

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Modi calls for...



PM Narendra Modi attending Vijaya Dashami (Dussehra) celebrations at DDA ground in Dwarka, New Delhi.

the enactment of women's reservation law. India is today emerging as the world's largest democracy as well as the most trusted democracy, he said. As Lord Ram is coming under such auspicious signs, he said after 75 years of independence, India's fortunes are now going to rise. Modi also asked people to take 10 pledges, including helping at least one poor family to raise its socio-economic status. The country will become a developed nation when everyone is developed, he said. "As long as there is even a single poor person in the country who does not have basic facilities, we will not rest," he said. The other causes he mentioned included saving water, digital transactions, cleanliness, vocal for local, quality work, domestic tourism, natural farming, consumption of millets and fitness. Vijaydashami is a festival of victory of justice over injustice, of humility over arrogance and patience over anger, Modi said, adding that it is also a day of renewing pledges. Referring to the tradition of "shastra pooja" (worshipping weapons) tradition on this day, he said weapons in India are not used for annexation but for the defence of one's territory. He emphasised on the eternal as well as modern aspects of Indian philosophy. "We know 'maryada' of Lord Ram as well as also how to defend our borders," he said.

Dussehra celebrations in...

ashes at Srinagar's SK Stadium, the cheers of the crowd filled the air, carrying a message of hope and triumph. "This grand celebration of Dussehra in Srinagar is poised to become a memorable and unifying moment in the city's history," said one of the persons present on the ground. Meanwhile, the J&K Lieutenant Governor's Advisor RR Bhatnagar also participated in the Dussehra celebration in Srinagar. Speaking to the media, the advisor extended his greetings and congratulated the district administration and the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He said the "historic return" of the Shobha Yatra is a significant example of peace, brotherhood, and communal harmony in the valley.

Cultural Marxists, woke...

cultural Marxists or woke," he said. Bhagwat said cultural Marxists reward, promote and spread anarchy. "They take control of the media and academia, and plunge education, culture, politics and social environment into confusion, chaos, and corruption," he said.

Unelected judges have...

have become focal points of engagement between civil society and the quest for social transformation. "So, people approach the courts, not just for outcomes. Let's be very clear, people approach the courts also for a voice in the process of constitutional change..." he said. This is a complex question and there are several reasons as to why people come to courts more often, he said. "It is very important for courts... because we are as many institutions of governance... of course there is the principle of the separation of powers. We don't take upon ourselves the role of the legislature or we don't take upon ourselves the role of the executive," he said. The courts are becoming places where people come in order to give vent to the expression for the society which they aspire to achieve, he said. Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud has defended his minority verdict on some aspects pertaining to same-sex marriages and said he stood by it as the judicial opinions are sometimes a "vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution". On October 17, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by the CJI unanimously refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage. However, the CJI and Justice S K Kaul were in minority on the issues of right to form civil union and right of adoption of queer couples. Speaking candidly at the 3rd Comparative Constitutional Law discussion co-hosted by the Georgetown University Law Center, Washington and the

Society for Democratic Rights (SDR), New Delhi about him being in minority in the same-sex marriage judgements, the CJI said, "I do believe it (judgement) is sometimes a vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution and I stand by what I said."

He said the CJIs have been in minority on rare occasions. "But there are 13 significant cases in our history where the Chief Justice has been in a minority. And, I do believe, sometimes it is a vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution and I stand by what I said," he said. "Therefore, we said that, well, it's time for Parliament to act. Apart from that, that's where I got into a minority. I said, though we cannot therefore entrench into the domain of Parliament. Nonetheless, there were sufficient foundation principles in our Constitution, to allow for recognition of same sex unions in terms of civil unions," he elaborated. "Three of my colleagues, another colleague joined me in this, but three of my colleagues felt that to recognise a right of forming unions was again beyond the judicial domain, and that it must be left to Parliament," the CJI said. On the fundamental issue as to whether same sex couples should have the right to form binding unions and cohabit traditional relationships, three of my colleagues, though they recognised that they do have the right, he said, "we cannot elevate this to a constitutional right." "The other area in which I was in a minority was whether same sex couples have the right to adopt... I said that well, same sex couples, queer couples have the right to adopt a child because under Indian law, a single individual can adopt a child, a woman can adopt a child. So, I said if they are together, there is no reason to deny them the right to adopt the child merely because they are in a queer relationship," he said. "So on the broader aspect, there was a unanimity, but on the right to form unions and adoptions, I was in a minority of two as against three of my colleagues," the CJI said.

Only 10 local...

should come back and drop his weapons to lead a normal life," he added. The DGP said there has been a great change in the situation in Jammu and Kashmir over the last five years. "Terrorism, which had struck like a calamity on the entire Jammu and Kashmir, has been almost finished and whatever remnants are left will be eliminated soon. "The atmosphere of fear has ended and people of all ages can move around freely. Today we have times of peace and happiness," he said. North Kashmir is almost free of terrorism, he said, adding, "There is no active militant but there are a few odd floating militants who keep moving from one place to another. They will also be eliminated."



DGP Dilbag Singh briefing media at Handwara.

Upliftment of 60...

were provided to the poor beneficiaries, apart from Rs 5 lakh health insurance coverage and 5 kg grain per month per person to the 60 crore poor people. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire world expressed concern regarding 130 crore people of India, but Modi inspired and supported scientists to produce vaccines to fight the virus. Modi used technology to protect the country from COVID-19," the Gandhinagar MP added.

Israel's increased strikes...

building in the southern city of Khan Younis, killing at least 32 people and wounding scores of others, according to survivors. The fatalities included 13 from the Saqallah family, said Ammar al-Butta, a relative who survived the airstrike. He said there were about 100 people there, including many who had come from Gaza City, which Israel has ordered civilians to evacuate. "They were sheltering at our home because we thought that our area would be safe. But apparently there is no safe place in Gaza," he said. Another airstrike hit a bustling marketplace in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, killing several shoppers and wounding dozens, witnesses said. Men used sledgehammers to break up concrete and dug with their bare hands through the jagged wreckage to save anyone they could or at least recover the dead who had been buying meat and vegetables when the explosion hit. A man buried up to his chest in rubble looked up at his rescuers with wide eyes, his face coated in dust from the blast. An oxygen mask was placed on his face as they spent 15 minutes working to free him. Gaza's Hamas-run Health Ministry said the attacks killed at least 704 people over the past day, including 305 children and 173 women. More than 5,700 Palestinians have been killed in the war, including some 2,300 minors, the ministry said, without giving a detailed breakdown. The figure includes the disputed toll from an explosion at a hospital last week. Most of the Palestinians killed since Oct. 7 were in the north and central areas of the enclave that Israel had told them evacuate, the ministry said. The fighting has killed more than 1,400 people in Israel mostly civilians slain during the initial Hamas attack. As the death toll in Gaza spiralled, facilities to deal with the casualties were dwindling. A total of 46 out of 72 primary health-care facilities, and 12 out of 35 hospitals, stopped functioning, the World Health Organization

said. Palestinian health officials said the lack of electricity and fuel to power generators from the Israeli blockade, as well as damage from airstrikes, has forced many of the facilities to close. Gaza's five main hospitals were all filled beyond capacity, it said.

While Israel has allowed a small number of trucks filled with aid to enter, it has barred deliveries of fuel to Gaza. The rising toll has made it hard for Palestinians to bury the huge numbers of dead, with cemeteries being forced to excavate and reuse old plots and bury up to five bodies in one grave. "Bodies pour in by the hundreds every day. We use every empty inch in the cemeteries," said Abdel Rahman Mohamed, a volunteer who helps transfer bodies to Khan Younis' main cemetery. "Some bodies arrive in pieces in bags. It's horrible." Israel says it does not target civilians and that Hamas militants are using them as cover for their attacks. Palestinian militants have fired over 7,000 rockets at Israel since the start of the war, Israel said, and Hamas said it fired a new barrage Tuesday morning. "We continue to attack forcefully in Gaza City and its environs, where Hamas is building up its terrorist infrastructure, where Hamas is arraying its troops," said Israeli military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari. He again told Palestinians to head south "for your personal safety." The UN agency for Palestinian refugees said six of its staff were killed in bombings, bringing to 35 the death toll of its workers since the war started. Amid fears the fighting to spiral into a wider regional war, French President Emmanuel Macron arrived in Tel Aviv on Tuesday and told top Israeli officials that he came "to express our support and solidarity and share your pain" as well as to assure Israel it is "not left alone in the war against terrorism."

In a joint news conference with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Macron stressed Israel's right to defend itself, but added that it shouldn't target civilians and should allow aid to Gaza and electricity for its hospitals. Netanyahu blamed Hamas for the civilian casualties and said "it could be a long war." On Monday, Hamas released two elderly Israeli women who were among the more than 200 people Israel says were taken to Gaza during the attack. Appearing weak in a wheelchair and speaking softly, 85-year-old Yocheved Lifshitz told reporters Tuesday that the militants beat her with sticks, bruising her ribs and making it hard to breathe as they kidnapped her. They drove her into Gaza, then forced her to walk several kilometers (miles) on wet ground to reach a network of tunnels that looked like a spider web, she said.

Once there, though, her treatment improved, she said. The people assigned to guard her "told us they are people who believe in the Quran and wouldn't hurt us." Lifshitz, whose husband remains a hostage, said conditions were kept clean, she received medical care, including medication, and was given the same one meal a day of cheese and cucumber that her captors had. Lifshitz and 79-year-old Nurit Cooper were freed days after an American woman and her teenage daughter were released. Hamas and other militants in Gaza are believed to have taken roughly 220 people, including an unconfirmed number of foreigners and dual citizens.

The Israeli military later dropped leaflets in Gaza asking Palestinians to reveal information on the hostages' whereabouts. In exchange, the military promised a reward and protection for the informant's home. Israel has vowed to destroy Hamas. Iranian-backed fighters around the region are warning of possible escalation, including the targeting of US forces deployed in the Mideast, if a ground offensive is launched. The US has told Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon and other groups not to join the fight. Israel and Hezbollah have traded fire almost daily across the Israel-Lebanon border, and Israeli warplanes have struck targets in Syria, Lebanon and the occupied West Bank in recent days.(AP)

Indians will be...

unfolding in Gaza, it has not been taken as seriously as it should have been. "The UN is not silent, but unfortunately not much attention is being paid to what it is saying. As far as I saw, the UN has spoken about the humanitarian crisis there, but Israel is getting so much support from the US, the UK and other countries that we do not see as much impact of the UN as we would have liked," he added. Meanwhile, People's Democratic Party (PDP) accused the BJP-led central government of adopting double standards on the situation in the Middle East by sending aid material to the Palestinians, but not allowing peaceful protests in their support. "Millions of people are coming out on the streets across the world, but we are not allowed to protest peacefully. I don't understand the double standards. The MEA spokesperson... expressed solidarity with the Palestinians and the Government of India also sent 42 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Gaza Strip via Egypt. "But we are not allowed to even hold protests here in support of the Palestinians," PDP president's media advisor, Iltija Mufti, told reporters. Mufti alleged the PDP was being selectively targeted and was not allowed to hold any peaceful political activity. "The administration has placed our senior leaders Ghulam Nabi Hanjura and Mehboob Beigh under house arrest since last evening. Even our DDC members, who are elected representatives, have been detained at police stations. Why is it happening in a democracy? There has to be a robust opposition in democracy," she said. Abdullah also criticised the J&K administration for not allowing Friday prayers at the Jamia Masjid in Srinagar for the last two weeks. "Four weeks ago you (government) made so much noise that the situation has improved and there was no need to stop him (Mirwaiz). However, for two weeks now, the Friday prayers have not been allowed in the Jamia Masjid, and Mirwaiz has been confined to his home. You want to tell the world that the situation has improved and it is normal. If it is so, allow the prayers at the Jamia Masjid and remove the curbs on Mirwaiz," he said.

Terror acts by LeT in Mumbai or Hamas in Kibbutz Be'eri unlawful, unjustifiable': Blinken

■ AGENCY

UNITED NATIONS: Drawing a parallel between terrorist attacks by Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba in Mumbai and Hamas in Israel, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Tuesday said that all acts of terrorism are "unlawful and unjustifiable" and the Security Council must denounce member states that arm, fund and train terrorist groups. Blinken made the remarks while addressing the Security Council ministerial meeting on the situation in the Middle East following the October 7 attack on Israel by Gaza-based Hamas militants. "We must affirm the right of any nation to defend itself and to prevent such horror from repeating itself. No member of this Council, no nation in this entire body could or would tolerate the slaughter of its people," Blinken told the UN Security Council here. In his remarks, Blinken drew a parallel between the terrorist attacks by Hamas against Israel and the

Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba in Mumbai. "As this Council and the UN General Assembly have repeatedly affirmed, all acts of terrorism are unlawful and unjustifiable. They're unlawful and unjustifiable, whether they target people in Nairobi or Bali Istanbul or Mumbai, in New York or Kibbutz Be'eri," he said. "They are unlawful and unjustifiable whether they're carried out by ISIS, by Boko Haram, by Al Shabaab, by Lashkar-e-Taiba or by Hamas. They are unlawful and unjustifiable whether victims are targeted for their faith, their ethnicity, their nationality or any other reason," Blinken said. He stressed that the Security Council has a responsibility to denounce member states that arm, fund and train Hamas or "any other terrorist group that carries out such horrific acts." Blinken's remarks appeared to refer to the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks carried out by

Pakistan-based terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba. A total of 166 people, including six Americans, were killed in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in which 10 Pakistani terrorists laid a more than 60-hour siege, attacking and killing people in India's financial hub. Blinken added that the international community must not forget that among the more than 1400 people that Hamas killed on October 7 when it attacked Israel, were citizens from more than 30 UN member states, including many of the members around the horseshoe UNSC table. The victims included at least 33 American citizens. "Every one of us has a stake, every one of us has a responsibility in defeating terrorism," Blinken said. Addressing the Council, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the situation in the Middle East is growing more dire by the hour. "The war in Gaza is raging and risks spiralling throughout the region.

Divisions are splintering societies. Tensions threaten to boil over," he said. The UN chief, however, added that it is "important to also recognise the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum. The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation. "They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing," he said. "But the grievances of the Palestinian people cannot justify the appalling attacks by Hamas. And those appalling attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people," Guterres said. The Ministry of Health in Gaza has reported over 5,000 Palestinians have been killed so far, including over 2,000 children and 1,100 women as well as journalists, medical workers and first responders, with more than 15,000 injured.

76th Annual Nirankari Sant Samagam from 28th to 30th October

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

HARYANA: The Sant Nirankari Spiritual Complex, Samalkha, Haryana, is abuzz with preparations for the 76th Annual Sant Samagam - a testament to selfless service - set to take place with grandeur on October 28, 29 and 30, 2023, in the divine presence of Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj and Nirankari Rajpita Ji. This event will be the source of immense joy to devotees travelling from all corners of the world. As devotees receive this auspicious news, the global Nirankari community collectively experiences a wave of sheer enthusiasm and ecstasiness. As followers from every region come together with hearts filled with the feeling of universal brotherhood, as one extended family, seek blessings from the physical presence of the Satguru and listening to Her divine teachings. Undoubtedly, this spectacle will be an extraordinary sight, a melting pot, where people of all back-

grounds, languages, religions and races rising above their differences, truly embody the message of unity. For this sacred occasion, "Samagam," meaning a congregation of saints, devotees are preparing selflessly with complete dedication and surrenderance. The sight catches thousands of selfless souls wholeheartedly engaged in service from the break of dawn till sunset; dancing, singing and joyfully performing their duties. This exceptional scene reflects the teachings of the Sant Nirankari Mission, emphasising unity and fraternity. Children, youth and the elderly are all actively contributing with great fervor to these services.. All this is being done to provide a grand welcome for the upcoming devotees and guests, ensuring their comfortable stay during the Samagam. All these dedicated volunteers and devotees are not showing signs of exhaustion rather radiating a glow of joy. It's evident that this is all hap-

pening solely through the divine blessings of Satguru Mata Ji. Her Holiness often emphasizes in Her discourse that, serving selflessly with body, mind and wealth is the highest form of service, leading to the well-being of all. For this sacred Sant Samagam, suitable arrangements are being made to welcome devotees not only from all parts of India but, also from distant countries. Members of the Nirankari Sewadal, pening solely through the divine blessings of Satguru Mata Ji. Her Holiness often emphasizes in Her discourse that, serving selflessly with body, mind and wealth is the highest form of service, leading to the well-being of all. For this sacred Sant Samagam, suitable arrangements are being made to welcome devotees not only from all parts of India but, also from distant countries. Members of the Nirankari Sewadal,

wearing blue (ladies) and Khaki (gentlemen) uniforms will be present at railway stations, bus terminals and airports to welcome all the devotees and guide them to their designated accommodations. With open arms, Nirankari Mission wholeheartedly welcome, any person wishing to immerse themselves in this experience of love, oneness and peace and congregate with saints and attain state of eternal bliss. Sain Abdul Rashid appointed as J&K Pradesh Congress VC tude to the party leadership for entrusting him with this new responsibility. He particularly acknowledged Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, M Kharge & J&K Pradesh Congress President Vikar Rasool for having faith in his abilities and commitment to the party's ideals. He pledged his efforts to strengthen the party's cadres and to conduct extensive public outreach programs throughout the summer capital.