

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Bumper Issue: INCLUSIVE OF DELHI TIMES & SECOND SECTION (CIRCULATED ONLY IN DELHI NCR) | *APPLICABLE ONLY ON MONTHLY PURCHASE (IN DELHI NCR)

INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

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REFER PACK* FOR DETAILS**BLUE VS GREEN
IS RED HOT**

As India takes on Pakistan today in a WC match millions have been eagerly awaiting, TOI presents the most comprehensive coverage, packed with insight, analysis, key data, comments and columns by all-time greats



GEARING UP: Rohit & Virat (L) & Babar Azam in Ahmedabad

- Both Rohit & Babar do their jobs quietly, yet efficiently, writes **Dilip Vengsarkar**
- Shun negativity, focus on performance: **Sourav Ganguly**
- India is a far superior team, feels **Sanjay Manjrekar**
- Pak can compete evenly with India: **Ramiz Raja**
- India has edge in spin, writes **Harbhajan Singh**
- Pak bats deep, but bowling a worry: **Waqar Younis**

SEE THIS BOOK, P 11, 12, 13;
OTHER BOOK, P 1, 16, 17**PM: Terrorism, for whatever reason, is against humanity**

Time For Peace & Brotherhood, Modi Tells P20

Akhilash Singh & Vishwa Mohan



The first batch of 200-odd Indians landed from Israel under Op Ajay on Friday | OTHER BOOK, P 3

New Delhi: PM Modi on Friday called for a tough response to terrorism and rejected efforts to justify it on one ground or the other, while warning that the international community's continuing failure to define what constitutes terrorism had helped terrorists.

"Now, the world is also realising how big a challenge terrorism is. Wherever terrorism strikes, for whatever reason and in whatever form, it is against humanity. In such a scenario, we all will have to be extremely stringent all the time regarding terrorism," Modi said, his strong statement also being interpreted as a rejection of the "root cause" alibi often proffered to support and rationalise acts of terrorism.

"This is the time for peace and brotherhood, a time to move forward together... We have to overcome the global trust deficit and move forward on human-centric thinking," Modi said.

The PM, who was addressing the inaugural session of the ninth G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) here, made specific reference to the Hamas attack on Israel that he had called a terrorist act.

► PM rues lack..., P 9

Israel asks Im in N Gaza to leave. Stay put, says Hamas

Palestinians began a mass exodus from north Gaza Friday after Israel's military told some 1 million people to evacuate toward the southern part of the besieged territory ahead of an expected ground invasion against the Hamas. The UN warned so many people—almost half the Gaza population—fleeing en masse would be calamitous, and urged Israel to reverse the order.

However, Hamas called on people to stay put, claiming ► Saudi stalls Israel deal, talks to Iran, OTHER BK, P 15

Israel's order was part of "psychological warfare".

Israel, meanwhile, continued hammering southern neighbourhoods of Gaza with airstrikes, and said its ground troops have conducted temporary raids to battle militants, search for weapons and look for hostages. OTHER BOOK, P 15



An Israeli embassy staffer being stabbed in Beijing on Friday after Israel criticised China's statement on the Hamas attack. The victim is stable. The attacker, a foreigner, has been held | OTHER BK, P 15

High alert in areas in Delhi with Jewish popn

Areas near Israel embassy & those with Jewish presence in Delhi are on high alert. In 2012 & '13, there were two bids on Israel's embassy and diplomats here. OTHER BOOK, P 3

Abortion plea: SC for 2nd opinion on condition of fetus, mother

Medical Board To Evaluate Mental State Of Woman

Dhananjay Mahapatra
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Caught in the interplay of law, ethics and morality in the case of a 26-week-old healthy and viable fetus's right to natural gestational life and the carrying woman's choice to terminate her pregnancy, the SC Friday decided to seek a fresh report from a medical board in AIIMS on the unborn child's condition and the woman's mental state.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra asked the 27-year-old married woman, mother of two sons, to appear before the medical board for examination on two counts—whether the fetus suffered from substantial abnormality (which would legally permit termination of pregnancy even after 24 weeks); and whether

IN THE COURTS

- Delhi court sends Sanjay Singh to 14 days' judicial custody in money laundering case | OTHER BOOK, P 4

- A Delhi court reserves its judgement in TV journalist Soumya Vishwanathan murder for October 18, asks accused to be present | P 2

- Bombay HC Nagpur bench says watching scantily clad women dance provocatively not obscene, quashes FIR against 5 | OTHER BOOK, P 11

continuation of the pregnancy to its full term would be jeopardised by medicines being taken by the woman since October last year for post-partum psychosis she was diagnosed with after birth of her second child.

By the time the board's report reaches the SC, the foetus will be 27 weeks old.

► Related report, OTHER BK, P 11

SC on Maha MLA pleas: Don't reduce hearing to charade

Anguished by delay in proceedings before the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker on cross-petitions by two Sena factions for disqualification of MLAs of rival groups in breach of the Supreme Court's orders, a bench led by the Chief Justice of India told him not to reduce the hearings to a charade and fix a time-frame. P 6

HC upholds arrest of NewsClick founder

Delhi HC on Friday upheld the arrest and remand of NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha and HR head Amit Chakravarty. It rejected their contention that they ought to have been supplied with the grounds of arrest, saying UAPA only speaks of the accused being "informed" about the reasons for arrest. OTHER BK, P 12

Being implicated in false cases: Naidu

Ex-Andhra CM N Chandrababu Naidu Friday told SC the state govt was implicating him in different cases at a time when polls are near, but the state said it can't put "blinkers" to his "misdeeds" when he was governing the state. OTHER BOOK, P 10

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Manipur killings: CBI nabs Pune kingpin

An SIT of the CBI probing the suspected murder of two missing Manipur students said on Friday that it has arrested a 22-year-old in Pune on the charge of masterminding the duo's abduction. The suspect, Paolum Mang, was traced to Koregaon. OTHER BOOK, P 7

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MAHINDRA & MAZDA GREAT INDIA PORT COOKIES

Woman stabbed by stalker now stable

The 23-year-old who was stabbed by her alleged stalker has gained consciousness and is stable. But her mother feared she would be targeted again. OTHER BK, P 3

Resident booked for condo accident

A Mahagun Moderne Society resident has been booked for culpable homicide and causing death by negligence after his SUV ran over a 76-year-old. OTHER BOOK, P 4

ITAT nixes fine on not disclosing interest

ITAT Mumbai has held that penalty levied by the T-department on a senior citizen for non-disclosure of interest earned on tax refund is not valid. OTHER BOOK, P 7

Casino busted in south Delhi farmhouse, 5 organisers held

The password was 'guruji'. Uttered by the right people in the guard's ear at a farmhouse on Dera Mandi Road in south Delhi's Chhattarpur, it opened the gates to a full-fledged casino where one could play roulette, blackjack or poker, be served liquor and hookah throughout the night, and possibly, dance to the lakhs and crores lost and won.

On Thursday night, police busted the illegal casino being run in the rented farmhouse for the past few months and arrested five organisers. Twenty women were found at the spot. Around Rs 8 lakh in cash, besides casino tables, tokens and illegal liquor, were seized. P 16

G20 FMs back crypto norms, MDB reform

Marrakech: G20 finance ministers and central bank governors, which met for a final time during India's presidency, agreed to work on a global framework for regulating crypto assets apart from pushing for reforms of multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank, so that developing and poor countries can get more funding, including for climate action, reports Sidhartha.

► IMF communique held up, OTHER BOOK, P 16

► 10 MDBs' 5-point action plan includes scaling up financing capacity, boosting joint action on climate, country-level collaborations, co-financing and catalysing private sector engagement

► FMs back regulatory and supervisory oversight, instead of ban, on crypto

► India to work with Brazil towards implementation of measures, says Sitharaman

forms of MDBs is being talked about, the IEG's language has found a comfortable place in the narrative in the evolution or reform roadmaps for making them bigger, better and more efficient."

► Related report, OTHER BK, P 16

HC grants boy's custody to aunt, gives parents visiting rights

The Bombay HC has declared the paternal aunt of a four-year-old boy his "true and lawful" guardian and granted his parents access to visit him frequently, reports Rosy Sequeira.

Justice Riyaz Chagla's October 5 order said the decision to grant custody to the aunt was based on the principle of parens patriae as laid down by the SC, under which a court assumes the role of a parent to take calls for the child's welfare.

The judge observed that the boy's mother suffered from "psychological issues" and the father was "very aggressive". Interacting with the boy, Justice Chagla found "he is extremely attached" to his aunt. OTHER BOOK, P 11

20 PAC, CRPF jawans get 10 yrs' jail for supplying arms & ammo to MaoistsKanwardeep Singh
@timesgroup.com

Bareilly: After a decade-long trial, the court of additional district and sessions judge in UP's Rampur has sentenced 24 people—20 security personnel, including Provincial Armed Constabulary and CRPF jawans, and four civilians—to 10 years' jail for "supplying arms and ammunition to Maoists and criminals". The court in its order Friday also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on each of them.

Retired IPS officer Rajesh Pandey, founding member of UP ATOs, told TOI on Friday: "We coordinated with the STF after there were inputs that empty cartridges were recovered from the spot of the Dantewada attack on CRPF jawans. Officials had supplied arms and ammunition

► CRPF is a reserve military force (formed) to combat internal disturbances and maintain law and order and counter insurgency. Two officials, namely Vinesh and Vinod, who belonged to this reserved force, in conspiracy with police officials who were armourers posted in police stations of different districts of UP, committed organised crime jeopardising the country's national security

► Addl dist & sessions judge to those who then sent them to Maoists. They had links with Maoists who killed 76 CRPF jawans in Dantewada in April 2010, added an ex-STF official, who was part of the probe team.

► Related report, OTHER BK, P 12

Centre begins probe into books of Mumbai, Navi Mum airports

The government has initiated an investigation into the books of Adani Group-run Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) and the Navi Mumbai airport that MIAL is building. The corporate affairs ministry has sought information from 2017-18 to 2021-22, reports Saurabh Sinha.

In a regulatory filing on BSE Friday, Adani Enterprises said: "MIAL and Navi Mumbai International Airport Ltd... have received communications dated Oct 6, 2023 (received on Oct 12, 2023) from the office of regional director, southeast region, Hyderabad, ministry of corporate affairs, relating to initiation of investigation of books of accounts and other books and papers in terms of section 20(0) of the Companies Act, 2013." OTHER BOOK, P 7



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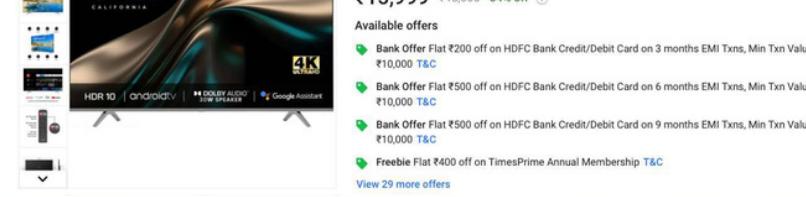
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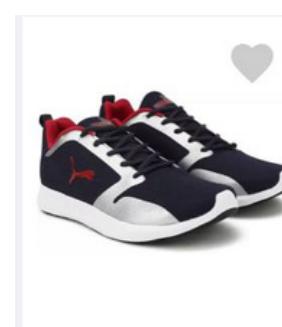
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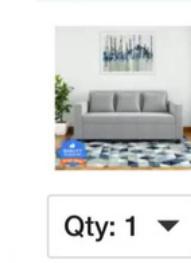
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Ravana effigies
in the making;
craftsmen
hopeful
of a good
festival | B2 P4

36.2°
MAXIMUM
FORECAST Partly cloudy sky. Maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 36°C and 20°C
SUNRISE 6.21AM (SUN)
SUNSET 5.53PM (SAT)

19.8°
MINIMUM
MOONRISE 6.42AM (SUN)
MOONSET 5.43PM (SAT)

THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2023

Friday prayers pass peacefully at
Jama Masjid amid security | B2 P3

256

AQI IN DELHI
ON FRIDAY
(POOR CATEGORY)

Parents turn
up in large
numbers for
mega PTM in
Delhi govt
schools | P5



Verdict In Journo's Murder On Oct 18

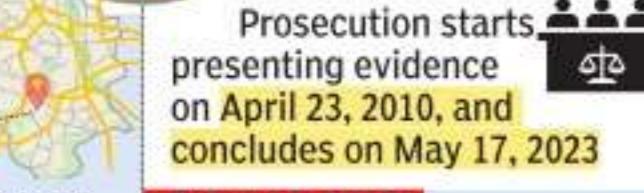
Five Men On Trial For Killing Soumya In 2008

LONG WAIT FOR JUSTICE

September 28, 2008



Soumya Vishwanathan found dead in her car on Nelson Mandela Marg



March 2009

Investigation in Jigisha Ghosh murder case reveals the involvement of the same accused

April 2009

Delhi Police invokes MCOCA against Ravi Kapoor Gang; investigation reveals that Vishwanathan was shot

December 5, 2009

Court takes cognizance of chargesheet; over 300 hearings follow

February 6, 2010

Charges framed against Ravi

been examined over nine years of the trial

February 2019

Vishwanathan's parents meet chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, request the appointment of a special prosecutor

May 2023

Process of recording the statements of the five accused completed

Final arguments commenced on September 1, 2023, before Additional Sessions Judge Ravindra Kumar Pandey

October 13, 2023

Court reserves its judgment in the matter for October 18



TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A few hours after sunset, scores of cars quietly drove into this farmhouse on Dera Mandi Road in south Delhi. The drivers rolled down their cars' windows at the entrance and whispered "gurji" in the guard's ears for the gates to open. All this was, however, not to attend a lavish wedding function, something which these farms are known for.

The code would open the gate to a full-fledged casino where lakhs, sometimes crores, were lost and won on tables where people played roulette, blackjack and poker. As stakes rose on tables, women served exquisite liquor and flavoured hookahs and winners danced away the night to jazz and blues.

Delhi Police's Crime Branch, however, got a tipabout the shenanigans at the farm and busted it on Thursday night. Forty-seven people, including businessmen, builders and property dealers, were found on the spot. Five of the organisers were arrested.

To attract and lure the players, the organisers, cops said, engaged girls who served liquor and tokens to the players besides other things. Twenty women were found at the casino. "They were called by the organisers on



Forty-seven people were found at the spot during the raid

The team found full-fledged games being played on four tables inside the premises besides card games, etc. Seeing the policemen, the players left their cash, playing cards and tokens on the table which were seized along with the hookahs being served to the customers. During further search, cops found illegal stores selling liquor bottles to customers without licence.

The arrested organisers were identified as Amit Kumar (39), Satender Sehgal (29), Sahil Gujral (35), Tejinder Singh (37) and Mithun Taneja (43), who belong to Faridabad.

During interrogation, the accused organisers disclosed that the illegal casino was being run in the rented farmhouse in the jurisdiction of Fatehpur Beri police station. "They called only the customers known to them and shared WhatsApp location as well. The entry was restricted and the door was only opened on telling a passcode that was 'gurji,'" the special CP further said.

Eight players could sit and play on each table. The players would either buy the tokens or borrow them from the organisers. Winners could encash the tokens on the next day at the given location. Four types of tokens, ranging from 50 to 10,000, were being used, officials added.

According to an official, the department of personnel and training of the central government, through an office memorandum in April 2020, had directed all government ministries and departments to modify relevant examination rules to include 'transgender' as a separate category in conformity with the provisions of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019.

The NHRC, however, observed that transgender persons continue to face discrimination, which manifests itself in employment disparities, limited access to healthcare, and exclusion from social circles. Delhi government has also urged an anti-discrimination cell to be set up for transgenders at the district offices of each department. Each cell will have three members and one of them should be a woman or a transgender. "We have circulated the advisory to all departments, boards, institutions, etc. They have been asked to send an action taken report within two months," said an official. TNN

extra payment for serving liquor and other services, the details of which are being collected," a senior cop said.

Special commissioner (crime) Ravindra Yadav said that they had seized Rs 8 lakh in cash besides casino tables, tokens, illegal liquor, music system, hookahs, etc. Inspectors Satender Mo-

han, Pawan and Mahipal had received a tipoff about the illegal casino running at a farm in Chhattarpur after which human and technical surveillance was mounted. "A team led by DCP Amit Goel and ACP Ramesh Lamba was formed and a raid was conducted at the farmhouse," special CP Yadav said.

Daughter among 3 held for senior's murder

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Days after a 65-year-old woman was found murdered at her residence in Dayalpur, police have arrested her daughter and a property dealer. They also apprehended a 17-year-old boy who was allegedly roped in to commit the crime.

Police said Chintamani (30) wanted to sell her mother's property in northeast Delhi's Nehru Vihar through Ashok Sharma (50), the dealer, and paid the juvenile mechanic Rs 2 lakh to

execute the crime. Cops said the deceased had 25 injury marks on her face, neck and back.

Police said they received information on September 27 that a woman named Shivkala had been found dead inside her shop-cum-home on the ground floor of a building. She was found on the floor with multiple injuries to her body, mainly to the face and head, with sharp and blunt objects.

"We found that the woman owned the two-storey house where she was found dead. A minor was spotted in

CCTV footage loitering near her shop just minutes before the crime," said deputy commissioner of police (northeast) Joy Tirkey.

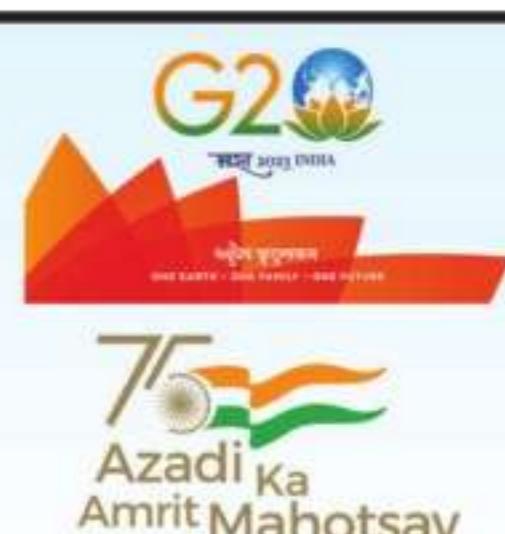
Policeman then managed to trace the suspect. "He revealed that Chintamani had paid him Rs 2 lakh. When questioned, Chintamani said she wanted to sell off her mother's property but the elderly woman was against it," Tirkey said.

Policeman said that when Shivkala was about to shut her shop, the minor allegedly sneaked in and attacked her with a pair of scissors and an iron rod.

TRAFFIC ADVISORY VEDANTA DELHI HALF MARATHON

ON 15th OCTOBER 2023 (SUNDAY)

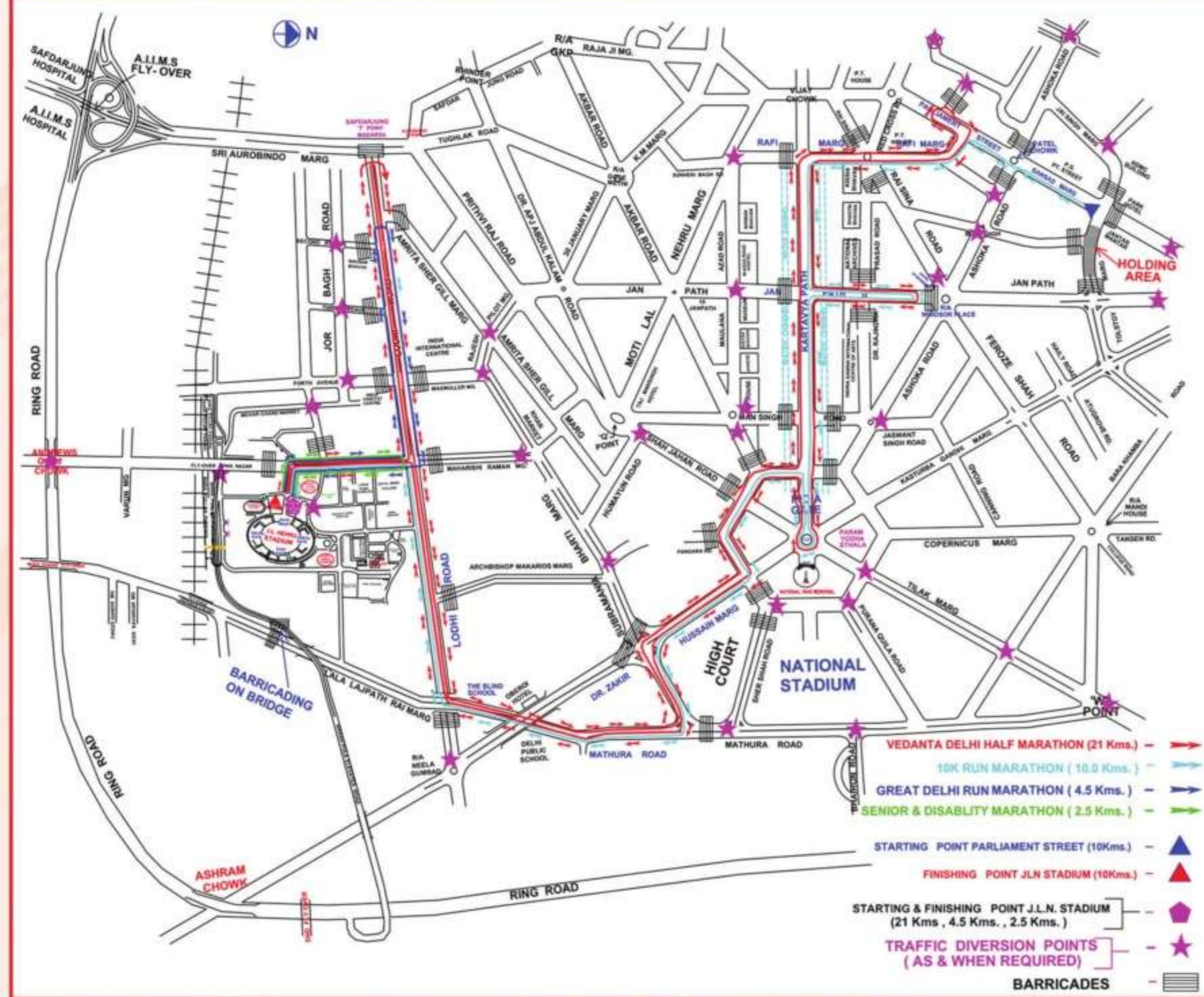
DELHI POLICE
SHANTI SEWA NYAYA



Mass participation sports have the potential to influence society by inspiring a healthier lifestyle. Delhi will be hosting one such mass participation sport - the iconic Half Marathon - on 15th October, 2023.

More than 37000 participants are expected to compete in the

DELHI HALF MARATHON WHICH WILL BE FLAGGED OFF FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU STADIUM AT AROUND 05:20 AM



HALF MARATHON AMATEUR (FROM 05:20 AM)

Stadium Complex - Finish outside Stadium Complex.

10K ROUTE (FROM 05:20 AM)

Start from Jeevan Deep Building on Sansad Marg - R/A Patel Chowk - T/L Sansad Marg - T/L Rafi Marg - R/A Rail Bhawan - T/L Rafi Marg - T/L Sansad Marg - U/Turn on Janpath near Hotel Le Meridien and move straight towards Kartavya Path - T/L Kartavya Path - India Gate Canopy - Back on C-Hexagon - T/L C-Hexagon (Wrong carriageway) - T/R Dr. Zakir Hussain Marg - T/L Subramaniam Bharti Marg - T/R Mathura Road - T/R on Lodhi Road - T/L Bhisham Pitamaha Marg - T/L JLN Stadium Complex - Finish outside Stadium Complex.

HALF MARATHON ELITE (FROM 07:00 AM)

Start from JLN Stadium Complex - T/R Bhisham Pitamaha Marg - T/L Lodhi Road - U/Turn on Lodhi Road from Sri Aurobindo Marg - Straight on Lodhi Road towards Mathura Road - T/L Mathura Road - T/L Subramaniam Bharti Marg - T/R on Dr. Zakir Hussain Marg - T/L C-Hexagon - T/L Kartavya Path - U/Turn from Rafi Marg Crossing - Return on Kartavya Path towards India Gate - India Gate Canopy - Back on C-Hexagon - T/L C-Hexagon (Wrong carriageway) - T/R Dr. Zakir Hussain Marg (Wrong carriageway) - T/L Subramaniam Bharti Marg (Wrong carriageway) - T/R Mathura Road (Wrong carriageway) - T/R on Lodhi Road (Wrong carriageway) - Go straight up to Aurobindo Marg - U/turn and back on Lodhi Road (Wrong carriageway) - T/R Bhisham Pitamaha Marg (Wrong carriageway) - T/L JLN Stadium Complex (Wrong carriageway) - Finish outside Stadium Complex.

Traffic movement will be regulated on the above roads from 05:00 AM to 10:00 AM. However, uninterrupted movement of emergency vehicles will be facilitated. Cross traffic movement at junctions located along the route will be allowed depending upon the location and density of participants.

Traffic will be diverted as per requirement at the following points:

- 1. 4th Avenue-Bhisham Pitamaha Marg Junction Under Sewa Nagar Flyover
- 2. Kotla Red Light
- 3. Sewa Nagar Red Light on 4th Avenue
- 4. Meharchand Market Red Light on 5th Avenue
- 5. 2nd Avenue
- 6. Jor Bagh Colony Road
- 7. Aurobindo Marg-Lodhi Road Junction
- 8. Subramaniam Bharti Marg-Pandora Road Junction
- 9. Q-Point
- 10. Rajesh Pilot Marg-Amritा Shergill Marg Junction
- 11. Subramaniam Bharti Marg-Max Mueller Marg Junction
- 12. Subramaniam Bharti Marg-Maharshi Raman Marg Junction
- 13. Subramaniam Bharti Marg-Arch Bishop Makarios Marg Junction
- 14. Lala Lajpat Rai Marg Neela Gumbad
- 15. Mathura Road-Bhairon Road Junction

SUGGESTED ROUTES

- > Ring Road - Ashram Chowk - Sarai Kale Khan - Ring Road - IP Flyover - Ring Road - ISBT Kashmere Gate
- > DND Flyover - Sun Dial - Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Marg - AIIMS Chowk - Ring Road - Daula Kuan - Ring Road - Brar Square - Naraina Flyover
- > Vikas Marg - ITO Chowk - Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg - Minto Road - Outer Circle Connaught Place - Panchkuian Road

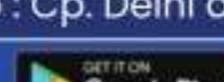
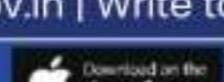
The citizens of Delhi are requested to cooperate in this celebration of fitness by avoiding the roads and junctions in the vicinity of Delhi Half Marathon and travelling via suggested routes mentioned above. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring smooth traffic management

For any further information, call at Traffic Helpline Number 1095

E-mail to CP, Delhi at : cp.sanjayarora@delhipolice.gov.in | Write to : C.P. Delhi at P.O. Box No. 171, GPO, New Delhi

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De/65/5/2023

Multi-pronged strategy needed for bad-air fight in NCR, says PMO

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The prime minister's office (PMO) on Friday reviewed several measures being taken by various stakeholders to deal with the air pollution problem in Delhi-NCR and emphasised on adopting a multi-pronged approach to handle the situation.

Chaired by P K Mishra, principal secretary to the Prime Minister, the high-level task force meeting also discussed the implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), its monitoring and measures to improve its enforcement.

Mishra during the meeting said that the strict implementation of the actions listed under GRAP by all concerned is critical to prevent worsening of air quality.

According to a statement from the PMO, Mishra discussed in detail about various measures being undertaken to reduce the impact of different sources of air pollution, including industrial pollution, vehicular pollution, dust from construction and demolition (C&D) activities, dust from roads, burning of municipal solid waste (MSW), biomass and miscellaneous waste, agricultural stubble burning and dispersed sources.

Greening and plantation initiatives to abate air pollution were also deliberated during the meeting, the statement said.

In an effort to ensure reduction of the paddy stubble burning in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, Mishra instructed close monitoring of the issue by chief secretaries of the three states.

He advised the in-situ management of paddy stubble through Crop Residue Management (CRM) machines, and use of biodecomposers. Mishra also advised the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) to improve the technologies.

Elaborating on ex-situ management of paddy stubble, he advised working on developing economic use of paddy straw. He also stressed on developing adequate storage facilities for baled straw along with infrastructure for baling, briquetting and pelleting for effective ex-situ utilisation of paddy straw, the statement said.

As part of the multi-pronged approach to be taken, Mishra stressed on expanding gas infrastructure and supply in the entire NCR by March 2024, and ensuring expeditious supply of biomass on demand.

1984 riots victims started getting justice only after Modi govt assumed office: Shah

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Home minister Amit Shah on Friday said justice to victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots started being delivered only after the Modi government assumed office

in 2014 and said 300 cases related to the riots were reopened and compensation of Rs 5 lakh was given to the family of each victim after 2014.

"No one can forget the riots of 1984. No one was punished in those riots until the Modi government

assumed office. Many inquiry commissions were formed but did not yield results. But Modi formed an SIT, reopened 300 cases and started sending those who were guilty to jail," Shah said while addressing a programme of the

Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee here.

The minister said after so many years, the process of giving compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of the 3,328 victims was done by the Modi government.

Paying glowing tributes to the Sikh gurus and the community, he said Sikhs took both religion and karma equally and when it was an issue of sacrificing one's life for religion, a true Sikh never looked back.

Shah paid tributes to the Sikh

gurus and said, "I bow my head to the Guru tradition of the Sikh religion. Guru tradition of 10 generations of Sikh Panth has set before the world an excellent example of struggle and sacrifice against injustice and barbarity before invaders."

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Myopia

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1 in 4
children in India
are myopic⁽²⁾

80%
of all learning
happens through
vision⁽¹⁾

Myopia, also known as near-sightedness or short-sightedness, is a condition in which people can see clearly up close, but objects farther away appear blurred. It commonly occurs when a person's eyeball is too long.⁽³⁾ Myopia typically develops in children of school-going age and tends to worsen every year until adulthood.⁽³⁾

Myopia is increasingly common among children. Myopia not only hinders children in their daily tasks, but myopia progression year on year can eventually lead to ocular complications in the future.⁽⁴⁾ This is why it's important to detect myopia as early as possible, so your child can have all the support they need to limit and slow down myopia progression.

Many factors may increase the risk of developing myopia, such as family history and environmental factors.⁽⁵⁾ However, recent increases in myopia prevalence mainly comes from changes in lifestyle, with children now spending less time outdoors and more time indoors doing near work.⁽⁶⁾

Find out the symptoms :



Have you noticed that your child has difficulty seeing distant objects?



Does your child come closer to the object to look at it?



Does your child often squint?



Does your child complain of eye strain and headaches?

Single vision glasses do not help to slow myopia progression in children

With regular single vision lenses, vision is corrected but myopia can still progress, affecting a child's vision and daily activities.^(4, 7) Timely detection by an eye care practitioner is vital to provide your child with a solution that ensures clear vision and helps slow down myopia progression.

*Compared to single vision lenses, when worn 12 hours per day, every day. **Highly Aspheric Lenslet Target (HALT) Aesthetic finish (1)Smith E, et al. Eyeglasses for global development: Bridging the visual divide. World Economic Forum, June 2016, page 7. (2)Gopalakrishnan A, et al. Prevalence of myopia among urban and suburban school children in Tamil Nadu, South India: findings from the Sankara Nethralaya Tamil Nadu Essilor Myopia (STEM) Study. Ophthalmic Physiol Opt. 2022; 42:345–357. (3)Hou W, et al. Axial elongation in myopic children and its association with myopia progression in the Correction of Myopia Evaluation Trial (COMET). Eye Contact Lens. 2018 July; 44(4): 248–259. (4)Sankargand P, et al. IMI impact of myopia. Investigative ophthalmology & visual science. 2021;62(5):2.(5)Filtcroft DI. The complex interactions of retinal, optical and environmental factors in myopia aetiology. Progress in retinal and eye research. 2012;31(6):622-60.(6)Morgan IG, et al. Myopia. The Lancet. 2012;379(9827):1739-48(7)Gwiazda J, et al. A randomized clinical trial of progressive addition lenses versus single vision lenses on the progression of myopia in children. Investigative ophthalmology & visual science. 2003 Apr 1;44(4):1492-500.(8)Bao J, et al. Spectacle lenses with aspherical lenses for myopia control vs single-vision spectacle lenses: a randomized clinical trial. JAMA Ophthalmol. 2022;140(5):472-478.

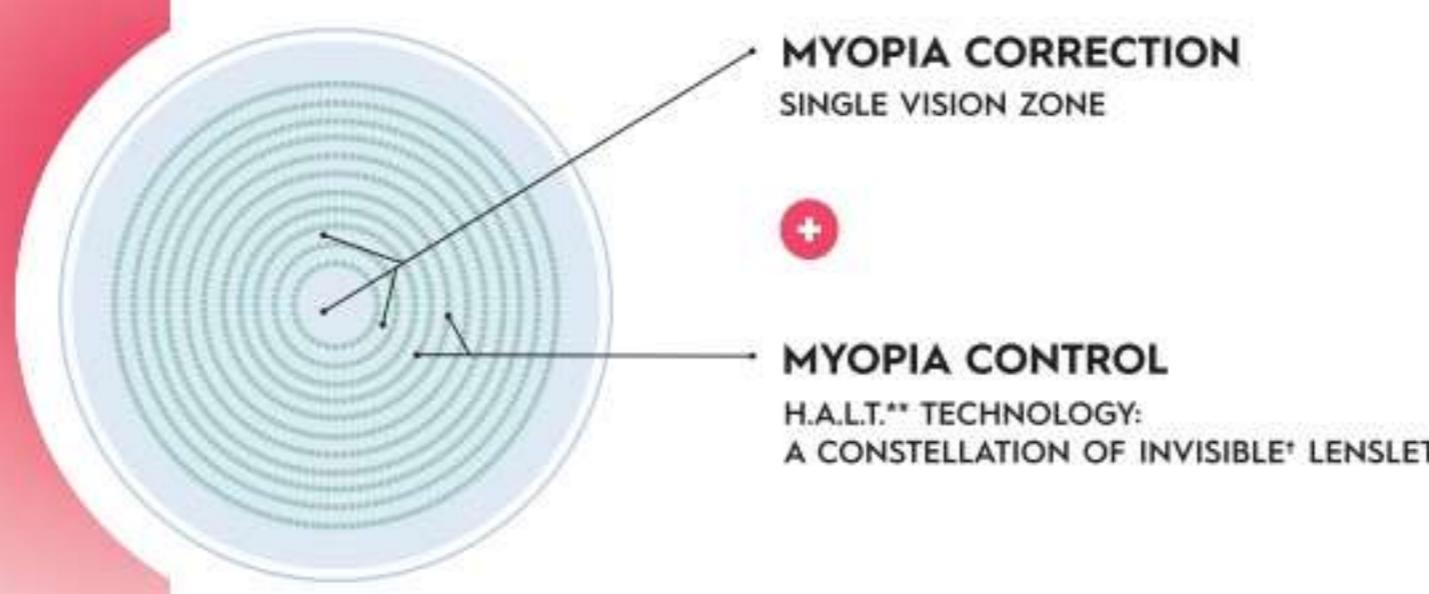
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Essilor® Stellest® lenses not only correct myopia but also control its progression, with no compromises in aesthetics and comfort.



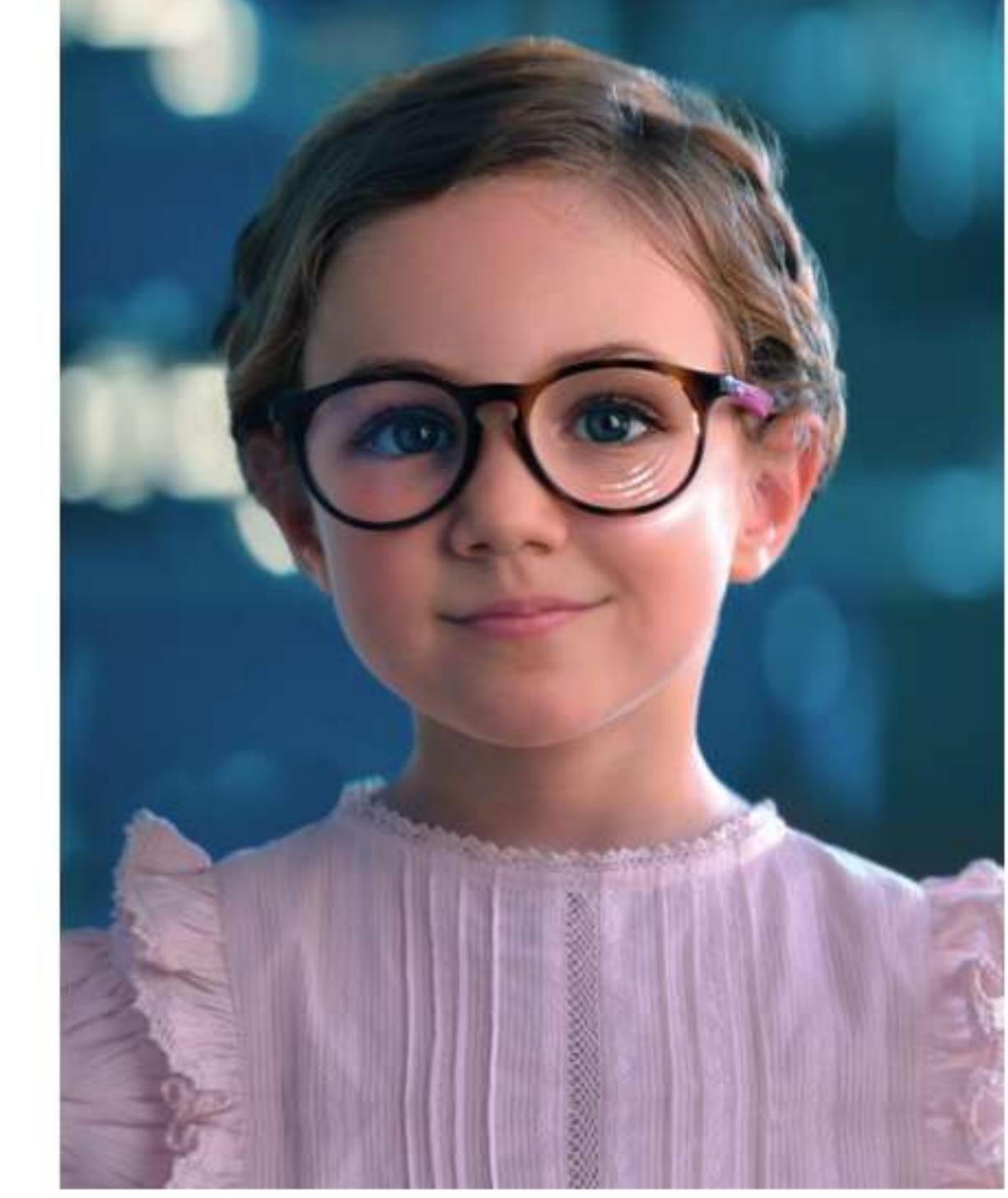
Why choose Essilor® Stellest® lenses for your child?

Essilor® Stellest® lenses slow down myopia progression by 67% on average, compared to single vision lenses, when worn at least for 12 hours per day, every day.⁽⁸⁾ Based on the decision of your eye care practitioner, Essilor® Stellest® lenses can be prescribed to myopic children as soon as myopia progression is detected.

Essilor® Stellest® lenses are Essilor®'s best solution to fight your child's myopia and control myopia progression.

Ask your eye care professional about Essilor® Stellest® lenses or visit www.essilorindia.com/stellest

Essilor® Stellest® lenses slow down myopia progression by 67% on average.⁽⁸⁾



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- Prabhat Pheri in schools
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- Mega event 'Haq Ki Baat with District Magistrate'
- Durga Shakti Mega Safety Workshop
- Shakti Workshop
- Yuva Shakti Rehabilitation Workshop
- Adoption Week Celebration
- Child Rights Awareness Programme
- Shakti Samvad
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Information and Public Relations Department, U.P.

'Our study found 208 bird species in Udaipur — Indian cities can provide hope for biodiversity'

Conservation biologist **KS Gopi Sundar** is co-chair of the IUCN specialist group on storks, ibis and spoonbills and editor-in-chief of the global journal 'Waterbirds'. Speaking to **Srijana Mitra Das** at Times Evoke, he discusses conducting a study on birdlife in Udaipur — and finding some surprises:

Photos: Kanishka Mehta via: KS Gopi Sundar

We recently carried out a study of cities and how these matter for biodiversity. An earlier study done by us had shown how even a bustling megacity like Delhi can sustain incredibly high levels of biodiversity, especially birds, when it lets ponds be — Delhi's pond diversity levels actually broke global records. Following from there, with Kanishka Mehta, my student from Sukhadia University, Dr Vijay Kohli and Swati Kittur, we designed a study to investigate birdlife in Udaipur, a smaller location than Delhi but a bustling tourist hub and selected for Smart City development work. We designed a framework covering the entire city through sampling and for the first time perhaps in India, surveyed each season to see if bird populations changed with the weather.

The project has thrown up some fascinating results. We found Udaipur has around 208 species of birds, of which about 80 are migratory. We describe a bird's niche as a range of environmental conditions in which species can thrive, including urban parameters like people, land uses (agriculture, concrete, etc.), tree species, open areas and so on. Combining these, we could provide numerical estimates of how a species' niche is doing.

Interestingly, we found few species needed very specialised conditions in Udaipur, suggesting the city could support a diverse bird assemblage. This is unusual as urban areas are often thought of as having a narrow set of conditions and thus, a low number of species.

We also expected these niches to



ARRIVING IN STYLE: The superb Dalmatian pelican is one of the many migratory species which visit Udaipur, adding to the splendour of its lakes

correspond differently to resident birds versus winter migratory ones. The literature suggested migratory birds would do 'niche packing' or squeeze themselves into existing spaces. However, we found the opposite happening in Udaipur — migratory species didn't pack themselves in thus. Udaipur has enough open spaces to accommodate many species in a season, which birds use in ways that defy our current measuring ability.

This study is thus a note of hope in a generally bleak atmosphere concerning biodiversity. It also suggests our view of human-caused 'disturbance' can be rethought — the disturbance in Indian cities is not strong enough to drastically shrink birdlife. Birds are also an excellent barometer of the environment — any place housing over 200 species reflects a high level

The Aravallis, among the least studied ecosystems globally and often considered highly degraded, are not doing so badly on biodiversity. Our work in Delhi, at one extreme of the Aravallis, and now this study in Udaipur, at the other extreme, shows this. The Aravallis seem healthy ecologically and that's in cities — imagine its biodiversity outside urban areas.

Cities should be considered potential habitat for birds. Studying a city, conservationists could discover new ways of preserving birds, frogs, etc. Thanks to government initiatives, practically every town has a university with science and zoology programs — this offers a chance to adopt cities as important habitat for biodiversity and develop new conservation modes in India.

in urban areas. We found large birds too, like ibises, cranes, woolly-necked storks and Egyptian vultures, thought to be declining in forests, yet seen breeding in Udaipur.

of ecological health. The presence in Udaipur of the pheasant-tailed jacana, which can only walk on lotuses, tells a tale of water quality. It is important to note that our cities are also not as sterile in layout as those abroad. In Udaipur thus, birds were not put out by humans, houses or cattle — the biggest positive component working for them was the presence of trees.

These learnings can help rethink our conservation ethos, currently heavily oriented towards protected areas which have the highest levels of biodiversity. Such studies provide an alternative vision for India though, seeing cities also as preservers of biodiversity. Thanks to its lakes, trees and the Aravallis which citizens maintain, Udaipur can be proud of its birdlife. This varies from the tiny plain prinia to the rare white-bellied minivet and white-naped tit, earlier thought to not be urban at all. We also found over 2.5 lakh house sparrows here — this is heartening for a species thought to be collapsing.

LOTUS STEPS: Pheasant-tailed jacana



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Amidst all the news of violence today, TE is a rare voice of sanity. We closely follow TE's scientific coverage of climate change and the biodiversity challenge and also enjoy its special features like the article on Iguazu National Parks in South America — this was very informative and vibrant. Looking forward to more, TE!

READERS WRITE

Dear Times Evoke,
TE's article on Argentina and Brazil's Iguazu National Parks (7th October) was breath-taking! Who knew national parks could also become so contested over land, citizenship, etc. We thought these were simply serene places made for wildlife. It was extraordinary to read how a new generation of administrators changed the policy of settling people inside these. Finally, someone prioritised nature! Thank you, TE, for such a wonderful feature!

— Varun Desai, Mumbai

I was very excited to read about the Iguazu national parks in Brazil and Argentina, sharing the iconic waterfalls on both sides of the border. It made me go to YouTube to see videos of the falls while reading TE. The intention of both countries to settle the parks with their own people and then, their removal by trained forest officials were very well explained by Dr Frederico Freitas. Thank you, TE, for this beautiful page.

— S. Sankaranarayanan, Chennai

Thank you, TE, for the lovely coverage on the Iguazu Falls and the amazing species living inside these national parks. We were thrilled to see the 'little armoured one' (armadillo), caiman alligator, jaguar, etc.! TE is always a fantastic read and it was so refreshing to learn about such a special and unique place.

— Priyanka Mittal, Delhi

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— Suresh S. Kadam, Pune

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G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit pledges to fight all forms of terrorism

The G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) on Friday adopted a joint statement materially in sync with the G20 New Delhi leaders' declaration as it condemned "terrorism in all its forms and manifestations" and pledged to play a role in combating the menace. It also asserted the essential role of Parliaments for effective implementation of various goals concerning issues ranging from climate change to food and energy security, report **Vishwa Mohan** and **Akhilesh Singh**.

"In the light of our legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, we pledge to play our role in combating terrorism & violent extremism," said the statement of the Presiding Officers of

Parliaments of G20 nations, adopted under Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla's chairmanship at Yashobhoomi convention centre. Although the joint statement was adopted with consensus, sources said Indonesia supported by a couple of other countries initially during one of the working sessions suggested inclusion of references on Israel's attack on Gaza in the text. However, it was not part of the final joint statement.

Taking note of the concern over under-representation of women in national Parliaments globally, the joint statement of parliamentarians specifically welcomed the adoption of the women's reservation bill by Indian Parliament last month.

challenges facing humanity in an interdependent world. "Today, the world is facing crises due to conflicts and confrontation. A world full of crises is not in anyone's interest. A divided world cannot provide solutions to the major challenges faced by humanity."

The PM said the global world needed to look at the world in spirit of "One Earth, One Family, One Future".

PM rues lack of consensus on defining terror

'Humanity's Enemies Taking Advantage Of This Attitude'

Akhilesh Singh & Vishwa Mohan | TNN

New Delhi: Addressing the inaugural session of the 9th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20), PM Narendra Modi recalled the December 2001 jihadi attack on Parliament, and seemed to articulate India's grudge that the world took time to recognise the trauma it suffered at the hands of Pakistan-backed terrorists.

"As you know, Bharat has been facing cross-border terrorism for decades. Terrorists have killed thousands of innocent people in Bharat, terrorists had also targeted our Parliament. And you will be shocked to know that Parliament was in session at that time. Terrorists had planned to take MPs hostage and to kill them. Bharat has reached here today after dealing with such terrorist incidents," he said, referring to the audacious attack by terrorists belonging to Jaish-e-Mohammed who, after breaking through the security cordon, had almost managed to get inside the main building of Parliament House.

"It is very sad that there is no consensus on the definition of terrorism. There is no consensus in the United Nations yet on the International Convention on Combating Terrorism," he said, amplifying India's unequivocal opposition to terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations".

"Enemies of humanity are taking advantage of this attitude of the world," he cautioned and said parliaments should help forge an understanding on how to fight terror.

In his speech, the PM, while celebrating India's democracy and diversity, said conflicts and confrontations give rise to crises which the world cannot afford, and appealed for a unified response to

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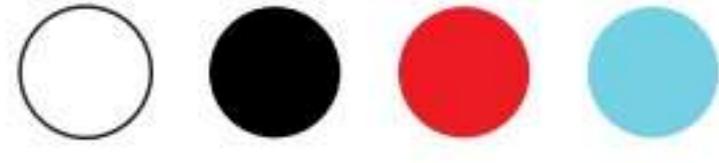
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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Con Job On Content

Middle East war again shows dangers of social media

It's not the best of times for Elon Musk, owner of social media platform X. Soon after he was forced to delete his tweets that promoted accounts infamous for misinformation, the EU wrote to him warning of indications that X is being used to disseminate illegal content. It's not just X that finds itself in regulatory crosshairs, other platforms such as Meta face the same problem. The war between Israel and Hamas is not the cause of their problems. At best, it has shown their flaws. The primary cause is their business model that relegates user safety to the periphery.



In 2021, Meta recorded a net income of \$39.4 billion on revenue of \$117.9 billion, giving it a profit margin of 33.4%. Over a six-year period (2016-21), the company spent just \$13 billion on user safety, while it didn't hold back when it came to protecting its own assets. Therefore, the regulatory challenges big social media platforms face today are of their own making. They are being held to account for it.

To give another example, consider Meta's process for content moderation. They often depend on users to flag problematic content. Even after their fact-checkers have identified misinformation in the content, it's not always taken down. Instead, it's featured less prominently. It's worth comparing the laxity of this approach with the checks and balances in traditional media. What social media platforms need to prioritise is a rapid expansion of content moderation teams. And it shouldn't be treated as a formality where headcount is expanded without attention to quality. Algorithms will undoubtedly be part of content monitoring apparatus, but a standardised approach won't work for a global user base. On balance, social media's problems boil down to one thing. Disrespect for their customers.

Inquilab Forever

Who's in charge, if everyone's protesting?

Bandhs and boycotts, pickets and placards, inquilab zindabad are heady stuff. And why should it be a monopoly of the young and/or 'oppressed'? In that spirit, Jadavpur University's acting vice-chancellor, registrar, officials, and several professors are on dharna, passionately protesting their own students. The contention is about student representation on the welfare board and anti-ragging committee – not only did the authorities refuse the students' demand, they were so aggrieved by the students' 'expression and behaviour', they decided to demonstrate against them. What are bemused students supposed to do now? And who's in charge, if everyone is an insurrectionary?

This bizarre reversal is not so unusual in our world, of course. We've seen chief ministers turn into chief agitators with great enthusiasm. From Arvind Kejriwal's serial dharnas over being unable to direct civil servants to Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Nitish Kumar demanding concessions for their states, to Mamata Banerjee protesting in the very state she governs and Rahul Gandhi tearing up ordinances of his own government, striking radical poses is what powerful people yearn to do.

Plus, we live in times where conservatives act like the new counterculture – forces of traditional authority around the world are draping themselves in radical banners and slogans, fighting the yoke of 'woke' oppression. Men's rights activists, white supremacists, upper caste groups – everyone's convinced they're the real victims. So why shouldn't Jadavpur University's grey eminences give it a shot?

A War That Never Ends & Pain That's Never Shared

Understanding Israel-Palestine via Middle East podcasts

There's good reason that the day-old Hamas attack on Israel is still shocking. Terrorists stormed out of Gaza, Israel's intelligence system failed, Hamas butchered Israeli civilians, including children, and dragged scores of hostages back to the Palestinian enclave. Now, the world holds its breath as it waits for a possible Israeli land offensive in Gaza. Everyone knows it's going to be brutal. No one knows how it will end. There are a thousand questions – and some attempts at answers.

Conflicted, a podcast that breaks down the complexities of history, religion and politics in the Middle East, takes on some of these questions in its latest episode hosted by Islamic scholar Thomas Small and ex-jihadist-turned-spy Aimen Dean. Their conclusion: Iran had a possible role to play in Hamas's outrageous attack. Israel and Saudi Arabia were just weeks away from announcing the biggest deal of the Middle East that would see normalisation of relations between Riyadh and Tel Aviv. As part of this deal, the Saudis supposedly had two sets of demands: The building of an American nuclear plant in Saudi Arabia, fully under American control, and the beginning of the creation of a Palestinian state with Gaza, West Bank and East Jerusalem.

However, the Iranians, despite inking a restoration of relations agreement with the Saudis earlier this year, supposedly instigated Hamas to pull the trigger to undermine the Riyadh-Tel Aviv rapprochement. The podcast says the situation has resulted from a "Mexican standoff" within a Mexican standoff with everyone pointing two guns at each other – Israel at Israel through Hamas and Hezbollah, Israel at Iran through Azerbaijan and the Kurdish movement in Iraq, Iran at

Saudi Arabia through Iraqi militias and the Houthis, Saudi Arabia at Iran through the current regime in Pakistan and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

A hopeless situation? Not according to some brave people living in Israel and Palestine. **Groundwork**, a podcast hosted by Sally Abed, a member of the national leadership at Standing Together – a Jewish-Arab grassroots movement – and Dina Kraft, the opinion editor of the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, tells stories about the people on the frontline of the conflict. In the episode 'Two States, One Homeland?' the hosts talk to May Pundak, the daughter of one of the architects of the Oslo Accords, Ron Pundak. May advocates a confederate, shared homeland for both Palestinians and Israelis with complete freedom of movement and settlement.

Many would say that's a wild dream. Over in Gaza, described by some as the world's largest open-air prison, the *Gaza Up Close* podcast by Lital Firestone delves into the systematic restrictions imposed on freedom of movement for everyday life in the Palestinian enclave. This particularly hits the women of Gaza hard who must contend with the concrete ceiling of the Israeli blockade even if they break through the glass ceiling of their own patriarchal societies. This means that even highly educated women in Gaza have little economic opportunities and liberties, keeping them poor, destroying their potential.

Unsettled, a podcast featuring diverse viewpoints on Israel-Palestine, the episode 'Politiced Pain' talks about how expressions of pain on both sides are used to cancel each other out every time violence erupts. It's only through empathy and compassion around that shared pain that Israelis and Palestinians can find a peaceful future for themselves. But who's listening?

mindfield

SHORT TAKES ON BIG IDEAS



Next Up, The Khaki Ceiling

After Parliament, women must be at least one-third of the police, to push back stubborn patriarchy

Dipankar Gupta



The women's reservation bill is a giant step, without doubt. Even so, the 'but' doesn't stop here. In a democracy, the 'but's' never stop. Women will now be represented in larger numbers in Indian legislatures, 'but' does this mean that they will be any safer at home or in the streets? Only last month, a Dalit woman faced an outrage no human should have ever encountered, simply for delaying on a loan repayment.

Clearly the women's reservation bill also requires colouring-in, as have all past moves in our democracy. For example, first there was an adult franchise, but then what about women voting? Then there was equality under law, but what about the historically deprived? These 'but's' had to be resolved. And they were, in due course.

Learning from this, and leveraging the women's reservation bill, now is the time to increase women's presence in Indian police to 33%. This advice has been gathering dust in the back rooms since 2005. If women in Parliament and police pull together, crimes against women would instantly fall.

If left to lazy time, it would take about 50 years to get 33% women in India's police from the current 10.5%. The evidence from Sweden, Australia and the Netherlands can help bellow the sails of this proposal. These countries protect women's interests best because they are well represented in their parliaments and in their police.

On the other hand, we have a curious anomaly. Rwanda, South Africa and Mexico rank high when it comes to women in parliaments. But they are not easy places for women to be in. That 61% of Rwanda's parliamentarians are women is not because of feminism or the women's quota alone but because the civil war between Hutus and Tutsis killed millions of men.

This raised the population of women in Rwanda to 71% and that helped increase their presence in Rwanda's parliament. There are surely better ways of getting there. However, once the war was over and the men returned, the old masculine ideology came right back.

It is for the same reason that Rwanda has a large number of women in its police force, but they lack political support and therefore, have not made a



difference. As women came to the fore by default and because of an unplanned shortage of men, the masculine ethos and cultural prejudice have stayed unchanged, or so it is alleged.

In South Africa too, women dominate the lower house. They comprise over 40% of all parliamentarians but South Africa has among the highest recorded rates of sexual violence in the world. It is hard to draw snap judgments, but it is evident that women in Rwanda and South Africa need help.

Who might they turn to? That women are probably safest in Nordic countries should make us think. No doubt, in India and elsewhere, patriarchy must go and women parliamentarians can curb wayward men. A

strong female police force in parallel would greatly aid this effort.

Sadly, crimes against women have stayed high in India and policemen cannot handle such cases with the empathy they deserve. About 29% of married women have faced domestic violence and the total lifetime experience of violence among women is about 33.5%. These facts clearly call for a larger presence of women in the police.

Credible Indian research also shows that when it comes to filing crimes against women, it is women police officers who are more active and willing. This may not always be because male officers are remiss in their duty but because women find it easier to open up to another woman.

When it comes to analysing official figures on crimes against women we must keep in mind that in a male-dominated society, women quietly swallow insults. Dowry deaths illustrate this feature, but if these women had a sympathetic policewoman's ear, such lives might not have ended in tragedy.

Keeping this in mind, Punjab police established Saanjh Shakti and Punjab Police Mahila Mitter Committee. Now a woman can approach an all-women helpline to register her complaint. There have been similar initiatives elsewhere too but to fully realise them, we need women police officers in good numbers at every level.

India has made up for lost time with a late-starter advantage. It took decades, often close to a century, for democracies in Europe and the US to legislate universal adult franchise and minority protection. India did both at one stroke. The template was ready and it took only audacity and conviction to do the rest.

Many other countries with a profile similar to that of India are far from giving adequate representation to women in elected bodies. But India has again delivered it in one stroke, and we will soon begin to feel its full reverberations. For every lightning move democracy makes, the thunderclap follows soon after.

The unanimous passage of the women's reservation bill in both houses of India's Parliament could not have happened without wide-spectrum support. This gives hope that implementing the policy to place 33% women in the police force will not be difficult at all.

The best time to strike is while the iron is hot.

The writer is a sociologist

Why Can't We Treat This As Just Another Match?

Getting worked up about India vs Pakistan today? Don't. The only prize is winning the World Cup

Avijit.Ghosh@timesgroup.com



Last week the opening World Cup game between defending champion England and runners-up New Zealand presented a rather unusual sight to cricket lovers across the world. Much of the cavernous Ahmedabad stadium, which can host more than 130,000 fans, was largely vacant. England opener Danielle Wyatt wanted to know on X, "Where's the crowd?" She wasn't the only one asking.

The scene promises to be different when India and Pakistan face off on the same ground today. The stadium is likely to be brimming with fans. No other game in the ongoing 13th edition of the ODI WC, barring another Indo-Pak encounter at a later stage, will match this one's intensity.

We all know why. The two contesting nations share the bad blood of history. Since the 1947 Partition, the two have fought four wars (1948, 1965, 1971 and 1999). The conflict – ranging from Pakistan's border incursions to terror strikes – continues daily. Toxic politics doesn't let the temperature go down. Social media posts, designed to mock and hurt, are dappled in alphabets of arsenic. Hate and contempt get hardwired into a million heads. Many of us watch sports against each other through this prism.

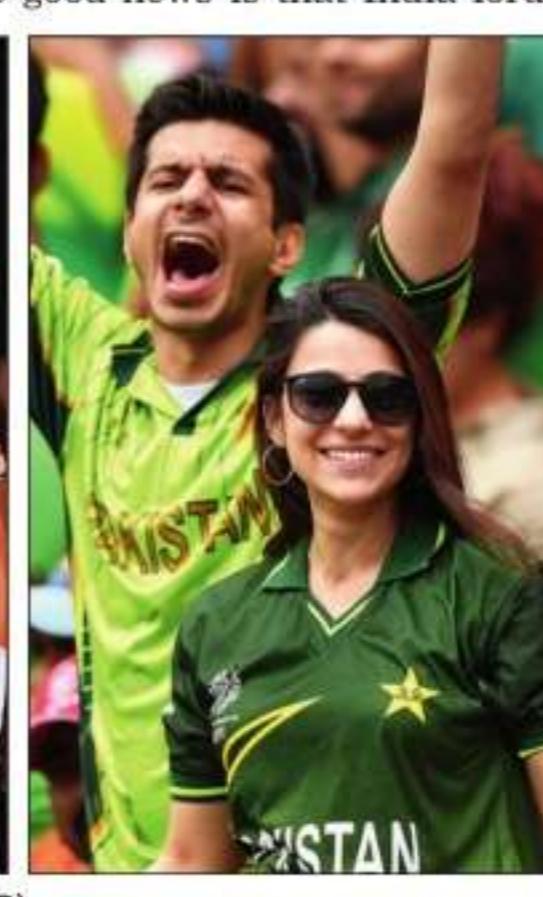
It happens elsewhere too: Bitter inter-club rivalries amid vicious international disputes. Against such backdrops, games cease to be about goals or wickets. They metastasise into vehicles of conquest, a proxy for settling a political score. A friend, with marginal interest in the game, once said after India thumped

Pakistan in the 2003 World Cup group game, "Hamara to aaj hi final tha" – today was our final. It is not an uncommon view. Depending on victory or defeat, national pride is restored or damaged.

The hysteria sweeps into other sports as well, especially hockey. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Indo-Pak hockey encounters were fiercely-contested and passionately-

countries went on the backfoot. India's last gold medal came in the boycott-driven Moscow Games in 1980. Four lamenting decades passed before the country returned to the hockey podium, winning a bronze in Tokyo 2020. Pakistan last earned a hockey Olympic medal in 1992 Barcelona and a World Cup title in 1994.

The good news is that India lorded



HAVE FUN, MOVE ON: Indian Fans (L), Pakistani Fans (R)

followed. During the 1964 Tokyo Olympics

hockey final, TOI reported how an altercation on the ground affected the spectators with "some of the Pakistanis from the sidelines threatening to be more belligerent than the players themselves".

But neither country seemed prepared for the looming structural changes that reshaped the game. Hockey became a faster and more fitness-demanding game once astro turf was introduced in the 1976 Montreal Olympics. Both

over men's hockey in the recent Hangzhou Asian Games and is currently ranked world no. 3. Demolishing Pakistan 10-2

might have brought added satisfaction, but then the country, currently in free-fall, is no longer part of hockey's high table. The old rivalry is irrelevant now. In India's quest for Olympic gold in 2024 Paris, the real opponents are likely to be superpowers Australia, Germany and the Netherlands; red-hot Belgium, not-to-forget England, Argentina and Spain.

In cricket, the situation is slightly different. Pakistan remains a formidable force and is currently ranked no.2 in the ODI format. The Indian management often insists that an Indo-Pak match will be treated as just another game. The fans certainly don't.

Men in Blue's enviable 7-0 record over Pakistan in ODI World Cups has led to cockiness. But only one of those magnificent seven victories led to the ultimate prize: the World Cup in 2011. India's other ODI WC victory in 1983 did not involve Pakistan. One also must not forget that while India earned bragging rights in 1992 too, it was Imran Khan and company who lifted the coveted trophy. Beating Pakistan is part of the journey, not the destination.

India is currently ranked no. 1 in all three formats of cricket (Test, ODI and T20). But we haven't won a World Cup in any of the three versions since 2011. That should be our only goal. To attain that end, emerging triumphant in the Saturday contest is as important as the eight other matches we play in the championship's round-robin format. Not less, not more. Every win fetches a team two vital points. Eight victories in nine matches will help any team avoid the anxieties of comparing points and run rates and should obtain a place in the semis.

The sub-continent's rivalry has always been milked by television, especially in more recent decades. The casually mocking 'mauka' ads are reworked and pushed out every World Cup season. For most of us, an Indo-Pak game will always carry that extra edge of intensity. However, while celebrating wins and mourning losses, we should remember that sports are not substitutes for war.

Sacred space

If you have less empathy towards victims because of how you feel about their government, propaganda is working on you. Propaganda...seeps into us over time. It seeks to block our empathy receptors.

Ben Sheehan

Awareness-Dhyana-Action: Steps To Be A Sanatani

Meena Om

A true Sanatani is always connected with Nature and is in sync with the time. There is a profound and subtle Law of Nature for growth – we stay at the level of the people we relate to and connect with. Our growth stagnates when we are influenced by people who have already played their innings or have not lived what they talk or preach. There is no formula for personal growth and transformation; it can happen only when knowledge is lived and imbibed.

One way to gauge stagnation is when we face the same situation repeatedly. Why? That is because we have not learnt the lesson that the situation was imbued with for our growth and evolution. It is essential to change, to be along with the time. Time goes on moving and in Kaliyug, it is galloping.

How to be with the time?

The first step is awareness. Be aware of where you stand, of what is happening around and within, of the information and knowledge that you are attracting from books, people, events and situations.

Next is dhyana. Contemplate what you have learnt. Realise which way the current is flowing, what it is demanding of you, what you can relate to, and then act accordingly. The conclusion drawn from this experience is wisdom. This way you can understand the messages of the time.

Satya Sanatan Dharma is purely an experiential way of life. It helps us to be on the path of constant growth and in sync with the universal mechanism and cosmic design – that which is eternal, perpetual, constant, consistent, true

dharma. It has nothing to do with mind-created religions.

The third step is to consciously connect with the reality of existence. It could be the truth revealed by an evolved master of your Age, one who is totally connected with Supreme Intelligence and Consciousness. The Vedas, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita too are replete with sanatan satya. They offer true gyan of rishis who were in sync with consciousness. They applied dhyana on what they observed and keenly noted its effect when acted upon.

Their realisations and wisdom drawn through these actions is the eternal truth. The most evolved human of his yug, Krishn, as a spokesperson for Supreme, delivered the Gita, which is the essence of all these scriptures. By

living the divine insights of the evolved ones, we too can become part of the lineage of sanatan satya.

Our daily spiritual and religious practices are techniques to centre us, empty our subconscious collections, and make us peaceful and healthy. They prepare us for further growth. But if we are still stagnating, feeling restless, and there is no newness in our lives, it means these practices are merely physical exercises. Spiritual practices and religious rituals prepare us to absorb the



TIMES SPORT

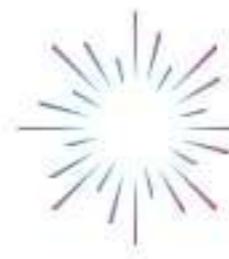
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HISTORY, FORM FAVOUR INDIA

Hosts Seek To Extend Proud 7-0 World Cup Record Vs Pakistan

Nitin.Naik@timesgroup.com

Ahmedabad: Hashtag 'BoycottIndoPak' match' was trending all day on Friday, the eve of India's World Cup match against Pakistan at the Narendra Modi Stadium here. Try telling that to the genuine fans of this cricket-mad city who are still scrambling for tickets. Try telling that to broadcasters, who will build up the game a few hours before any other contest. Try telling that to hotel owners here who have jacked up room rates. Try telling that to airline companies who have cashed in. Try telling that to the sea of cops guarding the venue and team hotels.

Try telling that to the BCCI, the hosts. A curious musical show prior to the toss, featuring several popular singers from the Hindi film industry, is indicative of the fact that the Indian board and ICC are keen to put on a spectacle. After all, the tournament has, till now, failed to generate excitement for non-India games.

The main show will be the performance of players from both teams. Man to man, India appear to have greater pedigree. They also have an enviable record in 50-over World Cups, having won all seven contests (1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, 2011, 2015, 2019). Of the last eight matches, India have won six, with one game

being rained out. Pakistan's last win in ODIs vs India came in the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy final.

The hosts have been more eager to embrace Powerplay urgency than Pakistan, who still rely on the traditional approach of build first, attack later. On flatter pitches, it leaves too much to do for the middle and lower order. India's batting lineup, despite the ambiguity over Shubman Gill's availability and apprehensions over a longish tail, has been in top form with all main batters getting tons in the last two months.

The bowling unit leaked runs against Afghanistan in New Delhi. But that surface at Arun Jaitley Stadium was a road. India's pursuit of 273 in 35 overs was proof. Against Pakistan, India need to decide if they are better off playing on a slow, black-soil pitch, like in the Test here against Australia in March, with the spin-trio of R Ashwin, Kuldeep Yadav, and Ravindra Jadeja. They did a splendid job of skittling out Australia in Chennai for 199. But it becomes a gamble if India field second on a dew-laden outfield under lights.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam admitted that when the team trained on Thursday evening, there was dew. Can Mohammad Shami come into the reckoning then? Not if the



THREE IS A CROWD! Openers Rohit Sharma, Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill at the nets on Friday



team management remains under an illusion that Shardul Thakur gives them batting depth. Pakistan will have worries of their own. Skipper Babar Azam was dismissed cheaply against the Netherlands and Sri Lanka, as was Mohd Rizwan, who has been a revelation with the bat this year at No. 4, averaging 69.90 in 15 matches. Sweeping, pulling, falling, cramping, smiling, Rizwan has been part entertaining, more enterprising.

The 'Green Shirts' also discovered a good opener in Abdullah Shafique. Shafique is known more for his red-ball exploits. But, the Sialkot-born 23-year-old responded with a counterattacking 113. Pakistan have been profligate in the field though and their spinners Shadab Khan and Mohd Nawaz have not been as potent as the Indian spinners in the middle overs. That could prove decisive.

Mohd Rizwan, who has been a revelation with the bat this year at No. 4, averaging 69.90 in 15 matches. Sweeping, pulling, falling, cramping, smiling, Rizwan has been part entertaining, more enterprising.

Ahmedabad as a venue has seen historic firsts. The city hosted the first ODI in India (vs England in 1981 not in Motera though). Sunil Gavaskar became the first to cross 10000 Test runs vs Pakistan in 1987. Kapil Dev went past Richard Hadlee's record of 431 Test wickets in 1994 vs Sri Lanka. Sachin Tendulkar scored his first double hundred in Tests in 1999 vs New Zealand. India beat Australia

in a World Cup for the first time in 24 years in a pulsating 2011 quarterfinal here.

Can Pakistan script history too? If they do, Babar, who turns 29 on Sunday, will consider it as his greatest birthday present.

to play three spinners, we will play three spinners."

One of the reasons why India have been successful across conditions and across formats is the ability of the team to adapt. The Narendra Modi Stadium is a venue which has a square on which both red and black soil pitches can be prepared. Saturday's game will be on a black soil pitch, which will be slow and aid spin, but Rohit seemed unfussed about ground conditions. "That's the good thing about this team. We come here knowing that this is the wicket. I don't decide what wicket we need. Whether it's a spinning pitch, seaming track, flat pitch, we've got the guys who can do the job for us."

It would be interesting to dig out Rohit's academic record in school and check out how he fared in history. Because he clearly doesn't seem interested in the past. Asked if India's 7-0 record will have any bearing on Saturday's match and if India start with a psychological advantage, he said, "I am not a person who looks into those stats. You want to play good cricket on that day to win."

If anyone had any doubts over the remaining one per cent, they were answered by Gill playing football enthusiastically during training.

Rohit chose to be vague also about the possibility of India fielding three spinners. "I don't know. I still haven't looked at the pitch yet. (He was seen having one after training and he had a word with the ground staff too), but we are ready for whatever combination we want to play. That's the challenge going forward for us as a team. If there is a change or two we need to make, we will be ready with that. And the guys have been informed very well in advance about these changes. If the requirement is there for us



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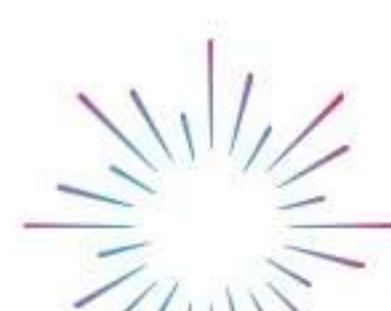
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WORLD CUP

KANE SUPREMACY

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Chennai: New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson was making his first competitive appearance in over six months, but made it look as though he was never away from the sport. However, his much-awaited comeback had an anti-climatic end as the 33-year-old retired hurt (78 off 107 balls; 8x4, 1x6) after being struck on the thumb by a throw from the outfield. He was immediately taken for X-rays. The New Zealand team management will hope their talisman will be ready for the bigger battles ahead. "I will get to know about it tomorrow, hope it will be OK," Williamson said later.

Williamson, who replaced Will Young in the XI, had a huge influence on the contest against Bangladesh at the MA Chidambaram Stadium here on Friday – first as a captain and then as a batter. Thanks to Williamson's sheer brilliance, Daryl Mitchell's aggressive knock (89* off 67 balls, 6x4, 4x6) and the pace battery's collective performance, New Zealand maintained their perfect record with an eight-wicket victory.

Williamson showed no signs of rust. After New Zealand were dealt an early blow, he stabilized the chase with an 80-run second-wicket partnership alongside Devon Conway (45 off 59 balls, 3x4).

Williamson, in the company of Mitchell, then took the match away from Bangladesh, adding 108 runs before deciding to leave the field in the 39th over after being hit on the thumb.

Williamson played some delectable strokes, the standout being the six over the deep mid-wicket fence off Shakib. He had begun his innings slowly but accelerated after hitting a couple of fours over sweeper cover off Shoriful Islam. Williamson also rode his luck as he was dropped on 27 by Taskin at short mid-wicket.

Earlier, after electing to field first on a surface that had something in it for the pacers, William-



ON A ROLL: New Zealand's Devon Conway and Kane Williamson in action against Bangladesh at the MA Chidambaram stadium in Chennai on Friday

son shuffled his bowlers superbly as almost everything he touched turned into gold. The changes he made in the early stages brought success straightaway – tearaway quick Lockie Ferguson struck in his very first over after coming on as first change, while part-timer Glenn Phillips, brought into the attack ahead of left-arm spinner Rachin Ravindra, took just one ball to make an impact.

Left-arm pacer Trent Boult, who provided the Black Caps a dream start with a wicket off the very first ball, was recalled in the 38th over, in which he dismissed Tawhid Hridoy for his 200th ODI scalp.

HOW THEY STAND						
Pos	T	P	W	L	N/R	NRR
1	NZ	3	3	0	0	+1.604
2	SA	2	2	0	0	+2.360
3	Ind	2	2	0	0	+1.500
4	Pak	2	2	0	0	+0.927
5	Eng	2	1	1	0	+0.553
6	B'desh	3	1	2	0	-0.699
7	SL	2	0	2	0	-1.161
8	Ned	2	0	2	0	-1.800
9	Aus	2	0	2	0	-1.846
10	Af	2	0	2	0	-1.097

SCOREBOARD

Bangladesh: L Das c Henry b Boult 0, T Hasan c Conway b Ferguson 16, MH Miraz c Henry b Ferguson 30, NH Shanto c Conway b Phillips 7, S Al Hasan c Latham b Ferguson 40, M Rahim b Henry 66, T Hridoy c Santner b Boult 13, Mahmudullah not out 41, T Ahmed c Mitchell b Santner 1, M Rahman c Latham b Henry 4, S Islam not out 2; **Extras:** (lb-1, nb-4, w-4) 9; **Total:** (For 9 wickets in 50 overs) 245; **Fall of wickets:** 1-12, 2-22 Conway; **Bowling:** Mustafizur Rahman 8-0-36-1; Shoriful Islam 7.5-1-43-0; Taskin Ahmed 8-0-56-0; Shakib Al Hasan 10-0-54-1; Mehidy Hasan 9-0-58-0; **Result:** New Zealand win by 8 wickets; **MoM:** Lockie Ferguson

Phillips 2-0-13-1, Rachin Ravindra 7-0-37-0, Daryl Mitchell 1-0-11-0.

New Zealand: D Conway lbw Shakib Al Hasan 45, R Ravindra c Rahim b Mustafizur 9, K Williamson retired hurt 78, D Mitchell not out 89, G Phillips not out 16; **Extras:** (1lb, 10w; 11; **Total:** (42.5 overs) 248-2; **Fall of wickets:** 1-12, 2-22 Conway; **Bowling:** Mustafizur Rahman 8-0-36-1; Shoriful Islam 7.5-1-43-0; Taskin Ahmed 8-0-56-0; Shakib Al Hasan 10-0-54-1; Mehidy Hasan 9-0-58-0; **Result:** New Zealand win by 8 wickets; **MoM:** Lockie Ferguson

'Players have to learn to deal with the negativity & perform'

Sourav Ganguly Tells TOI How Best to Cope With Pressures Of Playing Pak

Arani.Basu@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Sourav Ganguly, as India captain, was at the forefront when he led the team to Pakistan during the historic tour in 2004. On the eve of the game against Pakistan in Ahmedabad, TOI caught up with Ganguly for a chat. Excerpts...

GANGULY
What's the first thing that crosses your mind about playing a game against Pakistan?
I have many fond memories of playing against Pakistan, like my matches against them in Toronto. Like going to Pakistan and beating Pakistan, or the World Cup wins against them in 1999 and 2003. These are special moments. But the Pakistan tour was different. First time in 50 years, India beat Pakistan in Pakistan.

World Cup was just one game, that tour was a long one, and we were treated very well. What was it like sharing the field with them?

I had fond memories of playing against Inzamam, Saglan, Mushtaq Ahmed, Mohammed Yusuf and Younis Khan. Really enjoyed playing cricket with them. They were a very good team at that time. They were a better side than what they are now. They had a superior bowling attack with Wasim and Waqar. Waqar was actually very nice to play against.

As captain, how did you handle the trip to Pakistan given the diplomatic tensions?
I treated it as another game. I never looked at Pakistan as a different team and

just played cricket. At the end of the day, it's still the cricket ball and bat. Teams are used to backlash. From that point of view that's part and parcel of professional sport. You have to learn to deal with all the negativity going around and still perform. What's your advice to India for this game?

I would advise India to play one game at a time. India have looked brilliant and very strong. Hopefully, it continues. World Cups are long. There are seven more games and then the semifinals. So, you have to find a way to hold on to your form for a longer period of time. Do you prefer the same playing XI through the tournament?

If you perform it becomes a settled XI, which is the case at the moment. One odd change will happen this or that way, whether it's Ashwin or a fast bowler.

How difficult is it to bench a senior spinner like Ashwin? You had to keep Anil Kumble out in 2003?

I don't see it as a problem. I am happy that Ashwin is in the side.

KYA THI SHUBMAN KI KHOOSURAT CHINTA?
TATA CAPITAL

Memories of Pak, through prism of a World Cup

Avijit Ghosh recalls the 10 days spent on the other side of the border reporting on the 1996 WC



BACK THEN: All Pakistanis were fixed on the quarterfinal in Bangalore



Memory is an unreliable walking stick. It bends with time. And for many of us, the spring of 1996 wasn't just another time; it was another life. It was a time when the Internet was an infant, when barring the editor nobody owned a mobile phone, when articles would be faxed and costly calls made for confirmation. But as I rustle through old newspapers, now yellow and brittle, and flip through my articles, memories of those 10 days in Pakistan come alive like the clear light of day.

It was my first reporting trip abroad. The times were tense, by '90s standards. Till then, I had experienced Pakistan through the prism of what I had read and heard. I was a mix of curiosity, thrill and wariness when I boarded the PIA flight to the country of Noor Jehan and Hasan Sardar, Hanif Mohammed and Shehzad Sheikh, the land where Saadat Hasan Manto died and where Raj Kapoor was born.

The guy sitting next to me was the first Pakistani I spoke to. He was from Gujranwala. "If you get into an argument with anyone, tell him you are from Gujranwala, he will immediately back off. Everyone is scared of us," he said with glee and pride. I knew it was going to be an interesting trip.

The first feeling on landing was one of familiarity. The airport was undergoing

Lahore, the choices were Suzukis, Toyotas, Daewoos, even a Mercedes, if you could afford one.

On the cable TV in the hotel room, I found Geetanjali Aiyar smiling at me. Switching channels, I chanced upon Tara, then a popular soap on Zee and wondered if I was still in India. I loafed about in the glitzy Liberty market and found upscale ladies carrying the film gossip mag Stardust in vanity bags. I wanted to make a call back home but there were no phone booths around. I made the call from the hotel and later visited Pace, a plush multi-storeyed mall then owned by Imran Khan. I hadn't seen anything comparable in Delhi.

My next stop was Faisalabad, earlier known as Lyallpur but renamed after Saudi Arabia's King Faisal. A photographer from ABP and I haggled hard with a taxi driver for the two-and-a-half hour drive. He quoted Rs 2,000, our counter offer was Rs 1,500. We settled for Rs 1,600. The taxi drove through old Lahore. Tongas and Toyotas, buffaloes and BMWs jostled in a place pulsating with flavours of old life and smells of kebabs. We passed by Lahore fort and the iconic Badshahi mosque.

Out of town, we came to a bridge and found men, children and buffaloes bathing by the river as in India. Our taxi driver Iqbal told us it was the Ravi, and I was reminded that here, somewhere on its banks, the tricolour was first unfurled and Poorna Swaraj declared as the goal during the Congress' annual session on Dec 31, 1929.

"The actual venue is a little away from the bridge," the cabbie said. We were pleasantly surprised at his historical awareness. Some scenes are embossed in memory.

One, a buggy with a horse being carted on a lorry. "It must be on its way to a wedding in some remote village," Iqbal said.

The markets in Faisalabad town are laid out in the shape of the Union Jack, we were told. Fittingly, it was England taking on Sri Lanka in the quarter-final game at the Iqbal Stadium. By the time the game reached midway, most of us lost interest. Eyes now were automatically drawn towards the tv screen where India and Pakistan were locked in a jittery day-and-night encounter in Bangalore. Everyone in Pakistan was convinced that theirs was the better team. But they seem wary of Tendulkar. On the day, Sidhu scored the big runs but Jadeja landed blows none expected. Pakistan boomed at the beginning, but by the time we reached the hotel, India were on top. After the last wicket fell, the town went deathly quiet.

We flew to Karachi the next day and were taken to the press club before checking into a hotel. During the bus ride, a prominent sports journalist sang "Hum haarenge", parodying "Hum jeetenge", the team's anthem composed for the Cup. Everyone was sad and blamed Pakistan's reckless batting. I didn't come across anybody praising India's performance. At the National Stadium the next day, the boisterous crowd backed the West Indies against South Africa in another quarterfinal. The Caribbeans won.

At the airport on our way back to India, a fellow journalist's baggage looked ready to burst. "We are journalists and your guests. And we are going home. Why trouble us?" he said in Punjabi. The man at the counter smiled and waved us on.

Getty Images

Both the teams will be wary and watchful in initial overs

If someone says that the India versus Pakistan clash in Ahmedabad is like any other match, he is not telling the truth. It is, after all, India versus Pakistan, the mother of all battles! It would be played in front of more than 100,000 vociferous spectators who would be coming from all corners of the world. Nobody wants to miss it.

For the players too, it's a game in which everyone wants to put in more than their 100%, and why not? No one wants to give an inch to the opposition. As the saying goes, once on top, seal the game, never allow the opponents to raise their heads again. Besides, it would be watched by millions of people on television.

Both the teams have enjoyed morale-boosting wins in the competition so far. India endured hiccups versus Australia, but the depth in their batting line-up, and the sublime form of Virat Kohli and KL Rahul saw them through. Pakistan also struggled against the Sri Lankans but romped home quite safely.

Rohit, Virat and Babar Azam are big-match players. They don't let go of an opportunity to showcase their class whenever there's a big game, and therein lies their greatness.

Besides Babar, I quite liked the look of Abdulla Shafiq. He's a top-class player. Mohammad Rizwan may not be in the same bracket as the other modern-day greats, but he is a fighter and more than makes up for it up with his never-say-die attitude.

After all, it all boils down to how you raise the bar in such a high-octane game.

Both Rohit and Babar are among the best in the world. Their temperament, skill and shot production is simply breathtaking and worth going miles to see. Incidentally, both have similar temperament and attitude, maybe because batting comes so easily to them. They are so talented that while watching them bat, it seems they are having a walk in the park.

As captains too, they are not demonstrative but quietly do their jobs to the best of their ability. Both are good tacticians but quite rightly do not tolerate any lack of effort on the field.

I'm sure both the skippers must be pumping up their players mentally before the big game as it's an ODI in which the strategy is completely different from T20 cricket, so often played these days. In the 50-50 format, there's an opportunity to come back into the game in the middle overs if one loses wickets early in the innings. But if a team enjoys a flying start, then it becomes easier to put up a formidable score. That's why both the teams would be wary and more watchful while negotiating initial overs as both the teams possess top-class new ball bowlers capable of making early inroads.

It's going to be a great game, and I can't wait to catch the flight to Ahmedabad for this event at the beautiful and gigantic Narendra Modi stadium. PMG

THE PERFECT 10 ICONIC INDIA-PAK ODIs

A 7-0 scoreline in World Cups might suggest India have overwhelmingly dominated Pakistan in One-Day cricket. But this lopsided head-to-head is misleading. There was a period when an India win against Pakistan was a once-in-a-blue-moon affair. Dwaipayan Datta picks 10 memorable clashes between the two nations...

LOW-SCORING CLASSIC

Rothman's Cup, Sharjah (March 22, 1985): India were reigning world champions and had just beaten Pakistan in the Benson and Hedges final in Melbourne. Kapil Dev's team was the favourite but it was Imran Khan's 6/14 – one of the greatest spells in ODI – that helped Pakistan bowl out India for 125. On a difficult wicket, Kapil Dev, Sivaramakrishnan and Ravi Shastri struck back. But it was Sunil Gavaskar who took four catches in the slips as India bowled out Pakistan for 87.

RESULT: INDIA WON BY 38 RUNS

MIANDAD'S STUFF OF LEGEND

Australasia Cup final, Sharjah (April 18, 1986): This was the game that sparked off Pakistan's ODI domination over India for over a decade-and-a-half. Gavaskar's 92 and Srikant's 75 helped India reach 245/7. Considered a good score those days, Pakistan had lost regular wickets and were on the verge of defeat, but Javed Miandad was determined to fight on. Having to defend 10 runs, Chetan Sharma bowled the fatal last over, and it boiled down to the last ball with Pak needing four. Miandad hit Chetan's waist-high full-toss for six, a shot which has become stuff of cricketing folklore.

RESULT: PAKISTAN WON BY 1 WICKET



THE IMAGE THAT SUMS UP THE RIVALRY: Javed Miandad mimics Kiran More's over-appealing during India and Pakistan's first-ever World Cup meeting in Melbourne at the 1992 World Cup. India beat Pakistan, but Pakistan went on to win the title

MALIK'S GARDEN OF EDEN

Bilateral series, 2nd ODI, Eden Gardens, Kolkata (Feb 18, 1987): In the first-ever ODI at this iconic venue, more than 80,000 watched Srikant's 123 help India reach 240. Pakistan needed about 50 runs in the last four overs. Salim Malik launched into Maninder Singh and Kapil Dev, taking them for 22 and 16 in consecutive overs. His 72* off 36 balls saw Pak win with three balls to spare.

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'WON'T LOSE CAPTAINCY BECAUSE OF ONE MATCH'

Pakistan Skipper Babar Azam Quietly Confident Heading Into Big Clash Against India

Gaurav.Gupta
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Ahmedabad: It was a response which best summed up his unflustered, simple personality. On the eve of his team's 'Match of the Tournament' in the World Cup against India at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Pakistan captain Babar Azam, currently not in his best touch, was asked whether he was worried about losing his captaincy, should his side lose the big-ticket clash.

It will be the first time Pakistan will be playing India in India in more than seven years.

"Ek match se meri kaptaini nahi jaegi na mili thi. (I didn't get the captaincy because of one match and I will not lose it because of one match)," the 28-year-old replied, his calm demeanour backing his confident tone.

In fact, Babar did well to negotiate a 'bouncer' off the very first 'ball' that he faced in the presser—a query about whether people back home were reminding him of Pakistan's abysmal 0-7 record against India in ODI World Cups, and then urging him



BELLOW PAR: Babar Azam has scored just 168 runs in seven ODIs against India

to overturn it. "I don't focus on the past. I try to focus on the future. Such records are made to be broken and I (will) try to break them. I believe my team did well in the first two matches and will do well in the next matches as well," Babar replied.

Queried further on how he deals with the pressure of changing this lop-sided record—often played up on TV news channels, newspapers and the social media—in the eighth clash between the

teams in ODI World Cups, Babar lightened up the mood by saying: "I also got a lot of calls for tickets. Basically, people call me for tickets. We don't take pressure about this (past record) at all."

Even though Pakistan have won both their matches coming into this clash, Babar would personally have been happier with more runs in the bank, having been dismissed for five against the Netherlands & 10 against Sri Lanka in Hyderabad, in the World Cup so far. "My World Cup till now hasn't been as it should have been, but hopefully, you will see some difference in the

**Indiiiii
aaaaaa
-India**

next matches," he said.

He has endured an ordinary time in ODIs against India—just 168 runs in seven matches—but Babar pointed out that India and Pakistan don't play each other enough for his worth to be judged based on these contests. "Against India, we only come face to face in the World Cup. There is a big gap. It's not because of a bowler or...I say that I sometimes get out because of my mistake," he said.

On Saturday night, Pakistan will have to contend with India's '12th man' too—1,30,000 fans. With no visas for the Pakistan fans yet, the visitors will have no one egging them on from the stands. "If Pakistani fans were allowed, it would have been good for us," said the Pakistan captain.

Consistency is missing from Pakistan's bowling

**REVERSE SWING
WAQAR YOUNIS**

Head into the big India-Pakistan game in Ahmedabad, first of all I would like to say that Babar Azam's men will benefit immensely from three things. One, having been stationed at one place in Hyderabad for a few days, where they were treated warmly and got used to local conditions and the pitch. Two, beating Sri Lanka in such an emphatic manner by pulling off a record chase, with Mohammad Rizwan and Abdullah Shafique shining with the bat, will put Babar's men in a good mind space. And three, they have a couple of days' rest and recuperation before Saturday's big game, which is always welcome. Now that they have got rid of whatever initial nerves they had before arrival, Pakistan should be ready to travel for the rest of their World Cup engagements.

I'm surprised Azam & Co. didn't play Shafique straight away. Fakhar Zaman is capable of magic and has been a real match-winner for Pakistan, but he has been distinctly off-colour for the past 10-12 games, which is too long a period to be out of form. Shafique got a 52 against Sri Lanka in Colombo last month and he is hungry for runs. He has shown he has the willingness to learn and adapt. He

is just 23, and in World Cups we often see youngsters blossom for the more successful teams—I mean, just look at Rachin Ravindra. It's unfortunate Shubman Gill has been out with injury so far, otherwise he too is another youngster who is ready to stamp his authority on the Cup. Shafique is technically sound with a conventional approach but he has shown he can also switch gears. Such capabilities are always handy in 50-over cricket, which is not always a slam-bang affair.

People like to think of India-Pakistan games as Pakistan's bowling versus India's batting but on these pitches, as we have seen, the batting firepower and depth on both sides is important. The Pakistan batting lineup, on paper, is very strong and they bat deep. I like the presence of Saud Shakeel at No. 5—he plays spin very well—and Ifitikhar Ahmed at No. 6 before the two allrounders come in.

It seems surprising saying this but it's Pakistan's bowling which is more of a concern. They didn't bowl well against Sri Lanka and the consistency is missing.

Indiiiii aaaa-India

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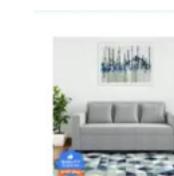
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