

## Manmohan Singh's life and work profoundly shaped India's destiny : CWC



New Delhi, Dec 27 (GNS) The Congress Working Committee (CWC) met here on Friday and paid glowing tributes to former prime minister Manmohan Singh, saying he was a towering figure in India's political and economic landscape whose contributions transformed the country and earned him respect worldwide.

In a condolence resolution passed at the meeting, CWC mourned the loss of a "true statesman" whose life and work have profoundly shaped the destiny of India.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, and Congress general secretaries Jairam Ramesh, KC Venugopal and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra among others met here at the AICC headquarters for a meeting of CWC to pay homage to the former prime minister.

Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms and a consensus builder in the rough world of politics, died at AIIMS, Delhi, late on Thursday. He was 92. He is survived by his wife and three daughters. "Dr Singh was a towering figure in India's political and economic landscape, whose contributions transformed the country and earned him respect worldwide. As Finance Minis-

ter in the early 1990s, Dr Singh was the architect of India's economic liberalisation," the CWC resolution read. With unmatched foresight, he initiated a series of reforms that not only saved the nation from a balance-of-payments crisis but also opened the doors to global markets, it said.

"Through his policies of deregulation, privatization, and the encouragement of foreign investment, he laid the foundation for India's rapid economic growth. Under his stewardship, India emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, a testament to his brilliance and vision," CWC said.

As the 13th prime minister of India, Singh led the country with a sense of calm determination and exceptional wisdom and his tenure was marked by sustained economic growth, global recognition and social progress, it said.

"He (Singh) steered the nation through the challenges of the global financial crisis in 2008 with strategic measures that shielded India from its worst effects. His leadership saw remarkable initiatives like MGNREGA, Right to Education, the historic Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal, National Food Security Act, Land Acquisition Act, Agricultural Debt Waiver and Debt

Relief Scheme, and the 93rd Constitutional Amendment that advanced social justice for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and OBCs through Article 15(5)," it said.

Singh also championed the Right to Information (RTI) Act to enhance transparency, the Forest Rights Act to empower tribal communities and contributed to achieving the highest GDP growth rate during his tenure, the CWC condolence resolution said.

"Dr Singh's dedication to inclusive growth, international diplomacy, and economic modernisation strengthened India's position in the global arena, while simultaneously focusing on the welfare of the common man. His legacy as a compassionate, reformist leader who prioritised stability and development will forever be etched in India's history," CWC said.

Beyond his contributions as a politician, Singh was a respected academician, whose career as an economist helped shape India's policies and direction, the resolution said. "His scholarly work as an economist and his service at institutions like the United Nations and the Reserve Bank of India laid the groundwork for many of the economic reforms he later championed as a policymaker," it said.

## Kapil Sibal says PM's visit to CJJ's resident shouldn't have been publicised

► Describing CJI Chandrachud as 'a man of great personal integrity', Sibal urges media not to blow it out of proportion and speculate on personal motives

New Delhi, Dec 27 (GNS) Amid raging controversy over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to CJI DY Chandrachud's residence to attend Ganesh Puja, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President Kapil Sibal on Thursday said such a private visit shouldn't have been publicised as it has given an opportunity to people to gossip about the Judiciary.

"It is not a public matter and, therefore, should be no videography, photographs which then should be allowed to be made public... especially in the context of people holding highest positions in the country because what happens is it sort of ignites a debate which is unnecessary and harmful to the institution," Sibal said, adding, he was "really surprised" to see the clip going viral online.

Describing CJI Chandrachud as "a man of great personal integrity", Sibal urged the media not to blow it out of proportion and speculate on personal motives. The CJI may not have known that the video of the function would be publicised, he added.

"No public functionary, whoever it may be, especially those who hold the highest post in India - the President, the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India - should publicise a private event. I am sure that maybe the Chief Justice may not have known that this was being publicised. The Prime Minister should never have shown his interest to go to such a private event, because the Prime Minister and those he must have consulted should, and must have



told them that this may send a wrong signal," Sibal said.

"Quite frankly, I was taken aback. I have been in the Supreme Court, in this institution for over 50 years. I have seen the greatest of judges, both past and the present. We are passionate about the institution, not passionate about any individual... I have great respect for the present Chief Justice. I can say without any hesitation that he is a man of great personal integrity," Sibal said.

Requesting the Prime Minister not to make a spectacle of these events, the SCBA President said, "It's not the first time that there is a Chief Justice from Maharashtra ... and in the context that there is going to be an election in Maharashtra, that's not an opportune time for the Prime Minister to have made a public spectacle of a private ceremony."

"Once you do this, what message do you send to those in the high courts and judiciary functioning at various levels in the country. They also look upon these things. Therefore, that sends a signal which is also unfortunate," Sibal said.

## As Siddaramaiah faces MUDA heat, 'loyalists' line up to replace him

New Delhi, Dec 27 (GNS) Karnataka, one of the only three states under the Congress rule, has again been plunged into dramatic political turmoil, which it is known for. With Chief Minister Siddaramaiah facing sustained attacks from the BJP over allegations of irregularities in allotment of land by the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA), the state is again in the news for its characteristic high-voltage politics. A number of party leaders and ministers have been openly issuing bold statements, expressing the desire to step into the shoes of Siddaramaiah, if need be; these statements have been flagged by some state office-bearers to party president Mallikarjun Kharge. A group of Congress lead-

ers has urged Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, to warn those making such statements as they are "bringing down the morale of the cadre across the state". Instead of fighting the BJP and JD(S), such leaders are "demoralising cadres", who are "losing hope" in the government and the party, they said.

They asked the central leadership to "warn them against issuing such damaging statements in future in the interest of the Congress party and the state of Karnataka". "Those who took charge as ministers should focus on implementing announcements made in the Budget. They should listen to the grievances of the public and respond to their problems.



It is wrong to go around claiming to be aspirants for the CM's post," a party office-bearer was quoted as saying.

MUDA fallout  
Facing intense criticism from the Opposition, which has been demanding his resignation, Siddaramaiah has dismissed the accusations in the MUDA allotments as "baseless". He has, in turn, accused the BJP of indulging in "vendetta politics" and trying to "destabilise" his government. The debate around his future intensified after Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot granted the sanction to prosecute him in the MUDA case.

## Putin proposes meeting with Modi at BRICS summit next month



New Delhi, Dec 27 (GNS) In a boost to peace efforts in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Indian National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval met Russian President Vladimir Putin today and conveyed details of the discussions between India and Ukraine on possible measures for resolving the conflict.

Doval met Putin on the sidelines of the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) NSAs meeting at Saint Petersburg. During the meeting, Putin proposed a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi next month on the sidelines of the BRICS leaders' summit in Kazan, Russia.

Prime Minister Modi and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had met in Kyiv on August 23, with Doval present among the inner core group of Modi's team during the meeting. The Indian NSA conveyed details of the talks in Kyiv, according to the Kremlin, which published a transcript and photos of the Putin-Doval meeting on its website.

The transcript quoted Doval as saying, "He (Modi) wanted me to come in person and tell you about the talks that took place (in Kyiv). It was a closed format, only the two leaders were present, and I was with Prime Minister (Modi); I witnessed this conversation."

Earlier this month, Putin suggested that China, India, and Brazil could act as mediators in potential peace talks

with Ukraine at an event in Vladivostok. On August 27, Modi spoke with Putin over the phone, emphasising the importance of dialogue, diplomacy, and sincere engagement for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The Kremlin stated that Putin blamed Ukraine and its 'Western friends' for what he called 'destructive policies.'

Regarding Putin's proposal for a bilateral meeting with Modi, the Kremlin quoted Putin as saying, "We are waiting for Modi in Kazan. I propose holding a bilateral meeting on October 22 in Kazan to summarise our joint work on implementing the agreements reached during his visit to Moscow and outline prospects for the near future."

From the Russian side, Secretary of the Security Council Sergei Shoigu was present at the Doval-Putin meeting in St Petersburg. The Indian Embassy in Russia posted on X about a separate bilateral meeting between Doval and Shoigu, stating, "Both sides reviewed progress in bilateral cooperation and discussed important issues of mutual interest."

In New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "NSA Doval met President Putin. He has other engagements in Russia." Doval is in St Petersburg to participate in the BRICS NSAs meeting from September 10 to 12.

## India successfully flight tests surface-to-air missile

► The flight test was carried out from a land-based vertical launcher, aiming at a high-speed aerial target flying at a low altitude

Balasore (Odisha), Dec 27 (GNS) The Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy on Thursday successfully flight tested vertical launch short range surface-to-air missile from Chandipur, off Odisha coast, defence officials said here. The test was conducted around 3 pm from the integrated test range in Chandipur, they said.

The flight test was carried out from a land-based vertical launcher, aiming at a high-speed aerial target flying at a low altitude. The missile system successfully tracked and engaged the target, they said. The flight test aimed at validating multiple updated elements of the weapon system, the defence officials said.

The performance of the system was "meticulously tracked and confirmed by various instruments" such as telemetry deployed at ITR Chandipur. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised the teams from DRDO and the Indian Navy

for their achievement, stating that this test reaffirms the reliability and effectiveness of the VL-SRSAM weapon system.

DRDO Chairman Dr Samir V Kamat congratulated the teams and said that the system will significantly enhance the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy and serve as a force multiplier.

Before the test, around 3,100 people residing within a radius of 2.5 kilometres of the launch pad were shifted to temporary shelters, a Balasore district official said.

The district administration also informed these people that they would need to be shifted again to temporary camps on Friday.

The people have been requested to start shifting from 5 am to temporary shelters and return to their respective villages after the administration gives them a green signal, the revenue officer. These are the measures taken in consultation with the ITR authority at Chandipur for safety, he added



# The myth of Tunisia's exceptionalism

Tunisia celebrated the seventh anniversary of the downfall of its former dictatorship with protests. For two weeks now, people have been demonstrating in impoverished towns like Tebourba and Ettadhamon, near the capital, Tunis, and towns like Kasserine in the mid-west, Sakiet Sidi Yousef in the north-west, and Sidi Bouzid in the south, where the revolution started in 2010.

Since the Tunisian uprising brought down Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011, a series of demonstrations have marked the anniversary of the revolution. And it is likely that they will grow into more substantial and violent unrest. Despite continuing popular protests and obvious signs of the rebirth of the Tunisian police state, international media continues to cover Tunisia as a relative success story.

The peaceful transition from the despotic regime of Ben Ali towards a participatory democracy with organised and active political parties, the drafting of a new constitution, and the competitive 2014 elections have been hailed as the ultimate proof of the "exceptionalism" of Tunisia and its transitional model. What is central to these narratives is a rather superficial comparison between the relative peacefulness of Tunisia's transition and the state disintegration in Libya, Syria and Yemen. After all, having an example of a "successful revolution" can always provide a glimpse of hope and optimism especially in these dystopian times. But this framing of the democratic transition in Tunisia since 2011 dismisses a dismal reality.

The construction and consolidation of the idea of "Tunisian exceptionalism" support the fetishisation of Tunisia's democracy as a political commodity. In turn, this process of fetishisation enables neoliberal political campaigns and interventions to be implemented while it denies the possibility of establishing radical democratic frameworks and policies. During Ben Ali's era, exceptional improvements in women's rights and the implementation of dogmatic secularism were used to promote the "impressive accomplishments" of the regime and hide its widespread and systematic human rights violations such the persecution of political opponents and abuse of government critics. France and the EU were complicit in promoting the "successes" of Ben Ali's regime and establishing Tunisia as "a pillar of stability and peace" despite a deteriorating social and political reality. Under the current government, the Tunisian political and social elite has exploited this same idea and pushed coercive policies designed to maintain the socioeconomic status quo under the excuse of ensuring economic survival and political stability. More radical changes and demands have been portrayed as dangerous to the stability and progress of the country. The ongoing pro-

tests, for example, erupted after the Tunisian government implemented austerity measures that caused commodity prices to go up dramatically. These policies, pushed onto the government by neoliberal institutions like the International Monetary Fund, fall in line with the ones Ben Ali's regime implemented. It was these very policies that led to the mass impoverishment of the Tunisian population and ultimately a pervasive popular malaise.

And it was under the cover of facilitating the democratic transition to "a new Tunisia" that the ruling majority passed a corruption amnesty bill in September 2017. The law grants amnesty to officials accused of corruption during the autocratic rule of Ben Ali. It signalled a failure of political reformism and a hostile democratic backslide. The idea of maintaining the internationally celebrated status of the "Arab Spring exception" has also given the Tunisian authorities an excuse to not only prevent the much-needed reform of the interior ministry and the security apparatus but also bring back securitisation policies of the Ben Ali era. A bill that could allow security forces to use even more violent means on the public is still under consideration in the Tunisian parliament. The "Repression of attacks against armed forces" bill, if voted in, will grant members of the security apparatus immunity from prosecution if they use lethal force and will prohibit criticism of the police force.

Again, international institutions and media, especially in Europe, continue to promote the exceptional status of Tunisia as a stable country in an unstable region and to overlook the social and political malaise behind the episodic unrest.

This time, the launching of an LGBT radio station and radical proposals that will grant women equal inheritance rights and allow them to marry outside the Muslim faith are used to maintain the idea of "Tunisian exceptionalism". While these political decisions can be seen as revolutionary, they reflect an artificial top-down approach to the issue of women's rights and suffer from the absence of a genuine and healthy public debate. What remains then is the desired circulation of shining headlines in Western media on Tunisia's "special status".

"Tunisian exceptionalism", this logic goes, must be maintained through peace and stability; any demands for radical change are seen as dangerous and disruptive. Hence, when the latest wave of protests erupted, the Tunisian political elite called for unity and peaceful demonstrations and reminded Tunisians how we are being perceived abroad. The angry protestors were portrayed as a threat to the "success story". The more serious problem here is that the rhetorical use of the "Tunisian exceptionalism" has been a rather successful strategy. For many Tu-

nisians who have long been conditioned to believe in a Western (neo)liberal view of the world and of themselves, the exceptionalism narrative makes sense. This double consciousness of always viewing oneself through the eyes of Western media has made many Tunisians believe in the perceived urgency of maintaining the Tunisian "success story". As a result, they have chosen to ignore the reality of a stolen revolution that they live in. During the demonstrations, the criminalisation of the protesters found a receptive audience in Tunisia because pro-government pundits in international and local media have polarised popular opinion, setting Tunisia's success story against criticism from the civil society.

Deepening socioeconomic problems and increased repression have fuelled a toxic relationship between Tunisia's youth and its ruling elite that is built on cynicism, confrontation, and excessive violence. The rhetorical question in the Fech Nestanaw (What Are We waiting for?) movement's name speaks to the widespread idea that a corrective second revolution is urgently needed. Tunisia's exceptionalism is a myth. Its logic is unsustainable. Long-standing structural issues and the gradual return to a hegemonic ruling elite challenges the forced legitimisation of a failing political leadership.

Lured by government promises of relocation compensation, a new apartment, and good jobs, many rural residents have joined the ranks of urban dwellers, but at the cost of becoming almost entirely dependent upon the government for what little income and benefits they receive.

Under Chinese law, villagers have limited property rights. In the case of government land seizure, a farmer is entitled to only a small fraction of the land's value. Payouts vary from village to village and project to project, and nearly a quarter of the time residents get no compensation at all. But when villagers are compensated, they only receive 5 to 10 per cent of the land's value, while local authorities sell the land to developers for millions. According to one survey, 43 per cent of Chinese villages had experienced government land grabs, with nearly 20 per cent of these cases being forced evictions.

Though more than three-quarters received some form of compensation, more than half were left feeling dissatisfied. Two decades after the colossal Three Gorges Dam displaced 1.2 million people along the Yangtze River, many continue to petition the government over their compensation. Some residents complain that they received less than 30,000 yuan (\$4,600) per person, far below what was originally promised. Although 30,000 yuan is not insignificant in the countryside, it doesn't go far in the city, where the average household earns over 33,000 yuan a year in dis-

posable income per capita. A 2013 visit by the New York Times to a newly built town in Shaanxi province revealed that relocated residents huddled around open fires in their front yards despite having indoor heating because they could not afford the electricity costs.

By law, all Chinese workers are entitled to a pension, unemployment insurance, health care, and housing assistance as well as access to public education. However, in reality, access to the system is favouring urban residents and leaving out rural farmers and those who have left the countryside in search of work. But providing rural transplants and migrant workers with the services they need is a prohibitively expensive proposition. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a state-run think tank, estimates it would cost \$15 billion to provide a million new urban residents with crucial services like education and health care. Moving 70 million, as the government plans, would cost more than a trillion dollars, more than one-third of all current government expenditures.

This additional spending comes as China's pension system is bracing for a wave of payouts. Due to the one-child policy, much of the nation's workforce is rapidly approaching retirement age while a shrinking number of young workers replace their ranks and replenish the pension system. An analysis by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences shows the nation's pension fund surplus will turn into a deficit by 2023 and grow to \$118 trillion by 2050 if significant reforms are not made. On top of that, local governments are buried in more than \$2.5 trillion of debt and often unable to provide necessary services to residents.

To fill their coffers, cash-strapped local authorities have taken to the unsustainable practice of seizing land from villagers and selling it to developers. Over the last decade and a half, this has led to deadly clashes, and dozens have set themselves on fire in protest. China's anti-poverty plan hinges on attracting rural residents to second- and third-tier cities, but villagers have shown little interest in moving there. Instead, they have clung to their rural homes and travelled to thriving cities to seek opportunities. The government has a long record of forcefully relocating residents, but it has always risked social unrest by doing so. In 2011, the village of Wukan made international headlines after authorities laid siege to the town following a mass uprising over a land grab. The protest was eventually quieted, but the government has little appetite for the costs of further suppression. So to incentivise voluntary moves, the central government has promised massive infrastructure spending, linking every city with more than 200,000 residents by rail and expressways, and cities with more than 500,000 by high-speed rail.

# Lessons in modern Irish history

A rainy day is a good day for a funeral, they say in Ireland. And on Monday morning, aged 95 years, Rosaleen Sands was laid to rest in the quiet corner of Belfast city cemetery. On May 5, 1981, her son, Bobby had died while on hunger strike — the first of 10 Irish Republican prisoners to starve themselves to death, to try and win recognition of a political status that the terrorists then engaged in a bitter violent political feud with Britain over its involvement in Northern Ireland. That struggle claimed more than 3,600 lives over three decades of conflict, and its repercussions are being felt till today.

As far as the then United Kingdom prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, was concerned, Sands and all the paramilitary members jailed under special anti-terror legislation and in courts that cut corners on normal legal and judicial standards, were common criminals. A month before Sands died, he had been elected a member of parliament for Fermanagh at Westminster. It was a watershed and seminal moment in Irish and UK history, garnering international attention and stinging criticism for the manner in which British authorities had responded to the crisis. It was an event that propelled Sinn Fein and its leadership under Gerry Adams, to the top of the political cause celeb charts, advancing support for that group's brand of violent Irish nationalism, and winning financial donations from the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) from misinformed, misguided and hardly sober Irish Americans in bars from Boston to the Bronx and Baltimore.

Sands was a charismatic man with a way with words. He said of the British security services at the time: "They have nothing in their whole imperial arsenal that can break the spirit of one Irishman who doesn't want to be broken." Last week, as I sat in a West End of London theatre, watching a wholly engaging production of The Ferryman, Jez Butterworth's fine take on absence, loss and family, set against the backdrop of that bitter hunger strike, Sands' words were quoted. And they are still capable of making a powerful and dramatic point about the human spirit so many years after the real and painful context of those events.

Alan Black is a man who has many painful memories of those dark days, and he bears the scars today of 18 gunshot wounds on his body. Black was the only survivor of the so-called Kingsmill massacre, an event that occurred on the dark evening of January 5, 1976. There were 12 men travelling in a minibus when it was stopped by an IRA gang. One Roman Catholic on board was allowed go free.

The other 11 were riddled with bullets, and Black was the only one to survive, frightfully injured. Ironically, when the gunmen asked from behind their balaclavaed faces: "Who is the Catholic?", those on board feared he would be singled out for execution, and they pleaded for his life. They were gunned down instead. Sadly, it was one of many horrific attacks that took place during the Troubles, as that period of political and sectarian violence in Ireland is commonly known. And earlier this month, as the 42nd anniversary of that massacre approached, another Sinn Fein MP was making headlines for all the wrong reasons. Barry McElduff posted a video on social media where he posed with a loaf of Kingsmill bread on his head as he supposedly couldn't find any.

Black was horrified, and raised the alarm. Sinn Fein tried to play down the video, but as Black later told Ireland's national broadcaster RTE, "[McElduff's] a very astute politician. He's a very clever man ... He done it deliberately to cause hurt and he succeeded in spades in the hurt that he caused." Sinn Fein suspended McElduff from the party for three months and hoped that the storm would go away. It didn't, and coincidentally, as Rosaleen Sands, the mother of a man of honour, was being laid to rest, McElduff quietly tendered his resignation as an MP in the House of Commons. Here's the thing, though. Technically, an MP cannot resign. The House of Commons is a bizarre place, in part for those elected there, but more so for the historic rules, conventions and procedures that govern day-to-day activities. In a ruling dating all the way back to 1624 and a time when King James I was sitting on the English throne, parliament passed a resolution that its members are not allowed to resign their sets of their own will. As it stands since March 2 of that fourth year in the reign of King James, an MP can only vacate his seat if he dies, if he is expelled by the House of Commons, or is disqualified.

# Keeping the faith within a stone's throw

Unarmed Gazan protesters gather peacefully at makeshift encampments by the wire-fence separating their tormented strip of land from Israel. They evocatively call their trek to the border March for the Return. They number in the tens of thousands, and they are in a festive mood. Ordinary, everyday Palestinian men, women, children. Young and old. The elderly in wheel chairs. Toddlers in strollers.

The idea for the march was first floated by social media activists several months before and only later adopted — some will say, latched on to — by Hamas. But no need here to fret over who sired it.

It smacked of people-power and hit a chord with Gazans. After all, to march for the return speaks to many in Gaza, out of whose population of just under two million, 1.3 million are refugees, or the descendants of refugees, from cities, towns and villages in ancestral Palestine.

And these folks begin to throw stones at the fence, most hurled from 150 to 200 yards (imagine a par 3, if you're a golfer) with only a few reaching their target. No matter. Stone throwing is a symbolic act for Palestinians, going back to the days of the 1987 uprising against the occupation, an uprising that captivated the imagination of people around the world, who in turn naturalised its Arab name, Intifada, into their own languages.

It was a Friday, the last day but one of March, which coincided with Day of the Land — for Palestinians a solemn occasion that commemorates the events of 1976 when the Israeli government's announcement of a plan to expropriate and colonise thousands of dunams of Palestinian land triggered protests that resulted in the killing of six unarmed Pal-

## ► Dispersal in exile and suffering under occupation have helped the Palestinians sustain their identity and sharpen their resolve for survival

estinians and the wounding of a hundred others. And here are these Palestinian at the Gaza-Israel border, whose stone-throwing hurt no Israelis.

Hurling stones was not, after all, meant to hurt but to say. Yet, before the day was out, well over a dozen Palestinians were shot dead by soldiers and hundreds of others were injured.

Why, you wonder, did the Israelis unleash such lethal fury against a crowd of unarmed Palestinians?

Simply this: They were unarmed and they were Palestinian. Nothing scares Israel — and sends a shiver down its spine — more than unarmed Palestinians reminding it of who they are, where they came from and why their sense of peoplehood remains anchored in Palestine. Hey, Palestinians as a nation were meant to have atrophied and disappeared from the world stage soon after their dismissal in the Balfour Declaration a century before as "the non-Jewish communities in Palestine" and the "Arab refugees" they were called after their patrimony was dismembered seven decades ago.

Yes, here they are, in the tens of thousands, with their children and grandchildren at "our border", armed with evocative slogans like the return (Awda), the catastrophe (Nakba), exile (ghourba) and land-is-honour (Ardi-Aardi), slogans that, as they gave resonance to the Palestinians' collective vision, raised serious doubts not only about "our claims" to exclusive ownership of the land but also about "our right" to subordinate others.

Yes, indeed, a war waged by Palestin-

ians where they throw stones at their occupiers, and coin poignant bywords imbued with historical pathos, is more deadly to Israeli leaders than one waged through use of blood and fire

Recall how conservative Jews in Israel and in the Euro-American world reacted when, in July 2001, the late Edward Said, the renowned Palestinian academic and the West's most respected Arab intellectual, himself decided to become a stone-thrower, headed down south of Lebanon and hurled his own symbolic projectiles at the fence that Israel had erected after it ended its 18 years of occupation of the region: The man was so ostracised that the Freud Society in Vienna cancelled a lecture he had been invited to deliver there titled 'Freud and the non-European' — and never mind the pouring of outrage by conservative Jews in Israel and the United States. (Said expressed surprise at the reactions his action caused, but no regret at his move.)

True, Palestinians have lived troubled lives — for some, as Gazans will tell you, non-lives — but if the ethos of the Nakba has taught them anything, it is this that the strength of a community reveals itself in times of distress, when men and women find that a capacity to show resilience, teleologically acquired during national struggle, becomes woven into the fabric of their identity. Somehow you find ways to survive and heal, to regenerate and re-vision. you become empowered, as it were, by the spite of your enemy. And Jews, more than anyone else, should know about that from their long

history of interaction with anti-Semites in the European world. Thus, Spinoza, the 17th century Dutch philosopher, who was of Jewish descent, observed in his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus that the Gentile enmity directed at Jews had the effect, ironically, of preserving the Jewish identity — in short, to extrapolate here, we can say that just as today Israelis accuse Palestinians of terrorism, Gentiles in Spinoza's time (and beyond) accused Jews of acts of malfeasance, that is, the killing of Jesus, which made Jews deserving of degradation.

Dispersal in exile and suffering under occupation should have, over the last seven decades, caused the Palestinians to become unglued, but in fact these two different calamities have served, in tandem, to sustain their identity and sharpen their genius for survival. We mourn the death of the 18 Palestinians who were killed at the border last Friday as they protested within a stone's throw from their ancestral homeland.

They died as martyrs. And when a man dies, his life ends, but when a martyr dies, his life begins. Their memory will continue to animate new modes of expression in our lives.

So keep the faith, I say, keep the faith, when you join the March for the Return again this coming Friday, perhaps finding time to sing the song that my generation of Palestinians, who grew up in the refugee camps in Beirut in the late 1950s, sang, a song whose refrain is: 'Who am I, who are ye? I am the returnee, I am the returnee.'

# Pigeon seduces women with advanced techniques

- ▶ Madhukar Reddy is the manager of Mahalakshmi Enterprises
- ▶ APGVB RM GPS. Chaitanya Kumar Pigeon Kitchen

## Outlet Launched in Hanumakonda

Warangal, 27 December : Nallavelli Madhukar Reddy, manager of Mahalakshmi Enterprises, announced the inauguration of a new Pigeon Company outlet on Naeem Nagar Main Road, Hanumakonda. The event, held on Friday, was graced by APGVB RM GPS. Chaitanya Kumar as the Chief Guest.

The outlet, supported financially by APGVB, aims to offer high-quality, affordable kitchen supplies designed with advanced technology.

Madhukar Reddy emphasized that these products cater to the middle class, enabling easy preparation of delicious meals. He also suggested that the products serve as ideal gifts for special occasions. RM GPS. Chaitanya Kumar encouraged the city residents to make



use of the opportunity and praised the organizers, Madhukar Reddy and his wife Madhavi, for their efforts. Mahalakshmi Enterprises committed to building

customer trust through guaranteed warranties and excellent service. The event was attended by APGVB employees, relatives, and well-wishers.

# TG IIC Chairman Nirmala Jaggareddy Tribute to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh

Sangareddy District December 28 : In Sangareddy District Center Nirmala Jaggareddy paid tributes to former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, the country's financial father, and said that the country has lost a great leader. The leader who took the country forward economically and made many reforms said that he did many things like food scheme, Aadhaar, RTI Act, Education Act, etc. CDC chairman Ram Reddy, ex-library chairman Topaji Anantha Kishan, Congress leaders Koonna Santhosh, Kiran Goud, Mahesh, Srikanta Goud, Sadashivapet Party President Siddanna, Councilors Nagaraj, Sohail, Leaders Kasini Raju, Chithari Yadagiri, Srinivas and others were present.



# District SP will reduce the crime rate

## ▶ Chennai Rupesh

Sangareddy District December 28 : District SP Chennuru Rupesh said in the SP office in Sangareddy district center that in the year 2024 ganja, the district industrialist said that a lot of care has been taken on traffic matters and the activation of She Teams has reduced the shortage of police in the district with the arrival of 430 new constables.

As the development is progressing, a boy who went missing in the government hospital two months ago was saved in 30 hours due to the construction of QR code for autos so that the workers going in shifts do not face any problem.

This year there were almost 8 cases last year but this time 24 ganja cases have been filed Karnataka border is about 150 distance Orissa, Andhra, Mumbai, Karnataka, Maharashtra, those who transported ganja from the states were imported and



those who exported them were brought and remanded. In cyber crime 4780 people were arrested and remanded.

900 were recovered, 17,500 passport applications were made, 17119 were given in verification, murders increased by 4 percent, recovery was 26%, 11 people were sentenced to life imprisonment, 1 was hanged. 150 cases

of matka were bound over and a police canteen was also set up. Sangareddy Town, Sangareddy Rural, Sadashivapet, Zaheerabad Narayankhed, Patancheru. The related technical teams have been formed and all this is being done peacefully without any issues. Patancheru, Sangareddy, Narayankhed DSPs and CIs participated in this program.

# A land dispute between two families that took lives

- ▶ One died and another was seriously injured
- ▶ No one's name was recorded in the government records on the land
- ▶ Case registered against two families: CI Nagarjuna Rao

Warangal, 27 December : The land dispute between the families of Dongiri Butchaiah and Sodari Lingiah in Ippala Gudem, Kataram Mandal, Jayashankar Bhupalapalli district, escalated tragically, resulting in one death and a serious injury. This long-standing dispute, reportedly without proper land ownership records, has led to violence in the past, with cases already registered against both families. On Friday morning, Dongiri Butchaiah confronted Lingiah and his wife, Padma, at the disputed site, which soon turned into a heated argument. During the altercation, Butchaiah attacked Padma with a shovel, inflicting severe injuries. Padma informed her son, Pawan, who, enraged by the incident, confronted Butchaiah near a cattle hospital in Kataram. Armed with a stick,



Pawan struck Butchaiah on the head, leading to his immediate death. Circle inspector Nagarjuna Rao confirmed that prior clashes between these families were reported to the police, primarily stemming from the lack of documented ownership of the land under cultivation. A case has been registered, and further investigations are underway. This incident underscores the critical need for proper land documentation and conflict resolution mechanisms to prevent such trag-

# Mitti Cafe now available at Bolarum Rastrapathi Nilayam

Hyderabad, Dec.27 (NSS): The popular Mitti Cafe is now available to the people at the Rashtrapati Nilayam in Bolarum, Hyderabad. The cafe is managed by 15 people with mental, physical, and health disabilities. At the Mitti cafe, they prepare and sell delicious, high-quality samosas, chaat, pakodi, masala tea, biscuits, coffee, Maggi, sandwiches, various types of ice creams and other snacks. We regularly see people suffering from various physical and mental health disabilities, and their parents struggling under their care. The Mitti Cafe is a non-profit organisation formed to reach out to such children and provide them with the skills and training they need to stand on their own feet and become financially self-reliant. G. Swathi, an organiser, explained that Mitti Cafes have been set up at more than 40 recognised locations across the country, including the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi.

**PICTALK**



The event involved several prominent figures, including Vardhannapet MLA KR Nagaraju, Hanumakonda District Kisan Congress President Pingili Venkatram Narasimha Reddy, and District Legal Sales Vice President Shekhar Rao,

gathering to honor Chief Advisor Vem Narendar Reddy on his birthday. The group paid floral tributes at his residence in Hyderabad on Friday, marking the occasion with respect and celebration.

- Warangal

**PICTALK**



Deeply saddened by the passing of former Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, an outstanding leader who is widely revered by the Indian people. Heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones." From Mohd Yaseen Ayyubi Bhai (Telan-

gana Pradesh Senior Leader,) Shaik Nayeem Uddin bhai, (Telangana Pradesh Senior Leader)...Masood Patel, Sajeed Patel, Ishaq bhai, Zafar bhai, Shaik Akram bhai, Shabbir bhai, Mozzam Khan and other at Suleman Nagar, Rajendranagar Constituency.



Organized by Hasnain Islamic, like every year this year too, on the occasion of New Year, the fourth annual gathering to prevent the young generation from immorality and obscenity will be held on Tuesday, December 31, 2024, at 9:30 PM, at Vate Pally Muhammadiyah Colony Mosque. It will be held at Amr Bhai's house opposite Muhammadiyah. This spiritual gathering is

a great opportunity to spend the New Year, happiness, blessings and seeking the pleasure of Allah. Ikram and Mushaykeen Azam will shed detailed light on the Islamic perspective on the New Year. The Zamdaran of the above-mentioned blessed gathering appealed to the public, especially the youth, to participate in this blessed gathering without time limit and get the rewards.



At the wedding ceremony of Mohammed Mazher Uddin's brother Mohammed Zubair Uddin's son, Mohammed Muneer Uddin, prominent attendees included Mohammed Siddiq Ahmed (Founder of ZED NEWS TV CHANNEL), Mohammed Riyaz Ahmed (Chairman), Mirza Yousuf Ali Baig Sufi, and others. At Shah Palace Attapur Hyderabad.

**PICTALK**



On 26th Dec at Grand Function Hall, Marriage of Mr. Mohammed Moinuddin's daughter with Syed Abdul Qhalig s/o Mr. Syed Abdul Malik. Function attended by big personalities like (Al-Indo Arab Federation) President Mr. Ali Habeeb Mohammed Sikander Hashmi, Wrestler Mohammed Wajid, State Youth President Mohammed Majid Ahmed, Mohammed Nayeem Uddin, Mohammed Tahir and others.

# India collapse after Jaiswal's terrible run-out

►Stumps India 164 for 5 (Jaiswal 82, Kohli 36, Pant 6\*, Jadeja 4\*, Boland 2-24, Cummins 2-57) trail Australia 474 (Smith 140, Labuschagne 72, Konstas 60, Khawaja 57, Cummins 49, Bumrah 4-99, Jadeja 3-78, Akash Deep 2-94) by 310 runs

Melbourne, Dec 27 (GNS) A familiar collapse unfolded after Yashasvi Jaiswal's inexplicable run-out as India stared down the barrel at 164/5 against a menacing Australia on day two of the fourth Test here on Friday. Jaiswal, who was quite fluent during his 118-ball stay that yielded 82 runs, was way short of his crease after a mix-up with Virat Kohli (36) while attempting a quick single, handing Australia the breakthrough that could prove decisive.

India are still 310 runs behind Australia's first innings score of 474 and would need another 111 runs to avoid a follow-on that should never have been a consideration on a placid batting track. It was 153 for 2 at one stage and in four overs, another three wickets fell with Gautam Gambhir's plan of sending a night watchman in Akash Deep turning out to be one of the many poor calls that the head coach has taken in this game. In a space of barely five minutes, cricket showed its fickle nature as Jaiswal pushed towards mid-on and called for a

quick single with an assured Kohli (36) at the other end. Kohli took a step and half before retreating. It was a day that started and ended badly for India.

They were insipid in the field during the morning as Australia ransacked 143 runs off 27 overs with Smith, who went to his 34th Test century to be within 51 of reaching 10,000 Test runs, and Cummins combining to add 112 for the seventh wicket.

Kohli, the day after being fined for his shoulder contact with Sam Konstas, wore a look of determination from the start of his innings. After a series of dismissals pushing at deliveries away from his body, Kohli left alone plenty as Australia's quicks tried to tempt him, although he did unfurl one pristine cover drive.

When Starc strayed on to the pads, Kohli flicked him powerfully through midwicket. Yet, ultimately, the channel outside off proved his downfall, and perhaps the effects of Jaiswal's run out as well. Smith brought up his century with a pristine cover drive off



Nitesh Kumar Reddy, and then took on the struggling Mohammed Siraj, who conceded more than five an over. It was as fluent as



Smith had looked for a long time, perhaps even back to the halcyon days of 2019. The century stand with Cummins was raised in



Steven Smith brought up his second straight century.

21 overs with the Australia captain showing the danger he can provide when playing positively. But, with up to three innings remaining against India, he now has a good chance to reaching one of cricket's rare summits before this series is done.

# Haaland penalty failure and Fernandes red card pile on woes for City and United in Premier League

Manchester, Dec 27 (GNS) Erling Haaland's failure from the penalty spot and Bruno Fernandes' latest red card compounded the woes of Manchester City and Manchester United on another tough day for the two Premier League giants. There were no such problems Thursday for Liverpool, which rallied to a 3-1 win over Leicester in foggy conditions at Anfield and moved seven points clear atop the standings approaching the halfway point of the campaign.

City dropped more points in its improbably poor run of form by drawing 1-1 at home to Everton, with Haaland having a spot kick saved by England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford in the 53rd minute. The four-time defending champions have only won one of their last 13 games in all competitions and manager Pep Guardiola acknowledged he needs to spend in the January transfer window to reverse City's slide.

"The transfer window in the winter is not easy, but even the players know that we have to add some new players," said Guardiola, who has had to cope without a host of key players, including Ballon d'Or winner Rodri, through injury this season. While City is languishing in seventh place, United is even further adrift in 14th place after a 2-0 loss at lowly Wolverhampton.

United played almost the entire second half with 10 men after Fernandes collected his second yellow card in the 47th minute. It was the United captain's third sending-off of the season, though one was rescinded. After seeing second-place Chelsea also drop points after conceding in the fifth minute of stoppage time to lose 2-1 at home to Fulham, Liverpool recovered from conceding in the sixth minute against Leicester to



extend its lead. Cody Gakpo, Curtis Jones and Mohamed Salah scored Liverpool's goals. Nottingham Forest won 1-0 against Tottenham and is a big surprise in third place. City pain City secured only its fifth point in the league since the end of October but that will be scant consolation to Guardiola, whose beleaguered team squandered a winning position after going ahead through Bernardo Silva's deflected shot in the 14th. Ilman Ndiaye equalized in the 36th.

Haaland's penalty failure means the Norway international has only scored once in his last seven games. He headed in from the rebound after his spot kick, but the goal was ruled out for offside. Haaland, who last week admitted his form had not been good enough during a run that has seen City's season unravel, held his head in his hands after his failure to score from the spot. He still has 18 goals

in 25 appearances this season, but has not scored in a win for his club since the 1-0 victory against Southampton on Oct. 26. "We shoot a lot in the 18-yard box, but unfortunately we could not get the results that we wanted," Guardiola said.

City's damaging run has seen it slip down the standings in the league and crash out of the English League Cup. Guardiola's team is also in danger of missing out on qualifying in the Champions League — sitting just one point above the cut-off point with two games left. Goal from a corner Wolves' first goal against United came direct from a corner, with Brazil striker Matheus Cunha seeing his kick curl over the head of goalkeeper Andre Onana and into the far corner in the 58th minute. "I was shooting — we train to shoot," Cunha said. Such goals are rare, though United also conceded from a corner in its 4-3 loss to Tottenham

in the English League Cup this month. Son Heung-min scored on that occasion. Wolves added a second through Hwang Hee-chan in the ninth minute of stoppage time and have won two straight games since Vitor Pereira replaced Gary O'Neil as manager. Cunha has 10 goals this season.

Salah scores again Salah moved three goals clear of second-place Haaland in the race for the Golden Boot, his 16th of the campaign completing Liverpool's recovery after Gakpo curled in the equalizer in first-half stoppage time and Jones made it 2-1 in the 49th. Salah has scored at least one goal in nine of his last 10 league matches, and has 19 goals in all competitions this season. Liverpool is unbeaten in its last 20 matches in all competitions, the only defeat all season under new manager Arne Slot coming at home to Forest in the league in September.

# MCC honours Tendulkar with club membership

Melbourne, Dec 27 (GNS) The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) on Friday said Indian icon Sachin Tendulkar has accepted its invitation to become an honorary member of the prestigious institution.

Founded in 1838, the MCC is one of the oldest sports clubs in Australia and is responsible for the management and development of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), one of the game's premier venues.

"An icon honoured. The MCC is pleased to announce that former Indian captain Sachin Tendulkar has accepted an Honorary Cricket Membership, acknowledging his outstanding contribution to the game," the MCC posted on 'X'.



The legendary cricketer currently holds the record of most runs at MCG with 449 from five Tests at an average of 44.90 and a strike-rate of 58.69 with a hundred and three fifties.

# World Championships Rapid and Blitz : Erigaisi looks to qualify for Candidates



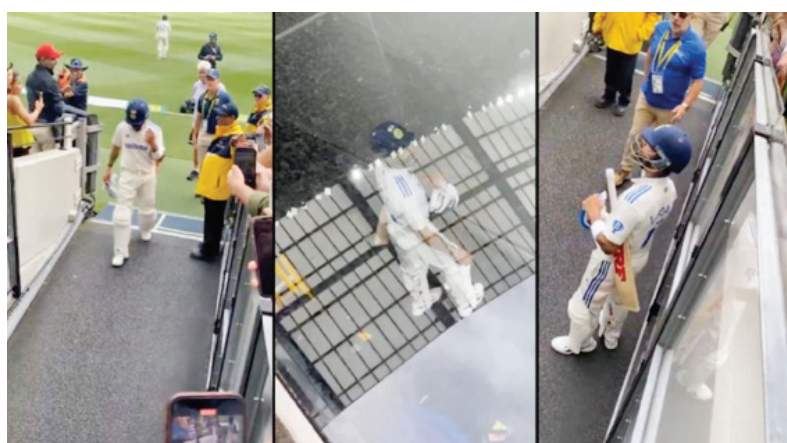
Melbourne, Dec 27 (GNS) Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi will have to tackle obstacles to retain his chances of becoming the first Indian to enter the 2026 Candidates' tournament when he opens his campaign at the World Rapid and Blitz chess tournament here. Erigaisi, who currently trails Fabiano Caruana of the United States in the list of players slated to qualify for 2024, will have a tall order to win the World Rapid chess championship that

gets underway. It may be noted here that the last time an Indian won the crown here was in 2019 when Koneru Humpy triumphed and in 2017 Viswanathan Anand had defied all odds to win the title. World's top-rated Magnus Carlsen will be back to defend his title in the faster version of the game as the top seed in both rapid and blitz. For Erigaisi to eclipse Carlsen as well as Caruana and Hikaru Nakamura of the United States is easier said than done.

# Kohli jeered at MCG after dismissal; turns around for short standoff with fans

Melbourne, Dec 27 (GNS) Star India batter Virat Kohli was booed and jeered while walking back to the dressing room after his dismissal in the Boxing Day Test against Australia here on Friday, prompting him to turn around for a brief stand-off with the fans. Kohli's conduct has become a hot topic in the ongoing fourth Test where he shoulder-charged 19-year-old debutant Sam Konstas on the opening day. It resulted in a fine and a demerit point. On Fri-

day, Kohli batted well for his 36 before being caught behind off Scott Boland. He was dismissed shortly after a mix-up with Yashasvi Jaiswal resulted in the opener running himself out at 82. As he entered the tunnel leading up to the dressing room, fans in that section of the MCG began booing him and also made some comments in a short clip that has since gone viral. Kohli strode back after hearing something that was not clearly audible in the 22-second video.



# Maheshwari, Anantjeet win skeet mixed team national title

New Delhi, Dec 27 (GNS) The duo of Maheshwari Chauhan and Anantjeet Singh Naruka rounded off a good year by winning the skeet mixed team title for their home state Rajasthan in the National Shooting Championship here on Wednesday.

In the final played at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range, the pair pulled off a tight 44-43 victory over Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Areeba Khan of Uttar Pradesh. Punjab's Ganemat Sekhon and Abhay Singh Sekhon won bronze.