programme held at Hindi Bhavan of Ghaziabad on September 29 and his whereabouts are not known.

When asked about it, Deputy Commissioner of

Police (Rural) Surendra Nath Tiwari said, "We are looking for the security of the temple and we have no idea about his detention".

Heavy police deployment has been made outside the Dasna temple to avoid any untoward incident, the police said.

An FIR has been lodged against 150 people on the complaint of Dasna police outpost in-charge sub-inspector Bhanu at Wave City police station over the protest outside the temple. -PTI

Sabarimala: Online booking only this year

Thiruvananthapuram: As the annual Mandalam-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season is just a month away in Sabarimala, the Kerala government on Saturday said pilgrims would be permitted through online booking only this year and darshan would be ensured to a maximum of 80,000 people a day at the Lord Ayyappa shrine.

At the time of virtual queue booking, the pilgrims would get a chance to choose their travel route also, a CMO statement said here.

The decisions were taken during an evaluation meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan here to take stock of the preparations for the upcoming pilgrimage season, it said.

According to sources, the decision was taken to regulate the heavy rush during the pilgrimage season.

Stating that necessary facilities would be provided for the devotees on the traditional forest path, the authorities said that if vehicles needed to be regulated during peak times, necessary areas would be identified for parking and basic infrastructure would be provided there. -PTI

Ladakh leaders say will sit on indefinite fast



New Delhi: Spearheading an agitation for Ladakh's Sixth Schedule status, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and Kargil Democratic Alliance member Sajjad Hussain Kargili on Saturday said they will sit on an indefinite fast here but are yet to find a venue.

Another leader from Ladakh said a few others will also be joining Wangchuk and Kargili.

Wangchuk had on Friday said he and other protesters from Ladakh would sit on an indefinite fast since they have not received any response from the government over their demand of meeting the President, prime minister or the Union home minister.

On Saturday, however, he confirmed that though they had sought permission to be allowed to sit at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, they

are yet to receive permission. While announcing the fast, Wangchuk had appealed to all groups, parties and organisations to provide them with a venue for their protest.

The climate activist is leading the 'Delhi Chalo Padyatra', which began from Leh a month ago. The march was organised by the Leh Apex Body, which along with the Kargil Democratic Alliance, has been spearheading an agitation for the last four years for statehood for Ladakh and its inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

He and 150 people from Ladakh were detained from Delhi's Singhu border on Monday night. They were taken to Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajhat on Wednesday and released later. -PTI

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"What is wrong in meeting RSS leaders? Whether Sangh Parivar leaders are untouchables? They are also human beings, right? I don't think that the CM would take a stand favourable to the ADGP."



Vellappally Natesan, General Secretary, SNDP

Over 60 per cent polling in Haryana assembly polls

Chandigarh: Over 60 per cent polling was recorded in the Haryana assembly elections on Saturday in which the ruling BJP is eyeing a third term and the Congress seeking a comeback after a decade.

Officials said polling, which closed at 6 pm, went on smoothly barring a clash in Nuh between supporters of two candidates which left three persons injured.

According to the data available at 5 pm, 61 per cent polling has been registered and it will further increase once all information

comes in.

The BJP, Congress, the INLD-BSP and the JJP-Azad Samaj Party alliances and the Aam Aadmi Party are the key parties contesting the polls.

A total of 1,031 candidates are in the fray, including 101 women and 464 Independent nominees. Counting will be taken up on October 8.

Among the top names in the fray are Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, BJP's Anil Vij and O P Dhankar, Haryana's Bhpinder Singh Hooda and Vinesh Phogat, INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala and JJP's Dushyant Chautala.



Burqa clad voters show their inked fingers as they pose for pictures after casting their votes at a polling station during the Haryana Assembly elections in Nuh district on Saturday. Pic: PTI

Among the districts, according to the Election Commission data available

at 5 pm, Yamunanagar had recorded a poll percentage of 67.93, Sirsa 65.37, Rohtak 60.56, Nuh 68.28, Palwal 67.69, Mahendragarh 65.76, Kurukshetra 65.55 and Jind 66.02. However, by 5 pm, districts like Gurgaon recorded 49.92 poll percentage, Faridabad recorded 51.28 while Panchkula registered 54.71 per cent.

Haryana Jan Sevak Party nominee from Meham constituency Balraj Kundu accused former MLA Anand Singh Dangi of assaulting him and his assistant at a polling booth.

In Nuh district, there was a clash among supporters of the Congress' sitting MLA from Punhana and Independent candidate Rashish Khan in a village in the constituency which left three injured.

Saini, who is contesting from Ladwa in Kurukshetra, cast his vote in his native village Mirza in Ambala district's Naraingarh.

Among the first voters to cast vote was Union Minister and former Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Chhattar, who his vote in Karnal. -PTI

Chhattisgarh forest minister defends coal mining

Kedar Kashyap asks how long people will remain poor

By Gaurav Saini

Rajpur: Chhattisgarh Forest and Climate Change Minister Kedar Kashyap has defended coal mining and other developmental projects in the state, saying these are essential for improving the living standards of the people.

In an interview with PTI, Kashyap also said that the state government will ensure strict implementation of the law in response to the Centre's recent directions to expedite the relocation of villages from core areas in tiger reserves.

Asked about protests against tree felling for a coal project in the biodiversity-rich Hasdeo Aranya forest, the minister acknowledged that some people have opposed coal and other development projects but stressed that most have supported these.

"How long will the people of this resource-rich region



remain poor? Development and energy are equally important. People need jobs. Yes, if trees are cut, it is our responsibility to compensate for that loss. We must also ensure that the health and livelihoods of affected communities are protected," he said.

On the issue of gram sabha consent for such projects, Kashyap said, "The law gives gram sabhas the power to say 'no'. In some cases, they have exercised that power, but in most cases, they have supported (coal mining and other projects)."

Chhattisgarh holds 57 billion tonnes of coal reserves, making it the third largest coal-bearing state in India after Jharkhand and Odisha. It ranks third among states with the largest forest cover, after Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh, with forests covering over 44 per cent of its total geographical area.

There are three adjacent coal blocks situated in the Hasdeo Aranya coalfield region in Chhattisgarh's Surguja district: Parsa, Parsa East Kente Basan (PEKB),

and Kente Extension Coal Block (KECB). All three coal blocks have been allocated to the Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd.

The Hasdeo Aranya forest is spread over 1,70,000 hectares -- an area much larger than Delhi. According to the Indian Bureau of Mines, the forest holds coal reserves of 5,179.35 million tonnes.

In January, the National Green Tribunal took suo motu cognisance of protests against tree felling for Phase 2 of the PEBK coal mining project and sought a report from the state forest department.

The department, in its reply, said that the tree felling was being undertaken "in strict adherence to the approvals and permissions given by both central and state government authorities".

It added that the PEBK coal block covers 1,898 hectares of forest land. Phase 1 mining, covering 762 hectares, has been completed, and Phase 2 is ongoing in the remaining 1,136 hectares.

Tree felling for Phase 2 resumed in late August

amid protests by local villagers.

In July, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav informed Parliament that 94,460 trees have already been cut for coal mining in the Hasdeo Aranya forest, with over 2.73 lakh more trees to be felled in the coming years.

He said that a total of 53,40,586 trees have been planted as compensation, for "mine reclamation and translocation", of which 40,93,395 have survived.

Asked about his view on the Centre's directive to expedite the relocation of villages from core areas of tiger reserves, Kashyap said: "We have been making a conscious effort to ensure the implementation of the law."

He said that people once lived in harmony with wildlife in the forests, but that dynamic has changed.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority issued an order on June 19, directing forest officials to expedite the relocation of 64,801 families from 591 villages located within the core areas of 54 tiger reserves.



"Tigers used to roam just a few metres from my grandmother's house. Humans and animals knew their boundaries. But the situation has changed over the years. It is true that forests are being encroached upon, upsetting the balance in the wild and leading to human-wildlife conflict."

Tribal communities in several tiger reserves, including Achanakmar and Udanti-Sitanadi in Chhattisgarh, have launched protests against the directive, asserting their rights under the Forest Rights Act.

They are now planning to gather in Delhi to "demand justice" for their livelihoods and traditions that are closely tied to the forests.

However, central government officials maintain that the directives were issued in accordance with the law and emphasize that the relocation of villages from tiger reserves is "entirely voluntary."

Bagde urges for natural farming

Jaipur: Governor Haribhau Bagde on Saturday called upon farmers to adopt natural farming for a clean environment.

Bagde stressed on adopting natural farming for minimum cost, higher yield, higher quality, and clean environment, along with chemical-free farming.

He called upon the farmers to contribute to the prosperity of the country by working on the concept of "village money in the village and city money in the city."

Bagde made the remarks while addressing the three-day Subhash Palekar Agriculture Workshop in Khatushyamji. Farmers from 13 states are participating in the workshop.

The governor gave top priority to water conservation, and also stressed on making efforts to ensure that the water of the village stays in the village, according to a statement by the Raj Bhavan.

Natural farming is the biggest need of the country to save the fertility of the soil, he said.

Bagde said the increased use of urea, DAP and pesticides has led to an increase in serious diseases. The number of soil-friendly germs and microbes has become negligible.

Due to these fertilisers, the number of patients suffering from incurable diseases like cancer is increasing continuously and to avoid all this, farmers should adopt natural farming, he added.

Earlier, Bagde visited Shri Shyam Baba in Shri Khatu Shyam Ji temple and performed the ritualistic worship.

-PTI

Measures to Improve Food Security in Hindu Kush Himalayas Switch to alternative farming, say experts

By Shirish B Pradhan

Kathmandu: Highlighting the urgent need to transform food systems in the Hindu Kush Himalayan countries to meet the triple challenges of climate change, nature loss, and acute food insecurity, experts have called for adopting agroecological methods to reshape farming.

"It's increasingly clear that industrial farming methods -- including use of chemical fertilisers and deforestation -- have been a calamity for the biosphere, for human health, and for the climate, and have failed to deliver prosperity for farmers," Abid Hussain, who leads ICIMOD's Economics division, said.

ICIMOD brought together academics, researchers, and policymakers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Tibet (China), India, Nepal and Pakistan to discuss food security in the region that is vulnerable to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, the organisation said in a statement on Friday.

"Food and farming are responsible for one-quarter of the global greenhouse emissions, second only to energy use," the experts pointed out.

"It is urgent, in the teeth of the climate crisis, that we reshape agriculture in the Hindu Kush Himalaya," said Hussain.

This region is warming at double the global average, and the changes in water supply from loss of mountain snow and ice, and no-



The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is an inter-governmental organisation for the eight countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Tibet (China), India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan -- that stretches for almost 3,500 km.

ticeably more extreme rainfall, are putting extraordinary pressure on food and farming, he said, adding, "Switching to alternative methods of agriculture can be a potent tool for carbon sequestration, and offers a huge opportunity."

Given the population sizes in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region and the acute food insecurity needs, it is crucial to prioritise investment in this transition to agroecological methods, the experts said at the international conference on climate resilient agriculture for sustainable food systems held here from October 1 to 3.

The conference marked the conclusion of a two-year action-research project, Green Resilient Agricultural Productive Ecosystems (GRAPE), which prototyped climate-resilient agricultural practices in seven districts of Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces of Nepal,

-PTI

Rescue teams search for missing after Bosnia floods

Jablanica: Rescue teams on Saturday searched for those still missing after flash floods and landslides hit parts of Bosnia, killing at least 16 people and injuring scores more.

Construction machines worked to remove piles of rocks and debris covering the central town of Jablanica after the rainstorm early on Friday.

Huge quantities of rain fell in the area around Jablanica and nearby Konjic, causing sudden floods that broke into people's homes as they were sleeping.

Surging waters also triggered landslides that collapsed roads and hills, covering villages in mud and cutting off entire areas.

Bosnian media are reporting that rocks from a nearby quarry fell on the village of Donja Jablanica,



Rescuers search for missing people after floods and landslides in the village of Donja Jablanica, Bosnia on Saturday.

Pic: PTI

burying houses.

Officials have said that at least 16 people are confirmed dead so far, including a baby. At least 10 are still missing while dozens are injured.

Rescuers sealed off Jablanica, banning any entry for outsiders while the

search took place. Some houses were submerged up to their roofs and as the water withdrew, rescuers could be seen walking over piles of rubble left behind.

Near the town of Konjic that was also hit by the storm, officials said some villages remained cut off on

Saturday.

"Kilometres of roads no longer exist, nearly all bridges have been destroyed," Husein Hodzic from the local civil protection unit told regional N1 television. "There is no electricity, all power poles have been swept away. There are no phone lines."

Human-caused climate change increases the intensity of rainfall because warm air holds more moisture. This summer, the Balkans were also hit by long-lasting record temperatures, causing a drought. Scientists said the dried-out land has hampered the absorption of floodwaters.

Flooding was also reported in Croatia and Montenegro in the previous days but caused less damage and no fatalities.

-AP

BEL inks pact with SAC-ISRO

Bengaluru: Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) on Monday said it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO to collaborate, indigenise and develop infrastructure for manufacturing space-grade Traveling Wave Tube Amplifiers (TWTAs) in India.

The BEL said that the MoU that was signed at SAC Ahmedabad will give a boost to the indigenisation of defence and space production and save foreign exchange for the country.

TWTAs developed by SAC, ISRO, and manufactured by BEL will be used in satellite communication and navigation payloads, microwave remote sensing radar payloads, scientific missions or probes and inter-spacecraft communication links. They are integral parts of communication and microwave remote sensing payloads.

Taiwan braces for powerful typhoon

Kaohsiung: Taiwan closed schools and offices and evacuated hundreds of vulnerable areas around the island Tuesday ahead of a strong typhoon expected to hit its populated western coast after lashing northern Philippine islands.

More than 500 people were moved from mountainous regions prone to landslides. Nearly 40,000 troops were mobilized to help with rescue efforts, according to the Defense Ministry.

Typhoon Krathon is expected to hit the major port city of Kaohsiung in the island's southwest on Wednesday morning then move across the center of Taiwan and northeast toward the East China Sea, according to the Central Weather Administration. It is expected to be felt in the



capital Taipei on Wednesday and Thursday.

In Kaohsiung, a city of 2.7 million people, many stores and restaurants were closed. Up to 80 centimeters (31 inches) of rain was forecast in its mountainous areas.

The storm was moving toward the island with maximum sustained winds of 198 kph (123 mph) and gusts of 245 kph (152 mph), according to the weather administration.

Typhoon Krathon on

Monday displaced nearly 2,000 people in the northern Philippines, where it blew away roofs of rural houses, toppled trees and caused widespread flooding.

Wind damaged an airport terminal and two parked light planes in Basco, the capital of the northernmost province of Batanes. An airstrip and a hangar were also flooded in Lingayen town in Pangasinan province, according to the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines.

-AP

Drought dries major Amazon river tributary

The river's level is lowest in over 122 years

By Edmar Barros, Fernando Crispim and Gabriela SA Pessoa

Manaus (Brazil): One of the Amazon river's main tributaries has dropped to its lowest level ever recorded, Brazil's geological service said on Friday, reflecting a severe drought that has devastated the Amazon rainforest and other parts of the country.

The Negro river's water level might drop even more in coming weeks based on forecasts for low rainfall in upstream regions, according to the geological service's predictions. Andre Martinelli, the agency's hydrology manager in

Manaus, was quoted as saying the river was expected to continue receding until the end of the month.

Water levels in Brazil's Amazon always rise and fall with its rainy and dry seasons, but the dry portion of this year has been much worse than usual. All of the major rivers in the Amazon basin are at critical levels, including the Madeira River, the Amazon River's longest tributary.

The Negro River drains about 10 per cent of the Amazon basin and is the world's sixth-largest by water volume. Manaus, the biggest city in the rainforest, is where the Negro joins the Amazon river.

The level of the Negro river at the port of Manaus was at 12.66 metres on Friday, as compared with a normal level of about 21 metres. It is the lowest since measurements started 122 years ago. The previous record low level was recorded last year, but toward the end of October.

For locals, the drought has made basic daily activities impossible. Gracita Barbosa, 28, works as a cashier on a floating shop on the Negro river. She is out of work because boats that once stopped there can no longer navigate the river due to the low water levels. Barbosa can no longer bathe in the river and travels to collect drinking water.

-AP



Drought has dried a major Amazon River tributary to its lowest level in over 122 years.

Antarctica turning green 'dramatically': study

New Delhi: Antarctica is turning green "dramatically", with the trend accelerated by more than 30 per cent in recent years, compared to the past three decades, a new study has found.

Researchers found that vegetation cover across the Antarctic Peninsula increased more than tenfold -- from less than a square kilometre to almost 12 square kilometres -- between 1986 and 2021.

The researchers, including those at the University of Exeter, UK, used satellite data to estimate the "greening" rate of the Antarctic Peninsula in response to climate change.

Antarctica has been shown to be warming faster than the global average, with extreme heat events becoming more common.

"This recent acceleration in the rate of change in vegetation cover (2016-2021) coincides with a marked decrease in sea-ice extent in Antarctica over the same period," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

"The plants we find on the Antarctic Peninsula -- mostly mosses -- grow in perhaps the harshest conditions on Earth," corresponding author Thomas Roland, University of Exeter, said.

While a tiny fraction of the landscape -- still largely dominated by snow, ice and rock -- is colonised by plant life, that tiny fraction has grown showing that this vast and isolated 'wilderness' is affected by human-caused climate change.

In surprise news briefing, Biden talks Israel

By Josh Boak

Washington: After 1,080 days as president, Joe Biden on Friday decided to pop in and take questions in the White House briefing room for the first time, striding in with a grin after a strong monthly jobs report and the temporary settlement of a strike by ports workers.

The president has been less available than his recent predecessors to questions from White House press corps, making his surprise appearance welcome to the gathered reporters who waited as his press secretary's daily briefing was moved up 15 minutes, then delayed for nearly one hour.

The president stepped through the press room's blue door in a dark gray suit and red tie and proceeded to make news in response to



questions about comments on the 2024 presidential election, the latest jobs numbers and the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

acknowledged doubts about whether the November election would be peaceful, given comments by former President Donald Trump that the results could be rigged.

"I am confident it will be free and fair. I do not know whether it will be peaceful," Biden said. "The things that Trump has said, and the things that he said last time when he did not like the outcome of the election, were very dangerous."

Biden has tried to rebut a political movement that has at times openly trafficked in conspiracy theories, with the latest revolving around the government reporting on Friday that employers added 254,000 jobs last month and the unemployment rate ticked down to 4.1 per cent.

The president also highlighted the deal reached on Thursday to suspend a strike by 45,000 dockworkers on East and Gulf coast ports until January 15, creating time to try to hash out a new contract.

Still, challenges remain

for Biden as his final months as president involve the risk of a wider war in the Middle East.

When asked, Biden clarified his comments from a day earlier about Israel possibly striking Iranian oil facilities, which caused the price of the commodity to jump on the prospect of supplies being squeezed.

"Look, the Israelis have not concluded what they are going to do in terms of a strike," Biden said on Friday. "That is under discussion. I think if I were in their shoes, I would be thinking about other alternatives than striking oil fields."

The president emphasised that he and Harris are "singing from the same song sheet" on foreign and domestic policy, calling her a "major player in everything we have done".

As Biden began to leave the room, he was asked if he would reconsider his decision to exit the race. Biden cocked his head and smiled.

"I am back in," he joked.

UK confirms final flight from Lebanon

London: The UK government on Saturday confirmed its final charter plane to fly British nationals out of Lebanon as the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel intensifies and tensions in the region escalate.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer once again urged British nationals still in the country to come forward to be evacuated.

"To everybody listening who may be in that position: now is the time to leave, we have got the plans in place. So please come forward and we can make sure that they are evacuated," Starmer told reporters during a visit to Cheshire on Friday.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said after a chartered flight leaves Beirut on Sunday, there are no more scheduled flights due to a decrease in demand. However, the situation will be kept under constant review as the UK urged all remaining British nationals who want to leave Lebanon to register with the government immediately.

"The situation in Lebanon remains volatile, so I am glad that we have helped the many people who have heeded our advice to leave the country immediately," said UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

"With demand falling and the security situation deteriorating, there is no guarantee other options to leave quickly will become available. I urge anyone who wants to leave to register now," Lammy said.

-PTI

Israel strikes Beirut suburbs, north



Smoke rises following Israeli bombardment in southern Lebanon as seen from northern Israel on Saturday. Pic: AP/PTI

Tel Aviv: Israel expanded its bombardment in Lebanon on Saturday, hitting Beirut's southern suburbs with 12 airstrikes and striking a Palestinian refugee camp deep in northern Lebanon for the first time.

The attack on the Bedawi refugee camp near the northern city of Tripoli killed an official with Hamas's military wing, along with his wife and two young daughters, the Palestinian militant group said in a statement. Tripoli is much farther north than the majority of Israel's strikes, which have been concentrated in southern Lebanon and Beirut.

Israel has killed several Hamas officials in Lebanon since the Israel-Hamas war began in October last year, in addition to most of the top leadership of Hezbollah.

At least six people were killed in more than a dozen Israeli airstrikes overnight and into Saturday, according to National News Agency, Lebanon's official news agency.

The Israeli military said

special forces were carrying out targeted ground raids against Hezbollah infrastructure in southern Lebanon, destroying missiles, launchpads, watchtowers and weapons storage facilities. The military said troops also dismantled tunnel shafts that Hezbollah used to approach the Israeli border.

Some 1,400 Lebanese, including Hezbollah fighters and civilians, have been killed and some 1.2 million driven from their homes since Israel escalated its strikes in late September aiming to cripple Hezbollah and push it away from the countries' shared border. On Tuesday, Israel launched what it called a limited ground operation into southern Lebanon. Nine Israeli troops have been killed in close fighting in the area in the past few days, the military said.

Also on Saturday, Palestinian medical officials say Israeli strikes in northern and central Gaza early Saturday have killed at least 9 people, including two children.

One strike hit a group of people in the northern town of Beit Hanoun, killing at least five people, including two children, according to the Health Ministry's Ambulance and Emergency service.

Another strike hit a house in the northern part of the Nuseirat refugee camp, killing at least four people, the Awda hospital said. The strike also left a number of people wounded, it said.

The Israeli military did not have any immediate comment on the strikes, but it has long accused Hamas of operating from within civilian areas.

The Israeli military warned Palestinians to evacuate along the strategic Netzarim corridor in central Gaza, which was at the heart of obstacles to a ceasefire deal earlier this summer. The military told people in parts of the Nuseirat and Bureij refugee camps to evacuate to Muwasi, an area along Gaza's shore the military has designated a humanitarian zone.

-AP

Don't know whether Israel holding up peace deal

Joe Biden had terse words for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday, and said he did not know whether the Israeli leader was holding up a Mideast peace deal in order to influence the outcome of the 2024 US presidential election.

"No administration has helped Israel more than I have, none. None, none. And I think Bibi should remember that," he said, referring to the Israeli leader by his nickname. "And whether he is trying to influence the election, I do not know but I am not counting on that."

For Biden, a diplomatic deal would help resolve a deep divide among Democrats over the war and shore up support for Vice President Kamala Harris, making one fewer global conflict for her to manage should she win next month. Netanyahu has his own political concerns closer to home: His far-right coalition would abandon him if he stopped the war, and he could lose power and have to face his own legal problems. And Israel has been decimating Hezbollah's leadership, so there is little incentive to stop now.

China could wage economic war on Taiwan

By Didi Tang

Washington: US military officials and analysts have for years warned of possible armed attacks or blockades by China on Taiwan, but a report released on Friday has raised a red flag about possible non-military tactics that could be used effectively against the self-governed island.

Beijing could wage an economic and cyber war to force a surrender from Taiwan without direct use of military power, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a Washington-based research institute, said in the report. Such a likely but overlooked scenario, it said, poses a challenge for the US, the island's biggest ally, and suggested Washington make preparations for how best to respond.

FDD researchers teamed up with banking and finance experts in Taiwan over two days earlier this year to simulate likely non-military moves by Beijing, such as disinformation campaigns and cyber-attacks on infrastructure. The exercise was the first of its kind and



Xi Jinping

seeks to fill an analytical gap, FDD said.

"Modern globalisation has created more economic connections that China can exploit to achieve coercive aims," the report said. "Technological innovation created even more digital connections, offering more possibilities for coercion, including through the targeting of critical infrastructure."

Tensions have flared in the Taiwan Strait since 2016 when Beijing began to increase diplomatic and military pressure on the island, prompting the US to step up its support. Washington, which is obligated under US law to provide Taipei with sufficient military hardware for its defence, has ar-



Tsai Ing-wen

gued that it is in the US interest to keep peace in the strait and to stand with democracies such as Taiwan to maintain the rules-based world order.

Beijing has demanded the US stay out of Taiwan, arguing it is a purely domestic affair.

President Joe Biden has indicated he would send troops to defend Taiwan in case of an armed attack from China, but the US government has yet to formulate a plan to respond to non-military tactics, giving Beijing flexibility in working to undermine Taiwan without triggering an outright response from Washington that a military invasion would, the FDD researchers said.

Sri Lanka's debt-restructuring agreement

Colombo: Sri Lanka has reached a debt restructuring agreement with its sovereign bondholders, the government has said, marking a crucial step towards the cash-strapped island nation's economic recovery and strengthening.

In a statement on Friday, the Ministry of Finance said following the Agreement in Principle (AIP) reached with representatives of its international and local holders of International Sovereign Bonds (ISB) on September 19, the Sri Lankan authorities have "now completed their consultations" with the country's "Official Creditor Committee (OCC) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund)".

USD 360 million
The amount Sri Lanka has already obtained under the EFF.

The statement from the Treasury department further said the OCC has confirmed that the terms of the AIP comply with both Comparability of Treatment (CoT) principle and the global lender has also confirmed that the terms of the agreement meet the IMF-supported programme.



South Korean nationals and their family members arrive after being evacuated from Lebanon with a South Korea's military aircraft at the Seoul airport in Seongnam, South Korea on Saturday. Pic: AP/PTI

Army officer, five soldiers killed in gunfight

Peshawar: A high-ranking army officer and five other soldiers were killed in a gunfight with terrorists in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military said on Saturday.

In a statement, the military's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the exchange of fire took place on the night between October 4-5 at

Spinwam area in North Waziristan district, bordering Afghanistan, during which "six Khwarij" were also killed.

During the "intense fire exchange", 43-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat, who was leading the operation against the terrorists, was killed along with five other soldiers, the statement

said. Meanwhile, the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The TTP was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. Pakistan has officially declared TTP as 'Fitna al-Khawarij' and the notification by the Interior Ministry emphasises the

use of the term 'khariji' (outlawed) along with the names of such terrorists.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021, dashing hopes in Islamabad that a friendly government in Afghanistan would help to tackle militancy.

-PTI

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"PTI will invite Jaishankar, Indian External Affairs Minister, to come and join PTI's protest and speak to our people and see that Pakistan is a strong democracy where everyone has a right to protest."



Muhammad Ali Saif, Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister

Thousands of Jewish pilgrims in Ukraine despite warnings

Uman (Ukraine): Prayer chants and the sounding of traditional ram's horns fill the air in the town of Uman, in central Ukraine, as thousands of pilgrims join an annual gathering to mark the Jewish new year, despite the war against Russia.

Uman, 200 kilometres south of the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, is transformed for the celebration of Rosh Hashana. The streets are plastered with signs in Hebrew for the pilgrims who come to pray at the tomb of Rabbi Nachman, the great-

grandson of the founder of Hasidic movement.

Despite Ukrainian and Israeli diplomats warning of the security threat, officials told The Associated Press that 35,000 pilgrims made the journey to Uman this year, the same as in earlier years.

Rabbi Moshe Reuven Azman, a leading figure in Ukraine's Jewish community, was one of those who urged international pilgrims not to visit Ukraine due to security concerns but acknowledged that many



would still make the trip regardless of the potential risks involved.

As the war in Ukraine rages for a third year, Russian army fires barrages of drones and missiles at

Ukrainian territory, with the capture of the city of Vuhledar being their most recent notable achievement. Israel is now engaged in a multifront war that includes the battles with Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon, attacks from Iran and strikes inside Syria, plus ongoing confrontations with armed militants in the West Bank and occasional attacks launched by Iranian-backed militants in Iraq and by the Houthis in Yemen. Ukraine closed its air space in February 2022,

at the start of Russia's full-scale invasion, forcing visitors to travel overland via other European countries in order to reach Uman.

The United Jewish Community of Ukraine said Wednesday that more than 14,000 pilgrims were unable to travel to Uman. Iran fired a barrage of nearly 180 missiles, causing cancellation of multiple flights from Israel in an act Iranian officials called retaliation for Israel's recent strikes on Hezbollah.

-AP

MY CORNER

A Heartwarming Step into Simplicity

A recent two-day rural immersion camp to Dabhlon Village, organized by the Group for Rural Activities (GRA) at IIT Bombay, provided students with a profound insight into rural life.

while enjoying simple yet flavourful meals prepared by their hosts. On the following morning, the students assembled again and met with the youth club, which included women as well.

After gathering at the village school, the students learned about the village's history, struggles, and progress. They met the village Sarpanch, Sudam Ji and discovered the efforts made by the youth club - the 'Adivasi Asmitha Prathishthan' - to elect him as their Sarpanch.

The students took away invaluable lessons from their experience in Dabhlon, particularly the villagers' spirit of community and resilience. Inspired by the warmth and hospitality shown to them, they recognized the importance of unity as villagers supported one another despite limited resources.

Under the leadership of Sudam Ji and the youth club, tremendous changes have been initiated—from constructing concrete roads to installing a smart TV in the local school. However, the challenges faced by the villagers are undeniable, particularly the lack of quality education for students and limited access to nearby cities or towns.

As they bid farewell to their hosts, they carried with them memories of a truly transformative experience with a learning: "Progress is not when you take 100 steps alone; it is when you take 1 step at a time along with 100 people."

(This is based on the experiences of the students - Vaibhav, Ayush, Aditya, Ajeesh, Tanushree, Eshika, Anupama, Rishi & Nikhil)

HIDDEN TREASURES

Cinematic Dreams on Dusty Fields: The Unseen Artists of Rural Maharashtra



By Santosh Ram

In the quiet rural hinterlands of Maharashtra, where the soil's yield determines daily survival and village life moves to a familiar, age-old rhythm, a new kind of artistry is flourishing.

On one such day, just outside Udgir, in the village of Haibatpur, I am orchestrating a scene for my latest short film, 'The Story of Yuvraj and Shah Jahan.'

The scene is deceptively simple—a boy, Yuvraj, and a bangle seller, Shah Jahan, meet at the village's edge. The tension between them is palpable, their friendship veiled by a society that shuns same-sex relationships.

If cinema is, at its core, a reflection of life, then rural Maharashtra's independent filmmakers are creating a mirror that demands to be seen.

Her daily life is punctuated by agricultural rituals: the releasing of the buffalo in the afternoon, the milking that must be done before dusk. Yet, on set, she becomes an artist.

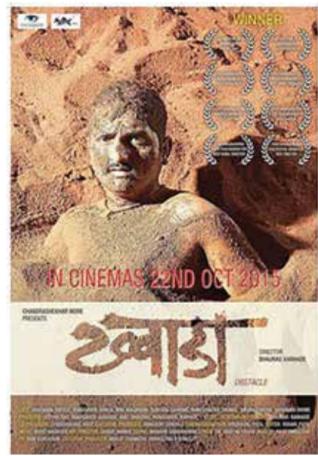
As a native of Udgir, I have long been drawn to stories that challenge the norms of rural society. Growing up in these villages, I have always been aware of the unwritten rules that govern our lives.

Today, in Maharashtra's hinterlands—Marathwada, Vidarbha, and West Maharashtra—thousands of unsung artists are attempting to transmute their daily realities into cinema.

Yet the path to artistic recognition for filmmakers like us is fraught with challenges. Independent creators in rural Maharashtra battle a host of obstacles, from financial shortages to the indifference of urban audiences.

This tension between rural filmmakers and Bollywood's glittering industry was starkly illustrated in the story of Prashant Ingale, an actor from a farming family in Shirur Taluk. In 2016, when Ingale, overwhelmed by debt and the pressures of rural life, attempted suicide by consuming fungicide, it mirrored the bleak realities portrayed in his films.

Though the Marathi film industry boasts a rich tradition, its independent directors remain at the mercy of financial constraints, local tastes, and the broader hegemony of mainstream cinema.



audiences ignore stories about rural life, finding them too distant, too foreign. They prefer narratives about their own world—the urban jungle of Mumbai or Pune.

These obstacles are hardly new for us. My journey into filmmaking began not with a traditional education at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) in Pune, but in its canteen, where I befriended students and began assisting on their projects.

I consider myself an FTII canteen pass-out. Despite attempting the FTII entrance exam multiple times, I never gained admission. Instead, I devoured books from the institute's library and learned his craft by immersing himself in the work of others.

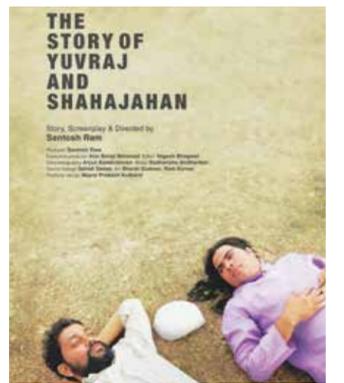
Bhaurao Karhade, the director of the National Award-winning 'Khwada' (2015) was forced to sell sold five acres of farmland to bring his project to life - a dark reflection of the very hardships his film sought to depict.

those same lives. They blur the lines between art and reality, their works becoming both a mirror and a means of survival.

The mission of such 'Indie celluloid boondockers' as myself or Karhade and the others, is clear: tell authentic stories of rural India without compromising for commercial appeal. This often means a life of scraping by, securing donations from friends, and collaborating with like-minded, low-budget artists.

While mainstream Bollywood may churn out blockbusters, filmmakers from the backwaters are intent on uncovering the poetry of the everyday—the silent struggles, the quiet resilience—of India's rural heartland.

(The writer is a filmmaker whose short films have been acclaimed for their gritty realism and sharp social commentary. His latest short is 'The Story of Yuvraj and Shah Jahan.' Views personal.)



A Year of Strife: Israel, Hamas, and the Shadow War of Intelligence



By Shoumojit Banerjee

Exactly a year ago, Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups launched a blitzkrieg on Israel, killing over 1,200 civilians and foreign nationals while taking several hostages.

Since the 'Black Sabbath' or the 'October 7' attacks as it has come to be known, Israel, recovering its nerve, has struck back hard, subjecting Gaza to its scorching wrath. It has simultaneously taken on and

decapitated the leadership of the Hezbollah, dealing the Iran-backed Lebanese militant outfit a body blow by killing its longtime general-secretary Hassan Nasrallah. Once again, Israel's intelligence apparatus, often touted as the best in the world, proved its lethal efficiency.

But how did Israel's intelligence apparatus, with its three arms - Mossad, Shin Bet and Aman - come to develop this ruthless efficiency, enabling it to carry out some of the most stunning intelligence coups in the last century and the present time?

The recent attacks on Hezbollah's pager and walkie-talkie communications not merely paralyzed the organisation's operations but also underscored the depth of Israeli infiltration. Such successes are not merely the product of modern intelligence techniques but tap into a long-standing tradition of espionage deeply embedded in Jewish history.

In 'The Secret World'



(2018) - his magisterial survey of the history of intelligence and espionage, Dr. Christopher Andrew - the doyen of intelligence studies - observes how the Jewish Tanakh, or the Christian Old Testament, contains a wealth of references to spies that outnumber those found in many other national histories.

From Moses dispatching agents to scout the Promised Land to Joseph, the Egyptian vizier, feigning ignorance of his brothers while accusing them of espionage, these narratives illustrate the centrality of intelligence in Jewish lore. Yet another early espionage tale is the betrayal of Jesus of Nazareth by Judas Is-

cariot, who became a paid informant for the high priests on what has been dubbed 'Spy Wednesday.'

As Andrews observes, Moses himself is a figure of significant importance not only in Judaism but also in Islam, where he is known as Musa. The Quran mentions him 136 times, more than any other human figure. In both scriptures, God commands Moses to send twelve spies into the Promised Land, marking what would become one of the earliest recorded intelligence failures. This failure was less about the quality of the intelligence gathered and more about how it was utilized. It was not until forty years later, following



a more organized intelligence operation, that Moses' successor, Joshua, successfully led the Israelites into Canaan.

The foundational texts advocating for the centrality of intelligence in matters of war and peace emerged not in Greece or Rome, but in ancient China and the Indian subcontinent, in form of Chinese general Sun Tzu seminal 'The Art of War' and the 'Arthashastra' ascribed to Kautilya.

In this sense, India's is lucky to have a splendid survey of its intelligence history by Vappala Balachandran, whose superb 'Intelligence Over the Centuries' (2022) also mentions the Land of Canaan as the fount of successful spy-craft. Balachandran's lively work offers a compelling exploration of intelligence, tracing the origins of the craft from Ancient Israel to modern-day Ukraine while being packed with thrilling anecdotes of the history of India's intelligence agency, R&AW, which marked 50 years in 2018.

Since its founding in 1948, Israel has relied heavily on intelligence to safeguard its borders, often resorting to pre-emptive strikes and targeted killings. In what is probably the first comprehensive history of its kind, investigative journalist Ronen Bergman's 'Rise and Kill First' provides a chilling account of Israel's targeted assassination strategy. Through extensive interviews and classified documents, Bergman reveals how Israel's intelligence agencies—Mossad, Shin Bet, and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) — have executed a vast campaign of extrajudicial killings aimed at pre-empting threats to the Jewish state.

The book traces this practice from pre-state Jewish underground movements to today's high-tech precision strikes, illustrating how assassination has become both a tactical weapon and a cornerstone of Israel's defense doctrine.

Bergman highlights that the Israeli intelligence community maintains strict

secrecy, enforced through a complex web of laws, military censorship, and intimidation of journalists, fostering a strong sense of solidarity among its personnel.

Since World War II, Israel has conducted more assassinations than any other Western nation, with leaders often opting for clandestine operations as the primary means of ensuring national security. In many instances, Israeli leaders have justified the endangerment of innocent lives as a necessary evil to eliminate threats.

The figures are striking: prior to the Second Palestinian Intifada in September 2000, Israel had carried out approximately 500 targeted killing operations, resulting in around 1,000 deaths, both civilian and combatant. During the Second Intifada, around 1,000 more operations were conducted, with 168 successful hits. Since then, about 800 targeted killings have occurred, primarily against Hamas in Gaza during conflicts in 2008, 2012, and 2014, and against Palestinian, Syrian, and Iranian targets in various covert operations. In contrast, during George W. Bush's presidency, the U.S. executed an estimated 48 targeted killings, while under Barack Obama, there were 353.

Israel's reliance on assassination stems from the revolutionary roots of the Zionist movement, the trauma of the Holocaust, and the belief that the nation is under constant threat of annihilation. This sense of vulnerability has propelled the development of a highly

effective military and arguably the world's most proficient intelligence community, resulting in a formidable assassination apparatus.

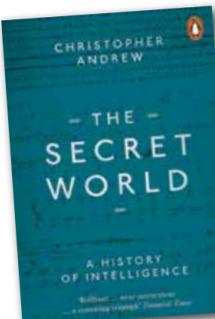
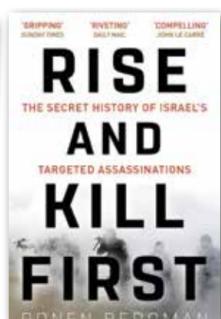
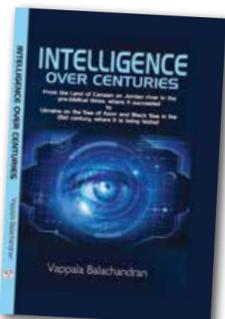
Strikingly, the United States has adopted Israeli intelligence techniques as a model, particularly after 9/11 when President Bush initiated targeted killings against Al-Qaeda. Many of the command-and-control systems, information-gathering methods, and drone technologies employed by American forces were developed in Israel.

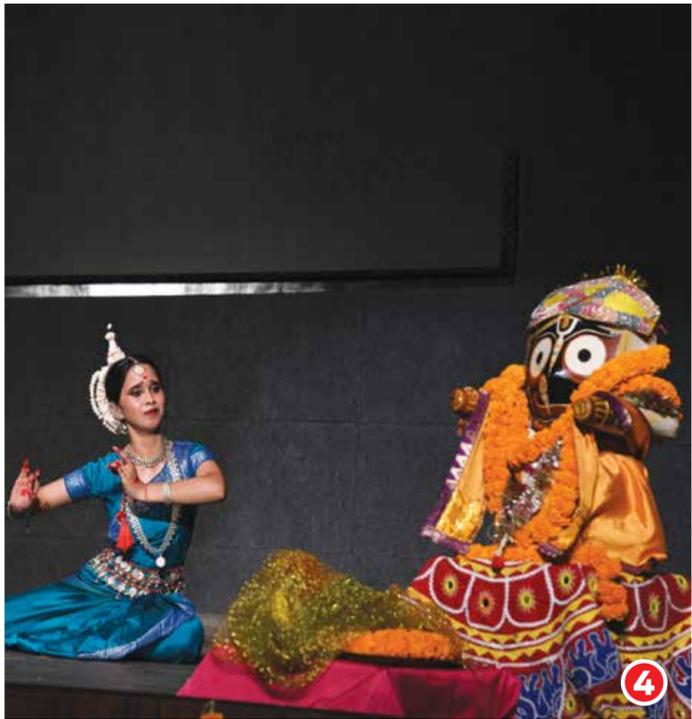
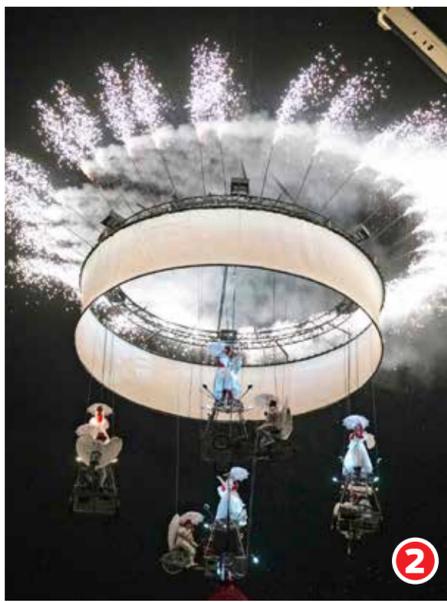
In his riveting history of intelligence operations during WW2, Max Hastings, in 'The Secret War,' points out that intelligence is far from an exact science. For all the success stories, there have been colossal failures. In Hastings' view, the only question that really matters is how far has secret knowledge changed outcomes? While intelligence might have saved Israel from crises, the unintended consequences have been profound. Assassinations ultimately breed more enemies, radicalizing future generations and perpetuating cycles of violence that undermine peace prospects.

Israel's reliance on assassination as a military tool is understandably born out of necessity—a small nation surrounded by enemies since its founding. But as the butcher's bill continues to mount, so does the moral cost.

(Tomorrow, we look at Israel and the Yemen-based Houthi rebel movement, and the global response to this terror outfit)

On the first anniversary of the Israel-Hamas war, our multi-part series investigates the historical and contemporary layers of the conflict. From Israel's historic engagements with militant groups since its founding in 1948, to the protracted engagements with Hamas, Hezbollah and other outfits, we explore a range of topics from intelligence coups and failures to how global powers have responded and the future of the region.





KALEIDOSCOPE

1. Members of the Indonesian Army Special Forces Commandos march during a parade marking the 79th anniversary of the Indonesian Armed Forces in Jakarta, Indonesia on Saturday.
2. Belgium's Tol Theater company presents its play titled Pedaling to Heaven at the opening of the International Festival of Living Arts in Bogota, Colombia on Friday.
3. Soldiers of India and Kazakhstan during ongoing joint military exercise 'Kajind' at Auli in Chamoli district on Saturday.
4. An artist performs during 'Chitralekha Odissi Nrityotsav 2024' organized by Kashinath Krishnapriya Institute of Performing Arts - KKIPA at Tezpur in Sonitpur district of Assam on Friday.
5. Visitors watch the audiovisual presentation Ocean Odyssey, projected on the walls of a former steelworks at the Phoenix des Lumieres exhibition in Dortmund, Germany on Friday.

All Pictures PTI, AP

LETTER FROM PAKISTAN

Can the SCO Islamabad Summit Improve Indo-Pak Relations?



By Kaswar Klasra

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), established in 2001 began with China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, evolving into one of the world's largest trans-regional economic and security organisations. India and Pakistan joined in 2017.

The upcoming meeting in Islamabad has the potential to thaw relations between India and Pakistan. As Pakistan assumes the rotating chairmanship of the SCO CHG, it is set to host a series of high-level meetings, culminating in the October summit. For both nations, the SCO provides a neutral venue to engage in dialogue amid heightened global scrutiny.

Jaishankar's visit is the first by an Indian foreign minister to Pakistan since 2014. Over the last decade, relations have been hostile and marked by diplomatic disengagement, with the Kashmir issue remaining an intractable barrier to peace. Both countries have escalated their military postures and intensified their nationalistic rhetoric, especially following India's revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in 2019.

The upcoming visit to Islamabad may signal a shift in India's approach toward Pakistan. It remains to be seen whether this trip is merely a diplomatic formality or if it has the potential to restart bilateral dialogue. The lack of confirmed meetings between Jaishankar and his Pakistani counterparts suggests that expectations should be tempered. Nonetheless, sending a senior official to Islamabad is noteworthy in the current geopolitical climate.

Pakistan is currently grappling with internal security threats, particularly in Balochistan and along the Afghanistan border. A recent surge in

terrorist attacks has intensified Islamabad's efforts to project stability before the summit. The deployment of the Pakistan Army, Rangers, and police under Article 245 of the Constitution to maintain order highlights the high stakes for the government. Successfully hosting the summit will enhance Pakistan's diplomatic standing and help address some domestic challenges.

Engaging with the SCO remains essential for India to counterbalance China's influence and carve out its sphere of influence in the Indo-Pacific. The SCO's focus on Central Asia allows India to strengthen its economic and security ties with Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan in key energy markets and security frameworks. However, Jaishankar's visit may be viewed with scepticism, particularly as Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares for key elections next year.



Jaishankar Shehbaz Sharif

China's growing presence in South Asia and its partnership with Pakistan complicate India's strategy. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project under China's Belt and Road Initiative, has deepened economic and military ties between Islamabad and Beijing. For Pakistan, China, an ally, provides diplomatic cover in international forums, financial support, and military assistance. India, however, is concerned about China's expanding footprint in South Asia amid rising tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Himalayas.

Beijing will likely welcome the prospect of reduced hostilities between India and Pakistan, given its broader regional ambitions. A stable South Asia serves China's economic interests, particularly in ensuring the

security of its investments in Pakistan and its energy corridors passing through Central Asia. Additionally, as a founding member of the SCO, China has a vested interest in ensuring the success of the upcoming summit in Islamabad.

However, China's ties to Pakistan make it a partial actor in the India-Pakistan dispute. Nonetheless, its economic clout and strategic interests make it an influential stakeholder in any potential thaw between India and Pakistan.

Following Western sanctions on Russia due to the Ukraine conflict, Moscow has sought to diversify its partnerships by increasingly turning to Asia. The SCO summit presents an opportunity for Russia to deepen its engagement and expand economic and security ties in the region. However, its role as a potential mediator in South Asian conflicts remains limited. Participation in the SCO allows India and Pakistan to project stability and leadership. Jaishankar's visit to Islamabad, while symbolically significant, may ultimately fall short of sparking meaningful dialogue. However, it does create a window—however small—for diplomatic engagement, which could set the stage for future talks.

The SCO summit in Islamabad may serve as a litmus test for the future trajectory of India-Pakistan relations. Will pragmatism prevail over entrenched hostilities, or will this opportunity for diplomacy be another missed chance for reconciliation? For world capitals like Washington, Beijing, and Moscow, the outcome of this summit will be closely monitored for its regional implications and broader impact on global geopolitics.

In a world increasingly defined by power competition, climate change, and economic uncertainty, South Asia's stability is critical. The upcoming SCO summit could reduce tensions between India and Pakistan. Whether this leads to concrete action remains to be seen, but the opportunity is there—and the world will be watching.

(The writer is a senior journalist based in Islamabad. Views personal.)

DEEP DIVE

India's Diplomatic Role in Escalating Global Conflicts



By Ruddhi Phadke

The world is deeply concerned about peace, especially with two ongoing conflicts—the Russia-Ukraine war and the one between Israel and its foes. Amidst the ongoing tensions, India has good relations with all the conflicting nations, like Russia, Ukraine, the US, Europe, Israel, Lebanon, Iran, and the entire Arab world. Recently, there have been rumours of an amicable truce with China, which could open the floodgates for mutual trade. As a result, India is being welcomed by all.

President Vladimir Putin's recent remarks, where he stated that Russia would consider an attack from a non-nuclear state that was backed by a nuclear-armed one to be a "joint attack," have raised eyebrows. Does this imply a threat of using nuclear weapons in the war in Ukraine? On Wednesday, September 25, Putin said his government was considering changing the rules and preconditions around which Russia would use its nuclear arsenal. In response to this threat, Zelensky is expected to receive an additional supply of lethal weapons that could pose a threat to the heart of Russia. US President Joe Biden is in favour of continuing aid to Ukraine as a last effort to support it during the final months of his tenure. A lot depends on the upcoming elections in the US. If Kamala Harris gets elected, this policy will continue, and if Trump wins, the aid to Ukraine will immediately stop. Zelensky visited the US, frantically and desperately trying to extract maximum help from Trump. On the other hand, Putin may be manoeuvring behind the scenes to ensure Trump's success.

What's interesting to see is how



India is reacting to all of this. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is emerging as a mediator and peace broker. Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General and reiterated India's support for an early resolution of the conflict and the restoration of peace and stability in the region. A losing side (Ukraine) cannot dictate terms for the truce; hence, Ukraine is left with no option but to compromise unless there is a miracle that has the potential to create a turnaround of events. PM Modi advised Zelensky that war cannot be stopped on his terms, but it can only stop if he is ready for a 'resolution.'

What potential solutions could Ukraine adopt?

- Pledging not to join NATO
 - Concede Crimea, occupied by Russia at the beginning of this war, as part of Russia.
 - Not to have a defence treaty with the US or any of the NATO countries.
 - Zelensky should resign, and a new head must be appointed on Russia's recommendation.
- Accepting some or all of these terms could effectively make Ukraine a subordinate nation to Russia. Modi, along with the active participation of External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, could play a crucial role in devising a solution acceptable to both sides while safeguarding the dignity and pride of each—a highly challenging task.

Many global leaders, from China's Xi Jinping to Erdogan of Turkey, have attempted a similar strategy, but nothing has come to fruition

yet. These two leaders are arms suppliers to Russia, and Ukraine finds it impossible to accept any suggestions from such mediators.

India continues to have trade relations with Russia despite US sanctions and provides humanitarian aid to Ukraine, but does not export arms to either one of them. This makes Modi acceptable to both sides.

Israel-Lebanon conflict

In the second major conflict involving Israel and its adversaries, Netanyahu is conducting airstrikes against Lebanon and is now escalating ground operations. Lebanon is aware that the only power that can deter Israel is the US. However, the US continues to supply shipments of arms and ammunition to Israel. Multiple nations, including India, have appealed for a ceasefire. However, Netanyahu is in no mood to arrive at a peaceful solution.

Meanwhile, the US has made little effort to restrain Netanyahu. Anticipating a large-scale war, many nations have issued advisories to their nationals. India too has issued three such advisories in the last 48 hours for its citizens to leave Lebanon. Similar to the situation of the Russia-Ukraine war, India shares good relations with Israel and the Arab world. In many Arab countries, Modi has been conferred with the highest civilian award. In the UN general assembly, India abstained whenever a resolution condemning Israel was moved and kept supporting the cause of Palestine to exist.

Having said that, much depends on the fulcrum of the US presidential election, which is around the corner.

LET'S TALK CRICKET

A wait of 27 years over

By
Sharad Kadrekar

Mumbai is considered as Capital of Indian Cricket, a cradle of Cricket in India its record in domestic cricket is enviable. The 42 times Ranji Trophy Champions and now 15 times Irani Cup winners! It retained Ranji Trophy between 1958-1973, which is a record. Double crown for Mumbai after a long wait of 27 years.

The Glorious History

Irani Cup match is played between Ranji Trophy Champions and the Rest of India team selected on the basis of other teams best, talented players. It is an annual feature of BCCI Cricket Calendar. Zal Irani who was BCCI's first Treasurer since its inception, later a Vice-President and President (1966-67) was honoured by having a Trophy presented in his name. It started in 1959-60 and was played at end of the season. After five years, it was shifted to the beginning of the next season. This Irani Cup tie gives valuable data about the form of current players.

This season 2023-24 has been amazing for Mumbai Cricket. They regained the Ranji Trophy after a long gap. With most of their star players away on national duty representing India in WC and WTC matches they showed the class. The newly looked Mumbai Team played well under the Captaincy of Ajinkya Rahane, a veteran Test stalwart.

Ajinkya led the side well though he didn't contribute much with the bat except in the final at Wankhede Stadium against Vidarbha. Ajinkya is always a captain cool. He is very shrewd with tactics. He led the bunch of talented youngsters which included Khan siblings Sarfraz and



Musheer, Tanush Kotian (find of the season), pacer Awasthi, Tushar Deshpande (presently in UK for treatment), Shams Mulani, the crafty left arm spinner who along with Tanush Kotian plotted the downfall of opposition batters.

The Turning Point

In the Irani Cup match played on the red soiled Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in the first week of October Mulani bowled 40 overs and bagged 3 wickets but two main Rest of India batters, opener Abhimanyu Easwaran and Dhruv Jurel who stitched a partnership of 165 runs and frustrated the Mumbai team but Mulani exploiting the rough got Abhimanyu sweeping and catch was held by Tanush running in from short fine leg. Tanush then polished off ROI tail very swiftly. ROI lost last six wickets for just 23 runs. Both the tweakers bagged three wickets and Mumbai gained vital first innings lead of 121 runs.

Known for its batting Mumbai started badly in Irani Cup losing three wickets for 37 runs but skipper Ajinkya Rahane along with Shreyas Iyer and then with Double Centurion Sarfraz Khan put Mumbai innings back on track. Rock solid batsman Sarfraz Khan scored unbeaten 222 runs which enabled Ranji Champi-

Ajinkya Rahane joins the illustrious band of Mumbai skippers who have led the Mumbai Team in Irani Cup Triumph. They are Polly Umrigar, Babu Nadkarni Ajit Wadekar, Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Sachin Tendulkar and Sanjay Manjrekar

ons to reach 537 runs in 141 overs.

The New Hero

Real hero of this Irani Cup match was Tanush Kotian, an allrounder. The 26-year-old, a resident of Kannamwar Nagar, Vikhroli is a find of the season. His father Karunakaran Kotian is also a well-known name in Mumbai's maiden cricket. Tanush also imbibed cricket from his father. He has progressed well making rapid strides in at national level.

A product of IES School, Dadar he is now the "Talk of the Town" by his exploits on field in Ranji Trophy tournament 2023-24. He got the Best Player Award for his eye catching all round performance. Last season, he scored a brilliant century and shared last wicket century record partnership with Tushar Deshpande, who also scored a maiden century.

"Bap se Beta Sawai"

Karuna is proud of his son's performance. He wished his son should play in the IPL and Tanush did play in the IPL a solitary game for RR. Irani Trophy match performance 64, 114 not out, and 27-2-101-3 plus the spectacular catch to dismiss Abhimanyu Easwaran for 191 is noteworthy.

The Rising Star of Mumbai Cricket is marching towards further glory as new season of Ranji Trophy is beginning from October 11 with Mumbai the holders meeting Baroda. All eyes will be on Mumbai's team performance in the opening encounter and the blue eyed boy Tanush.

Mumbai Cricket's glorious achievement is the fruit of efforts taken by Ajinkya Rahane and his talented team members, coach Salvi, support staff, selectors and zealous band of Mumbai Cricket Associations officials.

TANUSH KOTIAN
shines as Mumbai seal
15TH IRANI CUP

Lucknow: Tanush Kotian's gritty unbeaten hundred laced Mumbai's 15th Irani Cup victory which was sealed by virtue of their first innings lead over Rest Of India on the fifth and final day here on Saturday.

Mumbai's last Irani Cup victory came 27 years ago during the 1997-98 season and since then the domestic powerhouse appeared in eight more finals without success and the last of which was in the 2015-16 season.

Mumbai, who started the final day from overnight 153 for six, declared their second innings at 329 for eight for an overall lead of 450 runs.

Kotian, who scored 64 in the first innings and resumed his innings on 20,

remained not out on 114 off 150 balls, hitting 10 fours and a six.

Knowing the futility of chasing 451 in little over a session, the Rest of India skipper Rituraj Gaikwad shook hands with his opposite number Ajinkya Rahane, signalling the draw and victory for Mumbai, the defending Ranji Trophy champions, at the same time.

Kotian, who showed remarkable maturity to steer Mumbai innings after the early departure of Sarfraz Khan (17) and Shardul Thakur (2), received good support from No. 10 Mohit Avasthi.

Mumbai were 171 for seven at that stage.

Avasthi remained unbeaten on 51 off 93 balls,

striking four fours and a six, and helped Kotian to add valuable 158 runs for the ninth wicket.

Off-spinner Saransh Jain took six wickets (6/121) but his efforts could only delay the inevitable.

Mumbai skipper Rahane was understandably delighted. "Winning the trophy after 27 years feel amazing. It was a red-soil wicket. I will like to pick Tanush Kotian for his performances in the previous season and this match.

"The Ranji Trophy and Irani Cup belong to everyone - from the maiden cricketers to everyone playing cricket in Mumbai."

Sarfraz was adjudged player of the match for his double hundred in Mumbai's first innings.

"I follow the process well and came into the tournament with practice. You build up experience by playing in different grounds. You get a knowledge on how to play on different pitches.

"I have a lot to learn by being around the Test team and can improve every facet of my game," said Sarfraz.

Mumbai Cricket Association president Ajinkya Naik lauded the team for the win.

Brief scores: Mumbai: 537 all out and 329/8 declared in 78 overs (Tanush Kotian 114 not out, Mohit Avasthi 51 not out, Prithvi Shaw 76; Saransh Jain 6/121) drew Rest of India: 416 all out.

-PTI

Nandu Natekar Badminton Championship
Darshan Pujari, Purva Barve emerge champs

By Correspondent

Mumbai: Pune shuttlers Darshan Pujari and Purva Barve enjoyed a rewarding day by winning the men's and women's singles crowns respectively in the Yonex Sunrise Shri Nandu Natekar Memorial Maharashtra State Senior Inter District (Team) and State Badminton Championship 2024 played on Saturday.

The 20-year-old Pujari, the defending champion, overcame compatriot 24-year-old Rishabh Deshpande, winning in two straight games at 21-19, 21-19 in the well-contested men's final.

Earlier, the 24-year-old Barve, put to good advantage against Thane's 18-year-old Aarya Koregaonkar, clinching a 17-21, 21-7, 21-11 victory in the women's final.

The Thane teenager did well to win crucial points



against Barve, who was struggling to find her feet. Koregaonkar exploited the situation and pocketed the first game.

But the wily Barve, with a clever tactical change and a flawless shot execution, dominated the rallies against the youngster in the second, which the former won comfortably to level the scores. In the decider, Barve continued to dictate terms before closing the contest with a cross-court smash that Koregaonkar returned into the net.

The men's summit clash was a close affair and the scores ran close through-

out the two games. Deshpande had his chances and he led 19-18 in both games but failed to put the finishing touches. Pujari exhibited tremendous fighting spirit and stayed focused to win the last three crucial points to win the two games and wrap up the contest in his favour.

Results:

Women's singles (Semi-finals): Purva Barve (Pune) bt 1-Saad Dharmadhikari (Pune) 21-14, 21-6; Aarya Koregaonkar (Thane) bt Siya Singh (Thane) 21-16, 21-14.

Final: Purva Barve bt Aarya Koregaonkar 17-21, 21-7, 21-11.

Men's singles (Semi-final): Rishabh Deshpande (Pune) bt 1-Varun Kapur (Pune) 21-12, 6-21, 23-21; Darshan Pujari (Pune) bt Aditya Tripathi (Thane) 21-15, 21-11.

Final: Darshan Pujari bt Rishabh Deshpande 21-19, 21-19.



Mayo White and Mayo Blue players in action during the Annual Mayo Polo Cup 2024 match in Jaipur on Saturday.

Pic: PTI

Vaishnavi helps
India bag silver

New Delhi: Promising archer Vaishnavi Pawar showed impressive presence of mind to help India clinch team silver in the recurve U-18 women's category at the 2024 Asian Youth Archery Championship in Chinese Taipei.

Vaishnavi took the first shot for the three-member Indian team, also comprising Pranjal Tholiya and Jannat, in every round and handled the pressure well as they pipped fancied South Korea in the semi-final in a shoot-off.

International cricket to return to Gwalior

By Bharat Sharma

Gwalior: International cricket will return to Gwalior after a 14-year gap on Sunday but going forward the city will not have to wait that long to host high-profile matches as the newly built stadium will allow MPCA to stage games "alternatively" with Indore,

the state association's president Abhilash Khandekar informed PTI on Saturday.

The state-of-the-art Shri-mant Madhavrao Stadium was inaugurated in June and is the new home of big ticket cricket in the city replacing the deteriorating Captain Roop Singh Stadium, which is run by the local corporation.

Speaking to PTI ahead of the India-Bangladesh T20I, Khandekar said Gwalior is a city with a rich cricketing history and therefore deserved world-class venue.

Khandekar wants Gwalior to also host a Test in the near future. Both the stadiums are owned by MPCA.

-PTI

The ICC and BCCI want an exclusive stadium for cricket and we have two now in Gwalior and Indore. Going forward, whenever MPCA is allotted matches by the BCCI, we would want to use Gwalior and Indore alternatively. Both are traditional venues with rich history of the game.

Abhilash Khandekar, President, MPCA

Harmanpreet credits HIL for personal growth

New Delhi: National men's hockey team captain and ace drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh, who has scored 205 goals in 234 international appearances, on Saturday credited the Hockey India League (HIL) for playing a pivotal role in his career development.

From being named the Upcoming Player of the Tournament in the 2017 HIL to becoming one of the world's top drag-flickers, it has been a tremendous journey for Harmanpreet who highlighted how the league has helped him grow after rubbing shoulders with some of the best international players.

"Hockey India League was a huge part of my development. The league provided me with a stage to



enhance my skills by exposing me to different playing styles under different coaches," Harmanpreet said in a Hockey India (HI) release.

Harmanpreet said there could be nothing better for Indian hockey than the HIL and all the country's players would be excited to take part in the League.

HIL is slated for a return after seven years in a new

avatar that will see a women's tournament for the first time running concurrently with the men's event.

The league will be played in two venues - Rourkela for men and Ranchi for women - from December 28 to February 1. The sport's world governing body, FIH has given sanction of 10 years for HIL.

The tournament will feature eight men's and six women's franchises.

The player auction for the HIL 2024-25 will be held from October 13-15 in New Delhi.

Each franchise will build a 24-player squad, consisting of at least 16 Indian players (with a mandatory inclusion of four junior players) and eight international stars.

"The Hockey India League will be much bigger this time; there will also be a women's League that will run at the same time in both venues.

"I am confident this experience will turn out to be invaluable for the Indian women's hockey team in their journey to be one of the best teams in the world," he said.

Players will be auctioned in three categories with base prices of Rs 2 lakh, 5 lakh and 10 lakh each.

"The auction is coming up soon and I would like to wish all the best to all the players taking part. As for myself, I cannot wait to see which team I will represent and begin the hockey revolution again," he signed off.

-PTI

Nihal Sarin powers AK

London: Indian prodigy Nihal Sarin helped PBG Alaskan Knights emerge as the sole leaders in the Global Chess League (GCL) after day two that was full of drama with world Number one Magnus Carlsen suffering a shock defeat on time against Alireza Firouzja.

The Alaskan Knights won all three of matches securing nine match points to take the pole position, while the Ganges Grandmasters languished in last place without any point in the season two of the meet.

With two impressive victories on Friday - dominating the American Gambits 14-2, followed by a narrow 8-5 win over Mumba Masters, Alaskan Knights secured their position at the top.

Mumbai Masters Squash
Rajpal fights back to enter semis

By Correspondent

Mumbai: Top seed Sanjay Rajpal in a tremendous turnaround survived from the brink of defeat to beat Raja Parthasarathy 3-2 in the MO50 quarter-finals 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 Saturday.

Rajpal lost the two opening games, but he did not give up easily, instead, he staged a gallant fightback. Parthasarathy seemed to run out of steam and Rajpal exploited the situation and went on to comfortably

win three games on the trot to clinch a satisfying 10-12, 11-13, 11-4, 11-7 and 11-7 win and a place in the final.

Niraj Makhija of UAE continued his march ahead as he defeated the joint 3-4 seed Anuj Kalia 11-4, 8-11, 11-7 and 11-6 to also progress to the last four.

Results: Quarter-finals - MO35: 1-Arjun Agnihotri bt Virendra Pawar 11-2, 11-2, 11-2; Rushabh Vora bt Aakash Sharma 11-6, 11-5, 11-8; 2-Prateek Chalia bt Mahesh Kadam 11-6, 11-6, 9-11, 12-10.

MO40: 1-Paul Ipe bt Apachu Sk 11-4, 11-4, 11-2; Aditya Maheshwari bt 3-4-Manish Chavan 11-7, 7-11, 11-7, 11-7; 3-4-Abishek

Laxminarayan bt Saurabh Sinha 11-6, 11-4, 11-3; 2-Sanjay Pawar bt Amitpal Kohli 16-14, 6-11, 11-5, 11-3.

MO45: Shaileendra Pratap Singh bt Prabhakar Sanghera 7-11, 11-5, 12-10, 11-8; Praveen Murthy bt 3-4-Abheek Datta 11-9, 13-11, 11-8; 3-4-Benjamin Nedarapalli bt Nikhil Kumar 11-8, 11-8, 11-2; Kuncheria Marattukalam bt Sunil Sihag 11-7, 11-8, 11-7.

MO50: 1-Sanjay Rajpal bt Raja Parthasarathy 10-12, 11-13, 11-4, 11-7, 11-7; Varinder Singh bt Jay Asundi 11-9, 9-11, 11-9, 11-1; Niraj Makhija (UAE) bt 3-4-Anuj Kalia 11-4, 8-11, 11-7, 11-6; Dalip Tripathi bt Gourav Rakshit 11-9, 11-2, 11-3.