



THURSDAY  
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# The Statesman

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PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



**PENTAGON STUNNED BY TRUMP'S DEFENCE CHOICE**

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**MAHA ASSEMBLY POLLS: SC QUESTIONS AJIT PAWAR FOR USING SHARAD'S NAME**

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**GIVE ME A CHANCE TO REPRESENT WAYANAD: PRIYANKA**

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**PONTING RESPONDS TO GAMBHIR'S OUTBURST**



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SENSEX 77,690.95 ▼984.23

NIFTY 23,559.05 ▼324.40

₹ vs \$ 84.40

GOLD 77,590.00

SILVER 1,01,000

BRENT CRUDE (IN \$) 72.18 ▲0.29

## WEATHER

MAINLY CLEAR SKY. SMOG/DENSE TO VERY DENSE FOG IN THE MORNING. SMOG/MIST/MODERATE FOG LIKELY IN THE EVENING/NIGHT. THE MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM TEMPERATURES WOULD BE AROUND 29 AND 16 DEGREES CELSIUS RESPECTIVELY.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max. 100 % Min. 68 %

TEMPERATURE

Max: 27.8 °C (-1) Min: 17.0 °C (+3)

SUN RISES 06:44 hrs SUN SETS 17:28 hrs

MOON RISES 16:11 hrs MOON SETS 05:53 hrs

## THUMBNAILS



First-time voters show their ink-marked fingers after casting their vote in the first phase of the Jharkhand Assembly polls on Wednesday. ■ ANI

**Over 64 pc voter turnout in first phase of J'khand polls:** More than 64 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the first phase of voting in Jharkhand Assembly elections on Wednesday. The voting in 43 Assembly seats spread across 15,344 polling stations in the mineral-rich state was held peacefully without any incidents of violence. The polling was marked by a festive mood and enthusiastic participation across all districts, with a large tribal population. (Pg5)

# Supreme Court reins in bulldozer justice

Top court terms it unconstitutional, arbitrary and high-handed

PARMOD KUMAR  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Reining in bulldozer justice being practiced in certain states targeting the residential and commercial buildings belonging to persons allegedly in conflict with the law, the Supreme Court on Wednesday termed it as unconstitutional, arbitrary, high-handed and violative of the rule of law, abuse of power by the executive and violative of fundamental right to life and shelter guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Laying down the guidelines that have to be strictly adhered to by the authorities while embarking on the demolition of structures belonging to an alleged accused, a bench of Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice K.V. Viswanathan said that if the demolition is found to be in violation of the orders of the top court, "the officer/officers concerned will be held responsible for restitution of the demolished property



at his/their personal cost in addition to payment of damages."

The judgment in the matter titled "Re: Directions in the matter of demolition of structures" deals with different dimensions relating to the issue, including rule of law, separation of powers, doctrine of public trust and public accountability, rights of the accused under the Constitution, principles of criminal law - presumption of innocence of an accused till

found guilty by a court and natural justice, right to shelter and permissibility of collective punishment on the family of an accused and the direction that have to be followed before any demolition drive is undertaken. Stating that the principle that "an accused is not guilty unless proven so (guilty beyond a reasonable doubt) in a court of law" is foundational to any legal system", Justice Gavai, authoring the judgment

said: "The chilling sight of a bulldozer demolishing a building, when authorities have failed to follow the basic principles of natural justice and have acted without adhering to the principle of due process, reminds one of a lawless state of affairs, where 'might was right'."

Justice Gavai added: "In our Constitution, which rests on the foundation of 'the rule of law', such high-handed and arbitrary actions have no place. Such excesses at the hands of the executive will have to be dealt with the heavy hand of the law. Our constitutional ethos and values would not permit any such abuse of power and such misadventures cannot be tolerated by the court of law." The court directed that: "No demolition should be carried out without a prior show cause notice returnable either in accordance with the time provided by the local municipal laws or within 15 days' time from the date of service of such notice, whichever is later."

# Under JMM-Cong govt, every thing done to make infiltrators permanent residents: Modi

NIKHIL VYAS  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on the JMM-Congress on the issue of infiltration in Jharkhand, saying that the biggest worry in the state was about Bangladeshi infiltrators and asserted that the protection of 'Roti, Beti and Maati' (livelihood, daughters, and land) is the biggest issue in the Assembly elections in the state.

Addressing a public rally at Deoghar in Jharkhand, he said: "I have been travelling around Jharkhand and I have noticed that the biggest worry here has been about the Bangladeshi infiltrators. As per whatever data has been available, we have learnt that the tribal population in Santal has now reduced to half. We have to protect our tribal families and Jharkhandi from this and that should be our first priority."

"What will happen if the tribal population continues to decrease like this? Your water, forests and land will be taken over by others. We have to save tribal families from this situation and also save Jharkhand. Wherever I have gone in Jharkhand in the past, the biggest concern has been about infiltration of foreigners," the PM said. "Jharkhandi pride and



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey during a public meeting for the Jharkhand Assembly election at Sarath in Deoghar on Wednesday. ■ ANI

Jharkhand's identity have been the strength of all of you. What will happen if this identity is lost? Statistics show that the number of tribals in the Santal region has almost halved," he said.

A major conspiracy is taking place to change the identity of Jharkhand, Mr Modi said. In the JMM-Congress government, every wrong thing was done to make the infiltrators, who came from outside, permanent residents here, he alleged. "Documents were prepared overnight for these infiltrators. Tribal daughters were cheated in the name of marriage and their land was grabbed. These infiltrators

snatched your employment from you and also snatched your bread. But look at the attitude of the government here. The JMM government told the court that there has been no infiltration in Jharkhand," Mr Modi said.

"It has become difficult for local residents to even get water here. Therefore, the security of bread, daughters and soil is the biggest and important issue in this election," he said. "I assure you that the BJP-NDA government will not let anyone play with the security of the bread, butter and soil of the Santal and Jharkhand," Mr Modi said.

# Jaishankar calls for Gaza ceasefire, says Saudi Arabia crucial for regional stability

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Describing Saudi Arabia as an important factor of stability in the region, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday expressed deep concern over the continuing conflict in Gaza and called for an early ceasefire.

"While we condemn acts of terrorism and hostage-taking, we are deeply pained by the continuing death of innocent civilians. Any response must take into account the international humanitarian law and we support an early ceasefire. India has also consistently stood for a resolution of the Palestine issue through a two-state solution," he said at a meeting here with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud.

Mr Jaishankar said India and Saudi Arabia have a similar interest in preserving the sta-



bility of the region and in driving their respective economies to greater prosperity. Referring to growing India-Saudi Arabia ties, he said the defence partnership between the two countries has also witnessed several firsts over the last few years, including a joint land exercise and two naval exercises.

"We have had regular exchanges on training and capacity building and our cooperation has now extended to defence industries and exports as well," he added. Mr Jaishankar noted that

the security cooperation between the two countries has grown steadily.

"We are collaborating in counter terrorism, combating extremism, terrorism financing and drug trafficking. Saudi Arabia's 'Vision 2030' and India's 'Viksit Bharat 2047' hold complementarities for their industries to build partnerships."

He was glad to note that the businesses of the two countries are collaborating intensively. "Trade and investments are important pillars of our partnership and we are strengthening them in new areas, including technology, energy, renewable energy, connectivity, health and education," he added.

The Saudi minister said he discussed with Mr Jaishankar the strategic relationship between the two countries and ways to explore new avenues for collaboration.

# India, China begin weekly patrols in Ladakh, eye further troop reductions

PARWINDER SANDHU  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Days after successfully completing a de-escalation process in the eastern Ladakh areas of Demchok and Depsang, India and China have commenced weekly patrols along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The first patrol round, completed in early November, saw the People's Liberation Army (PLA) begin its patrols in Depsang on Monday, while Indian troops had conducted their first patrol on 4 November, shortly after resuming patrols in Demchok.

Following the de-escalation, sources indicated that the next phase will involve a gradual de-induction of troops, although no specific timeline for this step has been set.



Previously, the Indian Army refuted media claims of logistical roadblocks in the Depsang area, emphasising that the patrolling process continues smoothly as agreed with the Chinese side.

The new patrolling protocol comes after four years of heightened tensions and military buildup, including the 2020 Galwan Valley clash

that resulted in 20 Indian casualties and saw both nations deploy significant military resources to the LAC. This period of tension ultimately led to rounds of diplomatic and military talks, culminating in the mutual disengagement recently achieved.

In a symbolic gesture during the Diwali festival,

Following the de-escalation, sources indicated that the next phase will involve a gradual de-induction of troops, although no specific timeline for this step has been set.

Indian and Chinese troops exchanged sweets at multiple LAC locations, including Chushul-Maldo and Daulat Beg Oldi, underscoring a commitment to reduced hostilities. Surveillance along the LAC will remain in effect, employing advanced technology to uphold the agreement. Additionally, regular communication at the brigadier level aims to maintain stability and reduce the risk of future escalations.

# Market witnesses bloodbath as Nifty falls 10 per cent from peak

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Benchmark indices closed deep in the red on Wednesday, marking their fifth consecutive day of losses. This was riding on the inflation concerns and sell-off in metal stocks.

The Nifty index dropped nearly 10 per cent from its all-time high of around 26,277.35, reached on 27 September.

This marks the fifth consecutive day of losses, as inflation concerns and a sell-off in metal and realty stocks weighed heavily on sentiment. At the close, the Sensex had shed 984 points, or 1.3 per cent, settling at 77,690, while the Nifty declined 324 points, or 1.4 per cent, to 23,559.

(Details on Page 10)

# CCPA issues guidelines to maintain transparency in coaching sector

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

In a measure intended to protect the rights of consumers and maintain transparency in the coaching sector, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued a set of comprehensive guidelines to address the issue of misleading advertisements by coaching centres.

The 'Guidelines for Prevention of Misleading Advertisement in Coaching Sector, 2024,' aim to safeguard students and the public from deceptive marketing practices commonly employed by coaching centres, Mrs Nidhi Khare, Chief Commissioner, CCPA, and Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs said on Wednesday while interacting with the media.

The guidelines were drafted in the wake of growing concerns about false/misleading claims, exaggerated success rates, and unfair contracts that coaching institutes often impose on students. Such practices have



been found to mislead students, influencing their decisions by concealing important information, giving false guarantees etc.

"We have seen coaching centres deliberately concealing information from prospective students. Therefore, we have come out with the guidelines to provide guidance to people involved in the coaching industry," Mrs Khare told reporters.

Under the new guidelines,

coaching centres are prohibited from making false claims regarding courses offered and duration; faculty credentials; fee structure and refund policies; selection rates and exam rankings; and guaranteed job security or salary increases.

The guidelines define 'coaching' to include academic support, education, guidance, study programmes and tuition, but exclude counselling, sports and cre-

ative activities.

Coaching centres cannot use names, photographs or testimonials of successful candidates without written consent obtained after selection. They must display disclaimers prominently and disclose important information about courses.

The guidelines cover all forms of advertising across academic support, education, guidance and tuition services. However, they exclude counselling, sports and creative activities.

The guidelines will apply to every person engaged in coaching, meaning not just the coaching centres, but also any endorsers or public figures promoting their services through advertisements. Endorsers, who lend their name or reputation to coaching centres, will now be responsible for ensuring that the claims they endorse are accurate and truthful.

Mrs Khare said coaching centres should accurately represent the service, facilities, resources and infra-

structure. They should truthfully represent that the courses offered are duly recognised and have the approval of a competent authority such as AICTE, UCG, etc.

Violations will attract penalties under the Consumer Protection Act, Mrs Khare added.

A committee, chaired by the then Chief Commissioner, CCPA, was constituted to frame the guidelines. It included the representative of several organisations namely Central Consumer Protection Authority, Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Education, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (as a special invitee), National Law University (NLU) Delhi, Law firm and Industry stakeholders.

Based on the suggestion of the committee, the CCPA put up the draft guidelines for public comments on 16 February. Public suggestions were received from 28 stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education.

# 2,000 more CAPF personnel deployed in Manipur following armed attacks

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
IMPHAL, 13 NOVEMBER

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sent 20 additional companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) to Manipur to address worsening violence and escalating tensions between ethnic groups in the state.

This deployment, bringing an additional 2,000 personnel, comes in response to renewed attacks and heightened unrest, including a targeted assault on police forces.

Recent clashes in the Jiribam district on Monday saw insurgents launching an attack on the Borobekra police station and a nearby Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp, resulting in at least ten militants killed and a substantial weapons seizure.

Manipur has been gripped by ethnic conflict since May 2023, when violent clashes between the Kuki and Meitei communities



erupted, due to disputes over Scheduled Tribe (ST) status demand by the Meitei community, leaving approximately 200 people dead and thousands displaced.

The MHA's move to reinforce security in the region follows significant episodes of violence, as various groups have called for additional forces to protect displaced residents and manage the ongoing tensions.

With the new CAPF forces, now totalling 218 companies, personnel are stationed in key areas like Imphal Valley and Churachandpur, aiming to stabilise these volatile

zones. The current deployment is scheduled to last through 30 November, though it may be extended if the situation remains unstable.

In addition to personnel reinforcement, the central government has stationed senior CRPF officials in Manipur to coordinate between CAPF units, state police, and local administration, especially in violence hotspots across the state. Meanwhile, efforts continue to restore order, though sporadic skirmishes persist, underscoring the complexity of the region's ethnic and political landscape.

## THUMBNAILS



Former Union Minister Vijay Goel, former Governor Jagdish Mukhi, ex-MP and renowned dancer Sonal Man Singh brief the media about online gaming regulations at a press conference on Wednesday.

SUBRATA DUTTA

### HC junks PIL challenging restriction on two-wheelers on highways and expressways:

The Delhi High Court has refused to entertain a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking direction to National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to permit two-wheelers to ply on all the highways and expressways. However, a bench headed by Chief Justice Manmohan asked the petitioner to submit a representation to NHAI with respect to imposition of penalty to the extent of Rs 20,000 on two-wheelers. "Should the petitioner make the representation, the Competent Authority of the NHAI would consider the same and decide it as expeditiously as possible, preferably within four weeks," said the Bench, also comprising Justice Tushar Rao Gedela. The PIL challenged the gazette notifications issued by the NHAI restricting two-wheelers on national highways and expressways and sought direction to government to framing guidelines for usage of two-wheelers on the national highways and expressways. Referring to the decision rendered by a coordinate bench in Yuvraj Francis vs. Union of India (2023) case, Chief Justice Manmohan-led Bench said that it agrees and concurs with its earlier analysis and opinion.

### Delhi-NCR residents complain of burning eyes, breathing issues due to air pollution:

Apart from the national capital, in the NCR cities of Noida and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh and Gurugram in Haryana there was a toxic smog hanging low in the air, making breathing difficult for residents. Abhimanyu Jha, a Delhi resident, voiced the concerns of many as he spoke to IANS, warning that pollution had reached deadly levels. "Pollution has now become fatal," he said, adding that it was causing severe respiratory issues and even cancer among the city's population. Buddh Singh, who was out on the roads for work, noted the worsening conditions: "It's like walking through fog. My eyes are burning, and it's difficult to breathe," he said. Prabhunath Dubey, a factory worker, shared similar concerns. "The fog is so thick today that even riding my bicycle has become dangerous," he said.

# Delhiites gasp for breath as AQI enters 'severe' zone

4 places in the city recorded air in 'severe plus' category with index value above 450

ACRAJ PRATAP SINGH  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi on Wednesday witnessed a spike of 84 points in its air quality index, plunging it into the 'severe' category in just a day's time.

The city's AQI stood at 418 from Tuesday's figure of 334.

Four places in the national capital recorded air quality under 'severe plus' zone at 5 pm on Wednesday, with AQI level above 450. These include Anand Vihar-463, Jahangirpuri-457, Ashok Vihar 455 and Wazirpur-450.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the primary pollutants in the city's air consisted of PM 10 and PM 2.5 (particulate matter). PM10 means particulate matter of 10 micrometers or less in diameter, while PM2.5 refers to particulate matter which is 2.5 micrometers or less in diameter.

The readings regarding AQI in Delhi were based on observations from 36 out of the total 39 air monitoring stations, the CPCB said.

Many people complained of breathing discomfort, especially outdoors, and in the areas with more vehicular movement.

Talking to the newspaper, many expressed that they did not venture out for morning walks or



PHOTO BY:-SUBRATA DUTTA

other outdoor activities upon witnessing thick layers of smog in the morning hours, while they also felt uneasy.

A man who ventured out for a morning run in the New Delhi area said that the visibility was much less and the smog was quite dense, which made him return home.

The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) in its Air Quality and Weather Bulletin for Delhi on Wednesday mentioned that meteorological conditions are likely to remain extremely unfavourable for effective dispersion of pollutants.

According to the CPCB, AQI falling between 401-500 points

(severe) affects healthy people and seriously impacts those with existing diseases.

Pollution levels in the areas adjoining Delhi, like Noida, Ghaziabad and Gurugram were no less harmful, but were under the 'very poor' zone.

Talking of the anti-pollution measures, the second stage of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) of the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) which entails a host of steps including mechanical sweeping, water sprinkling and restrictions in force across Delhi along with its stage-I measures.

It is likely that the CAQM may invoke the next stage of GRAP, in

case the national capital's AQI remains to be in the severe zone.

Not only Delhi NCR, in fact several places across Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh are also reeling under poor and very poor air quality.

Chandigarh's AQI on Wednesday was 372, Dehradun-291, Mandi Gobindgarh-322, Panipat-370, Rohtak 303 and Sonapat 338.

According to the pollution monitoring agency, AQI up to 50 points is considered 'good', 51 to 100 is 'satisfactory', 101 to 200 'moderate', 201 to 300 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor', 401 to 450 is 'severe' and above 450 'severe plus'.

## 'Delhi govt failed to control pollution'



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva on Wednesday blamed the AAP government for the deteriorating air quality in the city, saying it has utterly failed to control pollution.

Referring to worsening air quality, he said the pollution levels in Delhi have reached a peak, with PM 2.5 levels surpassing 400 in several areas, and PM 10 levels reaching beyond 1,000, on Wednesday.

"Delhi has turned into a gas chamber, and the situation is so bad that, except for Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi and Gopal Rai, everyone in Delhi is coughing or complaining of eye irritation and headaches," Sachdeva said.

Pointing out that a PM 2.5 level near 400 warrants implementing Graded Response

Action Plan (GRAP) level 3, he said but the city government is not at all "serious" about pollution control.

"Whether it's smoke from crop burning in Punjab, dust from broken roads, or construction sites running in violation of restrictions, all these factors have turned life in Delhi into a nightmare," Sachdeva said.

Stating that small children and the elderly are the most vulnerable to pollution, the Delhi BJP chief said the government should immediately close schools up to Grade 5 and advise the elderly and children to stay indoors.

He said "while Delhiites are suffering, there are no government clinics offering medication to counter pollution. Immediate arrangements must be made to distribute medicines to protect against pollution."

## LG approves deployment of Civil Defence Volunteers to combat pollution

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, on Wednesday, approved the deployment of Civil Defence Volunteers (CDVs) for a period of four months, starting from November 1.

The LG also urged the Delhi government to take concrete steps towards devising a scheme for the permanent employment of the bus marshals separately as he had directed in his earlier letter to the chief minister on



October 20. In a note to Chief Minister Atishi, Saxena asked for the scheme to clearly define the

roles of bus marshals, their rationale, and service conditions to be approved by the Cabinet and called for immediate steps to be taken for the creation of the posts and making budgetary provisions for the same to bring the issue of bus marshals to a logical conclusion.

"It may be recalled that your predecessor, Arvind Kejriwal, had recommended to me in October 2023 that the services of CDVs be terminated till a number is determined through a proper exercise," the LG stated,

adding, "Responding to his note, I had suggested that a core strength of CDVs be retained in the revenue department for the purpose of disaster-related work, and had also raised the issue of livelihood concerns of CDVs who come from a humble background and had asked the government to give it serious attention."

However, no proposal for deployment of CDVs had been received till September 2024, he said.

"In the last two weeks, air pollution is on the rise and there is an urgent need to activate local enforcement measures. In order to mitigate air pollution I approve the proposal to call out all CDVs who were deployed as of October 30, 2023, as per extant Rules and regulations," the note read.

However, the services of these CDVs shall be utilised only for the purpose of prevention of air pollution in terms of the plan of DPCC and they should not be diverted to any other department for any other work, it mentioned.

## CM sends official note to LG for reinstatement of bus marshals



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, on Wednesday, sent an official note to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena recommending immediate reinstatement of bus marshals.

According to her, it has been made amply clear by the additional chief secretary of transport that the issue of bus marshals falls under the purview of the LG. Hence, she said, till the formulation of a scheme for the regularisation of the bus marshals, they must be reinstated immediately the same way as it was before October 31 last year.

The chief minister said the LG

should give a one-time relaxation for utilisation of civil defence volunteers as bus marshals. The issues of bus marshals and the safety of women in the city buses were extensively deliberated in an all-ministry meeting held on November 10 and a report has been placed before LG.

The Delhi Cabinet unanimously recommended the LG to immediately reinstate bus marshals as the matter pertains to services as well as law and order with a request to make a scheme for bus marshals.

Meanwhile, the Delhi government reiterated its commitment to providing budgetary support to the bus marshals.

On Monday, the AAP said its government, in a decisive move, resolved to secure permanent appointments for 10,000 Bus Marshals who had lost their jobs allegedly due to BJP's dirty politics. After a cabinet meeting, Atishi announced that the Delhi ministers would submit a proposal to the LG urging him to formulate a policy to make these positions permanent.

The Delhi government had committed to fund the deployment of bus marshals entirely, even if the Centre or the LG introduced their own policy for them.

## Kingpin involved in Nangloi, Alipur firing incidents held

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

The kingpin shooter involved in two firing incidents at north Delhi's Nangloi and Alipur areas was held after an encounter with police on Wednesday.

The accused - Ram Nivas (30) alias Mogli - sustained bullet injury on his leg and is undergoing treatment at a hospital, a police officer said, adding that a motorcycle that he was riding and two firearms had been seized from him.

He was associated with Yogesh Tunda-Gogi gang which had fired at a plywood shop in Nangloi area and later at the office of a property dealer in Alipur in an attempt to extort by threatening them in the name of gangsters Jitender Gogi and Kuldeep Fazza, on November 4.

The Crime Branch had already arrested two sharpshooters following a brief encounter from Narela area in Outer Delhi on November 5.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell NR), Amit Kaushik said the gangster was spotted riding on a motorcycle alongside Khera Canal, Alipur and when asked to stop, he opened fire on the police team.

## Delhi's sanitation system completely collapsed under AAP: Vijender Gupta

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta on Wednesday said the sanitation system in the national capital has completely "collapsed" under the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

Gupta, who led a delegation of the BJP legislators, made the statement during his meeting with MCD Commissioner Ashwini Kumar over the issues related to the sanitation system in Delhi.

Attacking the AAP, the Leader of Opposition said, "since the AAP came to power in the MCD, the city's sanitation system has been in disarray. Trash piles up in various locations, and roads are not even being swept regularly, causing dust to accumulate on the streets, which spreads through vehicle movement, further increasing pollution in Delhi."

"The AAP has completely failed in the Municipal Corporation. Neither Mayor Shelly Oberoi acknowledges the widespread filth in Delhi, nor does she take responsibility for it," he said.

Expressing concern over growing garbage piles at Delhi's three major landfill sites, Gupta pointed out that AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal



had promised during the 2022 MCD elections to tackle the problem of garbage mountains. However, instead of decreasing, they have only grown bigger.

On the stray animals on roads, the Leader of Opposition said, "Stray cows and other animals stand in the middle of roads, obstructing traffic and spreading filth, while their removal is solely the responsibility of the corporation."

Referring to the 2025 Delhi Assembly polls, Gupta said, "The AAP, mired in corruption, is certain to be ousted in the next assembly election. Once in power, the BJP will begin addressing Delhi's issues from day one."

Elections to 70 Assembly seats in Delhi are scheduled to be held early next year.

## 'AAP creating confusion to deceive students on development of sports'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva, on Wednesday, called the AAP government a deceptive dispensation that creates confusion around education systems to deceive students about the development of sports in the city.

Sachdeva hit out at Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, who along with AAP leader Manish Sisodia, visited the Civil Lines-based sports school, for praising the school as an achievement of their government ignoring its failure to produce even one national-level athlete in two years.

The Delhi BJP chief said before the 2020 Assembly elections, the Arvind Kejriwal government announced plans to establish a Sports University in Delhi. However, to date, not a single brick has been laid on the university campus, the BJP leader claimed.

Sachdeva said three years ago when the government was widely criticised for failing to establish the sports university, the Kejriwal government sought to avoid criticism by announcing the conversion of an old school campus in Civil Lines into a sports school, which the BJP leader called a mere mockery of Delhi's students. He further said there are around 3 million students of school-going age in Delhi, across both government and private schools who could participate in sports.

## Delhi experiences first fog of the season heralding onset of winter

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi was enveloped in a thick blanket of fog on Wednesday as a sign of the arrival of winter with reduced visibility and a dip in the temperature.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the visibility at Indira Gandhi International Airport stood at 'zero' meters while it hovered between 125 meters to 500 meters at the same time.

The visibility at several airports in the northern part of the country dropped below a thousand meters at 5 am with Amritsar and Hindon airports recording zero meters and Chandigarh airport recording



PHOTO BY:-SUBRATA DUTTA

200 meters among others, it added. However, the visibility later improved after sunrise after causing a diversion of

flights in the morning.

Airport officials in Delhi confirmed that at least ten flights were diverted with nine

to Jaipur and one to Lucknow. In a post on X, the Airport Department stated, "Landing and takeoffs continue at Delhi

With a blanket of fog covering the city for a major part of the day, sunlight remained cut off leading to a fall in the maximum temperature

airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected and the passengers are advised to contact respective airlines for timely updates."

The Weather Department added that the minimum temperature in the last 24 hours stood at 17 degrees Celsius while it was recorded at 17.9 degrees Celsius on Tuesday.

The national capital wit-

nessed a significant change in the weather in the form of intensification of fog conditions in the morning with dense to very dense fog over the city, it added. "With a blanket of fog covering the city for a major part of the day, sunlight remained cut off leading to a fall in the maximum temperature," the Weather Department added.

It has also predicted a gradual fall in the minimum temperatures by 2-3 degrees Celsius over north and northwest India in the next five days.

The maximum and minimum temperature in the city is in the range of 30-33 degrees Celsius and 14-18 degrees Celsius respectively, IMD stated.

## Female agent arrested for human trafficking

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

A 28-year-old female agent, part of a larger syndicate, was arrested for forging Indian documents for Nepalese nationals, arranging Indian passports, and facilitating their travel abroad to earn quick money.

The syndicate's activities came to light when two passengers, Dinesh and Shyam, both holding Indian passports, arrived at IGI Airport in February. During document verification, they were found to be Nepalese nationals who had fraudulently obtained Indian passports.

A case was subsequently registered at the IGIA Police

Station under sections of the IPC, Public Premises Act, and Foreigners Act, and an investigation was launched.

During the investigation, the detainee revealed that they sought to go abroad to earn a better income, as wages in Nepal were reportedly low. With a friend's assistance, they traveled to West Bengal, where they met Suban Subba, who promised to arrange their journey and Indian documentation for a fee of Rs 10 lakh.

Subba, in collaboration with another associate, prepared fake Aadhaar and Voter ID cards for them and booked their tickets. However, the authorities at IGI Airport intercepted them.

THUMBNAILED



People light earthen lamps at Vasudev Ghat near Kashmiri Gate during the "Dilli Deepotsav 2024," illuminating the area with 3.51 lakh diyas on Wednesday. IANS

**India and Vietnam conduct 5th edition of 'Exercise VINBAX-24' in Ambala:** The 5th edition of 'Exercise VINBAX-24' is underway in Ambala, where Indian Army and Vietnam People's Army (VPA) troops are participating in joint training focused on the deployment of engineering units and medical teams in the United Nations missions. As part of the exercise, both forces conducted a joint road-opening drill led by an Engineer Task Force and a disaster management drill by the medical team. This year's exercise includes an expanded scope with Air Force personnel from both nations exchanging best practices for utilizing air assets in the UN mission rehabilitation efforts. The contingent observed the use of Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) and Chinooks in various engineering support tasks. The joint contingent also engaged in sports and physical training, strengthening camaraderie and coordination between the two forces.

**Former South Delhi MP inaugurates second dealership of Omega Seiki Pvt Ltd:** Former South Delhi MP Ramesh Bidhuri inaugurated the second flagship dealership of Omega Seiki Pvt. Ltd., an electric vehicle and clean energy solutions sector, marking a significant step towards strengthening its presence in the Indian market. The new showroom, located in New Delhi will showcase Omega Seiki's cargo and passenger electric two and three wheeler models offering customers a first-hand experience of cutting-edge EV technology.

**14-month-old Kenyan infant gets new lease of life:** A 14-month-old Kenyan infant, diagnosed with Pearson Syndrome, an exceptionally rare and life-threatening disorder, treated successfully by a team of doctors in Gurugram. The team of doctors led by Dr Vikas Dua, Principal Director and Head, Paediatric Haematology, Haemato Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram performed a stem cell transplant with thoroughly planned chemotherapy regimen. The patient was discharged in a stable condition within 21 days and has been under regular weekly OPD follow-ups. This is the first such case treated in India of half-matched donor and 7th bone marrow transplant, for treatment of Pearson Syndrome.

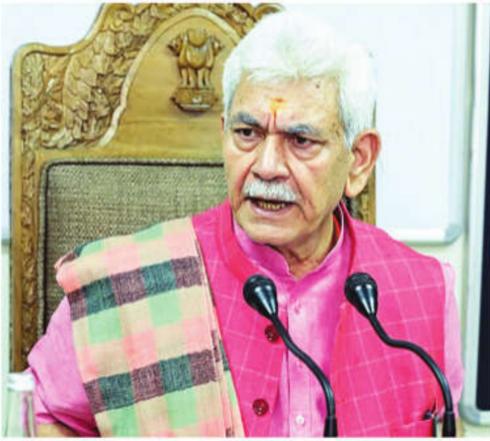
**Myopia Centre of Excellence launched:** EssilorLuxottica, a global leader in the design, manufacture and distribution of ophthalmic lenses, frames and sunglasses, and Dr. Shroff's Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH), one of the oldest eye care institutions in India, have announced their collaboration in establishing state-of-the-art Myopia Centre of Excellence in the Capital. This collaboration brings together the expertise and resources of both organisations to combat Myopia progression in children and to help protect their vision for the future. Myopia, commonly known as nearsightedness, affects more than 1 in 4 Indian children and if not treated early can cause significant vision challenges when the child has grown up.

# Make a mark in global brands, J&K LG advises NIFT students

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 13 NOVEMBER

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday urged young and creative minds to address the emerging challenges of the domestic apparel and textile industry and work towards making India the fashion capital of the world. Addressing the convocation at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Srinagar, the Lt Governor said, "Youth are the inheritors of our great civilisation. I firmly believe India's unique cultural and historical identity, and dedication of our youth to weave magic into creative products, will bring far-reaching changes to the fashion industry".

The Lt Governor shared the key initiatives taken under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to strengthen the entire value chain, from fibre and yarn to fabric and apparel,



while also reviving unique cultural and artistic heritage.

"J&K is a repository of Indian creative traditions, which manifests in various handicraft and handloom products. We are com-

mitted to providing the necessary opportunities and facilities to empower and unlock the potential of our talented weavers and craftsmen," he said.

The Lt Governor also com-

mended the efforts of NIFT to provide a complete, meaningful, relevant education in the area of design development, fashion management, and fashion communication to strengthen the brand positioning of apparel and crafts and to support J&K's artisans and enrich the local crafts through craft cluster projects.

He advised the students to adopt an inclusive approach in spreading the benefits of expertise and exposure earned at NIFT to the handicrafts and handloom industry and to do justice to the creativity of craftspeople for their empowerment.

"NIFT has emerged as a premier fashion institution in the country, producing professional human resources for the textile and apparel industry. Your collective aim should be to build global brands. Your creativity, innovation, value addition, and dedication to cultivating the personality of your products will

help make the fashion design, technology, and lifestyle accessory industries competitive in the international market," he said.

The Lt Governor also paid tribute to well-known fashion designer Rohit Bal who was born in Srinagar and went on to revolutionise the Indian fashion industry. He said his innovative and dynamic approach will inspire NIFT students to become catalysts for stronger and sustainable growth in this sector.

Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner, Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department; Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Rajiv Omprakash, DIG CKR Srinagar; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Budgam; Prof. Monika Gupta, Director, NIFT Srinagar; Prof. Sudha Dhingra, Dean Academics, NIFT; HoDs of different educational institutions, senior officials of civil and police administration, students, and faculty members were present.

## Postgraduate student detained in Kashmir for glorifying terrorism

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 13 NOVEMBER

A postgraduate student from South Kashmir's Kulgam was on Wednesday detained by the Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) for allegedly spreading radical views and instigating public sentiment against the Indian government on social media.

The CIK said that the M Sc Lab Science student Bhat Navidul, a resident of Tazipora-Mohanpora of District Kulgam, was misusing social media for radical propaganda aimed at instigating people against the government of India and also glamorising terrorism in J&K.

"He was using social media platforms to promote radical propaganda, encouraging people to join militant ranks and glorifying militancy in Jammu and Kashmir," said the CIK.

The accused is in constant touch with some cyber and virtual entities involved in radicalising and motivating the youth to join terrorism and terrorist ranks, the CIK said. "Besides, the individual also consumes the radical content available on the internet. It was also learnt that he is about to join the terrorist ranks. On receipt of the information, a special team of CIK apprehended Bhat Navidul Ali for questioning.

## LG Saxena nominates BJP's Satya Sharma to preside over Mayoral polls

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Wednesday nominated Bharatiya Janata Party's Municipal Councillor Satya Sharma to preside over the meeting of the house on Thursday for the election of the Mayor. Sharma is the councillor

**The last mayoral elections had witnessed high voltage drama as the LG had nominated aldermen, which was opposed by the AAP which alleging that BJP was favoured**

representing the Gautam Puri ward in Northeast Delhi and has

presided over the mayoral polls earlier as well.

The meeting is scheduled to be held at 2 pm on Thursday at the Civic Centre for the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the MCD.

It was on November 4 that elections to the post of Mayor and Deputy Mayor were announced, as per an official

order. The Mayoral polls have been postponed since April this year. This time, the new Mayor is going to be from the reserved community.

As per the existing scenario in MCD since the last election, the AAP's councilors strength in the house stands at 125 out of the 250-members with the BJP

at 113. The Congress has eight seats, while the remaining three are held by the independents.

The last mayoral elections had witnessed high voltage drama as the LG had nominated aldermen, which was opposed by the AAP which alleging that BJP was favoured.

This also led to a delay in the swearing in of the councilors.

## Finance Commissions Conclave in Delhi today

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

In a significant effort to promote greater devolution to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), the Centre is organising a One-Day Finance Commissions Conclave - Devolution to Development at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Thursday.

The conclave, to be held under the leadership of Dr. Arvind Panagariya, Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission, will bring together key stakeholders to discuss and enhance the role of State Finance Commissions (SFCs) in the effective allocation of funds to Rural Local Bodies (RLBs).

The conclave aims to foster dialogue and collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in local governance and financial devolution.

The event will feature participation from the Members of the 16th Finance Commission, Senior Officials from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, and eminent experts from reputed academic and relevant institutions.

Chairpersons of nine State



Finance Commissions - from Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh - are expected to share their experiences and insights on the functioning of SFCs with the Finance Departments of the States that have not yet established SFCs.

The conclave will feature four key sessions focused on strengthening financial governance in local bodies, with a particular emphasis on the effectiveness of SFCs:

The conclave will provide an opportunity to highlight and address the structural and operational needs of SFCs, fostering a stronger, more responsive framework that can directly contribute to sustainable development at the grassroots.

## Delhi LG wants income limit for EWS admission quota raised to ₹5 lakh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena has advised Chief Minister Atishi to enhance the income limit for availing admissions in private schools under the EWS category from the existing Rs 1 lakh to at least Rs 5 lakh per annum.

Disposing of a file in a court matter where the matter of income limit for availing of benefits is before the Delhi High Court, Saxena said that the income limit



set by the government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) was "unrealistic and restrictive",

the LG office said on Wednesday.

Saxena underlined that in a scenario where even a minimum wage earner earned more than Rs 2.5 lakh per year, such restriction would deprive thousands of deprived children of benefits under the EWS scheme for admission into private schools, it said.

The LG pointed out that the prescribed income limit for higher education by the Government of India stood at Rs 8 lakh and the court itself in its earlier hearing had asked the Delhi government

to raise the income limit to at least Rs 2.5 lakh.

Saxena stated while ideally, the income limit should be Rs eight lakh itself since students benefiting at the primary and secondary levels are the ones who go ahead to avail higher education, a minimum of Rs five lakh should be kept as the limit for admissions into private schools.

In his note addressed to the chief minister, the LG directed that the stand taken by him on the file should be brought on record of the court.

## Himachal HC declares appointment of CPS void

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
SHIMLA, 13 NOVEMBER

In a blow to the Himachal Pradesh government, the state High Court on Wednesday declared the appointment of Chief Parliamentary Secretary (CPS) by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu void.

Terming the appointment as unconstitutional, the court ordered immediate withdrawal of all facilities provided to the six CPS. A division bench of the HC headed by Justice Vivek Thakur and Justice Bipin Chander Negi gave the final order.

The court setting aside the Himachal Pradesh Parliamentary

Secretaries Act, 2006 under which the appointment of the CPS had been made, termed the appointment of the CPS as wastage of public funds.

The appointment of CPS had been challenged through two separate petitions including eleven BJP MLAs which also included former BJP President Satpal Satiti and a PIL by Kalpana Devi.

The six MLAs who had been appointed as CPS by Sukhu government on January 8, last year include Sunder Singh from Kullu, Sanjay Awasthi from Arki, Mohan Lal Brakta from Rohru, Kishori Lal from Baijnath, Ashish Buitaal from Palampur and Ram Kumar from Doon.

The court in its ruling declared the appointment of CPS to be 'illegal, unconstitutional, void ab-initio' and accordingly set it aside.

"Since the impugned Act is void ab-initio therefore the respondents (six CPS) are usurpers of public office right from their inception and thus their continuance in the office, based on their illegal and unconstitutional appointment, is completely impermissible in law. Accordingly from now onwards, they shall cease to be holders of the offices of CPSs with all consequences," maintained the court. The court also directed the Advocate General appearing for the state and counsel

appearing for the respondents to convey the passing of the judgment to enable the Chief Secretary and all concerned for its immediate implementation. The Chief Secretary and all concerned have also been directed to ensure the implementation of this judgment in and spirit by the court.

Meanwhile, Advocate General Anup Rattan said that the state government will challenge the High Court's order in the apex court. Leader of Opposition and former Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur and BJP state president Dr. Rajeev Bindal, welcoming the decision, said that this order is a major setback to the Congress government of Himachal Pradesh.

# The transformation of Haryana over a decade is crystal clear: Governor

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH, 13 NOVEMBER

Stating that the transformation of Haryana over a decade is crystal clear, Governor Bandaru Dattatraya called upon the members of the state assembly to ensure that no obstacle stands in the way of fulfilling the resolution for 'Viksit Haryana - Viksit Bharat'.

"The difference between the Haryana a decade ago and the Haryana today is crystal clear," he said while addressing the first session of the State Vidhan Sabha on Wednesday and hoped each MLA would make the most of every moment in this House to prioritise public welfare.

He said he was confident that the Assembly would usher in a new chapter of decisions focused on public welfare. "Let's all unite with full dedication to achieve the resolution of 'Viksit Haryana - Viksit Bharat', he told the assembly. On the occasion, the governor pointed out that this is the first time in the history of Haryana that people have shown trust in a government for the third consecutive time.



"Now that the environment is highly conducive for the development of non-stop Haryana in every way the entire state would be keeping an eye on the decisions and policies formulated by this Assembly in the times to come. Hence, it is the responsibility of every member to ensure that the state and its people get the maximum benefit of this favourable time," he said.

The governor advised the members to always remember

the 'moolmantra' of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who emphasised that every decision we make should be evaluated by its impact on the poorest and weakest person in society.

He told the legislators, "The people of the state have enthusiastically participated in the recently concluded election process and have sent you to this Assembly, the state's Supreme Panchayat, as the advocates of their rights. You are, therefore, expected to fulfill your responsibilities with full dedication and commitment.

The governor noted that 40 of the 90 members of the 15th assembly have been elected to the august house for the first time. Extending a special welcome to all these members, he said in the 14th Assembly, only nine women members, who he called 'navratnas' (the proverbial nine gems), were elected, while this time around the number has increased by nearly one, and half times to 13. Calling the House flag bearer of the aspirations of 2.75 crore people of the state, he said it is the responsibility

of every MLA to meet the expectations of the people.

Bandaru Dattatraya pointed out that this is the first time in the history of Haryana that people have shown trust in a government for the third consecutive time. The incumbent state government has received a historic and decisive mandate in these elections. This mandate is a strong expression of the people's unwavering trust and faith in the existing policies and programmes of the government.

Governor Bandaru Dattatraya further said that for the fair and peaceful elections held in the state, the vigilant voters of the state, the Election Commission of India, and all officers and employees associated with the election process deserve appreciation.

He called the 2024 elections an election based on trust in 'Neeti, Niyat, Nishtha aur Nirnay' (Policy, Intent, Integrity, and Decisions).

The present state government has carried forward a mission of service, security, good governance, cooperation, and uplift of the Antyodaya for the last 10 years, and this mandate is an endorsement

of that mission.

This is a mandate that the work of developing Haryana should continue non-stop and we should continue achieving our goals. The government will continue to move forward with the spirit of 'Rajya ke vikase desh ke Vikas' (Development of the State contributes to the development of the Nation), said Bandaru Dattatraya. Over the past 10 years, the present state government worked beyond the narrow mindset of regionalism, constituency consideration, and family-based politics. Also, it has focused on 'Shiksha, Swasthya, Suraksha, Swavalamban aur Swabhimaan' (Education, Health, Security, Self-reliance, and Self-respect), giving new energy and momentum to the state's development. The vision of Antyodaya by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya has not only guided the present state government but also embodies the core principle of "Haryana Ek-Haryanvi Ek" in all our efforts, he said.

He said the government has envisaged Haryana as a vibrant, dynamic, and resurgent State of India. Dedicated efforts are being made to

ensure that farms of the state have an abundance of produce; the wheels of industry grind uninterrupted, ample employment opportunities are available for the youth, and sisters and daughters feel safe, empowered, and self-reliant.

The governor said the state government, following the guiding principle of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has provided equal opportunities for every section to progress in the state. The prime minister considers the poor, the youth, women, and farmers as the four pillars of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India).

He said the state government has oriented its policies toward strengthening these pillars. The government's effort is to ensure that every government scheme benefits them, as this is the path to their upliftment and welfare. When the government works with the resolve that not a single eligible person should be left out from any government scheme so that every penny spent from the treasury is utilised in the public interest, said the Governor.

## Direct-to-consumer brands explore avenues to enhance buyer experience

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Aimed at a transformative impact on the retail industry, various brands that work on the Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) model on Wednesday held discussions in New Delhi for strategic partnerships and innovative practices for betterment based on the theme New Age Destinations Anchored by Experiences.

The discussions were held on key strategies by the industry leaders, retail innovators, and stakeholders from across the country regarding improving the experience of consumers at the new age shopping centres.

The businessmen discussed the approaches that were customer-centric with the business strategies to involve the customer focused planning. A young business leader emphasised during the discussions held at the SCN and D2C Summit that empathy and understanding customers' needs are crucial to building lasting relationships.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Bhavesh Pitroda, con-



venor of the India D2C Summit highlighted the significance of the co-located events, stating, "The powerful convergence of SCN and India D2C Summit 2024 is perfectly timed, as developers are keen to explore new partnerships with D2C brands looking to expand into new geographies. More emphasis was also laid on the use of technology to solve customer pain points, in a bid to build more trust, which will ultimately result in better sales. Technology is the key to reducing returns and improving customer satisfaction, said Pratik Singh, co-founder of a new age footwear manufacturing brand.

Discussions were also held on creating better in-store experience for the consumers, particularly in the younger demographic, making experience based retail a powerful tool.



# If MVA Wins, Maha will become an ATM for Congress, says Shah

### Amit Shah criticised the Congress for not fulfilling its pre-election promises in Telangana

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 13 NOVEMBER

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said at an election rally in Maharashtra's Chalisgaon on Wednesday that if the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) wins the assembly elections, the state would end up as an ATM cash machine for the Congress. "They (Congress-backed MVA) will withdraw funds from Maharashtra and send the cash to Delhi," Shah said. He also made fun of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. "Recently, Rahul Gandhi was waving a copy of Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution. He used the same copy for taking the oath in Parliament. But after journalists got their hands on that copy, it had only blank pages. By showing a fake Constitution, Rahul

has broken the trust of the people and insulted Babasaheb Ambedkar. Rahul Baba, you have never read the Constitution," he said.

He dismissed claims that investment in Maharashtra had dropped under the Mahayuti government. "The truth is that after Eknath Shinde and Devendra Fadnis formed the government, Maharashtra is now the number one state in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India," he said.

Shah said that the Mahayuti government would bring benefits to Maharashtra. "Your single vote will not only bring the Mahayuti to power, but it will also deposit Rs 2,100 in the accounts of Maharashtra's sisters. Your single vote will result in depositing Rs 15,000 instead of Rs 12,000 annually in bank accounts of farmers," he said.



He criticised the Congress for not fulfilling its pre-election promises in Telangana, Karnataka, and Himachal Pradesh.

Earlier in the day, Shah attacked the Congress-backed opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance at an election rally in Dhule.

Ridiculing Rahul Gandhi over alleged demands from Muslim leaders for reser-

ations, Shah said, "Rahul Baba, even if your fourth generation comes, Muslims will never receive reservations meant for SCs, STs, and OBCs," adding that quotas for these groups are constitutionally protected.

Shah called the MVA the "Aurangzeb fan club" and accused the Shiv Sena (UBT) Chief Uddhav Thackeray of abandoning the principles

of his late father Bal Thackeray by joining hands with Congress and NCP leaders who had resisted initiatives like the renaming of Aurangabad, construction of the Ram Temple, the abrogation of Article 370, and the 2016 surgical strikes against Pakistan.

"The Aghadi only wants appeasement. Uddhavji has forgotten all the principles of Balasaheb Thackeray. Maharashtra has only two options before it—the MVA, which is the Aurangzeb fan club, or the Mahayuti, which follows the principles of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Veer Savarkar," Shah said.

He said that the BJP-backed Mahayuti is a force for 'vikas' (development) while the MVA is a guarantee for 'vinaash' (destruction), urging voters to choose a party committed to development.

# Mallikarjun Kharge calls BJP-led Mahayuti 'a government of thieves'

BOBBY ANTHONY  
MUMBAI, 13 NOVEMBER

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge launched a frontal attack on the BJP as he campaigned for the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) at Akalkot near Solapur in Maharashtra on Wednesday.

"The BJP-backed Mahayuti is not a government chosen by the people, but a government formed through deceit and bribery. Prime Minister Narendra Modi claims this is a double-engine government, but I call it a government of thieves. Such a government will not last long," said Kharge, switching between Kannada, Marathi, and Hindi.

"Modi claimed that all black money kept abroad would be brought back and everyone would get Rs 15 lakh. He said that 2 crore jobs would be created and that farmers' income would be doubled, but none of this happened. Soybean



farmers are not getting the minimum support price (MSP)," Kharge said, reiterating promises made in the MVA election manifesto.

"Why did Modi take control of the Enforcement Directorate, CBI, and all other departments? He did it to trouble and terrorise people, not for the sake of development," Kharge said.

"It was Pandit Nehru who introduced a mixed economy in this country. After that, the joint sector was started, bringing both private and public sectors together.

Later, the cooperative sector was started by the Congress under which milk cooperatives were initiated. After that, they began selling all

of this to two of their friends — Adani and Ambani," he said.

"Modi calls himself an OBC, but he never pays attention to backward castes. Instead, he looks after his two backward friends — Adani and Ambani. Both of these gentlemen are backward, and that is why Modi helps only them. Do you think he is going to help the poor? This is a government of thieves," he said.

Earlier during the day, Kharge attacked the BJP as he campaigned for the MVA at Latur in Maharashtra. Calling the BJP-led Mahayuti a government of thieves, he said that the BJP and its ideological mentor, the RSS, played no role in India's freedom struggle.

"Congress leaders laid down their lives to keep the country and all communities united. On the contrary, the BJP and RSS had no contribution to the freedom movement or the unity of the country," he said.

# Only negative people can give slogan like this: Akhilesh Yadav on Yogi's slogan 'Batoge to Katoge'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KANPUR, 13 NOVEMBER

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday said BJP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has given the worst undemocratic and unconstitutional slogan in history.

"Only negative people can give the slogan of 'Batoge to Katoge' (If we divide, we will be cut). This slogan was given after learning from the British policy of divide and rule," he said, adding that people of BJP are traders of fear. "They create fear and trade in fear," he alleged.

The SP President was addressing a public meeting in support of the party candidate for the Sisama assembly bypolls here on Wednesday.

Polling for Sisama along with 8 other assembly seats

will be held on November 20.

In a veiled attack on CM Yogi Adityanath, the SP President said a person becomes great by his thoughts but some people start considering themselves great by changing their clothes.

"People become saints by thoughts and words and not by changing clothes. The public will destroy those who lie and mislead," he said.

Akhilesh Yadav said that "this election is an election to provide justice".

He said "SP people will neither fear nor bow down, they will fight against injustice and win. We are fighting to save the Constitution of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and the democracy of the country. The Constitution is our shield, our security, our protective shield and our life-line."

# Maharashtra assembly polls: SC questions Ajit Pawar for using Sharad Pawar's name, tells him to stand up on his own legs

PARMOD KUMAR  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

The Supreme Court on Wednesday questioned Ajit Pawar faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) as to why it was repeatedly using the name of the veteran leader Sharad Pawar — head of the rival Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Chandra Pawar) - during the campaigning for the ongoing State assembly election in Maharashtra.

A bench comprising Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan told the Ajit Pawar faction that they have to fight the elections on their own identity and should not take Sharad Pawar's name during the electioneering.

Asking Ajit Pawar to stand on his own legs and instruct



the members of his party not to use the pictures and videos of Sharad Pawar, the bench observed that voters are wise enough to see through any confusion.

"You try to stand up on your own legs, now that you have ideological differences with Sharad Pawar," it said.

In the earlier hearing, the top court had directed the Ajit-Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) to publish disclaimers in news-

papers, including Marathi dailies, stating that the use of the 'clock' symbol by his party remains a sub-judice matter.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the Sharad Pawar faction told the bench that Ajit Pawar faction was not complying with the top court order and it was continuing to piggyback on the veteran leader's goodwill.

To this, the bench said people are wise enough to differentiate between Sharad and Ajit Pawar.

"We should not underestimate voters also," said the bench. Telling both Ajit Pawar and Sharad Pawar factions to concentrate on their side of the battlefield, the bench said, "People of this country are very wise and know how to vote and can differentiate who is Sharad and Ajit Pawar. Order of court should be faithfully complied with and respected. We are not sure if videos influence or not and how much."

The observation by the top court came in the course of the hearing of an application by the Sharad Pawar group alleging violation of the conditions of the court order by the Ajit Pawar faction.

# Congress calls for immediate release of civilians missing after Manipur militant attack

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
IMPHAL, 13 NOVEMBER

Following a recent militant assault on the Borobekra police station and a nearby CRPF post in Jakuradhor, Jiribam district, former Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh has called for the urgent and safe release of six civilians who remain unaccounted for.

At a press conference here today, he expressed deep concern over the growing violence in Manipur, highlighting the government's failure to ensure civilian safety amid escalating unrest. Ibobi stressed the innocence of the missing civilians, who disappeared on the day of the attack, and appealed to the

assailants to release them unharmed on humanitarian grounds. "These missing people are innocent civilians, and releasing them would be the humane and wise course of action," he said.

Criticising the government's handling of security, the former CM questioned its commitment to protecting residents' lives and properties. "What is the point of having a government if it can't protect its people?" he asked, adding that 18 months of instability have left citizens increasingly vulnerable. He also condemned the Central government's perceived inaction, describing its silence as "unfortunate" and suggesting it has allowed the conflict to deteriorate.

**Classified**

**LEGAL NOTICES**

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**  
Notice under Order V Rule 20 Code of Civil Procedure Case No. MAC. APP. 627/2019 & CM. APP. 27580/2019 & 27581/2019 Appeal Against order dated 16-01-2018  
Passed By Sh. Devender Kumar, PO: MACT, Shahdara Dist., Karkardooma Courts, Delhi.  
IN MAC No.: 641/2016 SAJAN & ANR.  
-Appellants  
Vs  
THE ORIENTAL INS. CO. LTD. & ORS.  
-Respondents  
Notice to: Respondent No. 2 to 7.  
2. Dhirender @ Dhirender Kumar S/o Late Sh. Kunwar Lal, 3. Sangeeta W/o Sh. Nand Ram, 4. Reeta D/o Late Sh. Kunwar Lal, 5. Geeta D/o Late Sh. Kunwar Lal, 6. Poonam D/o Late Sh. Kunwar Lal, 7. Deepu S/o Late Sh. Kunwar Lal  
(Respondent No. 4 to 7 are minor through Respondent No. 2 being Natural Guardian.)  
All R/O B-1, 287/A-1, Gali No. 11, Ground Floor, Ashok Nagar, Delhi.  
Permanent Address: Village & Post Karmer, Ps Aata, Orai Distt., Jalour, U.P.  
Whereas the above noted appellant has presented an appeal Under Section 173 of Motor Vehicle Act 1988, which was listed before the Court on 31-05-2019 and the Court ordered issuance of notice to you and Notice of the application was also ordered to be issued to you. And whereas it has been proved to the satisfaction of the Court that you cannot be served in the ordinary manner. Notice is hereby issued that if you wish to defend the above mentioned appeal you may cause an appearance to be entered on your behalf either in person or through an advocate duly appointed by you for the purpose before the Joint Registrar Judicial on 20-11-2024 at 11:00 A.M.  
If no appearance is made on your behalf, by yourself, your pleader or someone by law authorised to act for you in the said appeal on the aforementioned date, no further notice of the subsequent date of hearing of the said appeal & application will be given and the same will be heard and determined ex-parte in your absence.  
Given under my hand and seal of this Court, this 16th day of October, 2024.  
Assistant Registrar For Registrar General  
Seal of the Court

**IN THE COURT OF Sh. Shiv Kumar, District Judge-02, West, Room No. 127, 1st Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi PC No.: 55/2024**  
ANISH KUMAR  
Vs  
STATE & ORS.  
CITATION UNDER SECTION 283(2) OF SUCCESSION ACT 1925  
Whereas the abovesaid petition under the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant of probate of the Will or for Letters of Administration to the estate of Late Smt. Indra Srivastava W/o Late Sh. Rajeshwar Prasad, who died on 05-06-2014 at Delhi in respect of entire Second Floor with Roof Rights, comprising of Two Rooms set of property bearing No. S-1/99 (Old No. W-251) area measuring 45 sq. yards, approx., fitted with electric & water connections with common stair case, situated in the colony known as Old Mahavir Nagar, in the area of Village Nanjil Jalab, New Delhi, has been filed by Sh. Anish Kumar, S/o Late Sh. Rajeshwar Prasad R/o S-1/127, Ground Floor, Old Mahavir Nagar, New Delhi.  
Whereas the 17th day of January 2025 has been fixed for hearing the abovesaid case. Notice is hereby given that any person having any interest in the Administration of the Estate of the said deceased may if he/she desires, appear in this court on the above said date and see the proceedings regarding Grant of Probate (or for Letter of Administration) and may file objection, if any, in the abovesaid probate petition.  
Given under my hand and the seal of this court on this 08-11-2024.  
District Judge-02, West, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
Seal of the Court

**IN THE COURT OF Sh. Bharat Aggarwal, Administration Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central), Room No. 113, 1st Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi SC No.: 132/2024 ND0H : 20-01-2025**  
RAJAN  
Vs  
THE STATE & ANR.  
Rajan S/O Late Sh. Manohar Lal, R/O H. No. 3298, Gali No. 3, Bagh Karekhan, Kishan Ganj, Delhi-110007  
-Petitioner  
FOR SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925  
Whereas the 07-01-2025 at 10 o'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing or the application notice is hereby given to this concerned.  
Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this 08-11-2024.  
Administration Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
Seal of the Court

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING ATTENDANCE OF DEFENDANT**  
(Order 5, Rules 20 of the Code of Civil Procedures)  
**IN THE COURT OF Sh. Sandeep Kumar Sharma, District Judge-02, Central, Room No. 31, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi Case Reg. No.: CS DI/202/2023**  
JAI KUMAR  
Versus  
DHARMENDER TH,  
Act, 1925 in respect of the debt and securities amount of Rs xxx. As per record to be standing in the name of Late Shri Manohar Lal deceased.  
Whereas the 20-01-2025 at 10 o'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing or the application notice is hereby given to this concerned.  
Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this 08-11-2024.  
Administration Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
Seal of the Court

**IN THE COURT OF Sh. Bharat Aggarwal, Administration Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central), Room No. 113, 1st Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi SC No.: 131/2024 ND0H : 07-01-2025**  
SUDHIR KUMAR & ANR.  
Vs  
THE STATE & ANR.  
1. Sudhir Kumar, 2. Sanjay, Both sons/Lrs of Late Sh. Sudesh Kumar, R/o House No. 87/100, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, 100 Quarters, Ajmeri Gate (Near Vikram Nagar), Ferozeshah Kotla, New Delhi-110002  
-Petitioner  
FOR SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925  
To, All Concerned  
Whereas in the above noted petition the applicant/petitioner has applied for Succession Certificate to the Hon'ble Court Under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 in respect of the debt and securities amount of Rs xxx. As per record to be standing in the name of Late Sh. Sudesh Kumar deceased.  
Whereas the 07-01-2025 at 10 o'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing or the application notice is hereby given to this concerned.  
Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this 08-11-2024.  
Administration Civil Judge-cum-Additional Rent Controller (Central), Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
Seal of the Court

**SH. DHARMENDER S/O SH. KATWARU RAM, R/O 502B, D-BLOCK, CHANDER SHEKHAR AZAR COLONY, WAZIRPUR AREA, NORTH-WEST DELHI-110052.**  
WHEREAS you are intentionally evading service of summons and hereby notified that if you shall not defend the case on the 29th day of January, 2025 on the day fixed for the final disposal, it will be heard and determined ex-parte.  
Given under my hand and the seal of the court on 07-11-2024.  
District Judge-02, Central District, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
Seal of the Court  
N-7336  
U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC IN THE COURT OF Sh. Gurdev Singh, Civil Judge (Junior Division), Ludhiana CNR No.: PBLD02-100423-2020 Next Date : 07-12-2024  
M/S J.P. FASHION READY-MADE GARMENTS SUIT FOR RECOVERY OF RS.-215706/1.  
PUBLICATION ISSUED TO: 1. M/S J.P. FASHION READY-MADE GARMENTS, G-23/91, SECTOR 7, ROHINI NEW DELHI THROUGH PROPRIETOR PARMINDER KAUR 2. PARMINDER KAUR PROP. M/S J.P. FASHION READYMADE GARMENTS, G-23/91, SECTOR 7, ROHINI NEW DELHI  
In above titled case, the defendants(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendants(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 07-12-2024 at 10:00 a.m.  
For details logon to https://highcourtdelhi.gov.in/?tr=s=district\_notice&district=Karnal  
Civil Judge (Junior Division), Karnal Dated, this day of 08-11-2024  
Seal of the Court

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**  
On instructions from and on behalf of my clients namely Sh. Naveen Dewan son of Sh. Ramesh Chander and Smt. Anu Dewan W/o Sh. Naveen Dewan both R/O D-30, Satyawati Colony, Ashok Vihar, Phase-III, Delhi-110052, I hereby notify to General Public that my Clients, due to ill-treatment, constant harassment and threats being extended to my clients by their son Sh. Bhavane Dewan and his wife Smt. Sharan both R/O Australia have severed all relations with them. My clients hereby disown and disinherit Bhavane Dewan and his wife Smt. Sharan from all their properties and they will not have any share, Right or Claim over Property, Bank Accounts and any other Assets of my clients whatever and wherever they may be. My clients shall not be responsible in any manner for the Acts of said Bhavane Dewan and his wife Sharan and anybody Dealing with them shall be doing so at his/her own risk and consequences.  
Dharmendra Prianti Advocate Chamber No. 105 & 119, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi Mob.: 9810062167

# Opposition hails Supreme Court's verdict on bulldozer action

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, 13 NOVEMBER

The opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh has received a boost in the bypoll campaigning following the Supreme Court's adverse comment on the Yogi government's bulldozer action and putting a break on this trend. The opposition leaders are elated on the apex court ruling it gave on Wednesday and slammed the illegal approach of the BJP government on the issue.

Commenting on this, Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav said that now no poor person's house will be demol-

ished. He said everybody in the state is welcoming the SC verdict as people are fed up with the BJP government's illegal actions. "BSP supremo Mayawati tweeted on social media platform saying shadow terror will definitely end now. After today's decision of the Honorable Supreme Court regarding bulldozer demolitions and the related strict guidelines, it should be expected that UP and other state governments will manage public interest and welfare properly and smoothly and the shadow terror of bulldozers will definitely end," Mayawati commented. Azad Samaj Party president

and MP Chandrashekhar Azad said, "This is a strong slap to the BJP government of the state that you cannot demolish someone's house without being proven guilty or after a court decision. I thank the Supreme Court for this." UP Congress president Ajay Rai said, "We all welcome this decision of the Supreme Court and thank them for this. As the Supreme Court said, somebody's house cannot be demolished even after being proven guilty, because the other family members living in that house are not guilty, we welcome this decision of the Supreme Court from the bottom of our hearts".

However, NDA partner, Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) chief and state minister Om Prakash Rajbhar said, "The entire country welcomes the decision of the Supreme Court, the government also welcomes it, the opposition also does. The government does not intend to demolish anyone's house. If a criminal has acquired illegal property and has built a house on government land, he is made to vacate it. The government never demolishes a house built on anyone's private land".

In today's verdict the top court has termed the action taken by the state governments to demolish the houses of crim-

# Tourism boom in UP with 44.9 per cent growth from 2020-21 to 2023-24

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
LUCKNOW, 13 NOVEMBER

The Uttar Pradesh government has taken transformative steps to elevate the state's tourism sector. These initiatives aim to increase tourist arrivals, boost the local economy, and create more employment opportunities. As a result, the recent years have seen the tourism sector in the state surge remarkably, recording a 44.9 per cent growth from 2020-21 to 2023-24.

Building on this success, the government has set a target of 19.2 per cent growth for 2024-25, with plans to develop numerous tourist destinations and showcase the state's cultural heritage on a global stage, state tourism officials here on Wednesday disclosed. The government envisions UP as a premier tourist destination, with its rich cultural heritage gaining global recognition. A key priority is improving accommodations for visitors; in response to the state's shortage of hotel rooms—currently at 30 rooms per 100,000 people compared to the national average of 180—the government has eased policies for hotel construction.

**TENDER**

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**  
Open E-Tender Notice  
No. W/13/NTS/GEN/CO/LENSO Dated: 11.11.2024  
Div: Rly Manager, N.W. Railway, Jaipur for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tenders for the following works upto 15:30 hours on the date shown as below Name of work with its location:  
Engg-JP-2024-25-101 Jaipur Divn: Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of CRT & Intelligent field devices. Approx Cost of work: 3773040.60 Earnest Money Rs.: 75500/- Detail is available on N.W.Ry website-www.reps.gov.in and Notice Board in WA section, DRM Office, NWR, Jaipur. 2. Tender No. Engg-JP-2024-25-101 is to be closed on 05.12.2024 at 15:30 hrs and opened on 05.12.2024 at 16:00 hrs. 1308-CR/24

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice No. 72/2024-2025 Dated: 13.11.2024  
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system  
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-  
S. No. Tender No. Brief Description Qty. Closing Date  
01 77249077 RUNNING CONTRACT FOR DIAMOND & 275 SET 05.12.2024  
RGC SCISSORS CROSSINGS  
02 07241558A IUC TYPE RUBBER VESTIBULE 925 NOS 06.12.2024  
03 15245236S SELF-CONTAINED COMPRESSED AIR 20 NOS 10.12.2024  
BREATHING APPARATUS  
NOTE:- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details. 2. No Manual offer will be entertained.

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY**  
OPEN TENDER NOTICE  
(Through e-Tender)  
E-tender Notice No 324575 Dated: 11.11.2024  
On the behalf of President of India e-Tenders are invited by the Sr. DMM/DSD, NWR, Jodhpur. Name of Item: Secondary Lashing Chain to RDSO drg. no. WD-82054-S-14 Alt-7  
Approximate Cost of item : Rs 5092313.00 (Rs. Fifty Lacks Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred Thirteen Rupees and Sixty Paise Only) Earnest Money to be deposited : Rs 101850.00 (Rs. One Lacks One Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Rupees Only). Last date and time for submission of E-Tender Opening of E-Tender: 02.12.2024 14:25  
Web site: www.ireps.gov.in. Address of ITI issuing Office: Officer of the Sr. DMM/DSD, NWR, Jodhpur-342001(Rajasthan) Notice: 1. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. 2. Cost of tender document & EMD (online through e-transfers i.e. through payment gateway facility 3. on the IREPS website. 1306-CR/24

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Rail Coach Naveenikaran Karkhana, Sonipat  
Tender Notice  
Invitation of tender through E-tendering (e-Procurement Systems)  
NIT No. 6-SEF/ile-260283/Tender  
Name of Work and its location: Tender for "Provision for Comprehensive running maintenance contract for preventive AC Units (Split AC) and centralized VRF/VRV system air conditioning system and repair and maintenance of desert cooler (Metal body), Water Cooler, Refrigerator, chimney at RCNK/SNP for 03 years as per scope of work."  
Approx Cost of work: Rs. 4437405.44/- including GST (Rs. Forty Four Lakh Thirty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Four Paise Forty Four only)  
Earnest Money: Rs. 88800/-  
Completion period of work: 36 months of date of execution of work  
Cost of tender document on cash/by post: NIL  
Date and Time for submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 13:00 hrs on 05/12/2024 Opening of Tender at 13:00 hrs.  
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen: Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in  
No. 6-SEF/ile-260283/Tender Dated 13/11/2024 3524/2024  
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

THUMBNAILS

**Independent candidate slaps election officer in Raj:** An independent candidate contesting the Rajasthan bypolls slapped a sub divisional magistrate who was on poll duty on Wednesday. The incident was reported in the Deoli-Uniara assembly constituency. Naresh Meena is fighting the polls as an independent after being denied a ticket by the Congress. He slapped SDM Malpura, Amit Chaudhary, an official said. Meena barged into the polling booth when one of his supporters passed him a message. The police and the SDM tried to stop him, but the contestant roughed them up.

**ED arrests 2 Bangladeshi nationals:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested two Bangladeshi nationals and one Indian from Kolkata in connection with Bangladeshi infiltration case for facilitating illegal infiltration and human trafficking in India. The arrested Bangladeshi nationals have been identified as Rony Mondal and Sameer Chowdhary, while the Indian national is identified as Pintu Haldar. The move comes a day after the agency conducted raids at 17 locations in Jharkhand and Bengal.

# PM announces projects worth ₹12,000 cr in Bihar

Prime Minister Modi lays the foundation stone of AIIMS in Darbhanga

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday lauded Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for developing a model of good governance and stressed that the double-engine government is committed to fast paced development in the state and working on the roadmap to strengthen the small farmers and industries.



The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone and inaugurated various development projects worth around Rs 12,100 crore in Darbhanga, Bihar today. The development projects comprise health, rail, road, petroleum and natural gas sectors.

In a major boost to health infrastructure in the region, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of the AIIMS, Darbhanga worth over Rs 1260 crore.

He informed that the regions of Mithila, Kosi and Tirhut apart from areas of West Bengal and neighboring regions would benefit from this, while also catering to the patients visiting India from Nepal.

The Prime Minister informed that the number of medical colleges have doubled in the last 10 years leading to more doctors. "Darbhanga AIIMS would produce many new doctors for the service of Bihar and the nation", he added. The Prime Minister remarked that the progress of the nation was stalled due to the poor health infrastructure and difficulties faced by the poor. Hence, he added, the old thought and approach were changed.

He underlined the holistic approach adopted by the government with regard to health. He outlined the focus areas of the government and said

that "the first focus area is prevention from diseases; secondly proper diagnosis of ailment; thirdly availability of free or low cost treatment and medicines; fourth to equip smaller towns with better medical facilities; and fifth expansion of technology in the health sector."

PM Modi highlighted the government's emphasis on Yoga, Ayurveda, nutritional value, Fit India Movement. Pointing out that junk food and a poor lifestyle are the main cause of common ailments, the Prime Minister listed out the government's efforts and mentioned campaigns like Swachh Bharat,

toilets in each home and tap water connection that are aimed at promoting cleanliness and reducing the scope for diseases.

The Prime Minister remarked that the severity of many diseases can be reduced if detected early. However, he noted, the high cost of diagnostics and research had prevented the people from getting known about being affected. "We have started more than 1.5 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs in the country", said Mr Modi which will help in early detection of diseases.

PM Modi noted that around Rs 1.25 lakh crore has been saved by crores of families due to Ayushman scheme and the patients were treated in both Government and private hospitals under the scheme.

Reaffirming the commitment of including citizens above 70 years of age in the scope of Ayushman Bharat scheme made during the elections, the Prime Minister remarked, "This guarantee has been fulfilled. Free treatment for senior citizens above 70 years has already begun irrespective of the family income."

He said that all beneficiaries would soon possess a Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card. He also touched upon Jan Aushadhi Kendras that offer medicines at extremely low costs.

Highlighting the fourth step of equipping smaller towns with better medical facilities and doctors towards better healthcare in India, the Prime Minister pointed out that there was only one AIIMS in the entire nation since 60 years of independence and the plan for establishing new AIIMS during previous governments were not completed.

He informed that it was the present government that not only looked after ailments but also established new AIIMS in all corners of the country, taking the total number to around 24.

The Prime Minister also touched upon enabling higher education in mother tongue and said that it has been his biggest tribute towards the dreams of Karpuri Thakur ji. In the last 10 years, the Prime Minister informed, "One lakh new medical seats have been added and efforts are underway to add another 75,000 seats in the next 5 years."

## 'Congress made mockery of Constitution by releasing its manifesto in silent period'

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra has accused the Congress party of violating the Constitution and election rules, urging the Election Commission to take immediate action.

Addressing the media at the BJP national headquarters here on Wednesday, Patra said, "Today, November 13, is the day of voting in Jharkhand. The Constitution celebrates democracy through free and fair elections, which is a testament to India's democratic values. But the Congress, a national party, has a history of disregarding the Constitution. The 48 hours before voting constitute a silent period during which no party is allowed to campaign or release any election manifesto. This rule is well-known and widely respected."

"Despite being fully aware of these rules," Patra remarked, "The Congress party chose to release its manifesto on November 12, just a day before the first phase of voting in Jharkhand. This is a clear violation of the silent period and a blatant tampering with the Constitution."

Patra went on to claim that this was not the first instance of such behaviour by the Congress. He criticised Congress

leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly disregarding the Election Commission's authority and continually speaking against it. "By releasing the manifesto during the silent period, the Congress has shown contempt for the election process," Patra asserted, adding that the BJP's state unit has filed a formal complaint with the Election Commission demanding action. Patra also alleged that the Congress party's recent move in Karnataka, where they allegedly proposed a 4 per cent reservation for Muslims in public tenders till the tune of Rs 1 crore, is an attempt to undermine reservations meant for SCs, STs, and OBCs.

He accused the Congress and JMM of betraying the people of Jharkhand with similar plans to reallocate reservations to Muslims. When asked about the Supreme Court's decision related to the bulldozer case, Patra reiterated the BJP's respect for the rule of law. "The Supreme Court's verdict applies not to one state but to the entire country. We believe in the rule of law and the Constitution. Any action taken outside these bounds has provisions for correction. Fear among criminals is a sign of good governance, while the public should feel secure," he said, affirming the BJP's support for the Supreme Court's decision.

## Over 64 percent voter turnout in first phase of J'khand polls

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

More than 64 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the first phase of voting in Jharkhand Assembly elections on Wednesday.

The voting in 43 Assembly seats spread across 15,344 polling stations in the mineral-rich state was held peacefully without any incidents of violence.

The polling was marked by a festive mood and enthusiastic participation across all districts, with a large tribal population, including areas affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE). Voters from diverse groups including first time voters, elderly, women, PwD and tribals among others were seen exercising their franchise at polling stations across the 15 districts that went to polls on Wednesday, undeterred by threats and boycott calls.



"As per updates till 5 pm, a voter turnout of 64.86 per cent was recorded at the polling stations in Jharkhand which has already surpassed 63.9 per cent voting in these 43 seats in 2019 Assembly polls," the Election Commission of India (ECI) said in a statement. Lohardaga district recorded

the highest turnout with 73.21 per cent, as per the poll panel.

Prominent among the candidates whose fate was sealed in the EVMS include former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren, Rameshwar Oraon, Mithilesh Thakur, Banna Gupta, and Deepak Birua.

Jharkhand Chief Minister and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Hemant Soren

along with his wife and MLA Kalpana Soren exercised their franchise at a polling booth in Ranchi.

Talking to reporters, he said, "Today is the great festival of democracy. I urge every citizen to come forward and strengthen the democratic system by exercising their franchise."

Former Chief Minister and BJP nominee from the Saraikela seat, Champai Soren cast his vote at a booth in Jilingora village in Gamarhia block and exuded confidence of BJP-led NDA alliance win in the state.

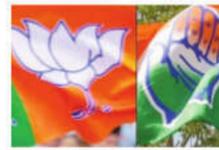
He said the BJP-led NDA will secure a huge majority in the state.

The polling for the final phase in 38 Assembly constituencies will take place on 20th November. The counting of votes would take place along with Maharashtra on 23rd November.

## BJP, Cong bypoll candidates detained in MP

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
BHOPAL, 13 NOVEMBER

Police Wednesday morning took the candidates of the ruling BJP and opposition Congress into confinement, as the voting for assembly bypoll at Vijaypur in Madhya Pradesh began at 7 AM. The police initially kept



Congress candidate Mukesh Malhotra under house confinement since 7 AM.

However, after protest by the Congress, the police brought BJP candidate and Madhya Pradesh Forest Minister Ramniwas Rawat also to a rest house at Vijaypur in the Sheopur district at around 10 AM. Both candidates would be kept in confinement till voting ends in the evening. The main aim

is to stop the candidates to unduly influence the polling and voters and prevent any untoward incidents, police said.

In the morning, Ramniwas Rawat cast his vote at a polling booth in his native village Sunwani. Around 17 per cent voting was reported from Vijaypur till about 10.30 AM.

## CISF's women battalion to protect critical infrastructure: Amit Shah



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said the first all-women battalion of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will protect the nation's critical infrastructure, like airports and metro rails,

and provide VIP security as commandos.

In a post on X, he said, "In a firm step towards realising Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's vision of enhancing women's participation in every field of nation-building, the Modi government has approved the establishment

of the first all-women battalion of the CISF. To be raised as an elite troop, the Mahila Battalion will shoulder the responsibility of protecting the nation's critical infrastructure, like airports and metro rails, and providing VIP security as commandos. The decision will certainly fulfil the aspirations of more women to participate in the crucial task of protecting the nation," he said in a post on 'X'.

The CISF Force has been a preferred choice for several women who wish to serve the nation in the police force. The number of women in CISF is more than seven per cent at present. The addition of a Mahila battalion would encourage more aspiring

young women across the country to join CISF and serve the nation. It will give a new identity to women in CISF.

The CISF Headquarters has started preparations for the early recruitment, training and selection of location for the Headquarters of the new battalion. The training is being specially designed to create an elite battalion capable of performing a multifarious role as commandos in VIP security and also security of airports, Delhi Metro Rail duties.

The proposal for the creation of all-women battalions in the CISF was initiated in pursuance of the direction of the Union Home Minister on the occasion of 53rd CISF Day function.

## Medicinal, aromatic farms to come up in Ladakh soon

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU, 13 NOVEMBER

The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, on Wednesday entered into a memorandum of understanding with the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), to set up a farm for medicinal and aromatic plants cultivation at Palam in Leh.



programmes of CSIR, the job-oriented training and skill development to the local farmers and unemployed youths should also be taken up on priority by CSIR-IIIM, which would have great bearing on the income generation and employment.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director CSIR-IIIM, highlighted ongoing initiatives of CSIR-IIIM and

the other labs. of CSIR under Agri-Nutri Biotech theme to support the region's upliftment through scientific advancements in agriculture and cultivation of Medicinal, Aromatic and flowering crops.

Citing a couple of success stories like Purple revolution in J&K brought through lavender cultivation by IIIM and golden revolution for marigold culti-

vation in Himachal Pradesh by IHB, another lab. of CSIR, Dr. Zabeer mentioned the vast potential and opportunities available in the Ladakh region to bring the barren land under cultivation directly impacting the farmers economy and regional prosperity.

Dr Ahmed also commended the efforts made in Ladakh to cultivate medicinal plants with the support of the local government.

He assured me that the organization would provide scientific and technological support to local farmers and entrepreneurs. This includes guidance on expanding crop varieties, processing, value addition, and marketing strategies to enhance economic self-sufficiency in the region.

DELHI TRANSCO LIMITED							
(An Undertaking of Government of NCT of Delhi)							
CIN: U40103DL2001SGC111529							
Shakti Sadan, Kotla Road, New Delhi - 110002							
Website: www.dtl.gov.in							
Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter & Half Year Ended on 30th Sept, 2024							
S. No	Particulars	Quarterly Performance			YTD		INR Lakhs
		Quarter ended 30.09.2024 (Un-audited)	Quarter ended 30.06.2024 (Un-audited)	Quarter ended 30.09.2023 (Un-audited)	Half Year ended 30.09.2024 (Un-audited)	Half Year ended 30.09.2023 (Un-audited)	
1	Total income from operations	40,633.48	39,971.81	39,743.46	80,605.29	78,465.40	157,282.54
2	Net profit / (loss) for the period before tax (before exceptional items)	27,265.70	29,923.88	27,274.83	57,189.58	52,481.56	107,899.68
3	Net profit / (loss) for the period before tax (after exceptional items)	27,265.70	29,923.88	27,274.83	57,189.58	52,481.56	107,899.68
4	Net profit / (loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	19,511.70	21,655.53	22,495.58	41,167.23	43,930.18	88,381.10
5	Total comprehensive income for the period (comprising profit for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax))	19,547.55	21,749.61	22,519.14	41,297.16	43,977.30	88,532.94
6	Paid up equity share capital	395,100.00	395,100.00	395,100.00	395,100.00	395,100.00	395,100.00
7	Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve)	302,803.91	283,983.72	216,949.58	302,803.91	216,949.58	261,506.91
8	Net worth	697,903.91	679,083.72	612,049.58	697,903.91	612,049.58	656,606.91
9	Paid up debt capital / outstanding debt	2,000.00	4,065.49	7,750.08	2,000.00	7,750.08	4,901.98
10	Outstanding redeemable preference shares	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
11	Debt equity ratio	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
12	Earnings per share (of INR10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)						
	Basic & Diluted (INR)	0.49	0.55	0.57	1.04	1.11	2.24
13	Capital redemption reserve	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	Debt service coverage ratio	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00
15	Debt service coverage ratio	16.45	29.08	3.25	23.49	5.33	9.02
16	Interest service coverage ratio	729.79	84.24	97.85	450.81	85.50	247.55

Notes forming part of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter & half year ended on 30th September, 2024.

a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly & half yearly financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarterly & half yearly financial results are available on the websites of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and the listed entity (www.dtl.gov.in).

b) The Financial results for the quarter & half year ended on 30th September, 2024 have been recommended by Audit Committee at their meeting held on 13.11.2024 and approved by Board of Directors at their meeting held on 13.11.2024. The Independent Chartered Accountant have conducted the limited review of these financials results.

c) For the items referred in regulation 52 (4) of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Bombay Stock Exchange and can be accessed on the URL (www.bseindia.com).

d) No investor complaints were pending at the beginning of the quarter and no complaints were received during the quarter.

e) Previous period's figures have been regrouped/re-classified wherever deemed necessary.

**By order of the Board of Directors  
For Delhi Transco Limited  
Ravi Dhawan  
Director (Finance)**

Date : 13.11.2024  
Place : New Delhi  
DIN : 09106085

# The Statesman

Incorporating and directly descended  
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## Power as a weapon

With the first phase of the Jharkhand assembly election over yesterday and the Maharashtra polls scheduled for November 20, a scrutiny of candidates' affidavits has once again sparked public interest. These affidavits, submitted to the Election Commission, offer a rare window into the personal assets, criminal backgrounds, and financial growth of those seeking public office. Beyond the usual revelations of wealth and criminal cases, some unexpected details – such as firearm ownership and luxury purchases – shed light on the shifting nature of Indian politics. One of the most striking aspects of the recent disclosures is the ownership of firearms among prominent political leaders. Both Hemant Soren, the chief minister of Jharkhand, and Eknath Shinde, the Maharashtra chief minister, have declared owning firearms. This raises important questions about the relationship between personal security and public responsibility. While both men oversee the home departments of their respective states, the choice to arm themselves reflects a broader trend where political figures seem to distrust state apparatus or seek to project strength in a volatile political landscape. In Jharkhand, candidates such as Champai Soren and Sita Soren, who are contesting on opposing party tickets, have also declared firearms among their assets. This is particularly interesting considering the state's complex socio-political dynamics. The ownership of weapons is a symbol of power in many parts of India, and for politicians, it can signal control, influence, and a readiness to confront both external and internal challenges. For voters, however, it may raise concerns about the militarisation of politics and the role of violence in electoral contests.

Another recurring theme in these affidavits is the rapid accumulation of wealth by political candidates, even in the face of broader economic challenges. For instance, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader and state minister Basant Soren's income soared from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1.9 crore over five years; this exemplifies the growing financial disparity between elected representatives and their constituents. While the economy has struggled, particularly during the pandemic, many politicians have seen their fortunes rise significantly. This suggests an entrenched political economy where wealth generation, often opaque in its origins, is closely tied to power. In Maharashtra, Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray's grandson, Aaditya Thackeray, offers another example of this evolving political landscape. His asset declarations, which include not just a collection of firearms but also high-value items like bangles, reflect a blend of modern luxury and traditional symbolism. The presence of luxury goods like a BMW or a Skoda cars in the affidavits of political figures, even as their incomes remain modest by comparison, underscores the disconnect between the financial realities faced by ordinary citizens and the ostentatious lifestyles of politicians. As voters head to the polls in Jharkhand and Maharashtra, these affidavits provide a glimpse into the motivations, values, and financial realities of the candidates who seek their support. Beyond the promises made in speeches, these personal disclosures reveal the true nature of those who will govern.

## Climate Reckoning

India's climate crisis is no longer a distant threat; it's an urgent, daily reality. The staggering statistics on extreme weather events in 2024 – over 3,200 lives lost, millions of hectares of farmland ruined, and countless homes and livestock destroyed – paint a grim picture of a nation bearing the brunt of climate change. Extreme weather events were recorded on 255 of the first 274 days this year, underscoring a relentless increase that demands both immediate action and long-term strategic shifts. The implications of these events go beyond the physical destruction they bring in their wake. Every flood, heatwave, and storm disproportionately affects those least equipped to handle the aftermath. Rural and low-income communities, often lacking resources for recovery, are left increasingly vulnerable. When crops are destroyed or homes swept away, it's the poorest households that face hunger, homelessness, and a future defined by loss. Climate change has ceased to be a concept debated in boardrooms; it's a lived experience for millions of Indians. Yet, it is not only climate change driving this destruction. India's pattern of unchecked development is a major contributor. In regions like the Western Ghats, intensive quarrying and construction in ecologically fragile areas exacerbate landslides and flooding. Similarly, urban areas like Delhi have stripped away their natural defences by filling lakes, ponds, and drainage systems to accommodate relentless construction. The result: Increased flooding and higher temperatures, making cities more inhospitable each year. This combination of climate change and poor planning amplifies the impact of extreme events, transforming natural disasters into human-made catastrophes. Data gaps further hinder effective response and planning. The lack of comprehensive records on property and crop damage obstructs efforts to measure the full economic toll of these events. Without accurate data, policymakers are left with incomplete information, making it difficult to allocate resources effectively or to understand the precise toll these events take on the economy and society. The absence of detailed loss data underscores the need for robust climate-tracking systems and transparent reporting mechanisms, which can serve as the foundation for a proactive climate response. What India needs now is a two-pronged approach: resilience-building for the immediate term and regulatory reform for sustainable development. The country must prioritise infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather, like improved drainage systems, flood-resistant housing, and resilient agricultural practices. Simultaneously, stricter regulations on high-risk developments are essential to prevent further destruction in vulnerable regions. Ecologically fragile areas must be protected, and sustainable development should be embedded in urban planning frameworks. India's escalating climate vulnerability is a call to action. Addressing this crisis requires both a shift in mind-set and a commitment to policy reforms that prioritises resilience and sustainability. Climate change is no longer an abstraction or an inconvenience; it's an existential challenge. The time has come to protect our most vulnerable populations, preserve our natural ecosystems, and rethink development practices that deepen our climate risks.

# Lady Justice

The symbolism marks an enlightened vision for India's judiciary. Yet, this gesture contrasts with the pressing challenges within the system, especially the vast backlog of cases. As of January 2024, the Supreme Court alone has over 80,000 pending cases, and more than 58 lakh cases are stuck across various high courts, with some dating back over 30 years. The delays disproportionately affect marginalized communities, often forcing them through a drawn-out, costly legal process



India's Supreme Court recently unveiled a new statue of Lady Justice, an iconic symbol of the judiciary, marking a significant departure from traditional representations rooted in colonial heritage. Traditionally depicted as blindfolded, holding scales and a sword, this new version portrays her with open eyes, dressed in a saree, and holding the Constitution instead of a sword.

This transformation reflects an intentional move by the judiciary to break free from the colonial past and to better align with Indian cultural values and constitutional principles. It speaks volumes about the spirit of a judicial vision that is becoming more aware, inclusive, and attuned to the complexities of contemporary Indian society.

The open-eyed Lady Justice has profound symbolic value. The absence of the blindfold is particularly significant in a country like India, where inequality, caste, gender discrimination, and socio-economic disparities persist.

The conventional blindfold, intended to symbolize impartiality, is inadequate in addressing India's diverse realities. Justice in India cannot be blind to the systemic injustices deeply rooted in its social fabric. The judiciary, by embodying this open-eyed figure, is expressing a commitment to seeing and addressing the country's unique challenges.

At the same time, the shift from the sword, a symbol of authority and punishment, to the Constitution signifies a more democratic and rights-based approach to justice.

The Constitution is the supreme law of India, enshrining the values of equality, liberty, and fraternity, and this new depiction of Lady Justice reaffirms the judiciary's role as the guardian of those principles.

It underscores that the judiciary's power should come not from the ability to punish, but from its dedication to upholding constitutional morality and protecting individual rights.

The symbolism marks an

enlightened vision for India's judiciary. Yet, this gesture contrasts with the pressing challenges within the system, especially the vast backlog of cases.

As of January 2024, the Supreme Court alone has over 80,000 pending cases, and more than 58 lakh cases are stuck across various high courts, with some dating back over 30 years. The delays disproportionately affect marginalized communities, often forcing them through a drawn-out, costly legal process.

According to the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), 2.45 lakh cases that are between 20 and 30 years old remain unresolved in high courts. For the ideals reflected in this statue to have a meaningful impact, the judiciary must address these delays through systemic reforms, such as streamlining procedures, embracing digital solutions, and filling judicial vacancies.

Without such reforms, the statue's message of attentiveness and equity risks being purely symbolic, rather than a reflection of justice in practice.

Another challenge lies in ensuring equitable access to justice. While the Constitution guarantees equality before the law, the reality is far from this ideal. Marginalized groups, including women, Dalits, Adivasis, and economically disadvantaged populations, often face barriers to accessing the legal system.

The cost of legal representation, a lack of awareness about rights, and systemic biases within the judiciary itself contribute to these challenges.

The saree-clad Lady Justice, a symbol of Indian womanhood, represents the judiciary's connection to the people it serves, but this connection must be translated into concrete actions that make justice accessible to all citizens,

regardless of their background.

Judicial independence is another pressing issue. While the judiciary is constitutionally protected from political interference, recent years have seen increasing concerns about the erosion of this independence.

Several high-profile cases have raised questions about the impartiality of judicial decisions, with critics pointing to a growing proximity between the judiciary and the executive branch.

The new Lady Justice statue, with her eyes wide open, sends a message that the judiciary must remain vigilant and independent, safeguarding its role as the protector of constitutional values and the rights of the people. Additionally, the introduction of the new Lady Justice raises important questions about the decolonization of India's legal system.

Many of India's legal structures and practices are remnants of British colonial rule, designed to serve an imperial agenda rather than the needs of the Indian populace. The new statue is a conscious step toward reclaiming India's legal institutions and making them more reflective of its own culture and values.

However, this process of decolonization must go beyond symbolic changes and include substantive reforms, such as simplifying archaic laws, addressing the hierarchical structure of the courts, and making legal processes more transparent and citizen-friendly.

In this context, judicial reform must also focus on improving the representation of women, minorities, and marginalized communities within the judiciary itself. While Lady Justice may now be depicted as an Indian woman, the reality is that women are significantly underrepresented in

India's judicial system.

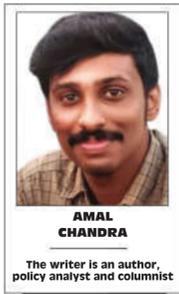
According to the Supreme Court's 'State of the Judiciary' report, women's representation in Indian courts has increased. In 2023, 9.4 per cent of Supreme Court judges were women, up from 4 per cent in 2018, while high courts saw a rise from 10.1 to 13.4 per cent during the same period. Subordinate courts have also improved, with female judges increasing from 27.6 per cent in 2018 to 36.3 per cent in 2023. However, the proportion remains particularly low in states like Rajasthan, Odisha, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh. To ensure fairness, the judiciary must mirror India's diverse society in its composition.

Moreover, judicial accountability remains a critical issue. The judiciary, while independent, must also be accountable to the people it serves. Mechanisms for ensuring transparency, such as live-streaming court proceedings and making judgments more accessible to the public, should be expanded.

The open eyes of Lady Justice can serve as a reminder that justice must be seen to be done – both in terms of transparency and in terms of the perception of fairness. Ultimately, the Supreme Court's unveiling of a new, open-eyed Lady Justice statue is a significant and symbolic step toward a more culturally attuned and constitutionally driven vision of justice.

However, this symbol must be accompanied by substantive reforms to address the real challenges facing India's judiciary. From tackling the case backlog to ensuring equitable access to justice, from protecting judicial independence to decolonizing legal systems, and from increasing diversity within the judiciary to enhancing judicial accountability, there is much work to be done.

Only by addressing these challenges can India's judiciary truly embody the ideals represented by its new Lady Justice statue – justice that is aware, inclusive, and rooted in the principles of the Constitution.



AMAL CHANDRA  
The writer is an author, policy analyst and columnist

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

## Climate challenges

SIR, As the annual UN climate summit COP29 gathers in Baku, Azerbaijan, it faces a forbidding future. Donald Trump, backed to the hilt by fossil fuel interests, will be back in the White House. He has indicated the US would again exit the Paris climate agreement.

Climate finance is COP29's main theme, where rich industrialised nations will have to up a

new, bigger fund, a new collective quantified goal, to help developed and vulnerable nations shift away from fossil fuels and adapt to climate change.

Given that the US is both the richest country and the largest GHG emitter, this ceding of responsibility will certainly throw off negotiations.

There will be an effort to draw



in more nations to contribute to funding, especially China and Gulf states, and resistance from those who don't want to pay for a crisis they didn't cause, and whose per capita emissions are still only a fraction of the wealthy Western nations.

India is among the very few countries who are on track to meet its 2030 nationally determined contribution (NDC) – voluntarily pledged climate actions under the Paris Agreement, setting an example of a balance between ecology and economy as its contribution to the global carbon emissions is a mere 4 per cent despite it having 17 per cent of the world's population.

Scaling up renewable energy and phasing out fossil fuels are two sides of the same coin – COP 29 must deliver on both. A deal to triple renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency, without a corresponding agreement on fossil fuel phase-out, would not fulfil COP 29's full potential.

Yours, etc.,  
Sanjay Chopra,  
Mohali, 11 November.

## MANIPUR

SIR, Please refer to today's report "11 militants killed in encounter with CRPF in Manipur's Jiribam". Manipur has been unravelling for the past year and a half, and there is little reason to hope that things will improve any time soon.

There has been a fresh escalation of violence, with farmers working in paddy fields being targeted by snipers on hilltops. The killing of two women – one was gunned down and the other burnt alive – shows the sheer brazenness of militants.

More than 200 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic clashes between Meiteis and Kukis since May last year.

The Centre's attempts to bring the warring sides to the negotiating table have been fruitless. There is a huge disconnect between the Union Government and the local people, whose concerns and aspirations remain unaddressed.

Two of its contentious decisions – fencing the India-Myanmar border and scrapping the Free Movement Regime – have been staunchly opposed by several tribal organisations in Manipur.

They have cited a threat to the social, cultural and economic ties between tribal communities living on either side of the border, but the Centre seems to be in no mood to do a rethink.

This intransigence has further alienated residents of the strife-torn state. Leaving Manipur to fend for itself can be perilous for the security of the entire North-east, which has been battling insurgency for decades.

Yours, etc.,  
Khokan Das,  
Kolkata, 12 November.

# Cyber-attacks expose a state's vulnerabilities

PAKHI GARG AND NACHIKETA MITTAL

Cyber-attacks on the government and significant business websites are as much a reality as physical insurgency and terrorist attacks. The latest cyber ransomware attack in Uttarakhand on 2 October 2024 brought the State Government machinery virtually to a halt. More than 90 major websites of the Uttarakhand Government, inter alia CM Helpline, 'Apni Sarkar', 'E-Office', 'E-Ravanna portal, Chardham registration, and Land Registry were compromised.

The Uttarakhand Government's data centre was hacked, crippling the State's entire Information Technology infrastructure. This attack, apparently, captured the State's Information Technology Development Agency (ITDA) server, holding the critical data of crores of people and sensitive government departments, including the office of the Chief Minister, and demanded a ransom. It was no less than paralysing the State Government. One week later, on 10 October 2024, the Uttarakhand Government announced that there had been no data loss. However, several critical questions loom large.

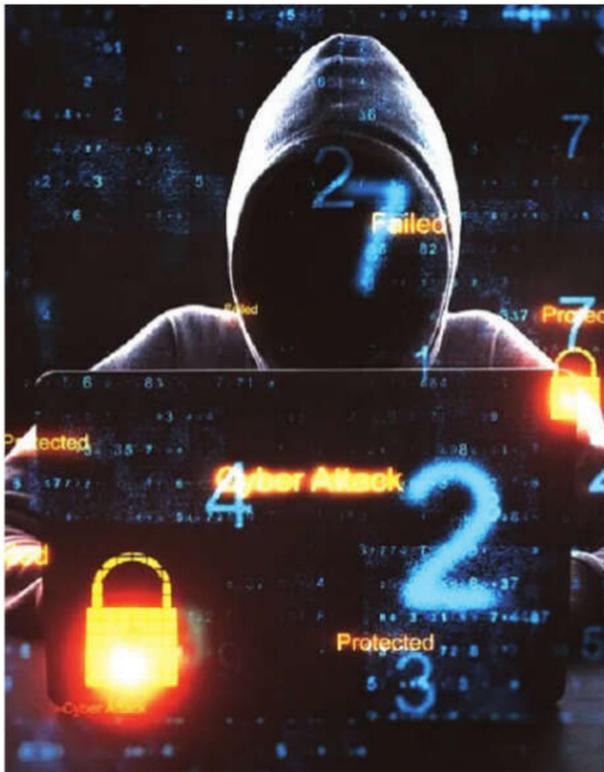
Cyber experts view it from multiple lenses rather than as mere ransomware attacks or from the perspective of data recovery. The government's preparedness to combat such a massive cyberattack is under question and accountability is at stake. The data of the last three years, curated by various State and non-State agencies further reflect a vulnerability of the Indian cyber system. For instance, till date in 2024, India has witnessed 388 data breaches, 107 data leaks, 39 ransomware activities, and 59 cases of access sales or leaks. We

also sustained nearly 5 billion cyber-attacks in 2023.

Approximately, 50 government websites were hacked, and there were around eight incidents of data breaches in 2022-2023. In an alarming case, India's weak cyber security architectural plan and IT infrastructure was exposed two years ago, when in 2022, AIIMS Delhi succumbed to a ransomware attack, compromising critical healthcare services for almost two weeks. This was probably one of the worst set-backs for Indian cyber security infrastructure in recent times. It was clearly a clear signal for governments to envision a clear roadmap to prevent such mishaps in future.

However, it seems Uttarakhand overlooked it for want of vision. There seems no plausible answer why the Uttarakhand Government does not have a proper cyber crisis management plan. More so because two years ago, the same Government of Uttarakhand, tasked ITI Limited, in Bengaluru to craft a disaster recovery plan. But it seems the matter has been in cold storage since then. It never saw the light of the day. Probably the government has so far treated cyber security as another welfare scheme which is announced during elections and forgotten until the next term. If this is the case, then we are heading for a bigger aftermath of a disaster after the data breach.

A prudent cyber expert's mind may ask what prevented the State Government from implementing a plan in the last two years? Given the escalating number of global cyber-attacks, the State Government urgently needs more specific regulations, guidelines, procedures, or standard operating procedures (SOPs) to combat these crimes.



Immediate policy changes and the implementation of effective measures to counter cyber threats are not just necessary but crucial. As we probe this disaster, a Pandora's box of questions seems to open up.

How could the state government overlook recruiting more subject matter experts for the Information Tech-

nology Development Agency (ITDA), in contrast to the existing team of three members, who are not even subject matter experts? As it appears, Data backup, a fundamental practice in cybersecurity, was not previously implemented, raising serious concerns about the State's risk management strategies. There also seems to

be a callous approach of the Government of Uttarakhand in firmly conducting a timely security audit of the 'State Data Centre'.

Non-establishment of the cyber security task force till date calls for another alarm in this scenario. While now the State Government has filed an FIR under section 308(4)(extortion) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sahinta, 2023 and 65/66/66C of the IT Act, 2000, there is a dire need for an overhaul of Uttarakhand's cyber security basic architectural design, recruitment of subject matter experts, inviting consultants on board, setting up cyber security nodal officers in every department, rigorous and continuous training and constant engagement for evolving a cyber-security plan because such attacks may happen again.

Precaution is the best cure. A half-baked cyber security plan cannot ensure the safety and security of the residents of Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand is known for cloud burst disasters and 2 October perhaps will be remembered as the Uttarakhand's Cyber Security Cloud Burst, till a robust plan is placed on the table.

It is quite evident that the Uttarakhand Government could not smell or see this coming despite enough reportage of cybercrimes across the country. It was knocking on our doors, and we opened our door wide open, then shooting the ransomware to mitigate the damage. A healthy dialogue between cyber experts and the Government is now warranted for a future roadmap that may not only help rebuild Uttarakhand from the crisis and may even serve as a model for other States to borrow from.

(The writers are, respectively, an Uttarakhand based cyber security expert and Co-Founder, World Cyber Security Forum, and Professor of Law and Registrar, NLU Tripura.)

100 YEARS AGO  
OCCASIONAL NOTE

IN his speech delivered at Karachi on Tuesday, Mr. Pochkhanawala, managing director of the Central Bank of India, hinted not obscurely at the difficulties in which Messrs. Tata now find themselves, but he paid no tribute to the efforts of Government and the Assembly to save that mismanaged firm by a tariff. "If exchange continues to fluctuate against our interests," he said, "and if labour does not come down proportionately, I am afraid we may have to close many of our industrial pursuits and be satisfied with our natural occupation, namely, agriculture, and provide a means of prosperity to the foreign countries by exporting the raw products for being returned to us as manufactured articles." If one may say so however, Mr. Pochkhanawala's deeds are better than his words. He has built a house for the accommodation of the Karachi branch of the Central Bank, and in the speech above quoted he refers with justifiable pride to the growth of the local staff from four to forty during the past dozen years. "Still," he adds, "we have reason to believe that the branch is capable of further expansion in its business." It would appear, therefore, that Mr. Pochkhanawala's pessimism stops short at the threshold of his own business. The prospects of the Central Bank of India do not lie under its shadow. The *sturm und drang* from which it has recently emerged lend emphasis, however, to this shrewd banker's remarks with regard to Leeman Act, passed in England nearly 50 years ago, and to the desirability of similar legislation in India to-day.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE NEW ORDINANCE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STATESMAN."  
Sir—I have had occasion to get opinions from some prominent politicians about the present situation and recent Bengal arrests. In the course of conversation one of them said that no civilized Government or nation would allow lawlessness and crime in their country. Educated Indians know that Bengal is the seat of anarchical and revolutionary movements. During the last two years there were more than 100 armed motor-car dacoities in and around Calcutta. In addition to these, highway robberies, murders of Europeans and Government officials, thefts, and assaults on innocent passengers of running train were perpetrated at the point of revolver. We have read about the Sankaritolah case and the day murder. If the people want security of life and property, such deeds must be put down by a steel hand, and the perpetrators should meet the maximum punishment the law allows. Every kind of leniency by our Government will increase crime in future years. We therefore applaud the new Ordinance. Law-abiding and peaceful citizens need not fear, as the Government have given full assurance that their personal liberties and freedom will not be in any way be infringed.

INDIAN MADRAS

GHATINA KHAL

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STATESMAN."  
SIR,—The re-excavation of the Ghatina Khal, the principal waterway of a locality comprising an area of about 40,000 bighas of land with a population of about 30,000, was sanctioned by the District Board of Pabna, through the intervention of the S. D. O. of Sirajganj, Mr. Hindley, long before the advent of the flood which is just over. But the work of re-excavation was not taken up by the District Board last season. The water has all but dried up and the actual work can now be easily undertaken. If it is delayed and not completed before the advent of the next rainy season, malaria will play havoc and the sufferings of the people will know no bounds. I therefore invite the attention of Dr. Bentley, Mr. Hindley, and the District Board of Pabna to this most important work and fervently hope that they will expedite the matter so as to complete the re-excavation of the Khal before the next monsoon sets in.

Yours, etc.,  
SAILAJA KUMAR SANYAL  
SALAP

ROADS IN BENARES DISTRICT

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STATESMAN."  
SIR,—I am sending copies of correspondence with the Chairman of the District Board, Benares, to show how the Benares District is faring under the first non-official Chairman. The District Fund he is administering was created firstly for the improvement of communications; secondly, for other objects of public utility. The previous District Board with that fund was maintaining some pucca and some kutcha roads. But our new Daniel repudiates his clear duty about the pucca roads and has allowed them to sink into pools of mud and water in the rainy season and rivers of knee deep dust with pits and ruts in the middle in the dry season. He further threatens to spend the taxpayers' money in litigation against the taxpayers if they go to the law-courts to teach him his clear duty under the law. Is this what Swaraj will bring in its train?  
ONE OF SUFFERING PUBLIC

# Our buried and forgotten history

RAFIA ZAKARIA

For the longest time, archaeologists forever in search of lost civilisations used to walk the earth, and map and dig areas where they believed ancient settlements had once existed and now lay buried under centuries of sediment and overgrowth. Sometimes, discoveries were made inadvertently, as in the case of the magnificent Lascaux caves of France, which were found by a group of teenage boys walking in the forest with their dog in 1940.

Another example is that of Pompeii, which was covered in ash from Mount Vesuvius when it erupted in 79 AD. Its location was discovered in the 16th century during work on a canal. The find was stunning: volcanic dust and lava deposits had 'frozen' Pompeii in time. Some corpses were found in cowering and crouching positions, just as they had been in their last moments before perishing under a heavy rain of volcanic ash. Everything, from children's toys to food containers, had been preserved, providing a picture not only of the tragedy that occurred so long ago but also of what life was like at that time. Pompeii remains one of the most visited archaeological sites today, so much so that the authorities have had to lately limit the number of visitors to the World Heritage Site out of fear of over-tourism.

Perhaps among the most bizarre incidents in this category of inadvertent finds was the discovery of the catcombs of Alexandria, Egypt. The

ancient Greco-Roman necropolis was discovered when a donkey fell through a hole in the ground.

Archaeology, however, has changed drastically since the days when luck and a little bit of knowledge helped explorers and archaeologists unearth some glorious object or a structure that indicated the prior existence of a bustling settlement. Archaeologists relied more on maps, ancient texts, geographical alignments, and surface finds. Without the resources of the modern age, archaeology was a calling and reflected the determination of the human spirit to excavate its way to the deep recesses of the past and bring to life all that was part of local lore and historical tracts. It was this restlessness that led Heinrich Schliemann to unearth the Homeric city of Troy and collect 'Priam's treasure', consisting of a large haul of diadems, rings, earring, daggers and swords.

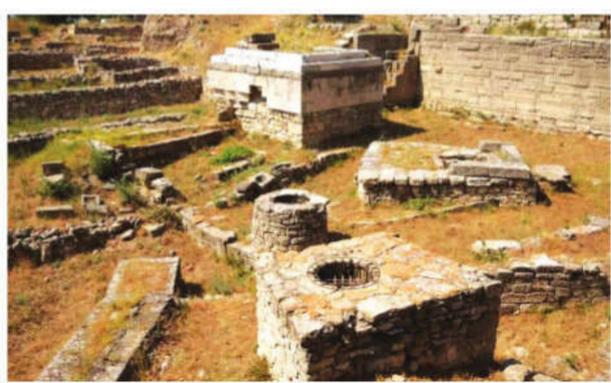
Overcoming the odds, archaeologists braved difficult terrains, disease and ancient curses. In areas such as South and Central America, with their heavily forested landscape at many places, digging was difficult and archaeological methods were labour intensive. Armed with their shovels, archaeologists relied on maps and local knowledge. It was thus that Hiram Bingham chanced upon Peru's Machu Picchu, now one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

Archaeology has taken many steps forward. From maps and pickaxes, it is now possible to discover

ancient relics from a distance, as in the case of a recent find. Luke Auld-Thomas, a PhD student, made a mind-blowing discovery while looking at aerial Lidar (light detection and ranging) images of the Mexican state of Campeche. Lidar, a remote-sensing technology, can look through heavily forested areas that are covered by vegetation to deliver images of structures from long ago. Archaeologists may not have access to the technique unless they have credible indication of the existence of some past settlement in the area. However, in many cases while archaeologists may not have the budget, people looking for other things, such as scientists or conservationists and land surveyors, may already have Lidar studies of a particular region.

It was one such study done all the way back in 2014 and commissioned by the Nature Conservancy of Mexico that Luke Auld-Thomas was poring over when he made the discovery of a lifetime. Through the Lidar images, Auld-Thomas could piece together the remains of what has been described as "a huge ancient city which may have been home to 30-50,000 people at its peak from 750 to 850 AD". It also contains thousands of structures. Auld-Thomas and his team have named the city 'Valeriana'.

Auld-Thomas has said that he had been looking through the images because he felt that casting about in the region known to have been populated by the ancient Mayans would eventually yield a discovery. No



doubt, it was quite something to be the actual person to have made the discovery. He is the lead author of an article on the lost city, which appeared in the journal *Antiquity* recently.

The impressive nature of Luke Auld-Thomas's work lies not only in that he made the discovery but that he used what he had access to — in this case, old Lidar maps from a decade ago — to see if he could find anything that would substantiate the view that Mayan cities were often interconnected and spread over large areas which did not exhibit the same level of population density.

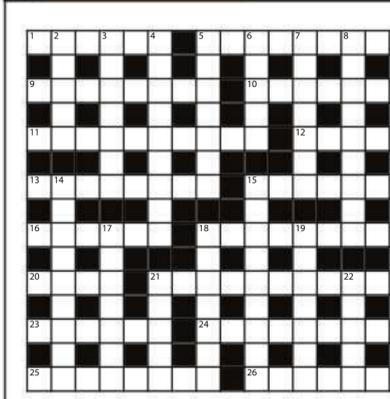
The discovery of the new city will yield a treasure trove of information about how the ancient Mayans lived, what they believed, and how they understood the world around

them. Junior researchers have a high bar to clear in that their relative lack of power means that they would never have the capacity to find the funds to commission a high-tech study on their own.

Clearly, that did not deter Luke Auld-Thomas and it should not deter others who pursue discovery and are often thwarted by doubters who think everything worthwhile either requires a huge budget or has already been discovered. In this sense, the ancient city of 'Valeriana' will not only reveal truths about a civilisation that disappeared long ago, but will also make us appreciate the spirit within us which charts new courses and makes new discoveries.

Dawn/ANN.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

NEUROBIOLOGY  
TENTATIVE  
ADHOMINEM NOMAD  
GEEABERNIT  
ACROSS VEHEMENT  
RSTRISO  
ASTRAY SUPPLIER  
OGBPRA  
HAPPENON FAUCET  
EHOGGIT  
CREOSOTE IMPART  
KAWCWAABO  
LEVVEAFORTIORI  
EYEMOIDS  
STUPEFAICIENT

- ACROSS
- Unsuccessful football manager took charge after international (6)
  - Deceitful character's broken promise to cut back (9)
  - Passionate fellow captivated by contents of erotica (8)
  - Rubber silencer fitted round American gun (6)
  - Copy note containing right answer with student's help (10)
  - Cotton on sticky part of plant (4)
  - Source arranged drugs for part of newspaper article (8)
  - Raid fashionable street (6)
  - Writer's point regularly belies little for the consumer (6)
  - 3 could make the grade (8)
  - 26 turned round in shock (4)
  - Frolic before friend with a gloomy air (10)
  - Introduce charge when Independent becomes accessible to everyone (6)
  - Put back in controls head of state ultimately sought (9)
  - Security feature present in electric blankets (8)
  - Part of tennis match repeatedly knocked back balls (6)
  - Member of police force becomes tense during bust (9)
  - Queuing outside entrance to Co-operative Bank (7)
  - Beat with stick (5)
  - Get anxious about lifting top (7)
  - Exchange article with one in supplementary reference for free (9)
  - Life with former partner is strained we hear (9)
  - Impose ban on criminal tried in court (9)
  - Wipe empty table at end of seat to eat (7)
  - Common man who's risen through the ranks (7)
  - Passes out: asleep and beginning to snore (7)
  - Thin mattress leads to night of terrible upheaval for back (5)
  - Great act of generosity gives away odd bits to sister (5)
- DOWN
- Mail ignoring Queen's secret affair (5)
  - Profited from Labour supporting Liberal intellectual (7)
- NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

THUMBNAILS

**Siddaramaiah may reshuffle Cabinet:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is facing Lokayukta and Enforcement Directorate (ED) investigations, is likely to reshuffle his cabinet after by-polls in three Assembly segments on Wednesday, sources said. The reshuffle, likely to take place after the winter Assembly session or by December-end, would be the Chief Minister's strategic move to reassert his authority, despite the impending probes against him in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case, sources said. CM Siddaramaiah appears convinced that the investigation against him won't affect him, said a Congress leader, adding that he wants to send a message to opponents that he won't get bogged down under any circumstances. The likely cabinet rejig may see the exit of six to seven ministers, making way for efficient leaders, a source said. When questioned about the possibility of a cabinet reshuffle, Home Minister C. Parameashwara said, "I do not know about a Cabinet reshuffle. The Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has to give an answer in this regard."

# 'Give me a chance to represent Wayanad'

'My expectations are being fulfilled, seeing the love & support of people,' Priyanka said



AGENCIES WAYANAD, 13 NOVEMBER

**C**ongress-led UDF candidate Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was all smiles on Wednesday as voters in Wayanad began queuing up to elect their new MP. Wearing a bright yellow saree with a red vermilion mark on her

forehead, Priyanka greeted voters warmly, adding charm to the polling day atmosphere. "I am confident that the people of Wayanad will give me the chance to represent them. My expectations are already being fulfilled, seeing the love and support of people coming out in large numbers," Priyanka Gandhi remarked after visiting a few polling

booths. Throughout the day, she is expected to visit polling stations across Wayanad, Kozhikode, and Malappuram districts. Her campaign team has set an ambitious target of winning by a margin of 5 lakh votes, which would require a voter turnout of over 80 per cent. By mid-

morning, about 35 per cent of the 14.71 lakh eligible voters had cast their votes, and it remains to be seen if turnout will reach the crucial 80 per cent mark. In the 2019 elections, when Rahul Gandhi contested from Wayanad, the voter turnout was 80.37 per cent, and he won with a significant margin of 4.31 lakh votes. However, in April 2024, his margin reduced to 3.64 lakh votes with a turnout of 73.57 per cent. Campaign managers, however, remain optimistic about achieving the 5 lakh vote margin, banking on a potential decline in support for the CPI and BJP candidates. The BJP, led by state president K. Surendran, made significant gains in 2024, doubling their vote count from the 2014 elections. All eyes are now on how much support CPI candidate Sathyan Mokeri and BJP's young contender Navya Haridas can garner. The question now is whether Priyanka can surpass Rahul's previous margin of 4.31 lakh votes, which will likely depend on achieving that 80 per cent voter turnout.

# Revanth Reddy snatching farmers' lands, says KTR

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 13 NOVEMBER



Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao on Wednesday alleged that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy was forcibly taking the lands of farmers in his constituency Kodangal for a pharma company owned by his son-in-law. Addressing a news conference, he claimed that farmers' lands were being taken away in the name of Pharma Village for Maxbien Pharma company owned by the Chief Minister's son-in-law. KTR alleged that for the sake of his son-in-law and another person Annam Sharath, the Chief Minister was forcing farmers to give away their lands. KTR slammed the Congress government over the manner in which BRS leader and former MLA Patnam Narendar Reddy was arrested in Hyderabad. He said Narendar Reddy was not arrested but kidnapped by policemen in plain clothes. Is he a bandit to be arrested in this manner, he asked. Narendar Reddy was arrested by police on Wednesday morning in Hyderabad in connection with the attack on the Vikarabad district col-

lector and other officials by villagers opposing land acquisition for 'Pharma Village'. KTR alleged that in the name of land acquisition, the Chief Minister was trying to do real estate business by giving lands of SCs, STs and BCs to his family members and followers. The BRS leader claimed that people were revolting against the ill-advised decisions of the Chief Minister. He said there was no conspiracy in the people's revolt. He claimed that people have been opposing the proposed Pharma Village in Kodangal for the last six months. He alleged that the Chief Minister's brother had threatened farmers refusing to part with their lands. KTR said the public anger in Kodangal was because of the ill-advised decisions of the Chief Minister. He slammed the Chief Minister for visiting Maharashtra for the election cam-

paign when farmers were arrested in his constituency. He said BRS worker Suresh Raj, who was named as the main accused in the attack on officials, is losing his seven acres of land. He claimed that Suresh did not attack anyone but was also only trying to explain distress to the Collector during the public hearing. Demanding the government to withdraw the proposal of 'Pharma Village', KTR said BRS would stand by farmers and people who were opposing the project. He recalled that then Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had planned Pharma City at Mucherla near Hyderabad with the idea to have all pharma companies in one place and to make Telangana the leader in the pharma sector. After strenuous efforts of eight years, about 14,000 acres of land was acquired for Pharma City. KTR said then Congress leader and the present Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had instigated people by saying Pharma City would create the problem of pollution. After becoming the Chief Minister, Revanth Reddy without ascertaining the facts scrapped the Pharma City project.

# Ex-BRS MLA arrested for attack on DM in T'gana

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD, 13 NOVEMBER

Former BRS MLA Patnam Narendar Reddy was arrested on Wednesday by Vikarabad police in connection with the attack on district collector and other government officials at Lagcherla village in Kodangal constituency. The police have alleged that the prime suspect, B Suresh Raj was a follower of the arrested MLA, who had instigated the attack on the officials. The farmers were protesting against the proposed pharma company for which land was being acquired in chief minister A Revanth Reddy's own constituency, Kodangal. Patnam Narendar Reddy was arrested by police while he was out at KBR Park for morning walk. He was then taken to Parigi police station in Vikarabad. Police had initially detained 55 people in connection with the attack on officials. It has now arrested 16 farmers while Suresh, who was designated as accused



number one and another 30 people, were on the run. Condemning the arrest of Patnam Narendar Reddy, BRS working president KT Rama Rao alleged this was a conspiracy to blame the BRS when people in the chief minister's own constituency were up in arms. "This wretched government was arresting people even when activists were speaking to people's representatives. Undemocratic measures are being taken to put down the people's rebellion at Lagcherla," said Rao. He called for the release of the former MLA and the farmers who have been detained.

Meanwhile, BJP MP DK Aruna was stopped by police from going to Lagcharla village. Her vehicle was stopped at Naneguda. Aruna was upset that she was stopped by police even as chief minister's brother A Tirupati Reddy was allowed to proceed to Kodangal. She questioned why police allowed him even though he was not even a ward member but stopped her. In the meantime, several Telangana BJP MPs have denied that KT Rama Rao had met Union Urban Development Minister Manohar Lal in Delhi. According to them he didn't get an appointment from the Union minister. Congress had alleged that Rao had fled to Delhi and sought to hold parleys with BJP leaders after the government sought the Governor's approval to proceed against him in connection with the Formula E race case. BJP MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy counter alleged that Rao had met Congress leaders in Delhi to seek immunity from arrest.

# K'taka bypolls: EC reports good turnout in three Assembly seats

AGENCIES BENGALURU, 13 NOVEMBER

The bye-elections held for three Assembly constituencies in Karnataka on Wednesday witnessed a good turnout as 45.02 per cent of voting was reported by the Election Commission of India. The poll panel reported a voter turnout of 45.02 per cent between 7 A.M. and 1 P.M. on Wednesday as the bypolls are being held for Channarayana Assembly constituency in Ramanagar district, Sandur Assembly seat in Ballary district and Shiggaon Assembly segment in Haveri district. The high-profile Channarayana seat saw a turnout of 48.15 per cent of voters, the Shiggaon segment witnessed 43.5 per cent of voting and the



Sandur seats saw a voters' turnout of 43.46 per cent. Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, HD Kumaraswamy's son Nikhil Kumaraswamy is the NDA candidate contesting under the JD(S) symbol from the Channarayana seat. He is also the grandson of former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda. Former senior BJP leader, CP Yogeshwara is the Congress

candidate from here. Former Chief Minister and BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai's son Bharat Bommai is the BJP candidate from the Shiggaon Assembly constituency. The Congress has fielded Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan as its candidate. Annapurna Tukaram, wife of former minister and Congress MP, E. Tukaram is the candidate for the grand old party from the Sandur

Assembly segment. The BJP has fielded Bangaru Hanumanth, State Morcha President as its candidate. The Congress, BJP and JD(S) have carried out high-voltage campaigning for the bypolls as the results are expected to have a direct impact on state politics. CM Siddaramaiah, facing allegations of corruption and investigation by the Lokayukta and Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case will find it difficult to continue in his position if the BJP manages to win all three seats. The results are also crucial for Union Minister Kumaraswamy to consolidate his position in the BJP at the national level. State BJP President B.Y.

Vijayendra will have a difficult time in case of a setback as he is facing internal challenges by senior leaders. There are 2.36 lakh voters in the Sandur constituency and of these, 1.18 lakh are women. There are 29 voters belonging to the third gender category and there are 153 polling stations. There are a total of 2.32 lakh voters in the Channarayana seat including 1.20 lakh women and 8 third gender voters. The Vokkaliga and Muslim voters are in large numbers in the constituency. There are 208 polling booths in the constituency. There are a total of 2.37 lakh voters in Shiggaon among which 1.16 lakh are women and 6 are third gender voters. The voting would be held in the 196 polling stations across the constituency.

# 'No alliance with BJP in TN for 2026 polls'

AGENCIES CHENNAI, 13 NOVEMBER

AIADMK General Secretary and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami (EPS) on Wednesday announced that his party will not form an alliance with the BJP for the 2026 Assembly elections.

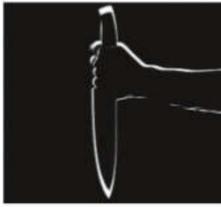
Speaking to the media in Coimbatore, EPS, who is also the Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly said that it was made clear during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and reiterated in several press conferences. "Our aim is to dethrone the DMK. There will be no

alliance with the BJP," Palaniswami asserted, emphasising that no further clarification was needed on the matter. EPS also referred to an interaction with a journalist in Tiruchi on Sunday during which he was asked whether the AIADMK would ally with the BJP.

# Doctor stabbed inside govt hospital by patient's son; medics strike work

M C RAJAN CHENNAI, 13 NOVEMBER

A senior doctor on duty was brutally stabbed by the son of a patient at the cancer ward of the Government Kalaignar Centenary Multi Speciality Hospital at Guindy on Wednesday. The incident at a premier government hospital has rattled the medical fraternity and they had gone on indefinite strike demanding adequate protection. Police said the incident took place in the morning when Dr Balaji, Head of the Department of Oncology, was offering consultation to outpatients. The assailant, Vignesh, of suburban Perungalathur, who was accompanying his mother Prema, receiving treatment for cancer, waited for her turn for the consultation. Three of his friends too had come with him. When his turn came, he entered the doctor's consultation room and immediately bolted it from inside before assaulting the doctor with a kitchen knife. Then, leaving the doctor, he ran away amidst the crowd, but



the alert hospital staff with the assistance of the people caught him and handed him to the cops. Besides Vignesh, the police are questioning his three other friends. According to hospital sources, Prema had been receiving treatment for an advanced stage of cancer and was given six rounds of chemotherapy. When her condition worsened, she was taken to a private hospital a few days ago. Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin, who visited the hospital and inquired into the incident, told the media that the youth, Vignesh, had resorted to the attack owing to a misunderstanding on the treatment and his mother's condition. "The patient was taken to a private hospital where the family was told something about her condition and the treatment which had pushed him to this," he said and assured the protesting doctors that the Government was committed to providing security to the doctors and the medical fraternity.

# TENDER

**DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI**  
**Addendum/Corrigendum No 02**

Subject: Expression of Interest (EOI) for Bioremediation/ Phytoremediation Treatment Process issued vide Letter No. DJB/EE (ISP)/2024/ 1318 dated 29/08/2024 displayed at DJB's website. The deadline for submitting documents related to the above said Expression of Interest has been extended from October 30, 2024 to January 31, 2025. For any further clarifications or additional information, please contact:

Sh. Pankaj Atray, CE(Dr.) Proj-III  
 Phone: 9650573355  
 Email: eeisp2024@gmail.com

Advt. No. J.S.V. 44(2024-25) Executive Engineer (ISP)

**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
 H.P.P.W.D. Division Ghumarwin, Distt. Bilaspur (H.P.) 174021  
 Tel: 01978-255281, e-mail id: ee-ghu-hp@nic.in.

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**

Sealed item rates tenders on PWD form 6 & 7/8 are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer H.P.P.W.D. Division Ghumarwin on behalf of Government of Himachal Pradesh. From the eligible contractors/firms of appropriate class for the following works as per detail given below. The important/key dates of tenders are as under:-

Date of receipt of application for the tenders	=	20/11/2024
Date of issue/sale of tender forms	=	21/11/2024

The tender which will be received on 23/11/2024 up to 11.00 AM shall be opened on the same day at 11.30 AM in the presence of intending contractors or their authorized representatives who may like to be present. The tender form can be had from this office against cash payment as shown below (Non-refundable) during the working hours on 22/11/2024. The earnest money in shape of NSC/Deposit at call/Time deposit in any Post Office/Nationalized bank in H.P. duly pledged in favour of undersigned must accompany with each application. The conditional tenders and tenders received without earnest money will be rejected. The tenders will be kept open for 45 days. The undersigned reserved the right to accept or reject the tenders without assigning any reason.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender form	Time Period.
1	Preparation of DPR for Upgradation of MDR Drainage to Jalni via Lakot Bazar/Bara-Da-Ghat road Km 0/0 to 19/130	478250/-	9600/-	350/-	Two Month.
2	Preparation of DPR for Upgradation of MDR Drainage to Jalni via Lakot Bazar/Bara-Da-Ghat road Km 0/0 to 19/130 (Job-II) Soil Investigation	133910/-	2700/-	350/-	Two Month.
3	Preparation of Hydraulic Data of 64.00 mtr Span over Seer Khand for C/o Motorable Bridge over Seer Khand on Bari Majherwan Dahad Parol road and Bridge Estimate and GAD of 19.75 mtr Span Double lane Bridge at Rd 1/425 on MDR Ghumarwin Berthim Shah Talai road and Preparation of Contour plan for Judicial Complex Ghumarwin, Preparation of Contour plan for Parking near Gandhi Chowk Ghumarwin and Preparation of Contour plan for Parking near Rajpals.	376930	7600/-	350/-	Two Month.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-**

- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject the tenders without assigning any reasons.
- The tender forms will not be issued to those contractors, whose performance is not found satisfactory.
- The GST/IGST/PAID. Copy of tender forms and copy of endorsement should be accompanied with the application.
- The application without documents will not be entertained.
- Proxi application will not be entertained.
- The contractors should have executed two similar types of works 1/3 of each amount put to tender.

Executive Engineer, Ghumarwin Division, H.P.P.W.D. Ghumarwin. For & on behalf of Government of Himachal Pradesh.

3233/2024-2025 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

**ODISHA GRAMYA BANK**  
 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT, HEAD OFFICE, GANDAMUNDA, KHANDAGIRI, BHUBANESHWAR-751030 (ODISHA)

Bid Number # GEM/2024/B/5539045 dated 12.11.2024

Odisha Gramya Bank invites application for procurement of 16 units of Microsoft Operating System Data Centre Edition 16 core licenses through bidding process from Government e Marketplace GeM portal. For details and application format please visit Bank's website: www.odishabank.in

GENERAL MANAGER

**NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM**

Ref: (i) Tender Notice No. 53/2024-2025 dated 19/09/2024.  
 (ii) Tender Number/15245195 due on 27/11/2024.

01. In reference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 12/11/2024 to 27/11/2024.

All other terms & conditions remain unchanged. The Corrigendum has been published on website www.iraps.gov.in. 3517/2024 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**कार्यालय नगर पालिका सांगोद जिला कोटा (राज.)**  
 E-Mail id:- np\_sangod05@gmail.com Phone No:- 07450-294239  
 क्रमांक:- 10/11010/2024/2975 दिनांक:- 12.11.2024

**ई-निविदा-सूचना**

इस कार्यालय की निविदा सूचना संख्या 2974 दिनांक 12.11.2024 के द्वारा कुल 1 कार्य की अनुमानित लागत 276.00 लाख की विभिन्न अभियंत्रिकी विभागों में सख्त शर्तों में पंजीकृत संवेदकों से ई-निविदा जमाकृत की जाती है। ई-निविदा से संबंधित मन्तव्य विवरण <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध है।

Work No. UEN No.

1	DLB2425WSOB11814	अध्यक्ष	अभियंताजी अधिकारी
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राज.संसाद/सी/24/7887 नगरपालिका सांगोद नगरपालिका सांगोद

**NORTHERN RAILWAY 1st Corrigendum**

No. 570-Sig-C-PS-AMC-Byte-24 Dated:- 12.11.2024

Sub:- 1st corrigendum to tender notice No. 570-Sig-C-PS-AMC-Byte-24 dt. 01.11.2024 in connection with tender for the work of 01 Year Annual Maintenance Contract of Byte Communication System installed in CAO/C office, K. Gate, Delhi. (Only OEM or authorized dealer of OEM is eligible for this tender). The following item of above tender notice may be read as under:-

As per original NIT	Revised as per this corrigendum
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Date of opening - 11.30 Hrs. on date: 22.11.2024 Tender No. 570-Sig-C-PS-AMC-Byte-24 dt. 01.11.2024 may be treated as cancelled.

3513/2024 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**

Reg. Office: PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001  
 Dy. Chief Engineer/O&M/M/M-II, GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat-151111 (Bathinda)  
 M. No. 96461-17607 E-mail: se.mno2.lehra@gmail.com  
 Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB0105G0039813 Website: www.pspcl.in

Tender Enquiry No.: 87/CHP/HEMC-307(V-A), Dated:- 13-11-2024

Dy. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Mtc. Circle-II/GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-tender for the work of "Dismantle & Erection of Apron pans (146 no.) & two no. chain links of apron feeder-D installed at coal handling plant. Stage-II, GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 13/11/24 at 17:00 onwards. Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

GHTP-92/24

# Pentagon stunned by Trump's defence choice

## Trump has nominated Fox News host Pete Hegseth to serve as his defence secretary

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON, 13 NOVEMBER

President-elect Donald Trump stunned the Pentagon and the broader defense world by nominating Fox News host Pete Hegseth to serve as his defense secretary, tapping someone largely inexperienced and untested on the global stage to take over the world's largest and most powerful military.

The news was met with bewilderment and wide-eyed worry among many in Washington, as Trump passed on a number of established national security heavy-hitters and chose an Army National Guard captain who is well-known in conservative circles as a co-host of Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends Weekend."

While some Republican lawmakers had a muted response to the announcement, others called his combat experience an asset or said he was "tremendously capable."

Hegseth's choice could bring sweeping changes to the military, as he has made it clear on his show and in interviews that, like Trump, he is stridently opposed to "woke" programs that promote equity and inclusion. He's also questioned the role of women in combat and advocated pardoning service members charged with war crimes.

In June, at a rally in Las Vegas, Trump encouraged his supporters to buy Hegseth's book after vowing that if he won: "The woke stuff will be gone within a period of 24 hours. I can tell you."

A staunch conservative



who embraces Trump's "America First" policies, the 44-year-old Hegseth has pushed for making the military more lethal. During an interview on "The Shawn Ryan Show" podcast, he said allowing women to serve in combat hurts that effort.

"Everything about men and women serving together makes the situation more complicated, and complication in combat, that means casualties are worse," Hegseth said.

And while he said diversity in the military is a strength, he said it was because minority and white men "can perform similarly" but the same isn't true for women.

point to the TV personality's lack of experience, with some suggesting he could be Pentagon chief in name only as the Trump White House runs the department. A number of other names floated as possible defense choices had included Rep. Mike Rogers of Alabama, the GOP chairman of the House Armed Services Committee; retired Lt. Gen. Keith Kellogg; Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa; and Robert Wilkie, a former Pentagon official who was head of Veterans Affairs in Trump's first term.

"There is reason for concern that this is not a person who is a serious enough policy-maker, serious enough policy implementer, to do a successful job," said Rep. Adam Smith of Washington, the ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee.

# Trump says Musk, Ramaswamy will form outside group to advise White House on government efficiency

AGENCIES WASHINGTON, 13 NOVEMBER

President-elect Donald Trump on Tuesday said Elon Musk and former GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy will lead a new "Department of Government Efficiency" — which is not, despite the name, a government agency.

The acronym "DOGE" is a nod to Musk's favorite cryptocurrency, dogecoin. Trump said in a statement that Musk and Ramaswamy will work from outside the government to offer the White House "advice and guidance" and will partner with the Office of Management and Budget to "drive large scale structural reform, and create an entrepreneurial approach to Government never seen before."

It's not clear how the



organization will operate. It could come under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, which dictates how external groups that advise the government must operate and be accountable to the public.

Federal employees are generally required to disclose their assets and entanglements to ward off any potential conflicts of interest, and to divest significant holdings relating to their work. Because Musk and Ramaswamy would not be formal federal workers, they would not face those requirements or ethical limitations.

Musk posted on X: "Department of Government Efficiency. The merch will be (fire emojis)." Later he added: "Threat to democracy? Nope, threat to BUREAU-CRACY!!!"

Musk has been a constant presence at Mar-a-Lago since Trump won the presidential election.

The president-elect has often said he would give Musk a formal role overseeing a group akin to a blue-ribbon commission that would recommend ways to slash spending and make the federal government more efficient. Musk at one point suggested he could find more than \$2 trillion in savings — nearly a third of total annual government spending.

Trump had made clear that Musk would likely not hold any kind of full-time position, given his other commitments.

# Israeli strikes kill 46 people in the Gaza Strip and 33 in Lebanon, medics say

AGENCIES DEIR AL-BALAH, 13 NOVEMBER

Israeli airstrikes killed at least 46 people in the Gaza Strip in the past day, including 11 at a makeshift cafeteria in an Israeli-declared humanitarian zone, medics said. In Lebanon, warplanes struck Beirut's southern suburbs and killed 33 people elsewhere in the country on Tuesday.

The latest bombardment came as the United States said it would not reduce its military support for Israel after a deadline passed for allowing more humanitarian aid into Gaza. The State



Department cited some progress, even as international aid groups said Israel had failed to meet the U.S. demands.

In Lebanon, large explosions shook Beirut's southern suburbs — an area known as Dahiyeh, where Hezbollah has a significant presence — soon after the Israeli mil-

itary issued evacuation warnings for 11 houses there.

There was no immediate word on casualties. The Israeli military said it targeted Hezbollah infrastructure, including command centers and weapons production sites, without providing evidence.

Another Israeli strike on an apartment building east of Beirut killed at least six people. Wael Murtaqa said the destroyed home belonged to his uncle and that those inside had fled from the Dahiyeh last month. He said three children were among the dead and other people were missing.

# US says it will not limit Israel arms transfers after some improvements in flow of aid to Gaza

AGENCIES WASHINGTON, 13 NOVEMBER

The Biden administration said Tuesday that Israel has made some good but limited progress in increasing the flow of humanitarian aid to Gaza and will not limit arms transfers to Israel as it had threatened to a month ago if the situation had not improved. Relief groups say conditions are worse than at any point in the 13-month-old war.

State Department spokesman Vedant Patel told reporters the progress to date must be supplemented and sustained but "we, at this time, have not made an assess-



ment that the Israelis are in violation of U.S. law." It requires recipients of military assistance to adhere to international humanitarian law and not impede the provision of such aid.

"We are not giving Israel a pass," Patel said, adding that the steps Israel has taken have not yet made a significant

enough difference. "We want to see the totality of the humanitarian situation improve, and we think some of these steps will allow the conditions for that to continue to progress."

The decision from the U.S. — Israel's key ally and largest provider of arms — comes despite international aid organizations declaring that Israel has failed to meet U.S. demands to allow greater humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip. Hunger experts have warned that the north may already be experiencing famine.

The Biden administration last month set a deadline expiring Tuesday for Israel

to "surge" more food and other emergency aid into the Palestinian territory or risk the possibility of scaled-back military support as Israel wages offensives against Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The obstacles facing aid distribution were on this display this week. Even after the Israeli military gave permission for a delivery to the northernmost part of Gaza — virtually cut off from food for more than a month by an Israeli siege — the United Nations said it couldn't deliver most of it because of turmoil and restrictions from Israeli troops on the ground.

# British writer Samantha Harvey's space-station novel Orbital wins the Booker Prize for fiction

AGENCIES LONDON, 13 NOVEMBER

British writer Samantha Harvey won the Booker Prize for fiction on Tuesday with *Orbital*, a short, wonder-filled novel set aboard the International Space Station that ponders the beauty and fragility of Earth.

Harvey was awarded the 50,000-pound (\$64,000) prize for what she has called a "space pastoral" about six orbiting astronauts, which she began writing during COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. The confined characters loop through 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets over the course of a day, trapped in one another's

company and transfixed by the globe's ever-changing vistas.

"To look at the Earth from space is like a child looking into a mirror and realizing for the first time that the person in the mirror is herself," said Harvey, who researched her novel by reading books by astronauts and watching the space station's live camera. "What we do to the Earth we do to ourselves."

She said the novel "is not exactly about climate change, but implied in the view of the Earth is the fact of human-made climate change."

She dedicated the prize to everyone who speaks "for and not against the Earth, for and



not against the dignity of other humans, other life."

"All the people who speak for and call for work for peace — this is for you," she said. Writer and artist Edmund Waal, who chaired the five-member judging panel, called *Orbital* a "miraculous novel" that "makes our world strange

and new for us." Gaby Wood, chief executive of the Booker Prize Foundation, noted that "in a year of geopolitical crisis, likely to be the warmest year in recorded history," the winning book was "hopeful, timely and timeless."

Harvey, who has written four previous novels and a memoir about insomnia, is the first British writer since 2020 to win the Booker. The prize is open to English-language writers of any nationality and has a reputation for transforming writers' careers. Previous winners include Ian McEwan, Margaret Atwood, Salman Rushdie and Hilary Mantel.

# Pentagon secrets leaker Jack Teixeira sentenced to 15 years in prison by a federal judge

AGENCIES BOSTON, 13 NOVEMBER

A federal judge sentenced a Massachusetts Air National Guard member to 15 years in prison Tuesday for leaking classified military documents about the war in Ukraine, actions prosecutors said put the country's national security at risk, endangered other military members and damaged U.S. relationships with its allies.

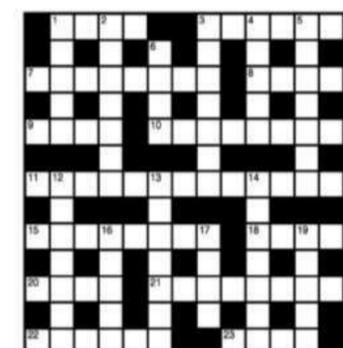
Jack Teixeira had pleaded guilty in March to six counts of willful retention and transmission of national defense information under the Espionage Act, nearly a year after his arrest in

the most consequential national security breach in years. Wearing an orange jumpsuit in court, he showed no reaction as he was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani.

"Today, Mr. Teixeira has paid a very heavy price for laws he broke, for the incredible damage that he caused," Acting Massachusetts U.S. Attorney Josh Levy said afterward. "This significant sentence sends a powerful message to every individual who holds a top secret clearance. Anyone who willfully threatens our national security by illegally disseminating classified information will face very serious repercussions."

## LEISURE

### 10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

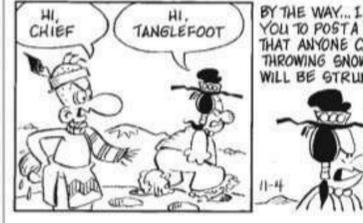


ACROSS: 1 Exhale audibly (4), 3 Greek region (6), 7 Slightly altered (8), 8 Standard (4), 9 Cry (4), 10 Refuge (8), 11 Road-rail intersection (5,8), 15 Reasonable (8), 18 Elephant's tooth (4), 20 Travel permit (4), 21 Brow (8), 22 Shooting star (6), 23 Adhesive (4). DOWN: 2 Quick look (7), 3 Supplemented (5,2), 4 Brief bikini (5), 5 Sure (7), 6 Substance (4), 12 Inspect (7), 13 Type of tree (7), 14 Schoolbag (7), 16 Furious (5), 17 Escapade (4), 19 Digging tool (5). SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD: ACROSS: Grandmaster, 11 How, 16 Empower, 3 Gold (Household), 20 Slime, 8 Rearing, 9 Tiger, 10 Scene, 11 Live-out, 12. DOWN: 1 Tea cake (5), 2 Quick look (7), 3 Supplemented (5,2), 4 Brief bikini (5), 5 Sure (7), 6 Substance (4), 12 Inspect (7), 13 Type of tree (7), 14 Schoolbag (7), 16 Furious (5), 17 Escapade (4), 19 Digging tool (5).

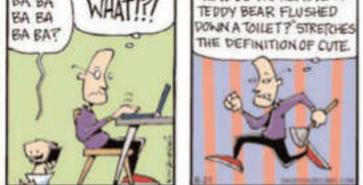
### BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



### RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



### DADDY DAZE/John Kovalski



### NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS: AIIMS 26588500, 26588900; Moolchand Medcity (formerly Hospital) 42000000 & 24-hour Chemist Shop 42000447; VidyaSagar Institute for Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences 26924300, 26924304; Batra Hospital & Medical Research Centre 29051280, 29958747; Deen Dayal Upadhyay 25496320, 25494403; Guru Tegh Bahadur 22586262, 22585007. RAILWAY INQUIRY: General Inquiry 139; Toll Free Nos. 1800112511; SMS Inquiry Nos. 57886, 54959, 5676747. ROADWAYS INQUIRY: ISBT (General Inquiry): 23868836, 23865181; Haryana Roadways 23861262; Himachal Roadways 23717473, 23325320.

### SCRABBLE GRAMS

Scrabble Grams puzzle with grid and word lists. Words include: RAO, R.V.B.H., ZOLA, B.A.N., E.D.V.D.I.T.O., T.V.T.E.L.U.R.

### SUDOKU Concepts Sudoku

Sudoku puzzle grid with numbers 1-9. Difficulty Level: \*\*\*\*\*



THUMBNAILS



**Arvinder Singh Sahney takes over as Chairman of IndianOil:** Mr. Arvinder Singh Sahney, an industry veteran with nearly three decades of experience, has taken charge as the Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IndianOil). A Chemical Engineer from HBTI, Kanpur, Mr. Sahney began his career with IndianOil in 1993. Over the years, he has held key positions across various functions, including Refinery Operations, Technical Services, Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) and Petrochemicals.

# Market witnesses bloodbath as Nifty falls 10 per cent from peak

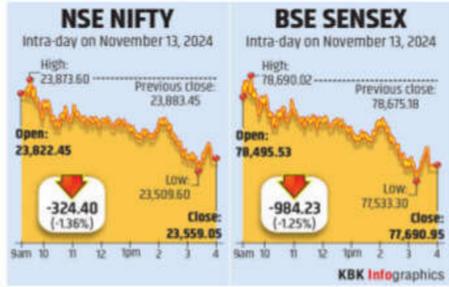
The Sensex had shed 984 points, or 1.3 per cent, settling at 77,690, while the Nifty declined 324 points, or 1.4 per cent, to 23,559

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Benchmark indices closed deep in the red on Wednesday, marking their fifth consecutive day of losses. This was riding on the inflation concerns and sell-off in metal stocks.

The Nifty index dropped nearly 10 per cent from its all-time high of around 26,277.35, reached on 27 September.

This marks the fifth consecutive day of losses, as inflation concerns and a selloff in metal and realty stocks weighed heavily on sentiment.



At the close, the Sensex had shed 984 points, or 1.3 per cent, settling at 77,690, while the Nifty declined 324 points, or 1.4 per cent, to 23,559.

Nifty Pharma, and Nifty Oil and Gas also declined by over 1.5 per cent each. Nifty IT and Nifty FMCG fell the least, down 0.5 per cent each.

and Asian Paints were the top gainers, while the laggards were Tata Steel, Eicher Motors, M&M, Hindalco, and Hero MotoCorp, each down by 3-4 per cent.

Among the sectors, all ended in the red for the day. Nifty Realty shed the most, down 3.2 per cent, followed by Nifty Metal, which declined 2.66 per cent. Meanwhile, Nifty Bank, Nifty Auto, and Nifty Media also fell by over 2% each.

The rupee depreciated by 1 paisa, reaching a historic low of 84.40 against the US dollar in early trading on Wednesday.

BSE Midcap and BSE Smallcap indices dropped 2.6 per cent and 3 per cent,

respectively.

Further on BSE, many stocks touched 52-week highs, including Excel Realty, Hikal, OCCL, Shyam Telecom, and Unichem Labs, while Taparia Tools, Aarti Industries, Allcargo, Asian Paints, Bajaj Electric, Bandhan Bank, Delhivery, CreditAccess Grameen, JK Lakshmi Cement, PNC Infra, and Vodafone Idea hit their 52-week lows.

Among the individual performances, shares of Sula Vineyards took a sharp tumble on the bourses after weak earnings for the quarter ended September.

NTPC shares rose despite a muted market sentiment as international brokerage Macquarie initiated coverage

on NTPC with an outperform call as well, issuing a target price of Rs 475 per share.

Shares of BSE reversed gains and ended 4 per cent lower after robust earnings for the quarter ended September.

As much as 2.5 crore shares, representing a 9.5% stake in PNB Housing Finance, were sold in a block deal, with Quality Investment Holdings being the likely seller.

Amid global central banks reducing interest rates, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has kept rates unchanged. Inflation remains a key concern, driven by rising food prices due to the extended monsoon and crop damage.

Mines Ministry signs MoU with IEA on cooperation in area of Critical Minerals

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

The Ministry of Mines on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Energy Agency (IEA) on cooperation in the area of Critical Minerals.

The move would provide India with access to reliable data, analysis, and policy recommendations in the critical mineral sector, thereby enhancing its decision-making capabilities and ensuring strategic resource management.

Ministry of Mines in a statement said the collaboration would enable India to streamline its policies, regulations, and investment strategies in the critical mineral sector, aligning them with global standards and best practices.

## LIC reports 3.51 per cent growth in profit after tax for H1 FY 2024

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 11 NOVEMBER

The Board of Directors of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has approved and adopted the standalone and consolidated financial results for the six months ending 30 September.

The Profit after Tax (PAT) for the half year ended 30 September, 2024 was Rs 18,082 crore as compared to Rs 17,469 crore for the half year ended 30 September, 2023 registering a growth of 3.51 per cent. In terms of market share measured by First Year Premium Income (FYPI) (as per IRDAI), LIC continues to be the market leader in Indian life insurance business with overall market share of 61.07 per cent for half year ended 30 September, 2024 as compared to 58.50 per cent for half year ended 30 September, 2023. For the half year ended 30 September, 2024, LIC had a market share of 39.79 per cent in Individual business and 74.77 per cent in group business. The Total Pre-

mium Income for six months period ended 30 September, 2024 was Rs 2,33,671 crore as compared to Rs 2,05,760 crore for the six months period ended 30 September 2023, registering a growth of 13.56 per cent.

Individual new business premium income for six months period ended 30 September, 2024 was Rs 29,538 crore as compared to Rs 25,184 crore for the six months period ended 30 September, 2023, registering an increase of 17.29 per cent.

Siddhartha Mohanty, CEO & MD, LIC said, "During the first half of this year (FY 2024-25), LIC has been successful in delivering holistic growth on various business parameters such as market share, premium, Non-par share within individual business, VNB, VNB margin and embedded value. Our market share for H1 FY25 has increased to 61.07 per cent as compared to 58.50 per cent for the same period of previous year and 58.87 per cent for the full year ended March 31, 2024."

## GAIL director (finance) Rakesh Kumar Jain honoured as one of top 50 visionary CFOs



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, 13 NOVEMBER

Mr. Rakesh Kumar Jain, Director (Finance), GAIL (India) Limited has been honoured as "Top 50 Visionary CFO in India" at the National Economic Growth Summit 2024 organised here by Bharat 24 News.

appointment as Director (Finance). Mr. Jain held the position of Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) in GAIL.

Additionally, Mr. Jain holds the position of Chairman in Indraprastha Gas Limited, GAIL Global (USA) Inc. & GAIL Global (USA) LNG LLC and Director in GAIL Gas Limited. Earlier he was on the Board of Bhagyanagar Gas Ltd., Bengal Gas Company Ltd., Ratnagiri Gas and Power Pvt. Ltd (RGPL). As Executive Director (Finance & Accounts), Mr. Jain headed the Corporate Finance and Treasury section and was involved in mobilisation of funds from domestic and international markets and took investment decisions in large infrastructure projects.

He was also actively involved in Investor relations and interactions with Analysts' fraternity.

## We are re-entering India to cater to evolving needs of Indian consumers: Daewoo India MD

RITWIK MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA, 13 NOVEMBER



Daewoo India, a globally acclaimed Korean brand, has now extended its legacy to the vibrant Indian market. The company is re-entering the Indian market, focusing on consumer electronics and energy solutions, with a target of Rs 500 crore in revenue by FY27. With a presence in more than 110 countries worldwide, DAEWOO is dedicated to enhancing consumer experiences with its range of consumer durable products: 1) Smart TVs: SMART ANDROID LED TV Range, webOS HUB, SMART LED TV Range. 2) Ultimate Interactive Flat Panel (IFP). 3) DAEWOO lite Touch Interactive Display and 4) Residential and Commercial Alkaline Water Machines.

We have partnered with Kelwon Electronics, leveraging their market knowledge and distribution network to ensure our products reach consumers effectively. By combining advanced Korean technology with affordability, we aim to re-establish DAEWOO as a leading brand in India, providing innovative and reliable products that meet the evolving needs of Indian consumers.

**Q: In which categories are you offering products, and why have you selected these categories?**

A: We are offering products in categories such as consumer durables, renewable energy, and electric vehicles. This selection allows us to address various aspects of modern living and sustainability. Our portfolio includes Smart TVs, Alkaline Water Health Machines, Lithium Hybrid Inverters, and Interactive Flat Panels. These categories were chosen to cater to the diverse needs of Indian consumers, leveraging advanced Korean technology to provide high-quality, innovative solutions.

**Q: What are your investment plans in India? Are you planning to seek any funding options?**

A: We are investing approximately INR 300 crore (\$40 million) over the next three years to expand our presence in India. This investment will be directed towards marketing, R&D, product development, and building a robust sales and service infrastructure. We are currently focusing on leveraging our partnership with Kelwon and do not have immediate plans to seek additional funding options.

**Q: The competition in the consumer durables space has intensified. How do you plan to compete and gain market share?**

A: Our strategy in India focuses on offering a diverse portfolio of products across consumer durables, renewable energy, and electric vehicles.

A: To compete effectively and gain market share, DAEWOO will differentiate itself by offering unique value propositions, including advanced Korean technology and competitive pricing. Our products, such as home automation systems, Interactive Flat Panels, and alkaline water purifiers, are designed to meet the diverse preferences and lifestyles of Indian consumers. Our focus on quality, innovation, and affordability will help us stand out in a competitive market.

**Q: Are you planning to start your own local manufacturing?**

A: Yes, we are planning to establish local manufacturing facilities in India as market demand grows. Initially, our products will be sourced locally through OEM partnerships, supported by R&D and technical assistance from DAEWOO. As we expand, dedicated manufacturing facilities will help us better cater to Indian consumers' needs and contribute to the local economy.

**Q: How will you reintroduce the brand to Indian consumers? Will you be tying up with large retail chains?**

A: We will reintroduce the DAEWOO brand through targeted marketing campaigns, strategic partnerships with large retail chains, and the launch of exclusive stores and experience centers. Collaborating with established retail partners and leveraging their networks will ensure wide availability and accessibility of DAEWOO products across India.

**Q: Are you looking for any other tie-ups?**

A: Currently, our primary focus is on our partnership with Kelwon Electronics & Appliances Pvt Ltd. This strategic collaboration allows us to leverage their extensive distribution network and market expertise to introduce our products across various sectors. We are open to exploring additional tie-ups in the future to further enhance our market presence.

## AI to add \$359 to \$438 billion to India's GDP by 2029-30: RBI DG

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Michael Debabrata Patra, on Wednesday said the forecasts indicate that generative artificial intelligence (AI) could add between \$359 billion and \$438 billion to India's GDP by 2029-30.

The adoption of AI in production processes by Indian firms has risen from 8 per cent in 2023 to 25 per cent in 2024.

"It is estimated that generative AI itself could increase global GDP by \$7-10 trillion over the next three years. Large language models are estimated to increase the productivity levels of workers by 8 to 36 per cent," the RBI DG said.

"Over the past three decades, the digital revolution has been transforming the world, eclipsing all past revolutions. It is estimated that the global digital economy accounts for more than 15 per cent of global GDP," he added.

"India is at the forefront of the digital revolution. Financial technology (FinTech) is speeding up digital payments." "The India Stack is expanding financial inclusion, galvanising banking infrastructure and public finance manage-

ment systems covering both direct benefit transfers and tax collections. Vibrant e-markets are springing up and expanding their reach," he said. The DG further added that India is uniquely positioned to unlock new growth avenues and optimise existing ones with its digital public infrastructure (DPI), a vibrant information technology (IT) sector and a burgeoning youth population, including one of the largest AI talent bases.

He also mentioned that an AI-assisted review of the latest annual reports of Indian banks reveals various instances of productivity gains by SCBs from digitalisation.

Talking further in terms of digitalisation, he said the micro-level evidence from surveys of Indian banks shows that while all of them have implemented mobile and internet banking, 75 per cent offer online account opening digital KYC, and digitally enabled doorstep banking.

Additionally, 60 per cent provide digital lending, 50 per cent offer payment aggregator services, 41 per cent use chatbots, 24 per cent have adopted open banking, and 10 per cent have integrated Internet of Things (IoT) technology.

## Sales of passenger vehicles stabilise in Oct, 2-W jumps 14 per cent: Data

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

In October, amid the festival season, sales of the passenger vehicles (PVs) stabilised and saw a flat 0.9 per cent rise, while the two-wheeler segment witnessed over 14 per cent jump.

The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) reported that PVs recorded its highest-ever October domestic sales reaching 393,238 units, marking a modest 0.9 per cent increase over the same period last year

despite a higher base. The domestic sales of two-wheelers (2Ws) rose to 2,164,276 units, growing 14.2 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y).

In October, the scooters and motorcycles led the charge within this segment, growing by 22.3 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, compared to last year.

Three-wheeler segment faced a slight decline in domestic sales, dropping by 0.7 per cent to 76,770 units in October 2024 from 77,344 units in October 2023.

## TENDER

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed percentage rate tenders are hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division No. II, US Club, HPPWD, Shimla-1 in form No.6 & 8 on behalf of Governor of H.P for the following works from the contractors of appropriate class enlisted with HPPWD (Electrical). The tenders shall be opened in the presence of contractors/firms or their authorized representative who wish to be present.

#### TIME SCHEDULE OF TENDER

- (i) Last date of receipt of application: 28.11.2024 Up to 1.00 PM
- (ii) Date of sale of tenders 28.11.2024 Up to 2 PM to 5.00 PM
- (iii) Last date of receipt of bids: - 29.11.2024 Up to 10.30 A.M
- (iv) Date of bid opening: - 29.11.2024 At 11.30 A.M

The tender form will be issued to only those contractors who qualify the criteria after the scrutiny of application forms by the committee constituted for the purpose.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time	Cost of Form	Eligible class of contractors
1.	Replacement of 15 TR compressor of chiller No.2 rewinding of fan motor of FDU Chiller No.1 and standby blower motor of AHU at CTVS department IGMC Shimla.	Rs.3,76,900/-	Rs.7600/-	One month	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
2.	Providing of motor and repairing of burnt motor starter contractors in CTVS chiller plant at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.86,240/-	Rs.1800/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
3.	Providing street light around the hostel and covered path from main road to PG girls hostel and replacement of damaged geyser in nursing hostel A-Block at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.1,42,429/-	Rs.2900/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	D & C
4.	R/M of Central Heating Plant at Auditorium building IGMC Shimla. (H.P) (SH)- Rewiring of 12.5 HP motor, replacement of step controller unit step switch, boiler element power contractor, times element, power contractor, times etc. therein.)	Rs.1,83,500/-	Rs.3700/-	3 months	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
5.	Repair and maintenance of central heating plant in New OPD Block at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.2,21,467/-	Rs.4500/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
6.	Shifting of FCU 1st floor lab and 2nd floor of New OPD Block at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.2,08,108/-	Rs.4200/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
7.	Replacement of damaged / burnt display card of OTIS lifts machine No. W469L (M lift) in New OPD Block at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.80,824/-	Rs.1700/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
8.	Supplying, installation, testing and commissioning of fire fighting of Terrace pump at New OPD Block at IGMC Shimla.	Rs.4,21,008/-	Rs.8500/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
9.	Providing running operation of electrical gadgets and maintenance troubleshooting various electrical breakdowns on Electrical Section Anni under HPPWD Electrical Sub-Division Rampur Bushahr.	Rs.3,21,840/-	Rs.6500/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	C & B
10.	R/M of E.L in Govt. Residential and Non-Residential under electrical Sub-Division IGMC Shimla. (SH)- Replacement of circuit wire, tube light and main control in Division office at US Club Shimla.	Rs.98,862/-	Rs.2000/-	15 Days	Rs.350/-	D & C
11.	Construction / Expansion of existing Cancer Hospital building at IGMC Shimla. (SH)- Providing terrace pump for firefighting system.)	Rs.3,19,093/-	Rs.6400/-	3 months	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
12.	R/M of Central Heating plant in Block-E under IGMC and Hospital Shimla. (SH)- Providing FCU, boiler step control unit, HRC fuses, PVC water tank, 3 pole power contractors, thermostat, boiler motor bearing and rewiring of 5 HP motor etc. therein.)	Rs.2,53,722/-	Rs.5100/-	One month	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
13.	Providing additional light point, computer point, top post lantern in Balika Ashram Mahabera District Shimla. (H.P)	Rs.2,49,816/-	Rs.5000/-	One month	Rs.350/-	D & C
14.	C/O Ayurvedic Health Sub-Centre building at Dargi Sub-Tehsil Dhamsi District Shimla. (H.P) (SH)- Providing E.L therein.)	Rs.4,99,302/-	Rs.10,000/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	C & B
15.	C/O Ayurvedic Health Sub-Centre building at Heun Sub-Tehsil Dhamsi District Shimla. (H.P) (SH)- Providing E.L therein.)	Rs.4,27,924/-	Rs.8600/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	C & B
16.	Providing annual service to automatic power factor correction panel 1000 KVAR 2 Nos. vacuum circuit breaker, air circuit breaker of various capacity at AIIMS Chamiana-02. (H.P)	Rs.3,56,500/-	Rs.7200/-	One year	Rs.350/-	C & B
17.	AMC of 1 No. passenger elevators Kone make installed in Warehouse Faga at Theog District Shimla for the year 2024-25. W.e.f. 01-09-2024 to 31-08-2025.	Rs.1,59,179/-	Rs.3200/-	One year	Rs.350/-	Specialized Job
18.	Providing running and operation of electrical gadgets and maintenance troubleshooting various electrical breakdown in electrical section Anni under electrical sub division Rampur Bushahr.	Rs.3,01,730/-	Rs.6100/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	C & B
19.	Providing staff for day to day maintenance under HPPWD (B & R) Division Jubbal under ESD Theog District Shimla for the year 2024-25. w.e.f. 08-12-2024 to 08-12-2025.	Rs.4,20,480/-	Rs.8500/-	One year	Rs.350/-	C & B
20.	Providing staff for day to day maintenance under ESD Theog District Shimla for the year 2024-25. w.e.f. 08-12-2024 to 08-12-2025.	Rs.4,20,480/-	Rs.8500/-	One year	Rs.350/-	C & B
21.	Providing LED fittings and accessories in Executive Engineer Residence B & R, HPPWD at Kaza District Lahaul & Spiti. (H.P)	Rs.1,22,926/-	Rs.2500/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	D & C
22.	Providing LED fittings and accessories in Executive Engineer Residence B & R HPPWD at Bhabanagar District Kinnaur. (H.P)	Rs.1,72,752/-	Rs.3500/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	D & C
23.	Replacement of damaged electrical accessories in HPPWD Division and repair of Executive Engineer office at HPPWD Bhabanagar Kalpa Division District Kinnaur. (H.P)	Rs.2,88,954/-	Rs.5800/-	3 months	Rs.350/-	D & C
24.	Providing staff for day to day maintenance at Civil Hospital Rohru under ESD Theog District Shimla. (H.P) w.e.f. 01-10-2025 to 30-06-2025.	Rs.2,10,240	Rs.4100/-	6 months	Rs.350/-	D & C
25.	Providing rewiring to E.L in Dr. Residence (veterinary) Mathana District Shimla.	Rs.2,10,925/-	Rs.4300/-	One month	Rs.350/-	D & C

1. The earnest money in the shape of National Saving certificate, Time deposit account in any of the post office in HP/FDR or any Bank duly pledged in favor of Executive Engineer, Electrical Division No. II, US Club, HPPWD, Shimla-1 accompanied with the application for receipt of tender form along with cost of form.
2. The contractor/firm should possess the following documents (photo copy to be self attested with application for obtaining the tenders documents.
  - a) Latest enlistment/renewal orders with application.
  - b) GST Number issued by the Sale Tax Department.
  - c) PAN (Permanent Account Number) issued by the Income Tax Department and copy of EPF issued from competent authority.
3. The Executive Engineer, Electrical Division No.II, US Club, HPPWD Shimla-1 reserves the right to reject any tender without assigning any reason(s).
4. The work will be completed by the contractor within the stipulated period.
5. The tender shall be issued to only those contractor/firms who are eligible suitable and competent.
6. The tender forms shall be issued to eligible contractors depending upon their past performance and work experience which shall be duly evaluated by the technical evaluation committee.
7. The contractor /firm having necessary documents and past adequate experience shall be preferred.
8. The contractor who has failed to start/complete the work already allotted in his favour within stipulated period shall not be issued tender forms.
9. A contractor enlisted in a particular class be eligible to tender for his own class and one step below
10. If any kind of holiday to be happened, the tender shall be opened on the next working day at 11.30 a.m.
11. GST will be deducted as per rates fixed by the Government.

3249/2024-2025 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

# An end to bulldozer justice!

**The apex court judgment in the UP bulldozer case lays down the law to be followed by all governments, says Sanjeev Sirohi**

The Supreme Court in a laudable and landmark judgment titled "In Re: Manoj Tibrewal Akash in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1294 of 2020 pronounced on 6 November has sharply criticised the growing trend of punitive demolition of constructions in the country. Mincing no words, the court held "Justice through bulldozers is unknown to any civilized system of jurisprudence and simply unacceptable under the rule of law."

The top court has explicitly barred authorities from using bulldozers to demolish encroachments or illegal constructions for road projects across India without following due process, which includes serving prior notice, conducting adjudication, and awaiting court decisions.

The Bench headed by the CJI Dr DY Chandrachud and comprising Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra said, "The days of announcing the removal of encroachments or illegal structures with drumbeaters or loud-speakers are over."

This was held while lashing out at the Uttar Pradesh Government for high-handedness after the Maharajganj Collector had demolished a house to widen NH-703. The court firmly pointed out, "Private properties need some protection and there has to be some accountability fixed for those resorting to demolitions using state power."

The Apex Court said: "There is a grave danger that if high handed and unlawful behaviour is permitted by any wing or officer of the state, demolition of citizens' properties will take place as a selective reprisal for extraneous reasons. Citizens' voices cannot be throttled by a threat of destroying their properties and homesteads. The ultimate security which a human being possesses is to the homestead."

The case stemmed from a senior journalist writing a letter to the top court in 2019 complaining that his ancestral residential house was demolished without notice by authorities in Uttar Pradesh.

The Court awarded an interim compensation of Rs 25 lakh to the person whose house was demolished. The Bench also directed the UP Chief Secretary to initiate inquiry into the

illegal demolitions that were carried out by the Collector, other officials and the contractor in 2019.

Senior advocate Siddharth Bhatnagar told the Court that the National Human Rights Commission's directions for initiation of proceedings against wrongdoers has not yet been complied with and no compensation made to the petitioner - Manoj Tibrewal Akash for illegal demolition of his ancestral house. The petitioner had written to the Apex Court on 4 October 2019 about the rampant incidents of illegal demolitions.

What must definitely attract attention is that while dusting off this case file nearly four years later, the Bench was aghast to note that no relevant material had been provided by the UP Government about 123 affected houses, including that of the complainant for road widening project. While terming it "very high handed", Mr Justice Pardiwala said, "You can't come with bulldozers and demolish houses overnight. You don't give time to the family to vacate. What about the household articles? There has to be due process followed."

On the alleged encroachment by the petitioner, it was observed: "You say that he was an encroacher of 3.7 square metres. We take it. We are not giving him a certificate for it. But how can you start demolishing people's houses like that? This is lawlessness... walking into somebody's house and demolishing it without notice." Besides rapping the UP government on the knuckles, the Court ordered that its directions be complied with within a month!

The Bench noted, "When the petitioner moved the NHRC by a letter dated 04 October 2019, a detailed enquiry ensued. The enquiry culminated in a report dated 3 February 2020, whereby the NHRC concluded that:

(i) No notice was given prior to the demolition, save and except for a public announcement through loudspeakers;

(ii) The house of the petitioner who was the complainant before the NHRC was constructed on land purchased by his grandfather in 1960 and 1964;

(iii) The spot inspections and measurements done by Revenue Department officials in the presence of the NHRC enquiry team revealed that the extent of the encroachment on Government land was about 3.70 meters in length and demolition of that limited extent was justified because the land was falling under a 16-meter-wide road;

(iv) However, the house was demolished beyond the extent of the encroachment of 3.70 meters and the actual demolition was in fact between 5 to 8 meters;

(v) No compensation has been tendered for the demolition of the property;

(vi) The demolition action commenced on 7 July 2019 and on 13 September 2019, the house, which was 16 meters from the centre of the road was demol-



ished; and

(vii) The video clip provided by the officials of NH-PWD revealed that household goods, as alleged by the complainant, were still in the house before the work of demolition commenced."

The Court noted: "In this backdrop, the findings of the NHRC indicate that at the highest, demolition to the limited extent of 3.70 meters may have been justified on the ground of encroachment but there was no justification for the demolition beyond the 3.70 meters. The NHRC concluded that the government agency had failed to provide any documents to support that the road in front of the petitioner's house was 32 meters (16 meters on each side from the centre of the road). The revenue records and the NH-PWD records revealed that the road width in front of the house was only 16 meters (8 meters on each side from the centre of the road). However, the District administration and officers demolished properties beyond the permissible extent, up to 32 meters (16 meters from the centre of the road on both sides) without authority of law."

It went on to say: "The following position emerges from the narration of facts: (i) The State of Uttar Pradesh has produced no document to establish

the original width of the State Highway which was notified as NH 730, a National Highway;

(ii) No material has been produced by the State of Uttar Pradesh to indicate whether any enquiry or demarcation was carried to earmark the encroachments;

(iii) There is no material to indicate that the land had been acquired before the work of demolition was carried out beyond a statement on affidavit that there was 'encroachment';

(iv) The State has failed to disclose (a) The precise extent of the encroachment; (b) The width of the existing road; (c) The width of the notified highway; (d) The extent of the property of the petitioner which actually fell within the notified width; and (e) Any justification for why the demolition was required to be carried out beyond even the area of alleged encroachment as the report which has been submitted by the NHRC would indicate that the demolition was far in excess of the alleged encroachment which was to the extent of 3.70 meters."

The Court has summed up the cornerstone of the state's action by noting, "The petitioner has alleged that the demolition was a reprisal for a newspaper report which contained allegations of wrongdoing in relation to

the construction of the road in question. We need not engage with this aspect, save and except to the extent that it supplies the background to the grievance of the petitioner. In any case, such high-handed and unilateral action by the State Government cannot be countenanced. Justice through bulldozers is unknown to any civilized system of jurisprudence. There is a grave danger that if high handed and unlawful behaviour is permitted by any wing or officer of the state, demolition of citizens' properties will take place as a selective reprisal for extraneous reasons. Citizens' voices cannot be throttled by a threat of destroying their properties and homesteads. The ultimate security which a human being possesses is to the homestead. The law does not undoubtedly condone unlawful occupation of public property and encroachments. There are municipal laws and town-planning legislation which contain adequate provisions for dealing with illegal encroachments. Where such legislation exists the safeguards which are provided in it must be observed."

It held: "We propose to lay down certain minimum thresholds of procedural safeguards which must be fulfilled before taking action against properties of citizens. The state must follow due process of

law before taking action to remove illegal encroachments or unlawfully constructed structures. Bulldozer justice is simply unacceptable under the rule of law. If it were to be permitted the constitutional recognition of the right to property under Article 300A would be reduced to a dead letter. Officials of the state who carry out or sanction such unlawful action must be proceeded against for disciplinary action. Their infractions of law must invite criminal sanctions. Public accountability for public officials must be the norm. Any action in respect of public or private property must be backed by due process of law."

Finally, the Court directed: "The Registrar (Judicial) shall circulate a copy of this judgment to the Chief Secretaries of all the States/Union Territories to ensure compliance with the directions which have been issued in regard to the procedure to be followed for the purpose of road widening in general."

It is a settled proposition of law that tolerance of injustice in any form is a threat to justice in all forms. The top court has made it indubitably clear that it will no longer take demolitions by bulldozers lying down and will hold accountable all those at whose behest the demolition took place.

(The writer is a Meerut-based advocate.)

# Pitfalls of new Australian social media law

**Australia's proposed legislation on social media platforms raises more questions than it answers, says Anne Twomey**

The Australian government's proposed legislation on misinformation and disinformation has passed the House of Representatives, but faces a rocky time in the Senate. Opponents have dubbed it the MAD Bill, and it has certainly made some of them mad. Ironically, there is a great deal of misinformation circulating about the bill itself.

Some believe it gives the Commonwealth government power to censor them and prosecute them for what they say - but it does not.

The bill is directed at digital platforms such as Google, Facebook, Instagram, X and TikTok. It requires them to be transparent, by publishing their policies, risk assessments and complaints mechanisms for dealing with "misinformation" (which is false, misleading or deceptive content) and "disinformation" (which is misinformation that is intended to deceive or involves "inauthentic behaviour" by bots).

It also requires the platforms to keep records and provide information to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) about how they deal with misinformation.

The digital platforms already take action to remove content, demote its accessibility, and place warning labels

on content that is disputed. But exactly how they do this, and whether their actions are sufficient, remains contentious.

The controversial aspect of the government's bill concerns its outsourcing to the digital platforms of the primary responsibility of dealing with misinformation. It requires them to enter into industry codes to address the spread of misinformation and disinformation. Once ACMA has approved the code, it becomes binding on the industry and is backed by hefty fines for any failure to comply.

If there is a failure to develop a code, or ACMA decides the code is deficient, or if there are "exceptional and urgent circumstances", ACMA can impose its own "standards" on the digital platforms. These are also backed by hefty fines for failure to comply.

It is unclear what these standards can address. The bill says they can deal with "matters relating to the operation of digital communications platforms", which could mean anything.

But the bill also says ACMA can only apply a standard if it considers it is necessary to provide adequate protection for the Australian community from serious harm caused or contributed to by misinformation or disinformation on the platforms.

ACMA cannot use its standards to order the platforms to remove content or boot off end-users, unless it involves inauthentic behaviour by bots.

It is when we get to the definition of "misinformation" that things get sticky.

Misinformation is defined as content that contains information that is reasonably verifiable as false, misleading or deceptive. It is only misinformation if the content is provided on a digital service to end-users in Australia, and is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to serious harm.

The types of serious harm are set

out in the bill. These include harm to electoral and referendum processes, harm to public health, the vilification of particular groups, and imminent harm to the economy or critical infrastructure.

If it was just confined to matters of fact that could be verified as false - for example, scam financial advertisements showing false celebrity endorsements, or manipulated photos - there would be less concern. But the explanatory memorandum to the bill says it also covers opinions, claims, commentary and invective.

How do you determine that opinions are false? What happens to claims that are contestable? How does a digital platform, based in the United States, make assessments about whether a claim relating to a referendum in Australia is false or misleading and is reasonably likely to cause serious harm to the referendum process in Australia?

The explanatory memorandum says information can be verified as false by a third-party fact-checker. Digital platforms already use Australian fact-checking services for this purpose. Fact-checkers rely on experts to help them make their assessments. But they are only as good as the experts who happen to respond to their requests.

When dealing with contestable matters, it is often the case that there are experts with different views. Who is chosen can make a big difference to the outcome of the fact-checking report. Even where there is a consensus of experts that something is wrong, that does not always turn out to be the case.

If the result of fact-checking is that a note is added to a post stating it is contested, and giving readers other information or references to more authoritative sources, that is fine. It ensures readers are aware the post may not be accurate, and empowers them to become better informed and make



their own assessment.

But if fact-checking leads to a contestable claim being declared "misinformation", and posts containing that claim are then removed from digital platforms, that is far more concerning.

While the "serious harm" qualification should mean most contestable claims are not treated as misinformation, that will not always be so. The explanatory memorandum regards swaying voter behaviour during an election so that "the outcome of an electoral process can no longer be said to represent the free will of the electorate" as falling within serious harm. So contestable claims about political policies could end up being classified as misinformation,

subject in the "misinformation" basket to avoid trouble.

But the last word on this may come from Donald Trump. He has announced that once inaugurated he would ask Congress to enact legislation that curtailed the powers of the digital platforms to restrict lawful speech. They would be prohibited from taking down content, other than unlawful content such as child exploitation or the promotion of terrorism.

How effective the Australian bill, if passed, would be in the face of such US legislation, takes this issue to a new dimension of difficulty.

(The writer is Professor Emerita in Constitutional Law, University of Sydney. This article was published on www.theconversation.com)





## SHAHEEN AFRIDI AT TOP SPOT IN ODI BOWLERS' LIST

Pakistan's premier fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has reclaimed the No.1 position in the ICC Men's ODI Bowler Rankings, a spot he initially held during last year's Cricket World Cup in India. Afridi's recent performance in Pakistan's victorious series against Australia, where he claimed eight wickets across three games at an impressive average of 12.62, helped propel him to the top spot once more. Afridi's rise comes as part of a reshuffling in the rankings, with South Africa's spinner Keshav Maharaj slipping to third and Afghanistan's Rashid Khan maintaining his position at the second spot.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

**Agnostic for Mayfowl Cup:** Mayfowl Cup, the feature event in a six race card framed for tomorrow here, appears to be a straight contest between Agnostic and Meropi. The distance of 1,400m may suit the former better.

**Selections:**  
2.00 p.m.: FRESH HOPE 1, Lightning Charlie 2.  
2.30 p.m.: SUPER SAPPHERE 1, Liban 2.  
3.00 p.m.: CHAMPAGNE SUPERNOVA 1, Jahzara 2.  
3.30 p.m.: AGNOSTIC 1, Meropi 2.  
4.00 p.m.: GLOBAL INFLUENCE 1, Wonderful 2.  
Day's best: Global Influence.

Gautam Banerjee

### THUMBNAILED

**Manipur, Haryana, Odisha, UP reach semifinals of senior men's hockey nationals:** Manipur, Haryana, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh emerged victorious in intense quarterfinal action at the 14th Hockey India Senior Men National Championship advancing to the semifinals on Wednesday. In the last-four stage clashes on Friday, Haryana will clash with Uttar Pradesh Hockey while Manipur Hockey will take on Odisha. In the first match of the day, Manipur defeated Hockey Punjab 3-3 (4-3) via a shoot-out in a quarterfinal clash. Both teams were locked in a 3-3 draw in regulation time. Cyril Lagun scored a hat-trick for Manipur. For Punjab, Ravneet Singh and Maninder Singh were the goal scorers.

## No guarantees in cricket: Khawaja to potential Oz opener McSweeney

Australia batter Usman Khawaja gives advice to potential opening partner Nathan McSweeney

TRIDIB BAPARNASH  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Australia's veteran Test opener Usman Khawaja has advised Nathan McSweeney, the potential second opener for the five-Test series against India, that there are no guarantees in cricket and he mustn't look to do anything differently than he has at the domestic level.

"There're no guarantees in cricket...but he doesn't have to do anything different. Just repeat the process. He's been able to handle the pressure at Shield level. When you look at his demeanour, the way he plays, you do kind of feel over a longer period of time he'll be able to handle the scrutiny, the pressure of Test cricket," Khawaja said.

McSweeney is among the first time entrants in Australia's Test squad for the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy, starting in Perth on 22 November, and is looked as a potential replacement to the retired David Warner. Having featured in 34 first-class games, McSweeney has 2252 runs to his name at an average of 34.16. His promotion to the senior team comes on the back of an impressive couple of outings in the Sheffield Shield, and a match-winning knock



against India-A in the first of two Tests.

Khawaja also laughed off the subject of McSweeney's strike rate (41.92) being lower than his in Tests (48.3), giving the newcomer a glowing review.

"I don't know where this myth started that you need someone to score really fast to do well. You've got five days to do it. I don't know why you need to score fast. Opening's as much about scoring runs as it is about being able to absorb. Davey was special, he could score

runs while absorbing but he didn't do it (score fast) every time. He was consistent, out there and setting a platform, and Nathan does that very well," the opener said.

On his part, McSweeney is trying to be as prepared as possible for his potential Test debut and has already started watching clips of India's quicks in an attempt to be ready for a likely new-ball barrage from Jasprit Bumrah and Co at the Optus Stadium in Perth.

"I'll definitely dive a lot deeper into it when I get to

bowls."

"Obviously he's got a unique action, he's one of the best bowlers in the world, so it's going to be hard to mimic that, that's for sure. I'm just looking forward to all of that and I can't wait," he added.

It's been a long time coming for McSweeney, who scored plenty of runs for Australia at the ICC Under-19 World Cup in New Zealand 2018 and has been knocking the door down in recent years while waiting for an opportunity at the highest level. That chance looks set to come against India in Perth and McSweeney believes he is ready to take the opportunity with both hands.

"In the last month or so I really feel like I'm batting the best I ever have. I think I'm the best I've ever been prepared to take this opportunity, so hopefully I can do that. No doubt there's plenty of learning and experiences that I haven't experienced yet and I'm looking forward to learning all about the challenges of Test cricket and challenging my game against the very best," he said.

"There's plenty of learning to go and plenty of improvement I hope, but I definitely feel like this is the best I've played and I'm ready for the challenge," he expressed.

## He's a prickly character: Ponting responds to Gambhir's outburst



AGENCIES  
MELBOURNE, 13 NOVEMBER

Legendary Australian cricketer Ricky Ponting called Indian head coach Gautam Gambhir a "prickly character" after he delivered a jibe at him for voicing concerns over the form of star batter Virat Kohli.

As the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT) at Perth's Optus Stadium comes close, the war of words between cricketing personalities from both the sides has only got intense.

During a recent episode of the ICC Review, Ponting had raised concerns over Virat's Test form over the last few years, having scored just two Test centuries since 2020. He had said, "I saw a stat the other day about Virat, it said he has only scored two (three) Test hundreds in the last five years. That did not seem right to me, but if that is right, then that is, I mean, that is a concern."

"There would not be anyone else probably even playing international cricket as a top-order batsman that has only scored two Test match hundreds in five years," he added.

In the same episode, he had also backed Virat to deliver, saying that the star has a fine record in Australia and one "should not question the greatness of the game".

Responding to Ponting's words during the pre-departure press conference, Gambhir had lashed out at Ponting saying that skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat are still passionate about their cricket and the Australian should worry about his team instead.

"Not at all (if concerned about Rohit and Virat's form)...Ponting should think about Australian cricket, what concerns he has for Indian cricket? Virat and Rohit are incredibly tough men. They've achieved a lot for Indian cricket and they will continue

to achieve a lot," Gambhir said in the press conference on Monday.

"They still work really hard. They are still passionate. They still want to achieve a lot more and that is something which is very important. The hunger in that dressing room is incredibly important for me and for the entire group of people as well in that dressing room. I feel there is a lot of hunger, especially after what has happened in the last series (a whitewash loss by 0-3 to New Zealand at home)," he further added.

Now responding to Gambhir's statement, Ponting said at Channel 7 as quoted by Wisden that it was not a dig at Virat at all and in fact the star batter himself would be concerned about his lack of centuries in Tests over the years. He also said that he is not surprised at the hitback received from a "prickly" Gambhir.

"I said I would be concerned, but I think if you ask Virat, I am sure Virat would be a little bit concerned that he has not been able to make the same amount of hundreds as he has in previous years," said Ponting as quoted by Wisden to Channel 7.

"In no way was it a dig at him. I actually followed it up by saying he has played well in Australia and he will be keen to bounce back over here. So, it is amazing how little things can get cut up, but he is a class player and he has played well in Australia in the past."

"I was surprised to read the reaction but knowing the coach, Gautam Gambhir... he is quite a prickly character, so I am not surprised it was him who said something back," he concluded.

This year in 19 matches across international formats, Virat has just scored 488 runs at a shockingly low average of 20.33.

## BGT: Team India start practice session ahead of Perth Test

AGENCIES  
PERTH, 13 NOVEMBER

Team India stars started their practice session at Perth ahead of the highly-anticipated first Test against Australia at the Optus Stadium.

The first Test of the highly-anticipated Border-Gavaskar Trophy will be played at Perth's Optus Stadium from 22 November. The series is extremely crucial for both sides' ICC World Test Championship final chances. While the Aussies will be aiming to get a good start in their bid to prevent a hat-trick of series losses to India at home, the visitors would also be charged up after a humiliating whitewash series loss to New Zealand at home in the three-match Test series, their first Test series loss in home conditions in 12 years.

Pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, middle-order batter KL Rahul, star batter Virat Kohli, all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, fast bowler Mohammed Siraj, wicket-keeper-batter Rishabh Pant and young opener Yashasvi



Jaiswal were among the players who turned up for the session. India is practicing at the Western Australia Cricket Association (WACA) ground. The iconic venue is undergoing redevelopment and is expected to be completed before next season.

On Tuesday, experienced stars like Virat, Bumrah, Jadeja and Ashwin were not present while players like Pant, KL and Jaiswal toiled hard in the nets, having hour-long sessions. The batters tried to get used to the fast and bouncy conditions common in Australia and several local

Perth club bowlers were selected to unleash their bowling to Indian stars. Back-of-a-length balls were encouraged while bouncers were rare. Jaiswal was batting with the same attacking avatar he has displayed in his Test career so far, with one of his big hits clearing the nets and sailing into the Braithwaite Street. Pant looked fluent while batting but got hit on his body.

By Wednesday, Virat also came for practice along with other main stars like Jadeja, Ashwin and Bumrah. The 36-year-old looked extremely

sharp and focused against pace bowling which he faced for more than an hour. He spent time in each of four nets. Virat was tested by back-of-the-length and full-length deliveries.

With a 3-0 series whitewash against New Zealand at home, India needs to win the series by 4-0 to punch their ticket to feature in London for the WTC final for the third successive time directly.

After the conclusion series opener in Perth, the second Test, featuring the day-night format, will take place under lights at Adelaide Oval on 6 to 10 December. Fans will then turn their attention to The Gabba in Brisbane for the third Test on 14 to 18 December.

The traditional Boxing Day Test, scheduled from 26 to 30 December at Melbourne's iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground, will mark the series' penultimate stage.

The fifth and final Test will be held at the Sydney Cricket Ground from 3 to 7 January, promising an exciting climax to a highly anticipated series.

## World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen in action at Tata Steel Chess



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
KOLKATA, 13 NOVEMBER

Former world champion Magnus Carlsen took on Indian chess prodigy grandmaster R. Praggnandhaa on the opening day of the Tata Steel Chess India Rapid and Blitz Open tournament at the Dhono Dhanyo Auditorium in Kolkata on Wednesday.

Elite Grandmasters are in the fray at this year's tournament which started on

Wednesday and will conclude on 17 December.

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave emerged triumphant in the Rapid while Alexander Grischuk won the Blitz in the Open category last year. Among the women, Divya Deshmukh had won the Rapid while Ju Wenjun had clinched the Blitz.

Magnus participated in the tournament in 2019, and had won both the titles. This year he will be challenged by top ranked players.

## Want to be part of a team that has a good environment: KL Rahul ahead of IPL auction

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

Stressing on the importance of playing with "freedom" in a "good environment", KL Rahul said he was looking forward to starting afresh as he enters the mega Indian Premier League auction after being released by the Lucknow Super Giants, following their forgettable seventh-place finish in IPL 2024.

Rahul, who led LSG into the playoffs in their first two seasons, in 2022 and 2023, but failed to continue the momentum in the last season, even though he finished as their highest run-getter with 520 runs at a strike rate of 136.12.

Speculations around Rahul's future at the franchise rose ever since visuals surfaced of an animated chat between him and team owner Sanjeev Goenka following LSG's defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad towards the end of the league



phase of IPL 2024.

Rahul acknowledged the pressure of putting consistent performances throughout the season, but maintained that it was important to have a calm dressing room irrespective of the team's eventual outcome, and thus he was

looking forward to being a part of a more balanced setup.

"I just felt like I wanted to start fresh, I wanted to explore my options and I wanted to go and play where I could find some freedom and the team atmosphere would be something much more bal-

anced," Rahul said.

"The pressure is already there in the IPL, it's so high. You see teams like Gujarat [Titans] and CSK [Chennai Super Kings] and all of these teams, and you see when they win or lose, they seem really balanced and the dress-

ing room is really calm. That's something that's very important for me as a player. I feel like if that happens, it gives all the players the best chance to perform. We tried that at LSG with Andy Flower (head coach) and GG (Gautam Gambhir, mentor) first and then last year with (new head coach, Justin) Langer, we tried to create that in the change room. I think it was a brilliant atmosphere in the change room. I think sometimes you just need to move away and find something good for yourself," the elegant right-hander told Star Sports.

Asked to look back on IPL 2024, Rahul suggested that external pressure may have contributed to their drop in results. After starting with a loss to Rajasthan Royals, they won three matches on the bounce before stuttering mid-season.

"There's always ups and downs. You need to be able to hold your nerves and be

able to keep up and you need to be able to keep putting up good performances after good performances. All the travel, all the drama outside, the pressure - all of it is there every year. But somehow this season, it felt like there was a lot more and somehow I think that affected the team and we couldn't put in performances when it really mattered," he said.

The Karnataka batter felt IPL captaincy wasn't the most important thing for him, while revealing his love for his home franchise — Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

"I would never go and ask someone for it. If you feel that my leadership skills are good enough, and you find something good in the way I play my cricket and in the way I handle myself, the way that I handle the team that I've captained in the last four to five years, and if you find it worthy, then of course I'm happy to do it," he said.

## Women's U19 Asia Cup: India grouped with Pakistan, Nepal

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI, 13 NOVEMBER

India have been placed with Pakistan and Nepal in Group A of the inaugural Women's U19 Asia Cup, to be played in the 20-over format at the Bayuemas Cricket Oval in Malaysia from 15-22 December. Group B comprises hosts Malaysia, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The Women's U19 Asia Cup will serve as a key preparatory tournament for all Asian teams before the 2025 ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup, to be hosted by Malaysia from 18 January to 2 February.

India are the reigning champions of the Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup, after winning the inaugural edition in 2023 in South Africa. They will play its first match of the Women's U19 Asia Cup against Pakistan on 15 December at 2 pm

local time, followed by facing Nepal on 17 December.

The top two teams from both groups will enter the Super Four stage, with matches to take place on 19 and 20 December. The top two teams from the Super Four stage will reach the final on 22 December to determine the first-ever champions of the Women's U19 Asia Cup.

The decision to launch the Women's U19 Asia Cup was taken by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) during its Executive Board Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 11 September. It said their vision of launching the tournament will give emerging female cricketers in Asia the opportunity to compete on an international platform and help them get crucial experience and readiness to ultimately help Asian teams perform better on the world stage.