

OPINION 6
A 'SPUTNIK MOMENT',
IN CHINESE CONTEXT

WORLD 8
PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN TO
RESUME 'DOSTI' BUS SERVICE

MONEY 9
PARL PANEL MEMBERS AGAINST
BANNING CRYPTO CURRENCIES

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12 SPORT

SC breathes fire over Capital's toxic air

Asks Centre to call emergency meet, curb 75% pollution caused by industry, dust and transport

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday directed the Centre to hold an emergency meeting on Tuesday with other stakeholders and come out with concrete proposals to tackle the menace of air pollution. The SC issued this directive after the Centre submitted an affidavit and said that 75 per cent of the air pollution is due to three factors: Industry, dust and transport.

The top court came down hard on the authorities after the Centre's submission that stubble burning contributes only 10 per cent to air pollution



in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Pointing to construction, industry, transport, power and vehicular traffic as the major culprits in causing pollution, the apex court asked the Centre to take measures like stopping

non-essential activities and implementing work from home.

"Even though some decisions were taken by the Commission for Air Quality Management in the NCR and Adjoining Areas Act it has not

indicated precisely what steps they are going to take to control factors that are causing air pollution," a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana said.

"In view of that, we direct the Government of India to call for an emergency meeting tomorrow and discuss the areas which we indicated and what orders they can pass to effectively control air pollution. So far, as stubble burning is concerned, broadly affidavits state that their contribution is not so much except for two months.

Continued on Page 2

Opp slams move to extend tenure of CBI, ED chiefs

Govt has used 2 agencies to silence dissenting voices, says Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition parties, including the Congress and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Monday, attacked the Centre over its move to extend the tenures of directors of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) up to a maximum of five years.

While the Congress said the Government has used the two agencies as "henchmen" who are now being rewarded so that "malicious prosecution" is used to silence dissenting voices, the TMC moved a notice for statutory resolutions in the Rajya Sabha objecting to the Ordinances by the Government to extend the tenure of CBI and ED chiefs.

Sources in various Opposition parties said such notices will be filed by other Opposition parties in the run-up to the Winter Session of Parliament.

President Ram Nath Kovind had signed two Ordinances promulgated by



the Ministry of Law and Justice on Sunday. The Ordinances stated that after the two-year term of an ED or CBI chief ends, the Union Government may extend his/her tenure by a year for three consecutive years.

The Ordinances amend the Delhi Police Special

Establishment Act, which is the parent law for the CBI, and the Central Vigilance Act, which covers the appointment of the ED director.

The TMC has raised objection to the ordinances route for the extension of the tenures questioning the Government's

hurry at a time when the Winter Session of Parliament was barely two weeks away.

Sources said the party has moved two separate statutory resolutions for the two laws the Government has amended through the ordinances to extend the tenure of ED and CBI chiefs.

"Two brazen ordinances extend ED and CBI director terms from 2 to 5 years #Parliament Winter Session begins two weeks from now. Be rest assured, Opposition parties will do all it takes to stop India from turning into an elected autocracy," tweeted TMC Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien.

Continued on Page 2

Centre amends FR; clears path to extend ED, CBI chiefs' tenure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after issuing an Ordinance to enhance the extension of Directors of the CBI and the Directorate of Enforcement up to five years, the Centre on Monday amended Fundamental Rules (FR), which is a set of guiding principles applicable to all Government servants and covers

the entire gamut of their in-service and post-retirement working scenarios.

The FR bars extension in service to any Government servants beyond the age of retirement of 60 years except a few including Cabinet Secretary, those dealing with Budget-related work, eminent scientists, Cabinet Secretary, IB and RAW chiefs besides the

CBI Director among others, with certain conditions.

The rules now allow the Central Government to give extension in public interest to the Defence Secretary, Home Secretary, Director of Intelligence Bureau (IB), Secretary of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and Directors of the CBI

Continued on Page 2

AAP: Lockdown must in all of Delhi-NCR

Pollution control steps by Delhi alone will have no effect, Govt tells top court

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Monday submitted a detailed affidavit to the Supreme Court about its efforts to reduce air pollution in the national Capital.

The Delhi Government listed the measures to bring down pollution and pointed out that imposing a lockdown in the city would be meaningful only if it is implemented across the entire National Capital Region (NCR).

"The GNCTD (Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi) is ready to take steps like complete lockdown to control local emissions. However, such a step would be meaningful if it is implemented across the NCR areas in neighbouring States. Given Delhi's compact size, a lockdown would have limited impact on the air quality regime. This issue would need to be addressed at the level of airshed involving the NCR areas. In view of the above, we are ready to consider this step if the same is mandated for the entire NCR areas by the Government of India or by the Commission for Air Quality Management in National



An anti-smog gun is used to spray water droplets to curb air pollution, as a thick layer of smog engulfs the national Capital

File photo

Capital Region and adjoining areas," an affidavit filed by the Delhi Government said.

In the affidavit submitted to the apex court, the Delhi Government mentioned various steps being taken by the ruling regime.

From the 'Green war room', the anti-dust campaign, installation of anti-smog towers, the DPCC's studies on different sources of pollution, an IIT-Kanpur study on vehicular, roadside and construction dust, to the identification of 13 major hotspots in terms of air pollution in Delhi.

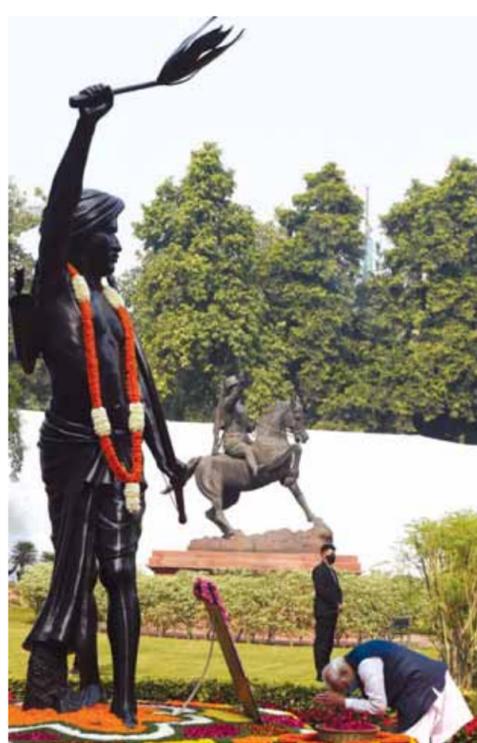
The city Government also

mentioned about controlling stubble burning. "After successful demonstration over 2,000 acres last year, the PUSA biodecomposer was sprinkled free of cost by the Delhi Government in more than 4,200 acres of basmati and non-basmati fields using combined harvesters," said the Delhi Government.

The city Government also mentioned their project on the construction of E-waste park, monitoring landfill sites to mitigate pollution from waste burning, upgradation of the Green Delhi App and controlling pollution from vehicles.

Continued on Page 2

TRIBUTES TO A LEGEND



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays tribute to the statue of tribal leader Birsamunda on his birth anniversary at Parliament House in New Delhi on Monday

India to ink ₹20K-cr deal for 30 armed Predator drones

Deal with US to be announced during India-US 2+2 talks in December

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and the US are likely to announce a ₹20,000-crore deal for 30 armed Predator drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) during the forthcoming two plus two dialogue between the two countries in December. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will hold talks with their US counterparts Lloyd Austin and Antony Blinken respectively during the high-profile event.

Top Defence Ministry officials, including Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar, held a meeting here on Monday to discuss the entire gamut of issues related to the deal, sources said.



If cleared, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by the Defence Minister will examine the proposed contract. Following the DAC nod, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by the Prime Minister will then take the final call, they said.

The Predator drones are also known as MQ-9 Reaper systems. The Indian Army, IAF, and the Navy are likely to get ten Predators each, they said. The Indian armed forces for long have urged the Government for this crucial procurement.

Continued on Page 2

WPI inflation at 5-mth high of 12.54% in October

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The wholesale price-based inflation spiked to a five-month high of 12.54 per cent in October, mainly due to the rise in prices of manufactured products and crude petroleum.

WPI inflation has remained in double digits for the seventh-consecutive month beginning April. Inflation in September this year was at 10.66 per cent, while in October 2020 it was at 1.31 per cent.

The October WPI is the highest in five months since May, when it was at 13.11 per cent.

Full report on Page 9

Daily domestic flyers hit new high since pandemic

3.85L passengers travelled on Sunday reaching 96.4% of pre-Covid level

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

With the number of flights and travellers going up, India witnessed the highest number of single-day domestic air travellers on Sunday since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic last March.

As many as 3,85,661 passengers travelled via 2,754 flights across the country on Sunday. This was at 96.4 per cent of the pre-Covid level as in the year 2019 an average of around 4,00,000 domestic passengers was recorded on a daily basis.

Major airports saw heavy crowds and long queues last weekend, indicating the comeback of air travel. As many as 3.78 lakh domestic passengers

had travelled via 2,701 flights last Sunday. Post the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, the daily domestic passenger count crossed the three lakh mark for the first time on October 9.

The data of the Ministry of Civil Aviation showed that as many as 3.67 lakh passengers travelled via 2,713 flights across India on November 13. Similarly over 3.21 lakh domestic air passengers travelled via 2,594 flights on November 12. Before the pandemic struck, India's daily domestic air traffic was approximately 4.25 lakh passengers.

On a weekly basis, the average daily air traffic during November 8-14 is around 3,52,400 passengers, 18 per

cent up on the week, and the average passenger load factor for all major airlines also hovered around 80-90 per cent. For context, the average daily domestic air traffic in the month of October was 2,83,334 passengers.

Last week, an ICRA report had said that domestic air passenger traffic in the country had grown by a whopping 67 per cent year-on-year at around 87-88 lakh in October, on the back of festive season demand amid a continuous fall in the

number of Covid-19 infection cases.

According to credit rating agency ICRA, domestic passenger volume in October 2020 was at 52.71 lakh. Moreover, domestic carriers operated 46 per cent more flights at 72,000

during the month under review over 49,150 departures logged in October 2020, ICRA said, adding, on a sequential basis, the number of departures in October 2021 were higher by around 18 per cent, as Covid-19 infections demonstrated a downward trajectory.

The Government has allowed airlines to operate at 100 per cent capacity from the existing limit of 85 per cent from October 18, which is also one of the factors behind increasing air domestic passengers in the country.

And the trend was visible in Srinagar as well. Air traffic rose month-on-month and year-on-year.

Srinagar airport had handled 3.32 lakh passengers on 2,460 flights in October against 1.63 lakh travellers on 1,227 flights a year back.

Continued on Page 2



CAPSULE

GODDESS ANNAPURNA'S IDOL INSTALLED

Varanasi: An idol of goddess Annapurna brought back from Canada after 108 years was installed at the Kashi Vishwanath temple here on Monday in a ceremony attended by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

KHERI VIOLENCE: UP GOVT AGREES TO SC PROPOSAL

New Delhi: The Uttar Pradesh Government agreed to the Supreme Court suggestion that a former judge of its choice may be appointed to supervise the State SIT's probe on a day-to-day basis into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case. P4

LIFE-SIZED STATUE OF BAPU VANDALISED IN OZ

Melbourne: A life-sized bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi, gifted by the Indian Government, has been vandalised here in an act, Prime Minister Scott Morrison strongly condemned as "disgraceful", triggering shock and disappointment among the Indian-Australian community. P8

MP DRUG BUST: AMAZON OFFICIALS SUMMONED

Bhopal: Police in Madhya Pradesh have summoned Amazon.com Inc's local executives as it investigates a case where the e-commerce platform was allegedly used for smuggling marijuana, a police official said on Monday. The police on Sunday arrested two men in Madhya Pradesh with 20 kg of marijuana and found they were using Amazon's India shopping website to order and smuggle the substance further to various States. P2

PAKISTAN RELEASES 20 INDIAN FISHERMEN

Lahore: Pakistan on Monday handed over 20 Indian fishermen, who completed their four-year prison terms for allegedly fishing in Pakistani waters, to India at the Wagah border, according to officials.

V KUMAR TO BE INDIA'S ENVOY TO MYANMAR

New Delhi: Senior diplomat Vinay Kumar has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to Myanmar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Monday. Kumar, a 1992-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, is presently serving as the Additional Secretary at the MEA's headquarters in Delhi.

14 BJP activists arrested for role in riots

AMRAVATI BANDH & RIOTS

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Opposition BJP found itself in the dock in Maharashtra on Monday, as the police arrested 14 of its local leaders and functionaries, including a former party and the local district party president for their alleged role in the violence that broke out at Amravati on November 13.

On a day when Maharashtra Minority Affairs Minister Nawab Malik accused the BJP of hatching a conspiracy to engineer riots at Amravati and even distributed liquor and money to instigate riots at Amravati in Vidarbha region, the police rounded up BJP leaders from various parts of the town.

Among the 14 BJP leaders and functionaries arrested were party's former MLA Anil Bonde, district party president Nivedita Choudhari and party's group leader in the Amravati Municipal Corporation (AMC) Tushar Bharati.

The BJP had called for a bandh

in Amravati on November 13 to protest against the violence that broke out in Malegaon, Amravati and Nanded on Friday during the state-wide demonstrations and rallies by Raza Academy and other Muslim organisations.

The bandh called by the BJP took a violent turn, with the protestors going on a rampage vandalising several shops and private properties. Turning the needle of suspicion towards the Opposition BJP, Amravati's district guardian minister Yashomati Thakur said that no one who engineered violence at Amravati would be spared.

In a related development, senior Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik was more direct in his attack against the BJP had hatched a conspiracy to engineer riots at Amravati on the pretext of organising a bandh on November 13 in protest against the morcha taken out by Raza Academy on the previous day.

Talking to media persons, Malik alleged: "On the pretext of

organising a bandh, the BJP tried to instigate a riot in Amravati. The police have busted the conspiracy. The BJP's plan was to organise in various parts of the state. However, the people maintained calm and restraint, foiling the BJP's conspiracy. That's why there was no riot in any place other than Amravati. BJP's local former MLA Anil Bonde hatched the conspiracy and even distributed liquor and money to miscreants to unleash riots in the Amravati".

Claiming that the Amravati police had found evidence to suggest the local BJP men's efforts to engineer riots at Amravati, Malik charged that after failing in all its efforts to destabilise and bring down the MVA government, the Opposition BJP had begun to practise riot politics in Maharashtra. Hitting back at Malik, former BJP MLA Anil Bonde said: "The local police have not shown the courage to arrest those behind the riots witnessed at Amravati on November 12.

Amazon India: Currently investigating use of platform for sourcing marijuana

New Delhi: E-commerce major Amazon India on Monday said it is currently investigating an issue, wherein its platform was allegedly used to source marijuana.

On Saturday, an online marijuana sale racket was busted by Bhind police in Madhya Pradesh, leading to the arrest of two persons and seizure of 20 kilograms of the contraband, according to an official.

The accused were operating the racket through a leading e-commerce firm, which received two-thirds of the profits generated, as per the official.

Evidence is being collected to see if it could be prosecuted for providing a platform for such drug transactions, the official added.

An Amazon India spokesperson on Monday said the company operates a marketplace in India (amazon.in), which enables third-party sellers to display, list and offer for

sale, products to end customers directly.

"Amazon has a high bar on compliance and contractually our sellers are required to comply with all applicable laws for selling their products on amazon.in. We do not allow the listing and sale of products, which are prohibited under law to be sold in India," the spokesperson said. The spokesperson said in case sellers list such products, as an intermediary, it takes strict action as may be required under the law when the same is highlighted to the company.

"The issue was notified to us and we are currently investigating whether there is any non-compliance on part of the seller. We assure full co-operation and support required to Investigating Authorities and Law Enforcement agencies with ongoing investigations and ensure full compliance to applicable laws," the spokesperson said. **PTI**

AAP: Lockdown must in...

From Page 1

The 27-page affidavit also remarked about the Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP) — 2018 by Air Quality Monitoring Committee (AQCM) and Continuous Real Time Monitoring at 26 different locations and 14 air quality monitoring stations in city by the DPCC, CPCB and IITM (SAFAR) to study PM 2.5, 10, No2 and other harmful pollutants. Meanwhile, the AAP accused Centre of "misleading the Supreme Court" by tweeting the affidavit filed by the Central Government in the apex court. "Efforts need to be intensified to control instances of stubble burning to a minimum as currently the paddy stubble burning has been contributing about 35 to 40 per cent of the total pollution load in Delhi-NCR," said the Centre's affidavit.

Centre amends FR; clears path to...

From Page 1

of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) on a case-to-case basis, subject to the condition that the total term of such secretaries or directors, "does not exceed two years or the period provided in the respective Act or rules made thereunder", according to a Personnel Ministry's notification. Monday's notification has excluded Foreign Secretary from the ambit of FR and included the ED chief, apparently allowing the incumbent to continue getting the service benefits of the extended tenure. The post of Foreign Secretary was included in the FR following a proposal cleared by the Union Cabinet in December 2010 "in view of the assignment of Foreign Secretary having increasingly acquired critical dimensions from the national security and strategic perspective, and the need to ensure continuity and swiftness in the decision-making process".

Opp slams move...

From Page 1

Reacting to the development, Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala alleged that the Government has used the two agencies as "henchmen" who are now being rewarded so that "malicious prosecution" is used to silence dissenting voices.

Abhishek Singhvi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's slogan of "Aatmanirbhar" (self dependent) actually means "depend on me" for their career, and as a result, instead of upholding the law the agencies are "upholding the will of their political masters".

Singhvi further said "the BJP is consistently, deliberately, consciously, intentionally engaged in undermining institutions, sabotaging institution, creating security for the establishment instead of for the nation".

Another Congress leader and party MP in Lok Sabha Manish Tewari said the Opposition parties should challenge CBI, ED ordinances in the Higher Court of judiciary.

India to ink ₹20K-cr...

From Page 1

The Predator B is a Remotely Piloted Aircraft and is the first hunter-killer UAV designed for long-endurance, high-altitude surveillance.

The Reaper has a 950-shaft-horsepower (712 kW) turboprop engine, allowing it to carry 15 times more ordnance payload and cruise at about three times the speed of its predecessor. The General Atomics built craft can be flown for over 27 hours in the air at a maximum altitude of 50,000 feet.

The drones are armed with advanced systems and weapons packages and can carry long-range surveillance and precision strikes.

The proposed deal first came up in 2017 during Prime Minister Modi's meeting with then President Donald Trump there. However, the contract could not be finalized. In March this year, the Government reportedly gave the go-ahead for joint procurement of the Predator drones for the three Services.

So far, India has only drones which are capable of surveillance and reconnaissance. The initial lot of these drones was imported from Israel some years back. India also procured two Sea Guardian UAVs recently on lease from the US for surveillance in the strategically important Indian Ocean region.

Underlining the importance of the armed drones in modern-day warfare, Army Chief General M M Naravane some weeks back said they have become an integral part of the war.

SC breathes fire over Capital's...

From Page 1

However, at present a good amount of stubble burning is taking place in Haryana and Punjab," the Bench said. It directed the Centre and the NCR States to examine introducing work from home for employees. Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, informed the Bench about several measures contemplated in an emergency meeting held between the Secretaries of the Union Government, and Delhi, Punjab and Haryana. "We have come to the conclusion that stubble burning is not the major cause of pollution and it contributes to only 10 per cent of the air pollution," Mehta said.

Reacting on his submission, the Bench, also comprising Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant, said, "Are you agreeing that stubble burning is not the main cause? That hue and cry has no scientific or factual basis?"

Referring to the affidavit filed by the Centre, the apex court said 75 per cent of the air pollution is due to three factors: Industry, dust and transport.

"In fact now the cat is out of the bag, the farmers' stubble burning contributes to only four per cent of the pollution as per the chart. So we are targeting something which is totally insignificant," the Bench said.

The top court also expressed displeasure over the earlier emergency meeting and said: "This is not the way we expected an executive emergency meeting will be held. It is unfortunate that we have to set the agenda. The sum and substance is that construction, power, transport, dust and stubble burning are the issues. Ask the committee created and decide how to implement the action plan by tomorrow evening."

The apex court slammed the Delhi Government for "passing the buck" to Municipal Corporations over road sweeping machines and warned that its "lame excuses" will compel it to hold an audit inquiry into total revenue earnings and expenditure on advertisements. When senior advocate Rahul Mehra, appearing for the Delhi Government, said that it has deployed 69 mechanical road sweeper machines to clean the dust from the roads, it asked, "Are these machines sufficient for entire Delhi?"

Mehra said the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is the one that sees all this as it's an independent and autonomous body. He said the Mayor or the concerned corporation staff may place an affidavit on record as to whether this is enough. The Bench reacted by saying "you are passing the buck to the MCD again."

Daily domestic flyers...

From Page 1

Air travel from the airport in the valley has been on a steady rise since the second wave of the coronavirus ebbed. The Srinagar airport handled 2.54 passengers on 2,127 flights in April this year. This fell to 91,507 passengers on 1,042 flights in the following month. The industry has suffered losses due to the two waves of the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought air travel to the ground. The Indian Government banned domestic air travel for nearly two months in late March last year and suspended scheduled international air services to and from India as a response to other Governments' travel and visa restrictions.

Naye Uttar Pradesh ka Naya Expressway

Built at a cost of ₹22,500 crores from Lucknow to Ghazipur
341 km. long and 6 lane wide

PURVANCHAL EXPRESSWAY

Barabanki Ayodhya Ambedkar Nagar Mau
Lucknow Amethi Sultanpur Azamgarh Ghazipur

Dedication to the Nation by **Narendra Modi** Prime Minister

Date : 16 November, 2021 | Time : 1:00 PM
Venue : Village - Arval Keeri Karvat Tehsil - Jaisinghpur, District - Sultanpur

In august presence of

Anandiben Patel Governor Uttar Pradesh
Yogi Adityanath Chief Minister Uttar Pradesh

Satish Mahana Minister, Infrastructure and Industrial Development, Uttar Pradesh
Jai Pratap Singh Minister, Medical & Health, Family Welfare Maternal & Child Welfare, Uttar Pradesh
Dharamveer Prajapati Minister of State, Industrial Development Uttar Pradesh
Maneka Sanjay Gandhi Member of Parliament Sultanpur

Surya Bhan Singh MLA, Sultanpur
Sitaram Verma MLA, Sadar
Devmani Dwivedi MLA, Lambhua
Rajesh Gautam MLA, Kadipur
Usha Singh Chairman, District Panchayat, Sultanpur

Soch Imaandaar, Kaam Dumdaar

Information & Public Relations Department, Uttar Pradesh

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Dengue cases in city surge to 5,270 this year Highest in 6 years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The number of dengue cases in Delhi this season has crossed 5,270, the highest in the national Capital in a year since 2015, according to a civic report released on Monday.

Nearly 2,570 fresh cases of the vector-borne disease were logged in the city in the last one week. However, no fresh fatality was reported.

According to the report on vector-borne diseases, a total of 5,277 dengue cases were recorded this year till November 13.

In the previous years, the total count of dengue cases was -- 4,431 (2016), 4,726 (2017), 2,798 (2018), 2,036 (2019) and 1,072 (2020), according to the report.

In 2015, the city had witnessed a massive outbreak of dengue, during which the number of reported cases crossed 10,600 in October alone, making it the worst outbreak of the vector-borne disease in the national capital since 1996.

Of the dengue cases in Delhi this year, 3,740 were reported in the first 13 days of November. In October, 1,196 cases were reported.

The total number of cases this year till November 6 stood at 2,708 and the official death toll due to dengue was nine.

In September, 217 cases were logged, the highest count for the month in three years.

This is also the highest number of fatalities due to dengue recorded in a year in the national capital since 2017, when the officially reported death count was 10.



ease in the national capital since 1996.

Of the dengue cases in Delhi this year, 3,740 were reported in the first 13 days of November. In October, 1,196 cases were reported.

The total number of cases this year till November 6 stood at 2,708 and the official death toll due to dengue was nine.

In September, 217 cases were logged, the highest count for the month in three years.

This is also the highest number of fatalities due to dengue recorded in a year in the national capital since 2017, when the officially reported death count was 10.

Cong attacks Centre, AAP Govt over toxic air

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress demanded a "white paper" from both the Centre and the Delhi Government on Monday on the steps taken by them to tackle pollution in the national Capital and said they should be held accountable for playing with the health of people.

Talking to reporters here, Congress spokesperson Jaiver Shergill accused both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of indulging in a blame game and wasting the taxpayers' money on "hollow" advertisements.

"AAP's Delhi Government and BJP's Central Government should issue a white paper on what steps they have taken to tackle the black pollution except hollow advertisements and playing blame game politics and wasting the taxpayers' money," he said.

Shergill said the Supreme Court's observations have exposed the "spineless and careless approach" of the AAP and the BJP towards tackling pollution.

The truth is that Delhiites are paying a heavy price for the BJP's and the AAP's politics, polluted with empty promises and an obsession with self publicity, he noted, soon after the apex court came down heavily on the two govern-

ments over the rising air pollution in the national capital.

"It is high time political accountability was fixed and the people of Delhi should hold both the BJP and the AAP accountable for playing with their health and jeopardising it," the Congress leader said.

People have been suffering due to the severe air pollution in the national capital over the last few days with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of over 500.



POLLUTION WOES

Air quality improves slightly from severe to very poor

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality on Monday improved slightly from severe to very poor as air quality index (AQI) recorded 331 micrograms per cubic (µgm-3).

According to SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research), a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), the AQI is unlikely to improve Tuesday as winds at transport level are increasing resulting in more intrusion of farm fires related pollutants into Delhi.

Calm local winds also reduce dispersion of pollutants.

"The air quality is expected to remain in the higher end of the very poor category tomorrow. The effective farm fire count is 3125 and its contribution to Delhi's PM2.5 today was 10%. Tomorrow winds at transport level are forecast to be blowing from the east direction and slowing down causing air quality to improve on November 17. On November 18, winds are expected to be blowing from the east direction which will

prevent intrusion of fire related pollutants into Delhi," it said.

"Surface winds are slowing down further on 17th and 18th reducing dispersion. Overall, the AQI is expected to be in the very poor category range for the next three days."

Values of harmful pollutants, Particulate Matter (PM) 10 and 2.5 were recorded 285 and 160 on the National Ambient Air Quality Index (NAAQI). Both the values are expected to increase on Wednesday as SAFAR forecast 371 and 208.

Kejriwal meets EU envoy, discusses ways to reduce air pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

European Union Ambassador to India Ugo Astuto met Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday.

Astuto and Kejriwal discussed Delhi's fight against Covid-19 and efforts to reduce air pollution.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supreme Kejriwal shared the city Government's approach to deal with Covid-19. From sero-survey to vaccination campaigns across the national capital, the AAP leader also talked about how city Government is dealing with the air pollution problem.

Ugo Astuto appreciated the Kejriwal Government's efforts in keeping Covid in control across Delhi.

"We have done several Sero Surveys in Delhi. These Sero Surveys help us identify what percent of our population has developed antibodies against Covid-19. In the latest survey we got some fantastic results. We have found out that 96% of the people of Delhi have developed antibodies to fight the existing strains of Covid-19. So at a

layman level, unless there's a new strain of the Coronavirus heading towards us, Delhi appears to be safe. This also means that of this 96% there would have been quite a few people who would've caught the virus but were not consciously aware of it because of its mild or asymptomatic nature," Kejriwal said.

The Chief Minister further went on to share how the Delhi Government is making great efforts in vaccinating its residents and said, "We have been actively working upon our vaccination programme as well. The seriousness that we've shown to raise awareness and vaccinate our population has contributed significantly in keeping COVID-19 at bay. Till now about 50% of our eligible population has been fully vaccinated whereas about 90% have received at least one dose of the vaccine."

Ambassador Astuto also shared how Europe was dealing with Covid-19 and said that it largely depends on the rate of vaccination and ideally it should be easier to handle when most of the population has taken the jab.

DELHI VIOLENCE Court raps lawyer for calling riots handiwork of political party

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court expressed "immense disgust" while coming down heavily on a lawyer for alleging that the 2020 riots here were the handiwork of a political party and criminal cases were fastened upon the members of the Muslim community alone, calling his statements highly irresponsible and patently false.

"These submissions of the Counsel are certainly not in good taste. These are noted with immense disgust, repugnance and strong disapproval," Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Virender Bhat stated in an order dated November 11.

Advocate Mehmood Pracha had submitted before the court that the riots were not actually communal and took place at the instance of certain political vested interests to derail the peaceful protest against CAA-NRC, as per the court's order copy.

The lawyer made the submission while arguing for the bail of Arif who is accused of allegedly murdering one Alok Tiwari. He had sustained several blunt and sharp injuries



during the riots.

The advocate argued that only those belonging to the Muslim community were targeted by the police in the aftermath of the riots and were arraigned in false criminal cases, as per the order.

Expressing disapproval with the submissions, the ASJ said: "The counsel did not point out any material on record to substantiate his claim that the riots were not communal in nature or were the handiwork of any political party."

"It is the Counsel himself, who is now painting the entire Delhi Police with a communal brush by saying that the criminal cases related to the riots have been fastened upon the

members of Muslim Community alone. The statement of Counsel is not only highly irresponsible but also patently false."

ASJ Bhat said that he, while dealing with the cases related to the riots, has noticed that members of both the communities have been arraigned as an accused and have been charge-sheeted by the police.

"In some cases, it has been observed that there are witnesses belonging to Hindu community cited against the accused belonging to the same community and witnesses belonging to Muslim community cited against the accused belonging to the same community," he said.

The police appears to have done its job with utmost integrity and certainly not on communal lines, he said, adding that some lapses have occurred during the probe but even they do not give slightest indication that the investigation was not fair and impartial or that it was on communal lines.

The judge advised advocate Pracha to desist from making irresponsible, uncalled for, and patently false submissions.

Capital records 16 new Covid cases, 1 death

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital reported 16 new cases of Covid-19 and one death in a day while the positivity rate stood at 0.04 per cent, according to data shared by the health department here on Monday.

The Capital has recorded four deaths due to the infection in November so far. Four people had succumbed to viral disease in October and five in September.

With the new cases, the coronavirus infection tally in the city climbed to 14,40,440. Of this, over 14.14 lakh patients have recovered from the disease. The death toll stands at 25,095.

According to the health bulletin, authorities conducted 37,495 tests, including 33,671 RT-PCR ones, the previous day. There are 337 active Covid cases in Delhi, of which 164 are in home isolation. The number of containment zones stands at 124.

Delhi reported 36 COVID-19 cases and a death on Sunday, 56 on Saturday, and 62 cases and two deaths on Friday.

In April and May, Delhi battled a brutal second wave of the pandemic that claimed a massive number of lives and led to a shortage of oxygen and essential drugs at hospitals.

ABVP-JNUSU clash over organising event at union hall

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Several students clashed inside Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) campus on Sunday night. Members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)-affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) allegedly got into an argument over organising a programme at the student

union hall in the campus. Police said they acted as soon as they received information about slogans being raised.

The ABVP and the JNUSU accused each other of attacking their members and injuring other students on Sunday night. An FIR has not been registered yet, police said.

According to Gaurav Sharma, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), South west district,

after receiving a call police responded swiftly and a on reaching the spot police team did not find any quarrel taking place on the spot.

"On inquiry, it was learnt that heated arguments took place between two groups of students. Both sides are levelling allegations against each other of disrupting their meeting. Inquiry is on and action will be taken accordingly," said the DCP.

According to a statement by

the left student bodies, an organisation had booked the student union hall for November 14 -- the birth anniversary of the country's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru -- for a programme and had put up posters in this connection.

However, when the organisers reached the hall to begin their programme late in the evening, they found the place to be occupied by some 15 members of the ABVP.

UPHAAR CINEMA FIRE Victims kin urge court not to suspend 7-yr jail terms to Ansals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Association of Victims of Uphaar Tragedy (AVUT) on Monday urged a Delhi court not to suspend 7-year jail terms awarded to real estate barons Sushil and Gopal Ansal for tampering with evidence in the 1997 case of Uphaar cinema fire which had claimed 59 lives.

The counsel for the association made the submission before Additional Sessions Judge Anil Antil in response to the pleas moved by Ansals challenging the jail term awarded to them by a magisterial court on November 8.

Senior advocate Vikas Pahwa, appearing for the association, told the court that the offence of tampering was extremely serious in nature as it affects the entire criminal justice system.

"It is direct interference in the administration of justice and thus requires serious consideration while suspending the sentence of seven years and fine of 2.25 crore each to both the brothers," he said.

He added that the judgement passed by the magisterial court was well reasoned and the court had dealt with each and every argument of the defence.

4 members of family, including 2 children, hurt in gas cylinder fire

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a tragic incident, four members of a family, including two children, sustained burn injuries after a gas cylinder caught fire at their house in Delhi's Nangloi area on Monday morning.

According to Parvinder Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Outer district, 40-year-old Daron, was preparing tea in

the morning when leakage of gas from an LPG cylinder triggered a fire.

"Daron, his wife Reena (35), both labourers, their daughter (15) and son (13) were in the same room when the fire broke out. Daron sustained 70-80 per cent burn injuries and his wife suffered 40-50 per cent burn injuries. Their daughter suffered 20 per cent burns and son 18 per cent burn injuries," said the DCP.

"A call regarding fire was received at 7.26 AM following which three fire tenders were rushed to the spot. The fire was in an LPG cylinder and some domestic articles. Four people received burn injuries and they were rushed to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital," said Atul Garg, the Director, Delhi Fire Services (DFS).

The blaze was later doused and a cooling process was undertaken, the Fire Department said.

Gang that robbed people after offering lift busted, 7 held

New Delhi: Seven people were arrested for allegedly robbing people after offering them lift in a car from west Delhi's Punjabi Bagh area, police said on Monday.

Abhishek Kumar (32), Arun Sharma (25), Nikhil (25), Prem Gupta (22), Anshul (22), Hemant (27) and Arun (22), all residents of Azadpur, were involved in around 25 robberies and snatchings in different parts of Delhi, they said.

According to police, the motive behind the crimes was to make quick money in order to sustain their lavish lifestyles and impress girlfriends.

Police said Kumar had bought a car on loan but was not able to pay the monthly installments. So, he along with his associates decided to form a gang and make money by illegal means. PTI

UNICEF India unveils 'Pandemic Classroom' installation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In observance of the Children's Day in India leading up to World Children's Day on November 20, the UNICEF India unveiled a symbolic 'Pandemic Classroom' installation at the amphitheatre at Select City Walk in Saket in the national Capital.

Empty rows of desks and chairs along with unused backpacks are set up to draw attention to the plight of millions of young children who missed going to school for over a year due to the school closures through the pandemic and have consequently experienced learning loss.

Yasumasa Kimura, UNICEF Country Representative and two adolescents unveiled the pandemic classroom installation by ringing a school bell. Noted educationist, Venita Kaul, Professor Emeritus, Early Childhood Education, Ambedkar University were key speakers at the event.



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RASHTRA RAKSHA SAMPARPAN PARV PM to unveil new Defence schemes

100 Sainik schools across country; NCC network expansion in border & coastal areas, ₹400 cr anti-tank guided missile propulsion system manufacturing unit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil a number of schemes, including setting up of 100 Sainik schools all over the country in collaboration with the private sector, expanding the National Cadet Corps (NCC) network in border and coastal areas and a ₹400-crore factory in Jhansi for manufacturing propulsion system for anti-tank guided missile.

All these schemes will be dedicated to the nation during the two-day event in a celebration titled 'Rashtra Raksha Samparpan Parv' from November 17 in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. These events are part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahaotsav' celebrations.

Giving details of the events here on Monday, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar said the Prime Minister will dedicate several new initiatives of MoD to the Nation in a grand ceremony being organised in the precincts of Jhansi Fort on November 19, the birthday of Rani Lakshmi Bai. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will inaugurate the event on November 17.

The Rashtra Raksha Samparpan Parv is being organised along with the Uttar Pradesh government. The programme on November 19 will see the participation of the defence minister, minister of state for defence Ajay Bhatt, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and other dignitaries.



The new initiatives to be launched include setting up of 100 New Sainik Schools, the defence secretary said. The Cabinet recently approved setting up of 100 Sainik Schools throughout the country.

These Sainik Schools will be set up in partnership with private educational institutions, NGOs and state governments. At least one Sainik School is proposed in each State and Union Territory. These 100 Sainik Schools shall be set up in the next two years. All Sainik Schools will be admitting girls also.

A NCC Alumni Association will also be launched and Modi is one of the ex-cadets from this institution. The Association is expected to fulfill a felt demand of lakhs of former NCC cadets.

A national programme of Simulation Training for NCC Cadets and training facilities for all the three wings including Army, Air and Naval wings will also be inaugurated. This will enable NCC cadets across the country to get trained in their respective areas.

ple and indirect employment to nearly 500 people. The foundation stone of the project will be laid by the Prime Minister on November 19.

The Prime Minister will hand over the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) designed and developed Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) to Chief of the Air Staff.

The LCH is a new addition to the HAL's helicopter division. This twin-engine helicopter is a dedicated combat helicopter of 5-8 tonne class. The LCH incorporates advanced technologies and stealth features for effective combat roles and is designed to carry out roles such as destruction of enemy air defence, counter insurgency, search and rescue, anti-tank and counter surface force operations. The LCH is the only attack helicopter in the world which can land and take-off at an altitude of 5,000 m (16,400 ft) with considerable load of weapons and fuel.

The Prime Minister will also hand over drones designed and developed by Indian startups to Chief of the Army Staff. The Army has decided to procure these drones from the Indian industry.

Modi will also handover the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) designed and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) manufactured Advanced electronic warfare (EW) suite for naval ships including that for Indian Aircraft Carrier Vikrant.

It is expected to provide direct employment to 150 peo-

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Lakhimpur case: UP accepts SC suggestion

Agrees to monitoring of SIT probe by former judge of SC's choice

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh Government on Monday agreed to the Supreme Court suggestion that a former judge of its choice may be appointed to supervise the State SIT's probe on day-to-day basis into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence. The apex court said it would need a day to decide the name of former judge and that he may be a Supreme Court or a High Court judge and take his consent. "We need one more day's time because we need to talk to the judge concerned... We will list it again on Wednesday and find out the judge who is willing to take up the job," said the bench by Chief Justice NV Ramana.

While consenting, UP



Government's lawyer Harish Salve said the state has no issues with the apex court appointing a former judge of its choice to monitor the probe, but the point that he should not

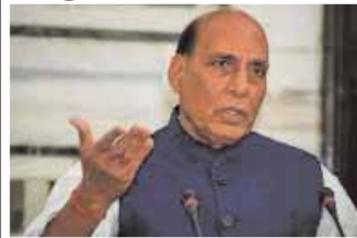
be a native of Uttar Pradesh should not bear in mind as the person concerned is a relevant factor.

The top court, while taking note of the state's consent, red

flagged the issue of involvement of mostly low-ranking police officers in the ongoing SIT probe in the case and sought names of IPS officers, who are of UP cadre but not the native of the state, for being included in the investigation team.

"The other concern is about the task force (SIT). The police officers of this task force have to be little higher grade officers and not from Lakhimpur area... Most of the members are SI (sub-inspector). Why don't you give some names of some IPS officers. We mean directly recruited IPS officers who are in UP cadre, but do not belong to the state of Uttar Pradesh. Give the names by tomorrow evening," said the bench.

Def Min urges scholars to get high end technological skills



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of fast changing global security scenario and new threats, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday urged scholars to inculcate high end technological capability and diverse skill sets to keep abreast with the times.

Making this observation here after unveiling a plaque at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) to rename the institute after former Defence Minister late Manohar Parrikar, he also said "All of you are studying from traditional warfare to non-contact and hybrid warfare and other concepts of war. But along with comprehensive national security comes high end technological capability, a population of a diverse skill set and national economic strength."

The renaming as Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) by the Defence Minister, who is the President of the Institute, follows the unanimous decision by the general body earlier this year to effect the change in the memory of the former Defence Minister. The renaming coincided with the 57th

Foundation Day of the Institute that is celebrated on November 11 every year.

Addressing the gathering, Rajnath termed MP-IDSA as an invaluable treasure which can provide a new direction to the defence and security of the country. The Defence Minister lauded the hard work and determination of the institute which, he said, has emerged as one of the best think-tanks in the field of defence, national security and international relations in the last almost six decades.

He described it as a unique institution, which has brought together the talents in academia and different research areas as well as government departments of many countries.

"The ideas that came out of the brainstorming have helped decision makers in dealing with the challenges of the 21st century. This institute has reached people through its large number of publications. It is constantly striving to carry forward its glorious legacy," Rajnath added.

Paying rich tributes to the former Defence Minister, Rajnath remembered late Manohar Parrikar who, during his time as Defence Minister, had focussed on promoting the work of the institute.

Recalling his long association with him, Rajnath said Parrikar had a deep understanding of matters related to defence and his insistence on indigenisation and efforts for politico-military synergy made him an invaluable asset.

"He was a thoughtful leader for our Armed Forces. His leadership in the 2016 counter-terrorist strikes following the Uri incident and the decision of 'One Rank One Pension' taken in the interest of the Armed forces will be long remembered," he added.

Sheel Vardhan new CISF DG



New Delhi: Senior IPS officer Sheel Vardhan Singh on Monday assumed the charge of Director General, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). Prior to his appointment as DG, CISF, he was serving as Special Director, Intelligence Bureau.

Singh is B.A. (Honours) in English literature. He joined the Indian Police Service in the year 1986 at the age of 23 and was allotted the Bihar cadre. During his distinguished career spanning 35 years, he has held many important and sensitive positions in Bihar as also during his Central deputation. Singh has served in the Ministry of External Affairs at the Indian High Commission, Dhaka, Bangladesh as First Secretary. Later, in Intelligence Bureau he served as Addl. Director & Spl. Director. Singh was decorated with the President's Police Medal for Meritorious Service in the year 2004 and President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service in 2010. He has become the 29th DG of the CISF. PNS

Naqvi raps Cong for criticising Govt over move to enhance CBI, ED chiefs' tenure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Monday lashed out at the Congress for its criticism over the Modi-government bringing ordinances by which the tenure of CBI and Enforcement directors could be further extended, saying it would further dilute the credibility of the opposition party which is losing its political base across the country.

The Congress has attacked the Centre over its move to issue the ordinances, saying the government has used the two agencies as "henchmen" who are now being rewarded so that "malicious prosecution" is used to silence dissenting voices.

"Isi tarah ke aaropon ke mantar ne Congress ko choomantar kar diya hai (Due to its mantra of making such accusations, Congress is disappearing)," the Minority Affairs Minister told reporters at an event here when asked about the Congress' attack.

"Those who do such negative and destructive politics only harm themselves," he said. The tenure of the directors of the CBI and the Enforcement

Directorate can now be extended by up to three years after the mandated term of two years, according to two ordinances brought in by the government on Sunday.

Attacking the Congress, Naqvi said those who hurl accusations should have at least some positivity.

Earlier, inaugurating 'Hunar Hat' here at 'Pragati Maidan', the Union Minister said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'vocal for local' mantra has proved to be an effective mechanism for strengthening the economy and the vision of self-reliance. Naqvi said that during the Covid crisis, indigenous production capacity fulfilled domestic needs and became the "safety cover" for the Indian economy.

The minister said the country, which used to depend on foreign imports even for food grains, has now not only become self-reliant in food grains production but is also exporting food grains to the entire world.

India's self-reliance in food grains production is a result of hardwork of our "Annadats" (food providers) and the Modi government's efforts to ensure 'Aatmanirbhar Krishi Aur

Krishak (self-reliant agriculture and farmer)", he said.

"India has become a major hub of the pharmacy sector, within a year of the Covid pandemic, the country made the entire world realise its capability and strength in indigenous production by developing 'Made in India' Covid vaccine, various medical equipment and other indigenous life-saving medicines to ensure the health and well-being of the people, said Naqvi.

India's traditional and ancestral legacy of handloom-handicraft has been promoted by Prime Minister Modi's mantra of 'vocal for local' and "Swadeshi", he said.

The 'Hunar Haat' has not only made the artisans and craftsmen self-reliant, it has also strengthened the commitment to "Aatmanirbhar Bharat", he said. The 'Hunar Haat' at Pragati Maidan is the 33rd in a series of such exhibitions across the country.

More than 550 artisans and craftsmen from over 30 states and union territories are participating in the "Hunar Haat", being organized at Hall No 3, Pragati Maidan from November 14-27 this year.

Speaker expresses concern over declining decorum among legislatures

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday expressed concern over gradual decay in the discipline and decorum in the legislatures. Addressing a press conference on the eve of 100th anniversary of the All India Presiding Officers' Conference (AIPOC), he said it will ponder upon the continuing decline in decorum of the legislatures across the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the conference at Shimla on November 17. AIPOC, the apex body of the legislatures in India, is celebrating its hundred years in 2021.

"The Shimla Conference will ponder over gradual decay in the discipline and decorum in the legislatures which is a matter of concern," he said. The speaker also emphasised on the roles and responsibilities of members in the House for the smooth conduct of proceedings. Talking about the anti-defection law, Birla said a committee was constituted on the subject matter during the Presiding Officers' Conference in 2019 and it is likely that a detailed discussion on the report will be held in Shimla.

CBI files one more WB post-poll violence case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Monday said it has registered a case of alleged post-poll violence in West Bengal. With this, the total number of cases in post-poll-violence has reached 45.

The CBI has been taking over cases relating to violence in West Bengal after the Assembly polls in the State earlier this year.

"It was alleged that the accused attempted to rape the victim. It was further alleged that the complainant was returning home along with her friend from her relative's house at Kandi, Murshidabad when few youths intercepted the complainant and her friend," the CBI said in a statement. The agency further said, "It

was also alleged that youths raped her friend, and one youth attempted to rape the complainant. The victim in the present case had allegedly complained about the incident to local Police, but no case was registered. As such, a fresh case has been registered by CBI."

The CBI had earlier registered a separate case on August 25, 2021, taking over the investigation of the case earlier registered at Police Station Nabagram in Murshidabad district vide FIR No. 114/2021 dated May 10, 2021 against three accused on the allegations of gang rape of the friend of the complainant in this case, it said.

CBI has so far registered 45 cases related to violence and other offences in West Bengal.

Warning labels on packaged foods can cut down use of items causing disorders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Clear and simple specific warning labels on the front of packaged foods that can be easily understood by all can help cut down consumption of high fat, sugar and sodium (HFSS) causing serious disorders like diabetes, stroke and obesity, health experts have asserted. NCDs cause an alarming 64.9 percent of the deaths in our country and 40 percent of hospital stays.

"This (FOPL) would ensure curbing NCDs as has been done successfully done by the Chile," Padma Shri awardee and leading endocrinologist Dr Anoop Misra said in a discussion with Gaurav S. Karrir from Institute for Governance, Policies and Politics (IGPP), an advocacy group on the World Diabetes Day on Sunday.

"Chile has mandated front-of-package warning labels, restricted marketing to children, and banned in-school sales of packaged foods and beverages high in calories and added sugar sodium, or saturated fat and exceeding set thresholds for these nutrients or for overall calorie content to carry FOPL—black octagon(s) with the words high-in sugar, sodium, saturated fat, and/or calories, whichever applies," said Dr Misra.

Results have been encouraging. "These products saw a reduction in the consumption of sugary drinks by 23%," said Dr Misra, who also happens to be the executive chairman of Fortis C-DOC Hospital for Diabetes and Allied Sciences. The World Health Organization (WHO) has also found that regulations such as these are instrumental in reducing NCDs globally.

Nutritionist and diabetes educator, Sugandha Kehar also supported the FOPL stating that clear and simple labeling can help people including mothers make better and healthy choices for their kids and family.

Dr. Misra expressed displeasure that while the NCDs mostly caused by the unhealthy diet is on increase, India's top food regulator FSSAI is yet to take any decision on the FOPL, except holding a series of debates on the issue since 2013.

With no check on what is being sold in the market, Dr Misra pointed out that sugar is the single most important factor for obesity and consequent diabetes while high salt results in hypertension and consequent risk of heart diseases. Kehar called for intensified awareness campaigns against HFSS laden foods and help the people make healthy eating choices.

RS clarifies Vice-Prez absence from Nehru birth anniv function

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

This has reference to reports in media alluding to the absence of Vice President of India M.Venkaiah Naidu at a ceremony in the Central Hall of Parliament on November 14, 2021 on the occasion of the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister late Jawaharlal Nehru.

In this regard, it is hereby stated that the Vice President of India never attends such ceremonies organized in the Central Hall of Parliament as a matter of convention and it was misleading to suggest that Vice President Venkaiah Naidu skipped the ceremony.

The said misleading reports have caused deep distress to the Vice President, as per a statement from Rajya Sabha Secretariat. Naidu, who was out of Delhi on Sunday, paid tributes to the former Prime Minister late Jawaharlal Nehru and the same was reported in the media.

EC gets application to register 'Punjab Lok Cong' after Capt Amarinder announces new party by same name

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Days after former Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh announced that he will launch a political party under the name of Punjab Lok Congress, the Election Commission (EC) has received an application from an association seeking to register itself as a political party under the same name.

"An application for registration of a political party under section 29A of Representation of the People Act, from an association wanting to be registered as a political party under name of Punjab Lok Congress party, has been received in the EC," a source in the EC said without elaborating. The application is under process, the source added.

Earlier this month, Singh had resigned from the Congress, accusing party president Sonia Gandhi, and senior leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra of



hatching a 'midnight conspiracy' to oust him. On November 2, Singh, in a seven-page scorching letter to Congress president Sonia Gandhi, resigned from the grand old party. At the same time, he also announced the formation of his new political party 'Punjab Lok Congress'.

Taking on Congress Punjab President Navjot Singh Sidhu, Amarinder Singh called him a person of 'unstable mind' and stated, "you will one day regret this decision and it would be too late by then. I am sure you must be regretting it now."

The 79-year-old leader had timed his bitter resignation letter with the announcement on the name of his new party.

Changes in post-mortem protocols made to boost organ donation: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Monday said that changes have been made in post-mortem protocols to allow the procedure to be conducted after sunset in hospitals with adequate infrastructure in a bid to boost organ donation.

"The post-mortem protocols were changed in response to the multiple references that have been received by the Union Health Ministry from various sources and in line with the Government's commitment to promoting ease of living by reducing the burden imposed

due to compliance to government processes," said the Ministry explaining the reason for tweaking the protocol.

The ministry further said: "Apart from friends and relatives of the deceased, this new procedure also promotes organ donation and transplant as organs can be harvested in the stipulated time window after the procedure."

The release added that the changes were introduced after a technical committee in the Directorate General of Health Services, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,

examined the representations.

In fact, some institutes are already performing night-time post-mortem. So, in view of the rapid advancement and improvement in technology, especially the availability of required lighting and infrastructure required for post-mortem, performing night-time post-mortem in hospitals is now feasible.

Before hospitals are allowed to do so, the fitness and adequacy of the infrastructure will have to be assessed by the hospital in charge to ensure that there is no dilution of evidentiary value.

Inflammation due to obesity can break down bone tissue

New Delhi: Chronic inflammation caused by obesity may trigger the development of cells that break down bone tissue, including the bone that holds teeth in place, according to new University at Buffalo research that sought to improve understanding of the connection between obesity and gum disease. Bone loss is a major symptom of gum disease and may ultimately lead to tooth loss. Also known as periodontal disease, gum disease affects more than 47% of adults 30 years and older, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study, completed in an animal model and published in October in the Journal of Dental Research, found that excessive inflammation resulting from obesity raised

es the number of myeloid-derived suppressor cells (MDSC), a group of immune cells that increase during illness to regulate immune function. MDSCs, which originate in the bone marrow, develop into a range of different cell types, including osteoclasts (a cell that breaks down bone tissue).

"Although there is a clear relationship between the degree

of obesity and periodontal disease, the mechanisms that underpin the links between these conditions were not completely understood," says Keith Kirkwood, DDS, PhD, professor of oral biology in the UB School of Dental Medicine.

"This research promotes the concept that MDSC expansion during obesity to become osteoclasts during periodontitis is

related to increased alveolar bone destruction. Taken together, this data supports the view that obesity raises the risk of periodontal bone loss," says Kyuhwan Kwack, PhD, postdoctoral associate in the UB Department of Oral Biology.

Also, the expression of 27 genes tied to osteoclast formation were significantly elevated in the group fed a high-fat diet.

Guj ATS seized drugs worth over ₹1,900 cr since 2016

Ahmedabad: The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) has seized drugs valued at over ₹1,900 crore since 2016, and out of these, narcotics worth ₹900 crore were recovered this year alone, officials said on Monday.

More than 70 people were arrested by the ATS during this period in some of the major cases related to narcotics, they said, adding that smugglers from Pakistan had been trying to use the Gujarat coast as a transit route to transport narcotics to their destination, especially in the last four years, but all such attempts were foiled.

This year, heroin worth ₹900 crore was seized in different operations, including 120 kg of the contraband valued at ₹600 crore recovered on Sunday from Morbi district, which was also sent by a Pakistani smuggler and brought to the Gujarat coast

through sea route, the ATS officials said.

Since 2016, various drugs, including heroin, mandrax, methamphetamine (or MD), charas and brown sugar, collectively weighing 2,242 kg and worth ₹1,923 crore in global market were seized by the ATS, they said.

In September this year, the ATS in a joint operation with the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) seized 30 kg of heroin worth Rs 150 crore transported by an Iranian fishing boat at the Arabian Sea of the Gujarat coast.

Last year, the ATS had seized drugs worth ₹177 crore, in 2019 worth ₹526 crore, in 2018 of ₹14 crore, and in 2016 of ₹303 crore. No major contraband was seized in 2017, according to the ATS data.

Gujarat ATS Deputy Inspector General (Operations)

Himanshu Shukla told reporters on Monday that Pakistani drug syndicates have been trying to use the Gujarat coast as a transit route for smuggling purposes, but all their attempts were foiled by the State police and central agencies, like the Coast Guard and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI).

"Pakistani drug cartels have been trying to use the Gujarat coast as the transit route because of its proximity to the neighbouring country," Shukla said.

"All such attempts have been thwarted by the Gujarat police and other central agencies, and in future too, no such attempts will succeed. A large quantity of drugs have been seized at the sea by the ATS, ICG and marine police. We have a 1,600-km-long coastline, hence all the agencies work in coordination to achieve this," the official said. **PTI**

Three NSCN-K ultras shot by Assam Rifles in Arunachal Pradesh

Itanagar: Two days after five Assam Rifles personnel, including a colonel-rank officer, were killed in ambush in Manipur, soldiers of the paramilitary force on Monday shot dead three militants of National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang), a separatist organisation, in a remote part of Arunachal Pradesh's Longding district.

The rebels were gunned down by Assam Rifles (AR) at Khogla Village in Wakka Circle of the district around 8 am, Longding Deputy Commissioner Bani Lego stated.

One AR jawan was reportedly injured in the incident, he said. A team of district police officers later visited the village, located along the country's border with Myanmar, to collect the bodies and sent them for post-mortem, the DC said.

The slain ultras are yet to be identified, he said, adding that more details are awaited.

On Saturday, a commanding officer of the Assam Rifles, his wife and son, along with four other personnel of the force, lost their lives in an ambush by militants in Churachandpur district of Manipur. **PTI**

2 scribes held by Tripura police over reports on communal incidents get bail

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Two women journalists, arrested by Tripura police over their writings on the recent communal incidents which allegedly created a "sense of hatred between communities", were granted bail by a magistrate's court on Monday.

Samridhi Sakunia and Swarna Jha, journalists with *HW News Network*, were produced before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) of Gomati district Shubhra Nath, who granted them bail on bail bonds of ₹7,500. They have been asked to mark their attendance at Kakrabon police station of the district on Tuesday before leaving the state.

Presenting his arguments for bail, their advocate Pijush Biswas asserted there was no evidence that they spread communal hatred. "The charges made against the journalists are completely baseless. Police filed the case with mala fide intention," he

insisted.

Biswas said his clients will move the Supreme Court for quashing the case. An FIR was filed against the journalists at Fatikroy police station on Sunday on a complaint by a VHP supporter alleging that they had maligned the image of the Tripura government with their reporting, according to a statement issued by their employer.

The duo was detained by Assam police in Karimganj district on Sunday, when they were on way to Silchar airport, at the request of Tripura police, and kept at a Government-run shelter home for women.

They were arrested by Tripura police on Monday morning and produced before the CJM's court in Gomati district. A senior Tripura police official had claimed the journalists planned to fly outside the state. Officials asked them to meet some police officers before leaving. The duo then started for Silchar

in Assam without informing the authorities, prompting Tripura police to request their Assam counterparts to detain them.

The official said the journalists had posted on social media that a mosque was burnt in Gomati district and a copy of the Quran was damaged. "Police suspect that the videos uploaded by her (Sakunia) were doctored and police want to know if the videos are fake or true by interrogating them," he added.

In a tweet on November 11, Sakunia had written, "#Tripuraviolence Darga Bazaar: On 19th October at around 2:30 am, some unidentified people burnt down the mosque in Darga Bazaar area. People in the neighborhood are very upset with the fact that now they don't have any place nearby to go and pray."

A press release issued by the office of Tripura police chief V S Yadav had claimed that Sakunia's posts were not true and promoted a sense of hatred between communities.

Rain continues to torment Kerala, three dead

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Rains continued to batter Kerala for the third day in succession on Monday as three deaths have been confirmed from various places in the State till 6 PM. All rivers are overflowing and many houses collapsed in the districts of Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram and Pathanamthitta.

Kuttanadu, the State's Rice Bowl, in Alappuzha district has been submerged in flood waters. Roads leading to Sabarimala, the holy shrine atop the Western Ghats in Pathanamthitta district too has been flooded due to incessant rains putting a question mark on this year's pilgrimage season which begins on Tuesday. The opening of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple was held on Monday in the presence of the shrine's chief priest and members of the royal family of Pandhalam, the traditional owners of the temple.

Schools and colleges in many districts remained shut down on Monday. Landslides disrupted rail traffic between



Thiruvananthapuram and Nagercoil on Monday. Efforts were in to remove the obstacles from the track to resume the train services by Tuesday.

Weather Bureau has announced that the rains would subside by Tuesday. Meteorologists attributed the Easterly winds blowing from the high pressure region of Siberia to the Bay of Bengal as the reason for the downpour that has been tormenting Kerala for the last few weeks.

HC orders probe into irregularities in giving relief to flood victims in WB

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal Government suffered yet another blow with the Calcutta High Court on Monday ordering an inquiry into the alleged irregularities in distributing relief to the flood victims in Malda and Murshidabad district.

Hearing a petition the Bench of Chief Justice Prakash Srivastava on Monday ordered a probe to be conducted by Comptroller and Auditor General and directed the State Government to submit a report by February 14 stating the amount sanctioned for the flood relief and the amount spent for that purpose.

The Court has also said that while CAG will conduct the probe the central Government will keep an eye over it and the State Government will have to cooperate in the investigation.

A public interest litigation was filed in the Court in 2019 seeking an order directing investigation into a flood relief scam worth crores in Malda and Murshidabad district of the State. Thousands of people had been affected in the flood that hit these two districts in 2017.

Subsequently the Government

announced Rs 70,000 for those affected in the flood. A large part of the amount was to come from the central Government.

However, the opposition BJP and Left complained of large-scale irregularities in distributing relief. "Crores of rupees were paid to unaffected people mostly belonging to the ruling Trinamool Congress while hundreds of those who were affected by the flood received nothing," said CPI(M) leader Sujan Chakrabarty.

A P.I.L. was filed in the High Court in 2019 post which the then Advocate General conceded before the Court that there indeed had been irregularities adding the guilty people had been showcased and they had been asked to return the amount. However the Court reprimanded the Government wondering whether issuing showcase notices and asking return of the misappropriated money was enough. The Court also asked as to why no FIR was registered against the guilty.

Senior TMC leaders later said that the corruption had taken place at the level of some village pradhans --- a contention that was summarily rejected by the opposition which demanded action against the culprits.

'Disconnect from gadgets' initiative to be launched in Tamil Nadu on Nov 20

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Come November 20, the world will see a new initiative from Tamil Nadu to wean people away from their gadgets like mobile phones, lap-tops and desk tops. From 7.70 pm to 8.30 pm, families will disconnect from their gadgets and spend time with their children-playing, talking, eating and laughing together; rediscovering the pleasure of each other's company in a fun way, says Parent Circle, a venture by Ramco Group, Tamil Nadu based industrial conglomerate which has interests in cement, computers, real estate and educational institutions.

The Pioneer has carried a news report about a scientific research in the US finding that addiction to gadgets like mobile phones and computers was as harmful as drugs. The mission by Parent Circle is to make people as well as the children to disconnect from their gadgets for one hour and get reconnected to the near and dear

ones at least for an hour. November 20 is being observed as World Children's Day by the United Nations and Parent Circle decided it to the ideal day to launch the mission to Disconnect to Reconnect.

"Though we were all home together during the pandemic, we were in many ways disconnected from our family members - particularly our children - due to our extreme dependence on technology. With the parents busy working from home and the children busy with online classes, every one has been cocooned in a 'connected' world of their own," said Nalina Ramalakshmi, founder and chairperson, Parent Circle.

She said that Governments of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry are actively participating in this endeavour by sending messages to teachers and students to take a break of one hour from their gadgets and on-line assignments and to spend the time with family members.

Kerala HC junks plea claiming Narayanan influenced CBI probe through land deals

Kochi: The Kerala High Court on Monday dismissed the plea of a former police officer, accused of falsely implicating Nambi Narayanan in a spying case in 1994, who had alleged that the ex-ISRO scientist influenced the CBI probe against him back then.

Former Kerala Police officer S Vijayan had alleged that Narayanan influenced the CBI probe by entering into land deals worth crores with the then investigating officials of the agency.

Justice R Narayana Pisharadi dismissed Vijayan's plea. The detailed order is awaited. Vijayan, along with 17 other former Kerala police and IB officials, is facing a CBI probe for allegedly falsely implicating Narayanan and some others in the 1994 spying case.

Vijayan had argued before the high court that he had placed before the trial court encumbrance certificates of several acres of land in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu which show Narayanan or his son as power of attorney holders. These lands

ISRO CASE

were sold to the CBI officials, Vijayan had alleged and contended that this material was sufficient for the trial court to order an investigation under the Prevention of Corruption Act against the scientist and the agency officials.

The high court, however, had said that encumbrance certificates do not prove sale of land and asked Vijayan to show the actual sale deeds.

The high court had also said that sanction to prosecute would also be required for the trial court to order an investigation.

Vijayan and three others were granted anticipatory bail by the high court in August in the CBI's conspiracy case against them. Besides the four, 14 others are named as accused in the case for various offences, including criminal conspiracy, kidnapping and fabrication of evidence in connection with the arrest and detention of Narayanan in the espionage case.

Besides Narayanan, two Maldivian women -- Mariyam Rasheedha and Fouziyya Hassan - were also arrested and detained in the case. The two women were jailed for over three years before being released.

The two Maldivians recently moved the CBI requesting it to place before the Supreme Court their claim for damages of Rs 2 crore from each of the 18 officers who are arrayed as accused in the conspiracy case being probed by the agency. The women have urged the agency to place their claim for damages before the apex court when it hears CBI's appeal against the Kerala High Court order granting anticipatory bail to the four accused - a former DGP of Gujarat, two former police officers of Kerala, and a retired intelligence official - in the conspiracy case being probed by the agency.

The agency, in its appeal, has sought cancellation of the anticipatory bail granted to the four accused by the high court on August 13.

28% sitting MLAs in Goa have criminal cases against them: ADR

New Delhi: Twenty-eight per cent of the 40 sitting MLAs in Goa had declared criminal cases against themselves while 23 per cent had declared serious criminal cases against them in their election affidavits, poll rights group Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said.

The ADR and Goa Election Watch have analysed the criminal, financial and other background details of all 40 legislatures. The analysis is based on the affidavits submitted by them prior to the 2017 Assembly elections and bypolls conducted thereafter.

Of the 40 sitting MLAs analysed, 11 (28 per cent) have declared criminal cases against themselves and nine (23 per cent) MLAs have declared serious criminal cases, it said.

The report said seven (26 per cent) out of 27 MLAs from the BJP, one (20 per cent) out of five MLAs from the Congress, one (33 per cent) out of three MLAs from the Goa Forward Party, one (100 per cent) out of one MLA from the NCP and one (33 per cent) out of the 3 Independent MLAs have declared criminal cases against themselves in their affidavits, the ADR said.

The poll rights body further said five (19 per cent) out of 27 MLAs from the BJP, one (20 per cent) out of five MLAs from the Congress, one (33 per cent) out of 3 MLAs from the Goa Forward Party, the lone (100 per cent) NCP MLA and one (33 per cent) out of the three Independent MLAs have declared serious criminal cases against themselves in their affidavits.

Meanwhile, all 40 sitting MLAs are 'crorepatis' (those with assets of ₹1 crore or more), the report said.

Akhilesh accuses BJP of compromising on quality of Purvanchal Expressway

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday charged the BJP Government with compromising on the quality of Purvanchal Expressway to cut down the project cost and inaugurate it before the Assembly polls to claim credit. Regretting the denial of permission by the Ghazipur administration to use the expressway on the pretext of its inauguration, the SP chief said his party will offer flowers in a symbolic gesture to mark the inauguration on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the 340-km-long expressway connecting Ghazipur with Lucknow in Sultanpur on Tuesday. "In a bid to make it cheap, there has been a compromise on its quality. To take credit ahead of the polls, the BJP is going to inaugurate the half-baked ('aadha-adhura') Purvanchal Expressway. There has been a compromise with

the quality with which it should have been built," the SP chief told reporters.

He said the foundation of the expressway was laid during his party's tenure. Pointing to the quality of work on the Agra-Lucknow expressway, he said in recent rains, some portion of it caved in. "If you had travelled on the Agra-Lucknow expressway, you would have experienced that tea will not spill even if you drive at 100 km per hour," he said.

"But, we don't know which bitumen has been mixed that if you increase the speed, then you will have stomachache and even pain in your waist," Yadav said.

He also claimed that the government snatched the expressway work from companies which could have made a better road. "We feel happy that the prime minister has not inaugurated any quality road like the one made during the rule of the Samajwadis,"

he said, adding that they are not taking side of the companies from which the work was snatched. Those companies are doing the best job in the country. If they had made the expressway, it would have been better than the Agra-Lucknow expressway," Yadav said.

"But, we don't know which quality has been brought by our Baba CM," he said taking a dig at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. "Dividers and medians have been reduced to make it cheap," the former UP chief minister alleged.

However, Akhilesh Yadav did not mention names of the companies. Yadav also said if the SP is voted to power, it will construct a market along the expressway and provide all facilities. Yadav further said, "The Samajwadi Party will on November 16 offer flowers in a symbolic gesture to inaugurate it. Very soon the SP will make a programme to move on the expressway." **PTI**

Renowned historian Babasaheb Purandare no more

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Renowned historian, Padma Vibhushan awardee, an authority on Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji and theatre personality Balwant Moreshwar Purandare - popularly known as Babasaheb Purandare - died at a private hospital at Pune after a brief illness, in the early hours of Monday.

Purandare was 99. He breathed his last the Dinanath Mangeshkar Hospital & Research Centre, around 5.07 am.

After he was diagnosed with pneumonia, he had been admitted to the hospital a week ago. His condition deteriorated on Sunday evening. He was put on ventilator in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the hospital, after his condition turned critical.

Thousands of his admirers turned out at his Pune residence where his body was kept for final darshan. His last rites were performed at Vaikunth Crematorium with full state honours at around noon.

Rich tributes were paid to Purandare - who was known for better part of his life as 'Shivshahir', a

bard of Shivaji -- from prominent personalities from various walks of life. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was among the first leaders to express his condolence over the demise of Purandare, said that Purandare "was witty, wise and had rich knowledge of Indian history".

"Shivshahir Babasaheb Purandare will live on due to his extensive works. In this sad hour, my thoughts are with his family and countless admirers. Om Shanti," Modi tweeted.

"Shivshahir Babasaheb Purandare was witty, wise and had rich knowledge of Indian history. I had the honour of interacting with him very closely over the years. A few months back, had addressed his centenary year programme," the Prime Minister added.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, whose late father Bal Thackeray considered Purandare as one of his earliest ideologues, said that Shivshahir Purandare's eternal adoration of Chhatrapati Shivaji and his dedication towards studying the life and times of the Maratha warrior king was his greatest source of energy

and inspiration throughout his life.

Governor Bhagar Singh Koshiyari, NCP President Sharad Pawar, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis of the BJP, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena President Raj Thackeray, state and union ministers paid homage to Purandare.

Born on July 29, 1922 at Saswad near then Poona and now Pune, Purandare had been fascinated by Chhatrapati Shivaji from his early age. He had penned essays and stories which were later published in a book form, 'Thinagya' (Sparks).

His other prominent works included Raja Shivachhatrapati and Kesari, and a book on life of Narayanrao Peshwa. Raja Shivchhatrapat was Purandare's a two-part, 900-page magnum opus on Shivaji in Marathi. It was first published in the late 1950s and has since gone through numerous reprints over decades.

His most well-known of his works was a drama Jaanata Raja, a widely popular play on Shivaji published and first staged in 1985.

It seeks to re-create the life and times of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Since then Jaanata Raja has been staged over 1,000 times in 16 districts of Maharashtra, Agra, Delhi, Bhopal, and the United States. Performed by more than 200 artistes, the drama is a visual delight as it involves elephants, camels and horses. The epic drama is staged in various parts of the state and country around Diwali every year.

Apart from studying all the forts and history of the Maratha Empire, Purandare delivered more than 12,000 lectures on the Maratha warrior.

In over eight decades of his writing and theatre career, Purandare had delivered more than 12,000 lectures on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and had studied all the forts and history of the Maratha Empire, which had made him an authority on the subject.

He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award on January 25, 2019. Among the other awards, Purandare bagged in his lifetime was Maharashtra Bhushan (2015).

His wife Nirmala Purandare

(1933-2019) was a veteran social activist who founded "Vanasthali" in Pune. She had worked among rural women rural women in the field of child welfare. Purandare is survived by renowned writer-painter-singer daughter Madhuri and two sons, Amrut and Prasad.

Purandare, who would have turned 100 on July 29, 2022 if he were to be alive, was felicitated at a public function on July 29 2021 on his entering the milestone 100th year of his life, by Maharashtra Education Society and Itihaas Premi Mandal.

Apart from Raja Shivachhatrapati, Kesari, 'Thinagya' and Jaanata Raja, Purandare's other works included: "Maharaj", "Shelarkhind", "Gadkot Kille", "Agra", "Lal Mahal", "Purandar", "Rajgad", "Panhalgad", "Sinhagad", "Pratapgad", "Purandaryanchi Daulat", "Mujaryache Mankari", "Fulwanti", "Savitri" and "Kalawantinicha Sajja".

His two-volume novel Raja Shivachhatrapati was adapted into a television serial in Marathi - with a Pune-based doctor-turned-NCP MP Dr. Amol R. Kolhe playing the title role.

2 terrorists gunned down in Hyderabad area of Srinagar

Jammu: At least two heavily armed terrorists were gunned down by the joint team of security forces in Hyderabad area of Srinagar late Monday evening. The vehicular movement on the highway near the site of encounter was suspended to prevent any injury to civilians passing through the area.

According to a Twitter handle of Kashmir Zone police, "in the initial exchange of fire one terrorist was neutralised. The second terrorist was neutralised almost two hours later".

Till the time of filing the report the operation was still going on.

The identities of the slain terrorists could not be ascertained as their dead bodies had not been retrieved so far from the encounter site.

Three terrorists were neutralised in two separate encounters in Srinagar and Kulgam districts on Friday. So far 135 terrorists have been neutralised across Kashmir valley this year in different encounters. **PNS**





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PAPER WITH PASSION

When breathing kills

The SC is forced to remind the Govts that toxic smog is taking a toll on the citizenry

It's once again the same drama that Delhiites have witnessed year after year: The Supreme Court upbraiding the authorities — both the State Governments and the Centre — over the toxic smog that clouds the national Capital's skyline throughout the winter. Just as the city was returning to normal after battling months of the COVID-19 scourge, the pollution menace has once again unsettled it. Those suffering from lung-related issues are forced to shut themselves up and live under dread. The rest go about the business, huffing and puffing, disregarding the looming toxic threat. They have few options. Life has to go on. People have to earn their livelihood. The city can't be brought to a grinding halt. The horror of the lockdown is still fresh in the mind of millions of those who suffered the most. It's a matter of shame and measure of the insensitivity of the authorities that the Supreme Court has to step in to remind them that the situation was perilous and that life cannot go on like this. The court has also set the record right by asking the authorities not to seek scapegoats in farmers, pointing out that only four per cent of the air pollution is attributed to stubble burning. Pointing this out, Justice Surya Kant said on Monday during the SC hearing: "The cat is out of the bag. Farmers are blamed needlessly." The court identified factories, transportation and road dust as major contributing factors other than stubble burning.



In its order today, the court said: "The Government has not indicated precisely what are the steps they are taking to control these (industrial pollution and pollution due to transportation, dust and stubble burning). We direct the Central Government to hold an emergency meeting tomorrow...and what are the steps they can take." On stubble burning, the court said: "While it's not the major cause...there is a lot of stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana. We request the State Governments to pursue farmers to stop the burning for a week... Punjab and Haryana should hold these meetings." Every time the Supreme Court has tried to nudge the authorities on some important issues, the refrain is the same: Please don't get into the domain of governance. But what should the court do if the Centre does not even convene a meeting of the States around Delhi which must be brought on board to tackle the pollution menace. After all, Delhi is not an island. The SC has rightfully directed the Centre to hold a meeting of Delhi, Punjab and Haryana to work out a comprehensive plan to deal with the situation. It's time the SC sets up a permanent committee headed by a retired Judge to monitor round the year the steps required to prevent the visitation of the annual menace. Going by the experiences of the past, the authorities are prone to sliding back into the "sleep" mode once the air quality level shows even the slightest improvement.

PICTALK



Devotees pray on the banks of the Yamuna on the occasion of 'Dev Uthani Ekadashi', in Prayagraj

Die hard

The T20 final was unfavourable, but Kiwis will do well to keep their fighting spirit alive in India

Having lifted the 50-over World Cup five times, the Aussies are no strangers to the pinnacle of glory, though the trophy's T20 cousin hadn't been added to their collection until Sunday evening, when the Kangaroos got the better of the Kiwis in the final played in the UAE. The Aussies, always one of the strongest title contenders after all formats, played exactly like champions. Their relentless chasing of targets, especially in the last few matches, showed that they were confident and meant serious business. Though not all players were in the best of form, somebody or the other rose to the occasion to save the day. Australia lost only one of their five matches (to England), leaving in no doubt their superior skill set and brute power. That's how former Indian cricketer Virender Sehwag, along with others from the cricket fraternity, underlined the Australian victory. While India took an early exit from the tournament (and it was not the first time when India's fate was pinned on the other team, Afghanistan, in this case), the Black Caps managed to hang on till the finals, but in vain. Having said that, they had made it to the 2015 and 2019 ODI World Cup finals, too, but lost to Australia and England, respectively.



But the courage and sporting spirit that the Kiwis bring to the field, though rarely being hailed as the "top dog", must be applauded. While New Zealand's World Cup ambition will have to wait until 2023, its focus must now shift to India for a three-match T20 and two-match Test series, starting November 17. Now it's time for both the teams to focus on the matches ahead with the fighting spirit they are known for and give their best. Team India had demonstrated resilience earlier this year when it pulled off a magnificent victory from the jaws of defeat against England as well as Australia. The same never-say-die attitude is needed to be brought to the table; it applies to the Kiwis as well. If both teams manage to put up a good show, it would certainly be a boost for the sport, besides uplifting the morale of the players and their fans. Cricket is much like life, where there always are new opportunities and one must always bounce back. One win will not make you invincible and one defeat will not define you. And, it is not over even after it's 'over'.

A 'Sputnik Moment', in Chinese context



BHOPINDER SINGH

While the US too has been working on hypersonic technology, it is yet to conduct a weapons test while the Chinese have already done it

On October 4, 1954, then Soviet Union had launched the first earth-orbiting satellite, *Sputnik 1*, to shock the rival USA in the early days of the Cold War. This momentary setback in the ensuing rivalry of sovereign competences birthed the term 'Sputnik Moment' to imply the disconcerting technological gap between nations, especially with an 'enemy' nation. The motive was to accept the bitter reality of inequality and galvanise the national mood towards a common purpose and resolve to overcome the obvious lacunae. Later, Senator John Kerry used the term "New Sputnik Moment" to invoke the much-needed spirit of bipartisanship on matters concerning new energy sources, education, infrastructure and technology, all of which were falling prey to partisan chest-thumping. Former US President Barack Obama was to evocatively posit the task of rebuilding the economy in the aftermath of the 2007 global economic crisis as "Our Generation's Sputnik Moment". Most recently, in a recalibrated context of the most relevant 'enemy' facing the 'Free World', Joint Chiefs of US Military Staff, General Mark Milley, likened the dangerous Chinese advancements in military technology with the test of its hypersonic weapons system as "very close" to a "Sputnik Moment".



The fact that the forewarning came from the topmost serving General of the US military makes the latest 'enemy' threat both credible and significant. The latest hair-raising alarm against the Chinese can be contextualised to the time when the Soviets launched the *Sputnik* along with the assumption that it could be plunged back into the US territory without any credible deterrence — today, similar questions of the US military's capability to deter a potential Chinese deployment of its hypersonic weapon loom. The extremely provocative backdrop of the ongoing Chinese belligerence in the Taiwan Straits, South China Seas or even along the Indian border reiterates the vulnerability felt in the Sino-wary sphere. As it is, the much famed and multibillion worth of US mis-



TRUE TO THEIR PATENT PLAYBOOK OF DEFLECTION, THE CHINESE HAVE RUBBISHED NEWS OF 'WEAPONISING' THE TECHNOLOGY AND, INSTEAD, ATTRIBUTED THE SAME TOWARDS A RE-USEABLE SPACE VEHICLE FOR 'PEACEFUL PURPOSES'

sile defence systems like the Saudi-procured Patriot batteries had come a cropper against the crude drone attacks fired by Yemen's Houthis rebels in 2019. Even the subsequent exposure of the much-banded Israel's Iron Dome interceptors in the Israeli-Hamas war resulted in 60-odd Hamas rockets piercing through the Israeli air defence system. Such demonstrated gaps in the supposedly 'cutting edge' and existing missile defence systems put the threat of the Chinese hypersonic capability in another realm, even if the Chinese trial missile is believed to have missed the target by 24 miles. Some naysayers have downplayed the Chinese alarm by pointing to the possible attempts by the Pentagon and the all-powerful arms industry to drum up the critical political rhetoric and warmongering towards finances for the estimated \$1.3 trillion investment in 'nuclear modernisation' of its entire base of the nuclear 'triad'. Aiding this plausible view is the recent Biden commitment towards defending Taiwan militarily, signing AUKUS (a security pact among the US, UK and Australia) and punting substantially on the sensitive microchip industry to stay ahead of the Chinese on the technological front. In times of overall economic hardship (COVID crisis, ironically orig-

inating from China), parallel allusion to a grave Cold War moment to frame a compelling and bipartisan national argument in favour of strengthening the military wherewithal is politically kosher. Irrespective of the suitability of the expression, the fact remains that while the US too has been working on hypersonic technology, it has yet to conduct a hypersonic weapons test. True to their patent playbook of deflection, the Chinese have rubbished news of 'weaponising' the technology and, instead, attributed the same towards a re-useable space vehicle for "peaceful purposes". This convenient tact affords the Chinese to rebuff any calls towards nuclear arms control until the last moment, by when the die is cast in Beijing's favour. The unofficial Chinese mouthpiece, *Global Times*, worded its ostensible clarification while still retaining the spectre of threat in its phraseology: "It is Washington that has gone hysterical in viewing China. Granted, the US has enough nuclear weapons to destroy the planet several times over, but China has sufficient countermeasures to make its rivals fear and think twice before launching a strike against China. This is the goal of China's defence strategy that the US does not understand." Such weapons and tech-

nology add to the 'destabilising' quotient of the Chinese imperatives that can be masked in unrelated socio-economic-diplomatic manoeuvres that are usually deployed in adjunct to the military footprint. Oddly, the reverse-engineering of American technology has played a considerable role in developing platforms like the Chinese hypersonic missiles programme, which the seminal *Financial Times* article (which broke the news first) described as "far more advanced than the US officials realised", adding that "the test raised new questions about why the US often underestimated China's military modernisation". Meanwhile, back home, the Indian leadership is content with obfuscations, whataboutery, mealy-mouthed statements and political bombast to downplay the Chinese threat. The reality of the Chinese capabilities is staring at the world, and it calls for an honest, detailed and thorough recognition of the threat perceptions with due preparation for countermeasures. The professional and realistic assessment of a 'Sputnik Moment' by a US General is just one lesson. (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE GOVT MUST PROVE ITS INTENTIONS

Sir — While allegations are made by the Opposition parties that constitutional bodies like the CBI, ED and IT are misused by the ruling dispensation to target opponents and others who don't toe their line of thinking, the Government has given enough credence to the said allegations by promulgating two ordinances on Sunday to extend the terms of the chiefs of the ED and CBI up to five years from the earlier mandatory two year tenure for such positions. It is said that the Centre has enacted the ordinances to beat the Supreme Court's order that no more extension should be given to the incumbent Chief of the ED Sanjay Kumar Mishra, after his tenure comes to an end on November 18.

Now, if the Government wants to prove that the promulgations have been made only in the interest of the nation, and not to defy the verdict of the apex court, they have a very good opportunity in hand to do so. The Government should not extend the tenure of S K Mishra anymore, allow him to retire on the due date and appoint another senior officer with an impeccable record as the next Chief of the ED.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

IMPART CYBER EDUCATION TO KIDS

Sir — What were the reasons behind the rise in cyber crimes against children in 2020 by over 400 per cent? In 2019, there were 164 reported cases against children, in 2018, the number was 117, and in 2017, 79 such cases, as per NCRB data. Increase of cyber crime against children from 2019 (162) to 2020 (842) is alarming. The reasons behind this alarming increase is attributed to the Coronavirus pandemic which made it compulsory for children to stay at home and use digital technologies more than ever. The use and popularity of social media has already been growing among children, but it increased manifold during the COVID-induced lockdowns. Another cause of this concern could be the exposure to a sudden rise in virtual learning among children in India. Since children are not very aware of

Aussies win T20 World Cup in style



The five-time ODI World Cup winner Australia at last grabbed its maiden T20 World Cup as it defeated New Zealand by eight wickets on Sunday. Both the teams played in great spirit but the Australians were better at the end of the day. The Kiwis added another 'runner-up' title in their collection as they had earlier tasted defeat in the 2015 and 2019 World Cup finals as well. In cricket, it is said that

catches win matches, but in the United Arab Emirates, it was all about who wins the toss and takes the right decision. Notably, out of the 24 matches played in the last round, 19 were won by the team chasing. 'Man of the Match' Mitchell Marsh played a superb knock ably supported by the Player of the Tournament David Warner and Maxwell, whereas Cummins, Hazlewood and Zampa bowled exceptionally well, though Starc had an off night. NZ put up a good total, thanks to Kane Williamson's knock, but their bowlers could not deliver. Interestingly, David Warner quietly took a sweet revenge on Williamson who had replaced him as the captain of Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2021. Hopefully, NZ would make up for it in the next WC; it is too good a team to miss out to get to the last stage.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

the cyber world, they are easy prey for hackers. Exposure to violence and obscenity, too, is an important cause. Therefore, the need to educate children on the risks of unsafe browsing from a young age becomes even more important. India is picking up pace in the field of digitisation and the world is likely to revolve around the internet for years to come. Therefore, safe internet browsing practices and data privacy should be taught in schools and given equal significance.

Tarun Patidar | Ujjain

NEED TO MOVE ON FROM COAL

Sir — Referring to the Glasgow climate pact, US climate envoy John Kerry made a caustic comment that the Governments had no choice but to accept India's coal language change for 'the responsible use of fossil fuels'. In contrast, the British Prime Minister Boris Johnson sounded optimistic when he said, "But today's agreement is a big step forward and, critically, we have the first ever international agreement to phase

down coal." At the 26th Conference of the Parties summit in Glasgow (COP26), Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the five nectar elements, 'Panchamrit', which he termed an "unprecedented contribution of India to climate action". Greta Thunberg's views apart, the cardinal question here is, can India phase down the use of coal? As of September 2021, 2.09 lakh MW of India's 3.89 lakh MW installed generation capacity is thermal power, generated from burning coal and lignite, accounting for 53.6 per cent of the total installed capacity. And as much as 0.60 lakh MW of thermal power generation capacity is under construction in the country. India will need enormous investments to reduce its dependence on fossil deposits buried eternally under the earth. The fallacy of the Net Zero commitment by 2070 appears obvious.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

By pushing security forces into civilian areas such as farming land and wedding halls, the Gol is choking public spaces.

PDP president — Mehbooba Mufti

Poverty and the top global health problems are closely connected. By improving one, we can make progress towards fixing the other.

Microsoft co-founder — Bill Gates

The teaser of Prithviraj captures the essence of the life of the legendary warrior Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan.

Actor — Akshay Kumar

Everyone has to say goodbye to cricket one day. But my target is to carry on playing until the 2023 World Cup.

Pakistan bowler — Wahab Riaz

Tribals were not given their due by the earlier Governments and (they) were deprived of basic facilities.

Prime Minister — Narendra Modi

FIRST COLUMN

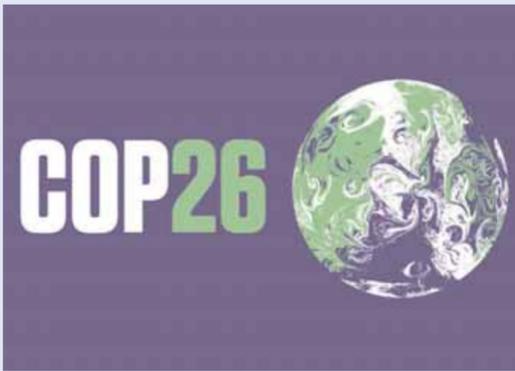
COP26: WE ARE IN UNKNOWN WATERS

Not yielding much to cut emissions, COP26 was a more productive climate summit



GWYNNE DYER

Closing the two-week COP26 climate summit in Glasgow on Saturday, Alok Sharma, the British president of the 197-country conference, declared "We've kept 1.5 (degrees Celsius) within reach, but its pulse is weak." But he was close to tears several times in his closing remarks. That was not because the 40,000-delegate meeting was a complete disaster. It wasn't a complete success either, but these things never are. Sharma was upset because a last-minute assault by the world's coal, oil and gas superpowers — Saudi Arabia and Australia as the biggest exporters, China, India and Russia as huge producers and consumers — nearly brought the meeting to a halt. After days and nights of almost non-stop negotiations, the great majority of the countries present got a commitment to phase out 'coal power' into the conference report for the first time. No timetable, but it's a start. What? You mean none of the other summits ever mentioned coal in their reports? Coal is the worst fossil fuel by far, in terms of the volume of carbon dioxide it puts into the atmosphere when it burns. Surely they must have mentioned it before. Nope. The fossil fuel powers always managed to keep it out of the final documents by threatening to sab-



otage a process that depends on consensus and unanimity. Ridiculous, of course. Your whole purpose is to stop global warming, but you're not allowed to mention the principal cause? At the final plenary session, India's climate minister, Bhupender Yadav, stood up and asked how developing countries could promise to phase out coal and fossil fuel subsidies when they "have still to deal with their development agendas and poverty eradication.

"The answer is that all the development agendas and poverty eradication will shrivel up and die if the warming stays on its current track — and Yadav probably knows that too. But he effectively threatened a veto, and managed to get the phrase "phase out coal" changed to "phase DOWN coal". It wasn't much of a victory, because the offending word 'coal' is still in the Glasgow Climate Pact. It will be there at all future climate summits, and every year there will be attempts to strengthen the other words around it. Eventually they will succeed. At this point you may want to join with Greta Thunberg in dismissing the whole process as "blah, blah, blah", but you would be wrong. This is the only way millions-strong groups of people called countries, most of whose ancestors were hunter-gatherers only a few thousand years ago, can make decisions on subjects that matter to all of them. Their representatives come together physically, and if the debate is intense and the meeting goes on long enough, their fixed positions tend to start bending towards compromise and consensus. That's how their ancestors did it in the far distant past, and that's how we still do it today. So the great achievement at Glasgow was to agree that they will all meet again next year and keep worrying away at the problem and 'ratcheting up' the promises. There's no formal agreement to meet again the year after that, but everybody expects that this will be an annual event in the future, no longer a five-yearly one. It doesn't mean that human beings will respond fast enough to avoid catastrophic warming. We have left it very late, the special interests will continue to wage a fighting retreat in defence of the status quo, and some 'non-linear' response to the warming climate may suddenly upset all our plans and expectations. We are in unknown waters now.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)

Tax cuts alone won't help rein in oil prices

Given the fast pace of vaccination and substantially diminished effect of COVID-19, the GDP is expected to register growth close to 10 per cent



UTTAM GUPTA

On November 3, 2021, the Union Government notified reduction in central excise duty (CED) by ₹5 per liter on petrol and ₹10 per liter on diesel. Seen in isolation, these cuts may appear to be significant. However, when viewed in the backdrop of the unprecedented increase affected by the Narendra Modi Government ever since it assumed office, this is small.

In May 2014, the CED on petrol was ₹9.8 per liter whereas on diesel it was ₹3.8 per liter. As on November 2, 2021, it was ₹33 per liter on petrol — a cumulative increase of ₹23.2 per liter. On diesel, it was ₹32 per liter — higher by ₹28.2 per liter. The cuts notified on Nov 3, 2021, have offset only 1/5th of the hike on petrol and 1/3rd on diesel.

The hike in duties has adversely impacted the economy by way of increasing prices across all sectors (all the more because increase in diesel price leads to higher cost of transportation), eroding the purchasing power of common man, undermining competitiveness of the industrial and services sector and increasing the cost of implementing welfare schemes such as making food available at subsidized rate. But, looking at things in isolation won't be fair.

We need to consider as to how the extra revenue from duty hike was put to use. Of the ₹23.2 per liter increase in CED on petrol, ₹13 per liter was given effect during 2020 alone (₹3/- in March and ₹10/- in May). In case of diesel, of the ₹28.2 per liter hike, ₹16 per liter was done in 2020 (₹3/- in March and ₹13/- in May). During FY 2020-21, the economy was devastated by the COVID pandemic leading to contraction in GDP (gross domestic product) by 7.3 per cent.

As a result, the Union Budget suffered a double blow.

While, on one hand, there was a drastic reduction in receipts (gross tax receipts or GTR was about ₹400,000 crore less than the target) on the other, the expenditure of the Government increased sharply to cover both life/health and livelihood needs. Major heads where its expenses zoomed included food subsidy: ₹500,000 crore; fertilizer subsidy: ₹134,000 crore; MGNREGA: ₹111,000 crore; health: ₹94,000 crore. Besides, it had to maintain high capital expenditure - revised estimate (RE) for the year being ₹439,000 crore.

Consequently, the fiscal deficit (FD) during 2020-21 was 9.5 percent of GDP or ₹1850,000 crore in nominal terms. This was despite the Centre collecting ₹335,000 crore from CED on petrol and diesel alone (during 2019-20, tax collection from these products was ₹180,000 crore). Imagine, if CED were to be less by ₹5/10 per liter on petrol/diesel, i.e. same quantum as the cuts affected now, the collection would have been lower by at least ₹100,000 crore.



THE HIKE IN DUTIES HAS ADVERSELY IMPACTED THE ECONOMY BY INCREASING PRICES ACROSS ALL SECTORS, ERODING THE PURCHASING POWER OF COMMON MAN, UNDERMINING COMPETITIVENESS OF THE INDUSTRIAL AND SERVICES SECTOR AND INCREASING THE COST OF IMPLEMENTING WELFARE SCHEMES

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)



This would have affected schemes for protecting the life/livelihood; alternatively, Government would have been forced to increase the FD to 10 percent or ₹1950,000 crore which would also entail heavy cost by way of macro-economic instability, rating downgrade, high interest rate, increasing debt, inflationary pressures and so on. Clearly, reducing duty cannot be an unmixed blessing all the more, when other revenue streams are drying up as happened during 2020-21.

During the current year, given the fast pace of vaccination and substantially diminished effect of COVID, GDP is expected to register growth of close to 10 percent. As a result, the GTR is likely to exceed the target by about ₹200,000 crore. On the expenditure side, food subsidy may not be very much off the mark though fertilizer subsidy could exceed the target by at least ₹40,000 crore (courtesy, steep increase in the international price of fertilizers).

The resulting budgetary cushion will help in absorbing the revenue loss from the recent cut in duties — estimated to be about ₹65,000 crore in the remaining five months of the current fiscal.

Twenty-five State Governments have also reduced VAT (value added tax). This together with cuts in CED should provide substantial relief (for instance, ₹20 per liter on petrol in Karnataka). Yet, there is clamor for

more; some even wishing that CED goes back to the level existing prior to 2014. Even this should be possible if only overall tax revenue picks up say, monthly GST collection going up to ₹150,000 crore on a 'sustained' basis. Till that happens, both the Centre and States will need to act in a calibrated manner.

However, to focus on reducing taxes alone won't help in reining in oil prices. Let us look at some numbers. In Delhi, the pump price of around ₹104 per litre (as on Nov 3, 2021) includes refinery price plus freight (ERP+F) of ₹47/-, dealer commission of ₹4/-, CED, ₹28/- and VAT, ₹25/- . Even if, CED and VAT are completely withdrawn (theoretical), the consumer will still pay ₹51/-.

In the break-up of pump price, ERP+F alone is ₹47/-. This corresponds to the international price of crude oil at \$85 per barrel. Being a function of the global demand-supply balance, the price of crude can go to any level; for instance, in the first quarter of CY (calendar year) 2012, it had touched a high of \$125 per barrel. If, that scenario were to repeat, the ERP+F would be ₹69 per liter. Plus, dealer commission, the pump price will be ₹73 per liter even if the Centre and State don't charge any duty.

Considering that India depends on imports for 83.5 percent of its crude requirements, there is a high probability of our having to pay such a high price.

Indeed, this is where the shoe really pinches. There is an urgent need for promoting self-reliance in oil production.

A recent directive of the Union Government to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to transfer 60 per cent of the operating rights in the Bombay High and South Bassein region (nearly 50 percent of India's oil production comes from these two areas) to a multinational oil company (MNC) is a good move as this will help in fully utilizing the potential of this prolific area. That apart, there is an urgent need to put in place a 'stable' and 'conducive' policy for attracting investment and increasing indigenous production.

Another important aspect has to do with economy in the use of fuel and improving energy use efficiency — a potent way of moderating demand. In fact, the current high price should signal consumers to make necessary moves in that direction. India being the third largest importer of oil, a lower Indian demand can also contribute to lowering of the international price of crude.

Finally, at present, marketing of petroleum products is the monopoly of public sector undertakings (PSUs). Out of 70,000 petrol pumps in the country, they account for 90 percent. There is need to bring competition by increasing share of private sector which will help reduce price by lowering the margins of firms.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

OUR TOURISM DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED THE SKOCH GOLD AWARD FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL PERFORMANCE DURING COVID-19.

—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER
MAMATA BANERJEE



THERE ARE SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS REGARDING THE CREDIBILITY OF SUCH AWARDS. SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE WHO APPLIES GETS THE AWARD.

—BJP LEADER
SUWENDU ADHIKARI

Free-flow Diwali boosts sales: Lesson for oppressive G20

After two years of pandemic and severe hits to the economy due to note ban, a semblance of market restoration is being noticed

The Indian economy is now moving up after certain unsavoury scenarios of note-ban, pandemic closures of activities. Gold sales are up, event bookings are rising, market has a good time during Diwali despite cumulative inflation and less intervention by the state apparatuses.

The G 20-led state controls created panic, made people dependent on the government and stymied growth globally. A free flow Diwali is changing that. Sales rise 10 percent and gold demand rises to 96.2 tonnes in India, says the World Gold Council.

According to the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), sales of its 70 million members increased over ₹72,000 crore in at least



SHIVAJI SARKAR

20 cities from where it could collect the data. Some other data claim \$1.25 trillion sales. Secretary general of CAIT Praveen Khandelwal says that for a long time, people had subdued their needs because of closure of activities in the country and the shock that demonetisation had given to them. Now with the opening up of the market and activities, people are making their purchases freely.

Many retailers say they were apprehensive before the festival but to their surprise despite severe rise in prices purchases are increasing. In demand were items such as earthen lamps, candles and paper mache lamps, which helped small potters, craftsmen and handicraftsmen rake in substantial profits. Sweets, dry



fruits, footwear, watches, toys, home décor, and fashion clothing also saw huge demand.

The World Gold Council expected gold sales would recover from 35 per cent below the pre-pandemic level. The demand has been more than expected. But it may not be as euphoric as the government is saying or as the Rs 1.3 lakh crore GST collections indicate.

The CAIT says this year sales exceeded that of 2019 — ₹60,000 crore; ₹50,000 crore in 2018 and ₹43,000 crore in 2017. The confederation says

the upswing shows a sustainable demand trend as rising vaccination levels along with lower transmission levels have instilled confidence in buyers.

The expectation is that by March 2022, there would be another ₹2 lakh crore sales. But GST collections may not be the actual indicator because it is collected over high prices due to inflation. Overall growth is uneven. Some sections are doing well but India slips down on hunger index to 101 position.

The wedding season beginning mid-November is to continue the boom. The weddings this year are expected to happen with the usual pomp and show. Countrywide, the demand for gold sales surged. Weddings are one of the biggest drivers of gold purchases

in India as bullion in the form of jewellery is an essential part of a bride's dowry and also a popular gift from family and guests.

Gold remains the biggest financial security instrument for rural and other families. The investment is considered secure and appreciating. For the bride too it is an essential part of her dowry and also a sought after gift from family and guests. After two years of pandemic and severe hits to the economy due to note-ban a semblance of restoration is being noticed.

The weddings also create wealth distribution at various levels. Till November-end, about 25 lakh marriage celebrations are on the cards. A wedding in India involves banquet halls, caterers, various

kinds of pipe bands, music system, hiring of musicians, decorations lights, ponies, priests, ornaments, garments and gifts. At the social level, different artisans and craftsmen are involved in generating income for many.

It is not the Indian businesses that alone are gaining but many foreign houses and retailers are making robust sales. In short, the Indian social system is getting strengthened. As per estimates till Diwali, about ₹9,000 crore was spent on gold jewellery and silverware while traders selling packaging items marked good sales.

Despite the chances of a progressive recovery, the RBI holding on to the repo rate at 4 per cent unchanged for the eighth time in a row is raising

eyebrows as savings is becoming non-remunerative. In reality, the rising inflation is eroding the basic value of savings. This is being viewed as a risk to the economy. Indian economy traditionally has been growing on small savings that are now being disincentivised.

The note-ban that had shaken the poor, could not unearth black money nor contain fake currency said to be coming from Pakistan. After five years, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence says that fake currency seizure has unprecedented jump.

Strong controls and G-20 harsh steps have not helped countries. India must discuss how to ensure a free-flow growth instead of oppressive imposition of measures that cause scares.

STATEMENT OF STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2021
(All amounts in Indian Rupees in lakhs unless stated otherwise)

Sr. No.	Particulars	Quarter ended September 30, 2021 (Unaudited) (refer note 2)	Preceding quarter ended June 30, 2021 (Unaudited) (refer note 2)	#Corresponding quarter ended September 30, 2020 (Unaudited) (refer note 2)	Half year ended September 30, 2021 (Unaudited) (refer note 2)	Half year ended September 30, 2020 (Unaudited) (refer note 2)	Year ended March 31, 2021 (Audited)
1	Income from operations						
	(a) Revenue from real estate operations	2,911.51	2,786.41	-	5,697.92	1,291.24	8,324.81
	(b) Other Operating revenue	86.71	34.77	-	121.48	111.91	153.05
	Total income from operations	2,998.22	2,821.18	-	5,819.40	1,403.15	8,477.86
2	Expenditure						
	(a) Cost of land/development rights	268.00	136.93	-	404.93	114	388.85
	(b) (Increase)/decrease in project work in progress	679.75	1,481.43	-	2,161.18	621.87	2,826.87
	(c) Project approval charges	351.20	3.01	-	354.21	2.93	457.77
	(d) Employees cost	305.87	282.20	-	588.07	433.39	948.79
	(e) Depreciation and amortization expense	47.50	46.69	-	94.19	109.30	220.18
	(f) Subcontractor, material and labour charges	388.10	26.64	-	414.74	77.90	192.87
	(g) Other expenses	230.03	167.01	-	397.04	313.92	741.26
	Total expenditure	2,270.45	2,143.91	-	4,414.36	1,560.45	5,364.59
3	Profit/(loss) from operations before other income, finance costs (1-2)	727.77	677.27	-	1,405.04	(157.30)	3,113.27
4	Other Income	252.44	199.79	-	452.23	517.98	786.91
5	Profit/(loss) from operations before finance costs and exceptional items (3+4)	980.21	877.06	-	1,857.27	360.68	3,900.18
6	Finance costs	685.67	816.13	-	1,501.80	1,876.10	3,607.66
7	Exceptional Items	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Profit/(loss) from operations before tax (after exceptional items) (5-6-7)	294.54	60.93	-	355.47	(1,515.42)	292.52
9	Tax expense	-	-	-	-	-	137.04
	Current tax expense	-	-	-	-	-	59.55
	Deferred tax expense/(credit)	141.07	211.00	-	352.06	27.26	171.71
10	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (8-9)	153.47	(150.07)	-	3.41	(1,542.68)	95.93
11	Other Comprehensive Income/(loss) (net of tax)	2.73	2.73	-	5.46	8.82	17.71
12	Total Comprehensive Income/(Loss) for the period (10-11)	156.20	(147.34)	-	8.87	(1,533.86)	113.64
13	Paid-up equity share capital (face value of Rs. 10 per share)	11.90	11.90	-	11.90	11.90	11.90
14	Paid-up debt capital / outstanding debt (refer note 5)	4,600.00	4,600.00	-	4,600.00	4,600.00	4,600.00
15	Net worth (refer note 11)	26,487.62	26,331.42	-	26,487.62	24,851.21	26,478.73
16	Debt redemption reserve (refer note 14)	18.86	18.86	-	18.86	18.86	18.86
17	Capital redemption reserve	321.70	321.70	-	321.70	321.70	321.70
18	Earning Per Share (EPS)*						
	Basic (in Rs.)	128.96	(128.09)	-	2.86	(1,296.25)	80.60
	Diluted (in Rs.)	128.96	(128.09)	-	2.86	(1,296.25)	80.60
19	Debt Equity Ratio (refer note 11)	0.96	0.96	-	0.96	1.15	1.00
20	Debt Service Coverage Ratio (refer note 11)	0.48	0.48	-	0.48	0.18	0.65
21	Interest Service Coverage Ratio (refer note 11)	1.50	1.13	-	1.30	0.24	1.14

*Not annualised, except year-end Basic and Diluted EPS. *Not applicable as per SEBI Circular no 637 dated October 05, 2021.

Notes: (1) The above financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2021 and year to date from April 01, 2021 to September 30, 2021 have been reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and approved by Board of Directors of the Company at their meeting held on November 15, 2021. The statutory auditors of the Company have carried out a limited review of the financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2021 and year to date from April 01, 2021 to September 30, 2021. The Company's debentures are listed and therefore, Regulation 52 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) 2015 is applicable to the Company. (2) The financial results of the Company have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement principles of Indian Accounting Standards ('IND AS') as prescribed under section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 (read with relevant rules thereunder). (3) In line with the provisions of Ind AS -108 'Operating Segments' and basis the review of operations being undertaken by the senior management, the operations of the Company primarily fall under 'real estate development', which is considered by the management to be the only reportable operating segment. (4) CRISIL had assigned CRISIL DB+ Stable rating for Non-Convertible Debentures vide letter dated August 13, 2021. (5) 'Paid up Debt Capital represents' (a) 4,600 Series A Fully Paid, Rated, Listed, Secured, Redeemable, Non-Convertible Debentures of Rs. 100,000 each amounting to Rs. 4,60,000 lakhs. The proceeds have been utilized for the purposes as mentioned in the offer documents and there is no material deviation in the utilization of the proceeds. *excludes Series B-2,900 debentures of Rs. 100,000 each amounting to Rs. 2,90,000 lakhs issued by the Company and pertaining to the Mall undertaking, that have been transferred to Eshoria Developers Private Limited (the Resulting Company), pursuant to Composite scheme of arrangement as approved by the Honourable High Court of Punjab and Haryana vide order dated March 31, 2017, and accordingly, the same have not been included in Paid up Debt Capital under Note 5. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) vide its order dated January 20, 2021 had accepted the settlement proposed by the Company in the said matter and the Company's management and the Resulting Company's management are currently in the process of completing procedural formalities with the Stock-exchange, for effecting the transfer of such debentures to the Resulting Company and believes that no adjustment is required in these standalone financial results at this stage. (6) The Series A Non-Convertible Debentures are secured by way of first ranking exclusive charge over Amritsar MIP project land, receivables from sale of Amritsar MIP project and Fatehabad project, insurance receivables- Penguin and Ambrose, the escrow accounts and monies lying to credit thereof. (7) As per the relevant terms and conditions of Information Memorandum (IM), the annual interest payable to the Series A NCD holders had got revised to 0.001% effective January 31, 2019 once FSI approval ('Milestone') was achieved by the Company's erstwhile wholly owned subsidiary company- Ruchi Malls Private Limited. The Company has paid interest as per revised rate, amounting to Rs. 0.05 lakhs pertaining to the period November 13, 2019 to November 12, 2020, on November 11, 2020. As confirmed by the debenture trustee vide letter dated May 07, 2021, pursuant to discussions between the Debenture Holders and the Company, the Debenture Holders have agreed to waive the interest on the Series A NCDs for the period November 13, 2020 to November 15, 2021 alongwith the redemption premium payable as per the terms of IM upto the period ending November 15, 2021 and the impact thereof for the period upto September 30, 2021, has been duly accounted for in these standalone financial results. (8) Next due dates for repayment of interest and principal of non-convertible debentures (NCDs).

S.No.	Name of Series	Type	Previous Due date of payment	Next Due date of payment	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	Series - A	Interest	November 12, 2020 (Paid Rs. 0.05 lakhs)	November 12, 2021	-
		Principal alongwith premium on redemption	Not Applicable	November 13, 2025*	9,912.00

As confirmed by the debenture trustee vide letter dated May 07, 2021, pursuant to discussions between the Debenture Holders and the Company, the Debenture Holders have agreed to waive the interest on the Series A NCDs for the period November 13, 2020 to November 15, 2021 alongwith the redemption premium payable as per the terms of IM upto the period ending November 15, 2021 and the impact thereof has been duly accounted in these standalone financial results. * As per the terms of issue of 4,600 Series A NCD as per the IM, the NCD are redeemable after 10 years from the deemed date of allotment i.e. November 13, 2015. However, the Company has the option to redeem these debentures at any time after the expiry of 3 years from the deemed date of allotment. (9) There is no investor grievance pending or received during the period under review. (10) The Company's operations have been impacted by COVID-19 pandemic. The Company's management has undertaken various cost savings initiatives including employee count and cost rationalization, rent waiver etc. to conserve cash. In preparation of these standalone financial results, the Company has taken into account internal and external sources of information to assess possible impact of the pandemic, including but not limited to assessment of its liquidity, recoverable value of its financial and non-financial assets, impact on revenues and estimates of residual costs to complete ongoing projects. Based on current indicators of future economic conditions, the Company expects to fully recover the carrying amount of its assets and further, the Company is undertaking active discussions with various stakeholders for seeking extension in timelines for repayment of its current loan facilities. Considering the evolving nature of the pandemic, the actual impact in future could be different from that estimated as at the date of approval of these standalone financial results. The Company's management will continue to monitor any material changes to future economic conditions. (11) Ratios have been computed as follows: (a) Debt equity ratio = paid up debt capital/ equity, where equity represents issued, subscribed and paid up share capital, equity component of compulsorily convertible preference shares and reserves and surplus. *Reserves and Surplus includes capital reserve, securities premium and retained earnings. * Paid up debt capital represents long term and short term borrowings excluding deferred payment liabilities (b) Interest service coverage ratio= Earnings before finance costs, tax and depreciation/finance costs. (c) Debt service coverage ratio= Earnings before finance costs, tax and depreciation/finance costs + principal repayment of paid up debt capital during the period (d) Net worth represents Equity.

12. Statement of assets and liabilities

	As at September 30, 2021 (Unaudited)	As at March 31, 2021 (Audited)
ASSETS		
Non Current Assets		
Property, plant & equipment	1,034.09	1,045.99
Right-of-use assets	47.48	101.51
Other intangible assets	4.59	5.28
Rights in development properties	133.10	133.10
Deferred tax assets (net)	266.71	620.60
Tax assets (net)	239.91	194.64
Financial assets		
Investments	1,224.90	1,224.90
Other non current assets	271.09	249.82
	4,762.48	4,910.04
Current assets		
Inventories	48,473.01	50,634.19
Financial assets		
Trade receivables	4,097.21	4,633.65
Cash and cash equivalents	818.97	1,407.32
Bank balances (other than cash and cash equivalents)	2,263.96	1,614.36
Loans	1,572.67	1,484.24
Other financial assets	2,849.15	2,499.86
Other current assets	2,620.02	1,915.09
	62,949.99	64,188.71
Total assets	67,457.47	69,098.75
Equity and liabilities		
Equity		
Equity share capital	11.90	11.90
Other equity	26,475.72	26,466.83
Total equity	26,487.62	26,478.73
Non-current liabilities		
Financial Liabilities		
Borrowings	20,440.80	22,780.81
Lease liabilities	10.08	18.18
Other financial liabilities	940.63	930.39
Current liabilities		
Financial Liabilities		
Borrowings	1,000.00	1,025.81
Trade payables	-	3.06
-total outstanding dues of micro enterprises and small enterprises*	9.00	1,441.34
Lease liabilities	1,193.87	91.89
Other financial liabilities	4,775.21	4,300.68
Provisions	272.50	170.86
Other current liabilities	12,381.47	12,157.00
Total liabilities	19,578.34	18,890.64
Total equity and liabilities	67,457.47	69,098.75

* To the extent of information available with the management

13. Cash Flow Statement

	September 30, 2021 (Unaudited)	March 31, 2021 (Audited)
A. Cash flow from operating activities :		
Net profit before tax	355.47	292.52
Non-cash adjustments to reconcile profit before tax to net cash flows		
Depreciation and amortisation	94.19	220.18
Loss/(Profit) on sale of property, plant and equipment	(6.02)	(15.74)
Finance cost	1,421.10	3,580.85
Financial liability written back	-	(0.02)
Excess provision/liabilities written back	(166.19)	(103.00)
Dividend income	(125.00)	(380.00)
Interest income	(150.36)	(296.33)
Lease rent waiver	-	(8.69)
Business written off	1.12	277.2
Operating profit before working capital changes	1,424.31	3,317.49
(Decrease)/increase in Working Capital :		
(Decrease)/increase in trade payables	224.65	(114.98)
(Decrease)/increase in other financial liabilities	7.34	(135.29)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	1.63	22.45
(Decrease)/increase in other current liabilities	224.48	1,520.13
Decrease/(increase) in trade receivables	535.32	(3,373.63)
Decrease/(increase) in inventories	2,161.18	2,918.52
Decrease/(increase) in non-current financial assets	(206.49)	335.72
Decrease/(increase) in current financial assets	(437.72)	358.26
Decrease/(increase) in other assets - (current and non-current)	(718.82)	508.97
Cash used in operations	3,215.88	5,357.64
Less: Direct taxes paid (net of refund)	(45.27)	(6.51)
Net Cash flow from/(used in) operating activities (A)	3,170.61	5,292.13
B. Cash flow from investing activities :		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(28.73)	(8.95)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	718	16.92
Dividend received	125.00	380.00
(Investment in)/redemption proceeds from fixed deposits	(241.61)	62.35
Interest received	150.36	296.33
Net cash flow from/(used in) investing activities (B)	(395.60)	548.77
C. Cash flow from financing activities :		
Proceeds from long term borrowings- Secured	1,415.33	-
Repayment of long term borrowings- Secured	(2,548.61)	(2,703.38)
Repayment of deferred payment liability	(807.24)	-
Repayment of short term borrowings - Unsecured	(25.81)	(259.81)
Payment of lease liability- principal portion	(57.79)	(93.10)
Payment of interest on lease liability	(6.07)	(20.51)
Finance cost paid	(1,332.97)	(1,990.72)
Net cash flow used in financing activities (C)	(3,363.16)	(5,067.52)
D. Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents (A+B+C)	(588.35)	773.38
E. Cash and cash equivalents as at the beginning of the year	1,407.32	633.94
Cash and cash equivalents as at the end of the year	818.97	1,407.32

(14) During the year 2020, the Company had received a demand for Rs. 1,440 lakhs from Municipal Corporation, Amritsar ('MC') towards the levy for Change in Land Use Fee (CLU fees) in relation to Company's erstwhile retail mall at Amritsar that had got approved by the Hon'ble High Court of Punjab and Haryana vide order dated March 31, 2017. The Hon'ble High Court of Punjab and Haryana ('Hon'ble High Court') vide its order dated March 3, 2010 had adjudicated that the basis of levying CLU fees is untenable and the amount deposited by the Company i.e. 1,260 lakhs (net of Rs. 180 lakhs recovered from another party as their share of the said demand) shall be refunded with simple interest @ 9% per annum from the date of collection by the authorities till the date of payment. Subsequently, the MC had preferred a Letters Patent Appeal (LPA) against the order of the Hon'ble High Court before the Hon'ble High Court on May 12, 2010 and the same was disposed off in favour of the MC. Pursuant to another order by the Hon'ble High Court in a later date, the amount deposited by the Company was refunded in lieu of furnishing of a Bank Guarantee by the Company in favour of the Register of the Hon'ble High Court, with the condition that if the MC succeeds in the LPA and the Hon'ble High Court, the Company shall be liable to be borne by the landowners. Accordingly, while finalizing these standalone financial results, no provision has been considered necessary at this stage. (15) In terms of clause 18(7)(b) of Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Rules, 2014 as amended by Companies (Share Capital and Debentures) Amendment Rules, 2019 notified on August 16, 2019, Debenture Redemption Reserve is not required in case of debentures of listed companies. (16) The Code on Social Security, 2020 ('Code') relating to employee benefits during employment and post-employment, received Presidential assent in September 2020. The Code has been published and will be notified and the final rules/interpretation are yet to be issued. The Company will assess the impact of the Code when it comes into effect and will record any related impact in the period the Code and rules thereon becomes effective. (17) The Hon'ble High Court of Delhi vide its order dated February 17, 2020, had approved the scheme of compromise and arrangement proposed by proposers of AN Sukhdev Private Limited ('ANB'), wherein Alpha Corp Development Private Limited had agreed to rewire ANB's Spire Woods real estate project by taking over the construction and development of such project. Subsequently, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi vide its order dated March 17, 2021 approved the execution of the Joint Development Agreement (JDA), between the proposers, ANB and the Company that sets out the terms and conditions for the proposed collaboration. The effective date of the transaction is subject to certain substantive actions including regulatory approvals, whereupon the transaction would qualify for accounting as per Ind AS, notified under section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013. (18) Pursuant to the order dated June 8, 2021 of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Alpha Corp Development Private Limited alongwith its 3 wholly owned subsidiary companies is implementing the approved Resolution Plan for acquisition of Copia, Sapphire and Techone real estate projects of Earth Infrastructure Limited ('Earth'), that was under Corporate Insolvency Resolution process as per the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 (including all amendments for the time being in force). As per the approved Resolution Plan, in the Company through its 3 wholly owned subsidiary companies intend to undertake the development of the real estate projects and deliver the units to the pre-payers, as per the terms of such plan. The transaction requires certain substantive actions to be taken whereupon the same would qualify for accounting as per Ind AS, notified under section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013.

For Alpha Corp Development Private Limited
Ashish Sarin, Director & Chief Executive Officer (DIN: 00897673)

PLACEMENT: GURUGRAM DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2021

Statue of Bapu vandalised in Oz

PM Morrison terms the act 'disgraceful'



(understand) why anyone would do such a low act of vandalism," Surya Prakash Soni, president of the Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria, was quoted as saying in the ABC report.

PTI ■ MELBOURNE
A life-sized bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi, gifted by the Indian government, has been vandalised here in an act Prime Minister Scott Morrison strongly condemned as "disgraceful", triggering shock and disappointment among the Indian-Australian community.

File photo
This level of disrespect," Morrison was quoted as saying in the report on Sunday. He said that attacks on cultural monuments would not be tolerated in a country which is the most successful multicultural and immigration nation in the world.

He said the Rowville centre was the first Indian community centre in the State of Victoria and had been established after 30 years of effort. Australia India Community Charitable Trust chair Vasan Srinivasan said that it saddens him that someone tried to vandalise the statue within 24 hours of its unveiling.

The incident happened hours after Prime Minister Morrison unveiled the statue at the Australian Indian Community Centre in Rowville on Friday alongwith the Consul General of India Raj Kumar and other Australian leaders as part of a celebration of 75 years of India's Independence, The Age newspaper reported.

"Whoever is responsible for this has shown great disrespect to the Australian Indian community and should be ashamed," he said. The statue was gifted by the Indian government. Victoria police said an

unknown number of offenders used a power tool to decapitate the statue sometime between 5.30pm on Friday and 5.30pm on Saturday, according to ABC News. The police said that the Knox Crime Investigation Unit detectives were investigating the matter and are appealing for witnesses to come forward with information. The Indian community in the city expressed their shock over the incident, terming it as a "low act."

China defends joining with India on coal 'phase down'

Asks developed nations to stop using coal

PTI ■ BEIJING
China on Monday asked developed countries to stop using the coal first and provide financial aid to developing countries to adopt green technologies as it defended its move to join hands with India in calling for "phase down" instead of "phase out" of coal in the final text of the COP26 conference declaration. Negotiators from nearly 200 countries accepted a new climate agreement after the COP26 summit in Glasgow concluded on Saturday with a deal, which recognises India's intervention for the world to "phase down" rather than "phase out" fossil fuels. "Green and low-carbon

transition is the overwhelming trend that all countries should work together for. China attaches high importance to energy transition," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing here. He was responding to a question on COP26 Chairman Alok Sharma's reported comments that China and India need to explain to developing nations why they watered down the language on efforts to phase out coal at the conference and rejected calls for "phasing out" coal firepower instead opted to "phasing down". Zhao said, "To optimize energy structure and reduce

WPI inflation at 5-month high of 12.54% in Oct

Crude, manufactured items see price rise

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The wholesale price-based inflation spiked to 5-month high of 12.54 per cent in October, mainly due to rise in prices of manufactured products and crude petroleum.

WPI inflation has remained in double digit for the seventh consecutive month beginning April. Inflation in September this year was at 10.66 per cent, while in October 2020 it was at 1.31 per cent.

The October WPI is the highest in five months since May, when it was at 13.11 per cent.

"The high rate of inflation in October 2021 is primarily due to rise in prices of mineral oils, basic metals, food products, crude petroleum & natural gas, chemicals and chemical products etc as compared to the corresponding month of the previous year," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in a statement.

Inflation in manufactured items was higher at 12.04 per cent in October, as against 11.41 per cent in the previous month.

In the fuel and power basket, the rate of price rise was 37.18 per cent in October, as against 24.81 per cent in

September.

Crude petroleum inflation was 80.57 per cent during the month under review, as against 71.86 per cent in September.

Inflation in food articles too witnessed some uptick on a month-on-month basis at (-) 1.69 per cent in October, against (-) 4.69 per cent in September. Vegetable prices were lower at (-) 18.49 per cent, while in onions it was (-) 25.01 per cent.

ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said the core index recorded a month-on-month jump of 1 per cent with a wide-spread uptick across the sub-groups reflecting the pervasive commodity price pressures.

"With demand reviving, we expect producers to start passing through higher input and freight costs, even as the tax cuts on fuels will offer them a breather. Led by the base effect, we expect WPI inflation to moderate in the months ahead, and print at 7.5-8.5 per cent in March 2021," Nayar added.

India Ratings and Research Principal Economist Sunil K Sinha said core and manufacturing inflation surged to a fresh high of 11.8 per cent and 12 per cent respectively in October 2021. This was the fourth successive month in

which they have remained in excess of 11 per cent.

"As supply disruption has yet to normalize in many areas and manufacturers are becoming more confident about the demand recovery they are increasingly passing on the higher input costs to their output prices. Since fuel is a major input into transportation cost, higher fuel prices push up the distribution cost further," he said.

Sinha said with Brent crude breaching the USD 82/barrel mark in the international markets, fuel inflation is unlikely to provide any breather going forward.

"The recent outbreaks of COVID cases in China and Europe indicates that the challenge of COVID-19 has yet not ended. Therefore, India Ratings & Research opines that wholesale inflation is likely to remain at elevated levels in the near-term," Sinha added.

CRCL LLP, CEO and Managing Partner, D R E Reddy said the rise in the WPI is a cause of concern as the industries may pass it on to end consumers.

"The persistent rise in inflation points to a rise in demand. On the positive side, the rise in demand points to a recovery in growth as lockdown is eased across the country. The month-on-month rise may hasten RBI's decision to unwind the excess liquidity, tighten the policy rates earlier than expected," Reddy added.

AFTER 5 YEARS OF DEMONETISATION

Cash in circulation at near peak in 2021, says report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Despite the overall increase in the formalisation of the economy in the past five-six years, the key component of an informal economy -- cash in circulation (CIC) as a percentage of GDP -- has continued to rise year after year, barring in the year of note ban in 2016 when it fell to 8.7 per cent, according to a report.

According to the report by SBI Research, almost 80 per cent of the economy has been formalised in the past five years with every aspect of the non-cash component of the economy including agri credit, gaining traction.

In a detailed report on Monday, SBI Research said that after dipping to 8.7 per cent of GDP in 2016 (after the note-ban), cash in circulation (CIC) as a percentage of GDP has climbed again to 13.1 per cent so far this fiscal. It is only marginally down from the peak of 14.5 per cent in FY21, which could be because of the pandemic-driven sense of insecurity and uncertainties.

During FY08-FY10, when the economy was on a scorching growth rate, sniffing at almost double-digits growth, the CIC trended at 12.1, 12.5

and 12.4 per cent, respectively. The same trend continued with minor variations in the next five years also peaking at 12.4 per cent in FY11 and falling to 11.4 per cent in FY15, according to the SBI report pencilled by Soumya Kanti Ghosh, its group chief economic adviser.

Ghosh attributes the high 14.5 per cent CIC in FY21 to the collapse of the economy due to the pandemic, wherein the GDP reported the worst contraction of 7.3 per cent.

If the circumstances were normal, nominal GDP growth in FY21 and FY22 would have been much higher and as a result, CIC would also have followed the trend as witnessed pre-note ban.

According to him, without the pandemic-induced GDP collapse, the CIC-GDP ratio would have been at 12.7 per cent as against 12.4 per cent in FY11 as because of the pandemic, people might have held as much as Rs 3.3 lakh crore in cash as a precaution.

Coming to digital transactions, 3.5 billion transactions worth Rs 6.3 lakh crore were recorded through UPI in October 2021, which is 100 per cent more than the same period last month and in terms of

transaction value, it is 103 per cent more than October 2020. Data also show that UPI transactions have jumped 69 times since 2017, while debit card transactions have stagnated indicating people preference and shift to UPI.

UPI transactions have jumped 69 times in the past four years -- from Rs 1,700 crore in 2017 to Rs 15,100 crore in 2018 to Rs 29,900 crore in 2019, to Rs 57,100 crore in 2020 to Rs 1,17,100 crore so far in 2021.

Similarly, credit card spends rose manifold between 2012, when it was only Rs 1,500 crore, and 2018 when it touched Rs 10,100 crore. It then steadily added 30 per cent more in two years to cross Rs 13,000 crore in 2020, according to the report.

It added that the credit card spends are on course to set a record this year as already YTD (year-to-date), it has reached Rs 13,300 crore, according to the report.

Again, debit card spends also continued to gain traction with 2012 seeing Rs 12,100 crore of transactions, which climbed to Rs 38,800 crore in 2017 but declined steeply in 2016 to Rs 15,600 crore.

Parl panel discussion: Several members against banning crypto currencies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary panel, chaired by BJP leader Jayant Sinha, on Monday discussed the pros and cons of crypto finance with various stakeholders, and several members were in favour of regulating crypto currency exchanges rather than imposing an outright ban on crypto currencies, according to sources.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of rising concerns in various quarters about crypto currencies and the possible risks emanating from trading in them, especially since there is a growing interest in such assets worldwide. Currently, there are neither specific regulations nor an outright ban on use of crypto currencies in the country.

Representatives of crypto exchanges, Block chain and Crypto Assets Council (BACC), industry bodies as well as academicians and other stakeholders submitted their views before the panel, whose meeting also happened days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held discussions with senior officials from various ministries and RBI on the issue of crypto currencies.

This is the first meeting on the subject that was convened by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance. The panel is chaired by Sinha, who is also a former Minister of State for Finance.

The sources said that broadly the panel members wanted regulations for crypto currency exchanges and were not in favour of banning crypto currencies.

Some Congress members in the panel told PTI that there are significant challenges in banning crypto currencies. The broad view of the panel was that a Chinese wall should be put in place on crypto currencies' fungibility in the real world and its interface with the real world should be regulated, they added.

Currency is a domain of the sovereign whereby its value is fixed in assured manner and crypto currency is a computer programme managed in distributed format on internet. Its value is only discovered by a buyer and user on an exchange which itself is illegal, they noted.

One of the members even wondered how crypto currencies are going to be regulated when even regulating the internet remains difficult.

Exports jump 43% to \$36 bn in Oct, imports soar 62%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's exports rose by 43 per cent to USD 35.65 billion in October while trade deficit widened to USD 19.73 billion during the month, according to the official data released on Monday.

Imports soared by 62.51 per cent to USD 55.37 billion widening the trade deficit.

Export sectors which recorded positive growth during October include petroleum, coffee, engineering goods, cotton yarn/fabs/made-ups, gems and jewellery, chemicals plastic and linoleum and marine products, the data showed.

Khadi India pavilion inaugurated by Union Min of MSME

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Khadi India pavilion, showcasing the theme of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat", was inaugurated by Union Minister of MSME, Narayan Rane at the India International Trade Fair 2021 on Monday. Union Minister of State for MSME, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, Chairman KVIC Shri Vinai

Kumar Saxena and Secretary MSME BB Swain were also present. The Khadi India pavilion comprises 50 stalls set up by Khadi artisans and Khadi institutions from 20 states and union territories, showcasing the finest handcrafted Khadi and Village Industry products.

After the inauguration, Rane lauded the KVIC for its employment generation ini-

tiatives. "KVIC is doing excellent work by creating self-employment across the country and thereby strengthening the rural economy," he said. The minister also said the India International Trade Fair provides an opportunity to MSME entrepreneurs to showcase their products and create new avenues for growth and self-reliance.

Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli

Open e-tender based on single packet system Tender Notice No. M-300-MCF-ISO-IRIS-019 Dt-13.11.2021 is invited by Dy. CME/Safety & Training/MCF/RBL on Indian Railways portal www.irps.gov.in for and on behalf of president of India for the following work:

Description of work- Work for Certification of ISO 22163:2017 (IRIS) as per scope of work of Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh-229120. Approx. Value (in Rs.) Rs. 12,78,382.00. EMD (in Rs.)/N/A Cost of Tender document - Rs. 2,000.00 only. Completion period of work- 36 Months. • Period of submission of tender document- From 13.11.2021 to 08.12.2021 • Date & time of closing of Tender- 08.12.2021 at 15.15 hrs. • Date & time of opening of Tender- 08.12.2021 at 15.30 hrs. • Detailed Tender Notice, Eligibility criteria, Terms & conditions are available at Indian Railways EIRPS website: www.irps.gov.in in tender document.

Note:- 1) Tenderers shall be able to submit their original/revived bids up to closing date & time only. Manual offers are not allowed for this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. 2) Tender Document Cost will be accepted separately, only online payment through net banking in favour of PFA/MCF/RBL of Gate Way Payment through IREPS Portal. Manual payment through demand draft, Bankers Check, Deposit Receipt & FDR etc. are not allowed.

Dy. CME/Safety & Training

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender Notice no.- E-ELECT-PS-20540 Date: 13.11.2021

On behalf of the President of India, Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/PS, Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli is inviting open e-tender, based on single packet system from capable & experienced tenderers through Indian Railways portal www.irps.gov.in for the under mentioned work on prescribed-tender format.

Details:- 1. Name of Work- Provision of EMS (Energy management Server) for Real Time Telemetry to UPLSDC through SEMC at 132/11KV and 33/11KV substation of MCF/RBL (Modern Coach Factory, Raebareli). 2. Place of work-Modern Coach Factory Lalajani, Distt. Raebareli 3. Approx. cost- ₹ 12,47,294/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Forty Seven thousand Two Hundred Ninety Four only). 4. Cost of tender - Nil. 5. Earnest money- ₹ 25,000/- (Twenty Five Thousand only) or Bid Security Declaration on standard format. 6. Period of completion- 03 (Three) Months. 7. Date & Time of closing of Tender- 08.12.2021 at 11.30 hrs

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/PS

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-TENDER CALL NOTICE

Name of the work: "Outsourcing of operational works of Balijhara Water Works on job contract basis under P.H. Division (M) for two years"

Estimated cost Rs. 6,08,72,842/-

Last Date & time of submission: 20.11.2021 upto 17:00 Hrs.

Refer our website for details: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>

Executive Engineer PHD (M), PPT
PPT/PR/121-22 Dt. 15/11/2021

Public Notice

It is Publicly notified that the Residential LIG H.NO. 185, Block-W, Sec-12, Noida Distt. G.B. Nagar U.P. allottee of Mr. Ram Avtar Sahni S/o Late Both Ram Sahni had sold on the basis of General Power of Attorney to the following persons: The General Power of Attorney was registered on dated 04.10.2020, in the name of Mrs. Gurmeet Kaur W/o Balvinder Singh R/o S-7 Sec-12, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar U.P. & agreement to sell on dated 04.10.2020 in the Sh. Balvinder Singh S/o Late Govind Singh R/o S-7, Sec-12, Noida Distt. G.B. Nagar which is not registered. Because agreement to sell is not registered so it is publicly notified that the transfer of the property bearing Residential LIG H No. 185, Block-W, Sec-12, Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar U.P. is going to be transfer through G.P.A. in the name of Balvinder Singh S/o Late Govind Singh R/o S-7, Sec-12, Noida, Distt. G.B. Nagar U.P. If some one has any objection he/she file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Housing Department (H) of the Noida Authority with in 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Mrs. Gurmeet Kaur

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one my name **Karan Kumar, S/o Mukesh, R/o: H.No. 303, Katra Sujanrai, Delhi Gate, Delhi, Age: 21 years, Height: 5'2", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Oval, Built: Normal, Wearing: Mehroon colour T-Shirt and Green colour Lower, has been missing from his house since 08.10.2021. In this regard a case vides DD No. 63A, dated 09.10.2021 has been registered at P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about him please inform to the undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641

SHO P.S. Chandni Mahal, Delhi DP/1046/CD/21 Ph.: 011-23271751, 23279338

HIMACHAL PRADESH POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(A State Government Undertaking)

Office of the General Manager
Shonglong-Karchham Hydro Electric Project (450 MW)
Reekong-Peo, Distt. Kinnaur (H.P.)-172107

National Competitive Bidding "CORRIGENDUM"

Request for Proposal (RFP) (E-Tender Mode only)

National Competitive Bids (Open Tendering Mode) are invited from reputed bidders/consultants/Firms/joint venture for the Bid No: **HPPCL/GM-STKHEP/P&C/Tender-05/2021-22** & Name of Procurement: "Engagement of an Architectural Consultant for providing consultancy services for planning and development of benches, roads and layout for residential/nonresidential Prefab buildings including detailed architectural and structural drawings etc. at village Ralli & village Dakho, in Tehsil Kalpa, Distt. Kinnaur (H.P.)" which was scheduled to be opened on 08-11-2021 at 15:30 Hrs is hereby extended as below.

Last Date of Download of Bid/Tender: 17:00 Hrs. on 06-12-2021
Deadline for Submission of Bids: 15:00 Hrs on 07-12-2021
Opening of Bids: 15:30 Hrs on 07-12-2021
Cost of Bidding Document: INR 590/- (inclusive of GST)

For detailed tender notification, please visit www.hppcl.in or <https://www.tenderwing.com/HPPCL> or Contact No.: **01786-222663, Fax No. 01786-223174**

Email: smcstkh450@gmail.com General Manager

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED

Registered Office:- 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar

CIN: L17115HR1993PLC32092

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

Particulars	(Rs. in Lakhs except per Share data)							
	Quarter Ended		Half Year Ended		Year Ended		Year Ended	
	30.09.2021	30.06.2021	30.09.2020	30.09.2021	30.09.2020	31.03.2021	31.03.2021	
Total income from operations	531.17	199.71	272.22	799.87	397.58	1235.43		
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax	1.10	1.51	2.18	2.62	2.35	2.83		
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax	1.34	1.13	1.40	2.46	0.78	(5.17)		
Other comprehensive income/(loss)	0.10	0.10	0.85	1.19	1.70	0.38		
Total Comprehensive Income for the Period	1.44	1.23	2.25	2.65	2.49	(4.79)		
Equity Share Capital	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00		
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year						738.82		
Earnings per share (of 2/- each)								
(1) Basic	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.03	(0.17)		
(2) Diluted	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.03	(0.17)		

Note:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange, www.bseindia.com and on the Company's website, www.unitedtextileslimited.com.

Place: Hisar For United Textile Limited (Vivek Aggarwal) Whole Time Director DIN: 07079208

Public Notice

I, Arvind Yadav S/o Shyam Sunder Yadav R/o A-5/4, DLF City Phase-1, Village Chakarpar, Gurugram, Haryana have lost documents related to my property in Village Sampka, Tehsil Patauda, Gurugram (Sale Deed No. 2634 dt. 07.03.2005 in favour of Om Prakash, Vedprakash, Laxmi, Sale Deed No. 2724 dt. 31.03.2005 in favour of Shyamal, Harnarayan, Gobind) and (Exchange Deed No. 2547 dt. 26.11.2008 in favour of Shyam Sunder and Tekchhand. Finder please inform me at above address.

Public Notice

General Public is hereby informed that my clients, Sh. Rakesh Kumar kasana, s/o, Baleshwar kasana, R/o, H.N.O., 29/105, Street No.10, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have disowned and debarred their son Sachin Choudhary from all their movable and immovable assets. Any person dealing with them shall do so at his/her own risk and responsibilities and my clients shall have no responsibility or liability of any kind whatsoever arising out of act(s) and/or omission(s) of sachin choudhary.

Ankit Sharma (Advocate)
Enrolment No.: D-3879/2016 D-218
kardkardooma court, Delhi.

Public Notice

This is to bring to the notice of general public that one ID card Mr. Shar Khan issued by icici bank Ltd. Having ID card no. 2137809 has been found missing and lost on LAXMI NAGAR, Delhi. Anyone who find the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card, to the manager & management group icici bank limited, SD tower sec-8 Rohini, Delhi. Thereafter, all the customer of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorized person holding the said ID card no. 2137809. Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and liability and ICICI bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment.

Date: 10.11.2021 FOR ICICI BANK LIMITED
Place: New Delhi SD TOWER ROHINI

LOGIX BUILDTech PRIVATE LIMITED

Reg. Office:- DGL006, GROUND FLOOR, DLF GALLERIA, MAYUR VIHAR PHASE-1, NEW DELHI-110091

Corporate Identification Number:- U70200DL2010PTC200042

E-mail: corporate@logixgroup.in Website: www.logixgroup.in

ANNEXURE I
(Regulation 52(8), read with Regulation 52(4), of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015
(All amounts in INR lakhs, unless otherwise stated)

	Quarter ended		Half year ended		Year ended	
	30.09.2021	30.09.2021	30.09.2020	31.03.2021	31.03.2021	31.03.2021
	Unaudited/ Reviewed	Unaudited/ Reviewed	Unaudited/ Reviewed	Audited		
1 Total Income from Operations	1,401	2,368	5,560	12,986		
2 Profit / (Loss) before tax, exceptional items	(4,725)	(9,386)	67	(8,110)		
3 Profit / (Loss) before tax & after exceptional items	(4,725)	(9,386)	67	(8,110)		
4 Profit / (Loss) after tax, exceptional items	(3,586)	(7,108)	1,064	(6,114)		
5 Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the period	(3,586)	(7,107)	1,065	(6,112)		
6 Paid up Equity Share Capital	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055		
7 Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	23,455	23,455	37,739	30,562		
8 Net Worth	25,510	25,510	39,794	32,617		
9 Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000		
10 Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	-	-		
11 Debt Equity Ratio	4.70	4.70	3.02	3.68		
12 Earnings per equity share						
(i) Basic (in INR)	(17.45)	(34.59)	5.18	(29.76)		
(ii) Diluted (in INR)	(17.45)	(34.59)	5.18	(29.76)		
13 Capital Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-		
14 Debenture Redemption Reserve	-	-	-	-		
15 Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.73)	(0.44)		
16 Interest Service Coverage Ratio	(0.02)	(0.02)	1.02	0.43		

Notes:

a) The above is an extract of the detailed format of annual financial results filed with the Stock exchange under Regulation 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the annual financial results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and the listed entity (www.logixgroup.in).

b) For the items referred in Regulation 52(4) of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the Stock exchange (BSE India) and can be accessed on the URL (www.bseindia.com) and website (www.logixgroup.in)

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Sd/-
Shakti Nath
Director
DIN: 00017090

Date : 12.11.2021
Place: Noida

UNITED TEXTILES LIMITED

Registered Office:- 7th K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar

CIN: L17115HR1993PLC32092

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

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Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year						738.82		
Earnings per share (of 2/- each)								
(1) Basic	0.04	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.03	(0.17)		

AirPollution

To minimise the impact of severe air pollution, the Commission for Air Quality Management in Delhi NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) advised Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh to shut down schools and construction and demolition (C&D) activities this week for the districts falling in the National Capital Region (NCR).



DOCYARD

DR VINEETA TANDON

Senior consultant, Internal Medicine

PSRI HOSPITAL, NEW DELHI



Know all about Dengue



The main vector of Dengue is the Aedes mosquito which is commonly found in a tropical region or subtropical region. Only the female mosquito is attracted towards the human because of the chemical composition of the human body and for the host to carry her eggs.

They are highly active during the early morning hours and before sunset. Dengue can not be transmitted from one person to another, it can only be spread by the mosquito bite, which transmits the dengue virus from the infected person and passes to a healthy person.

Symptoms

It is like any other viral disease and common symptoms include high fever (104 F), rashes, headache, muscle and joint pain, nausea, vomiting, pain behind the eyes, rashes, and loss of appetite.

Severe symptoms

Amongst these is abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, bleeding from the nose or gums, blood in stools, breathing discomfort, altered sensorium, and irritability. Dengue can have three grades of severity. Dengue fever where mild symptoms are seen after the first week of a mosquito bite. Dengue hemorrhagic fever includes the presence of fever with hemorrhagic manifestations, thrombocytopenia, and evidence of leaky capillaries.

Prevention

Prevention is two-pronged. One is preventing the birth of Dengue mosquitoes and the second protecting from bites. As regards the birth of Dengue Aedes mosquitoes- one should keep surroundings clean and dry. Empty containers, untidy drainage, collected water, plant pots, old scrap material are the ideal places for their growth, the water in this should be dried and not allowed to collect.

Besides for protection, one should wear full sleeves garments that protect you from a mosquito bite. Further applying mosquito repellents, closing windows in the evening are further ways of protecting oneself from a mosquito bite.

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for dengue but a few supportive measures which can help in preventing complications include drinking plenty of water (hydration is the most important element), avoiding NSAIDs for controlling fever, and taking only paracetamol whenever needed with proper rest. In case of warning signs, one should immediately consult a doctor.

When is platelets transfusion required?

Platelets transfusion is only required if the number goes below 10,000. If the platelet numbers are higher no transfusion is required unless there is any evidence of bleeding. Any type of unwarranted blood transfusion has its own due risks and hence it should be done only as per the guidelines.

Myths

A lot of people start consuming Papaya leaves and drink Goat milk to increase platelet count. These treatments have no scientific evidence and may even sometimes harm the patient.

Goat milk if taken in unpasteurized form, can at times be more harmful as it may lead to the passing of bacterial infection from animal to the human body which may turn deadlier than Dengue itself.

Similarly, Papaya extracts may lead to severe gastritis in patients causing persistent vomiting and excessive dehydration which will further cause a drop in blood pressure.

So people should follow their doctors' advice and have faith in science and evidence-based treatment.

Hydration is paramount in the management and preventing mosquitoes from breeding around the house is the best measure to prevent Dengue. It runs for three days and panic should be avoided. Hospitalisation is required in only very limited cases. **Can one get it twice?**

There are four different types of serotypes of dengue so you can get it more than once or multiple times in your life. Aedes mosquito also spread Chikungunya, Zika, and Yellow fever.

WARMFOOD

TOMATO SOUP: Tomato soup is a tasty way to get the most out of the health benefits of tomatoes.

Tomatoes are high in vitamins, antioxidants, and plant components, all of which are beneficial to one's health. These nutrients may potentially protect against a variety of ailments, including heart disease and cancer, according to research. During the colder

months, a hearty cup of soup would be a welcome treat. Tomato soup is high in antioxidants such as lycopene, flavonoids, and vitamins C and E, among other things. Antioxidant consumption has been associated to a reduced risk of cancer and inflammation-related disorders like obesity and heart disease. It protects against Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, and brain illnesses.



REGULATE SUGAR LEVEL

Amongst all options available for curing Diabetes, insulin offers maximum efficacy in lowering blood sugar levels, says DR MANGESH TIWASKAR

Diabetes has been treated using insulin for nearly 100 years now. In 1921, a team of Canadian researchers discovered insulin and triggered years of innovations in the care and management of Diabetes, helping innumerable patients. From being an extract obtained from animal pancreas to being developed into a artificially synthesized or also known as recombinant human insulin and now insulin analogs (modified to deliver as per the need i.e. faster or slower, uniformly effective insulin), insulin therapy has undergone a sea of innovative changes over the years. The changes in the insulin formulations are intended to mimic endogenous insulin (made by the pancreas) that has helped people with diabetes get closer to the goal of optimal blood sugar control along with decreased diabetes-related complications. Amongst all options available for the management of Diabetes, insulin offers the maximum efficacy in lowering blood sugar levels for management of Diabetes. The new generation of insulins have further enabled treating physicians to achieve improved control without compromising on safety.

Conventional formulations of insulins have been associated with the challenge of adherence and relatively increased safety risk of hypoglycaemia. Each new generation of insulin introduced brings in flexibility in terms of timing of dose administration and can facilitate increased adherence with much lower risk of hypoglycaemia. Multiple studies have shown that

adherence to medication is an important factor in determining its outcomes in patients, especially those who are suffering from chronic diseases. For people with Diabetes, adherence to medication leads to improved control of blood sugar levels that can translate into lower risk of complications, reduced health care costs, lesser chances of hospitalization, and lower mortality.

Benefits of Modern Insulin or New Generation Insulins (MI/NGI)

Today, the various types of insulins available for patient use include ultra-rapid, rapid, regular, intermediate, with slow protracted acting and concentrated, premixed and coformulation insulins, bestowing people with Diabetes several options to suit their needs. MI/NGI is given on the basis of the patient's individual requirements. Due to flexibility in the timings of the insulin dose, MI/NGI are convenient and can help in managing Diabetes better. Additionally, there is a reduction in the number of injections required per day, particularly with the combination MI/NGI. Their action profile is also predictable, which comes handy in planning and optimization of the doses. Unwanted effects like weight gain have been shown to be relatively less in patients on MI/NGI as compared to those on traditional human insulin.

Newer formulae enable a smoother experience of delivery of insulin and help in improving adherence, and glycaemic control, apart from being cost-effective in terms of value they offer. New insulin formulations, like long-acting acting, ultra-



Dr Mangesh Tiwaskar
Consultant Physician and Diabetologist,
Shilpa Medical Research Centre and
Karuna Hospital, Mumbai

THE REASONS BEHIND EARLY INITIATION OF INSULIN ARE EVIDENCE-BASED. IT HAS MANY BENEFITS WHICH INCLUDES COMBATTING THE GLUCO TOXIC EFFECTS OF HYPERGLYCEMIA, MINIMISATION OF THE COMPLICATIONS RELATED TO DIABETES LIKE ISCHAEMIC HEART DISEASES, KIDNEY FAILURE, LOSS OF VISION DUE TO RETINOPATHY, STROKE AND NEUROPATHY

rapid acting, and premixed analogue insulins, have been shown to cause lesser risk of hypoglycaemia while providing required glycaemic control in patients who have Diabetes. Moreover, it is not just that these insulins are relatively better, but also the new age pen devices that they come in, are portable, easy to use even by elderly patients, require lesser dose force and can thus lead to better compliance. With improved accuracy and the lower safety risk, they can be the preferred options over the use of vials and syringes.

Early initiation of basal insulin is helpful

The early initiation of the long-acting basal insulin is known to enhance glycaemic control and help people with Diabetes manage their condition better in the long run. This treatment strategy is also backed by international norms. The reasons behind early initiation of insulin are evidence-based. It has many benefits which includes combatting the gluco toxic effects of hyperglycemia, minimization of the complications related to Diabetes like ischaemic heart diseases, kidney failure, loss of vision due to retinopathy, stroke, neuropathy, peripheral vascular disease leading to limb amputation etc.

As is well-known, Type 2 Diabetes is associated with gradual deterioration of β -cell function and mass. One of the main aims of early insulin therapy is to safeguard and slow down decline in β -cells. Insulin therapy can help improve β -cell function and preserve β -cell mass through better insulin response to glucose.

How is male's menopause different from women's?

Unlike women, men do not experience a major, rapid change in fertility as they age.

Instead, changes occur slowly during a process, says DR ARCHANA DHAWAN BAJAJ

Hormonal changes are a normal part of ageing, however, unlike women, men do not experience a dramatic reproductive hormone plunge, rather these changes occur gradually over a period of time.

The term 'male menopause' is also known as andropause which describes age-related decreasing levels of testosterone. While in women, menopause results in end of ovulation and hormone production plummets within a short period of time, in men, this decline in hormone level and testosterone happens over a period of many years and the consequences are not necessarily clear.

For most older men barring an estimated 10-25 per cent, remaining have testosterone levels within the normal range. Also, low testosterone levels often go unnoticed in older men as they experience no symptoms.

In addition, the signs and symptoms associated with low testosterone aren't specific. They can also be caused by a person's age, medication use or other conditions, such as having a body mass index of 30 or higher.



Dr Archana Dhawan Bajaj
Gynaecologist, Obstetrician and IVF Expert,
Nurture IVF Centre

Signs and symptoms suggestive of low testosterone:

- ◆ Reduced sexual desire and activity
- ◆ Erectile dysfunction
- ◆ Low sex drive
- ◆ Breast discomfort or swelling
- ◆ Disturbance in sleep patterns
- ◆ Infertility
- ◆ Height loss, low trauma fracture or low bone mineral density

- ◆ Hot flashes or sweats
- ◆ Reduction in muscle mass
- ◆ Irritability and mood swings

Other possible symptoms include decreased energy, motivation and confidence, depressed mood, and poor concentration. It's also possible to experience increased sleepiness, sleep disturbances, mild muscle bulk and strength, and increased body fat. Other factors that can cause lower testosterone levels are: obesity, type 2 diabetes, hormonal disorders, liver or kidney disease, and infections.

Common symptoms of andropause:

- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Lack of energy
- ◆ Reduced ability in concentrating

It is important to note that signs and symptoms of andropause can differ from person to person. Men who experience male menopause also have an increased risk of developing certain complications like osteoporosis and cardiovascular problems.

Male menopause and fertility

Ageing changes in the male

reproductive system may include changes in testicular tissue, sperm production, and erectile function. Unlike women, men do not experience a major, rapid (over several months) change in fertility as they age (like menopause). Instead, changes occur gradually during a process that some people call andropause. Aging changes in the male reproductive system occur primarily in the testes. Testicular tissue mass decreases. The level of the male sex hormone, testosterone decreases gradually. There may be problems getting an erection. This is a general slowing, instead of a complete lack of function.

Treatment and Prevention of Andropause

Symptoms associated with male andropause are potentially treatable. However, to reverse the decline in testosterone levels, certain lifestyle changes will be recommended. This could be a combination of an exercise program and dietary changes. Medication or testosterone replacement therapy might be suggested in selected cases, but it is known to have some harmful side effects.

RETAIN THAT PRECIOUS SMILE



DR GUNITA SINGH tells us why regular check-up is important

Taking dental care is as important as taking care of any other body part.

Dental health has never been a priority in our country. We only go to a dentist only when there is an emergency but never for a routine check-up. Following the principles of prevention is better than cure.

It is high time that we realise the importance of dental health as our entire physical health depends upon our diet and eating abilities.

It is mandatory to visit your dentist at least once a year for regular check up and cleaning. If the oral hygiene is not maintained and the teeth are not cleaned regularly there can be food accumulation which can lead to carie.

Common problems that can occur

◆ **Take care of poor oral hygiene**
◆ **Scaling/polishing:** Once a year professional oral prophylaxis is a must that makes maintaining your oral health so much easier.

◆ **Brush twice a day:** Whether it's morning or night, brushing is a must. Due to busy schedules, people usually forget to brush at night or take it for granted, but this is the biggest mistake that they make.
◆ **Gum massages:** Spend some time with your gums as they are the foundation of your teeth. Healthy gums are equal to healthy teeth. Massaging in a circular motion for 5 mins in morning and evening with the oil of your choice (olive oil, vitamin E oil, almond oil) can do wonders for your gums.

◆ **Tongue cleaning:** Once a day, tongue cleaning with glycerine and cotton pad can prove to be magical not only for the lovely pink tongue but also bacteria-free oral cavity.

◆ **Mouth wash:** Rinse your mouth after every meal for 2-3 times with a mouth wash of your choice, swirl it for at least 30 secs each for best results.

◆ **Bleeding gums:** Bleeding from gums while brushing and otherwise is one of the most common problems. Periodontal laser therapy will give back life to your gums.

◆ **Caries:** Small black spots on your teeth can get nasty and turn into major infections if not treated on time so better watch out for them to get simple fillings done so that you don't need to get into root canals later.

Most of the time the patient walks in with the pain, which means the infection has reached the pulp of the tooth and the nerves are exposed.

Root canal treatment (RCT) becomes the only option. An early detection of caries is better but if the nerves are exposed, RCT is a must.

◆ **Swelling:** Swelling associated with teeth is a bad sign that means the tooth is now badly infected and one has to mostly get rid of the same. We can do extraction and then give an implant to replace the tooth.

◆ **Oral cancers:** Small ulcers or lacerations in the oral cavity if neglected and not attended, can lead to any kind of oral cancers.

The writer is BDS MD (Dental Lasers), Associate Consultant, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital

INBRIEF

IMA's campaign on World Diabetes Day



IMA resolve to coordinate intense campaign to build awareness, early detection and mitigation of Diabetes complication through organising walkathon, marathon, screening camps, social media campaign, research paper promotion among young doctors and intense personal intervention in hospitals. The campaign started on 14th and is extend for 10 days with the target of reaching one billion people and making all possible steps to mitigate Diabetes complications.

In this campaign IMA join hands with the association of Physicians of India, RSSDI, Endocrine Society and many other speciality organisations. Dr Shashank Joshi of Mumbai will head this campaign and Dr Arthy Kannan of Tuticorin will coordinate.

In India, more than 77 million adults are living with Diabetes. Researchers predict that this will increase to 134 million by 2045.

SUBLIME EXPERIENCES

KHUSHBU KIRTI couldn't take her eyes off the magnificent art-work displayed at *Episteme* at Art Centrix Space, New Delhi

As I entered the Jain farms on a November evening with nothing but chilly wind brushing against the skin (no it's not a Jane Austen novel, wait for it), I had no clue the magnificent art displayed at *Episteme* would blow me away. I will not exaggerate a bit when I say the convolutedly beautiful layers that each and every art-work presented forced the spectator to not blink, forget about looking away.

I walked through the outdoor sculpture lawns, into the expanded galleries that encompassed the art-work which evidently spelt beauty and elegance. The hub for South-Asian contemporary art featured 33 works by 10 emerging Indian artists, including Pinaki Ranjan Mohanty, Kundan Mondal, Anjum Rizve, Manish Sharma, Mainaz Bano, Tapas Biswas, Soham Raha, Sangam Vankhade, Pratik Raut, and Vijaya Chauhan exploring historical-cultural context through a contemporary lens via the senses. These artists have been educated from some of the best Indian universities of art, each armed with their own traditions.

Episteme is a group exhibition focussed on these 10 artists exploring material relevance and the impact that socio-political history has in the present day. The exhibition is curated by Monica Jain, the director-curator of Art Centrix Space.

Episteme, which translates to knowledge, has always been debated to have been extracted or obtained from even art. Knowledge disseminated through art is *a-priori* or non-empirical because the nature of the work is an experience, and the response is subjective. I felt the paintings could be categorised under epistemic art-work, since they had so much hidden inside them, were so much more than merely the visible. Speaking on the power of art, Monica

shared a personal experience, "This happened many years ago. I was at the studio, sculpting. I was feeling weary one day and decided to make something — it was a lady with a slight bulge on the tummy. Four days later, I found I was pregnant. Since then, I knew art is something that comes from within you. I also feel artists know something more than an ordinary person — they are gifted, in some sense. Energy is important for me and I truly believe in connections, and associating people. This show is about a lot of artists who were a part of my journey."

These layered narratives questioned deeper subjects like ecological problems, man-made capitalist issues, touched on colonialism, spoke of power-relations, talked about indigenous cultural practices, and taught new forms of communication like Braille.

In addition, the exhibition featured sculptures and well-researched site-specific works by Kundan, Manish and Bano. Expressing art through sculptures is a skill that has been alive for centuries. At the end of gallery were sculptures of birds in gold on the wall with different senses drawn on them. I had an opportunity to speak with the sculptor for the same, Manish, who came all the way from Bikaner. He expressed, "I have created this based on my experience during the Corona period. Apparently, our senses froze during the lockdown, and we couldn't see or feel or hear anything. We had become numb. The work demonstrates how we wanted to come out of it, desperately break out of the shell. I've used pure gold because our senses are extremely pre-

sented. There is no life possible without them. Also, since gold freezes, it depicts the senses aptly."

The paintings by Soham, "I am not the body, I am the mind", especially, completely enraptured my friend. Made on an acrylic and linen canvas, using natural pigments, the yellow, blue and green colours showed the roots of the humans in the universe. One of the three paintings showed a human in a *dhoti*, listening to music through a headset, whose roots went deep into the ground, depicting clear connections.

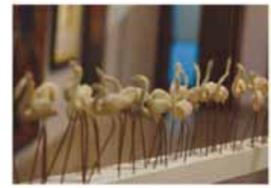
As I came across a fascinating marble sculpture showing an open haveli sort-of place with steps leading down to a bath, I had an urge to question the sculptor about the background of the same. Sangam explained, "My work is around stone-carving. I've been researching, for



three years, on Champaner and Pavagadh heritage sites that have been disturbed. There used to be seven step-wells out of which only one is left now. It was known that the kings who went to war used to fill water from here (he pointed to the blue bath).

Legend has it that whoever filled water from this step-well won the war. I have imagined how this must have looked like and created it, according to my data points and information."

While when I saw the dozens of birds sculptured on the walls, I was particularly intrigued by the concept. On talking with the artist behind the work, Pinaki, he shared, "My work is made of recycled materials and some have been collected from the Chilika lake itself. There is an Odiya poetry conveying that Asian local bards leave a mark wherever they sit. That's what I have literally attempted to show. It



reflects the climate changes, their migration, food changes."

Describing the vision behind the exhibition, Monica noted, "Art Centrix Space's vision is to work towards the development of South Asian artistic practices through exchanges, programmes and curatorial interventions, to generate larger associations, and viewership of Indian contemporary art and work by local artists. Supporting young and mid-career artists has been an integral part of the aim and I sincerely hope the new expansion will encourage and provide them with the space they need. We all should hold hands and create an impact on the world, together."

Here's something for all the art enthusiasts — the exhibition will continue till December 11 at Art Centrix Space, Vasant Kunj.



Raising their voices

Award winners at the recently held MTV European Music Awards 2021, used the opportunity to take a stand for gay and transgender civil rights in Hungary, where the show was hosted

Pyrotechnics, elaborate costumes and aerial acrobatics ruled the night at the 2021 MTV European Music Awards show in Hungary's capital on Sunday, a ceremony that was both a celebration of the year's biggest musical artists and a statement of support for LGBTQ people in the east's host country.

The show at the Papp Laszlo Sportarena in Budapest, which aired live on MTV in 180 countries, featured performances by some of the world's most popular artists — some of them LGBTQ musicians that used their stage time to speak out against policies in Hungary that are widely seen as curtailing LGBTQ rights.

Opening the night was English singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran with a performance of his newly released song *Overpass Graffiti*. Then the show's host, American rapper Saweetie, descended onto the stage riding a giant snowflake for her own medley of songs.

Saweetie, after speaking out on the need to show 'respect for the LGBTQ community', presented Sheeran with the award for 'Best Artist'.

Later, Sheeran's hit song *Bad Habits*, a chart-topping single from his fifth studio album released this year, took the award for best song, and the British singer performed his hit *Shivers*.

American rapper Lil Nas X was got the best video prize for *Montero (Call Me By Your Name)*, a video the artiste co-directed with Ukrainian music video director Tanu Muino. The rapper accepted the award via a video message.

The win by Lil Nas X, who came out as gay in 2019, highlighted the rift in values between the MTV EMAs and Hungary's right-wing government, which came under heavy backlash during the summer, when it passed a law forbidding the promotion or depiction of homosexuality to minors.

When announcing in October that the awards show would be held in Budapest, the president and CEO of MTV Entertainment Group Worldwide, Chris McCarthy, said the ceremony would be an opportunity to make a stand for gay and transgender civil rights worldwide in the Central European nation that has moved to curtail them.

"We're looking forward to using the event to amplify our voices and stand in solidarity with our LGBTQ siblings," McCarthy said in an interview, adding that no censorship of the telecast would be tolerated.

Another expression of that solidarity came through the EMAs debut of German musician Kim Petras, the first transgender artiste in the awards' history to perform at the show.

Earlier this month, Petras expressed support for MTV's decision to hold the awards in Hungary, which she said she hoped would inspire the local LGBTQ community to "not give

up on themselves."

"I'm transgender and performing at the EMAs," Petras said, "It's going to be pretty powerful to be in Hungary and perform the show when these laws have just happened."

In an interview from the red carpet on Sunday, Petras said, "censorship of any kind of love, sucks. It's not good. No one should feel, you know, not represented in media. No one should feel like it's not okay to be who they are."

Also performing at the EMAs was Norwegian indie pop act girl in red, with her hit single *Serotonin*. English singer-songwriter Griff gave a debut performance of her song *One Night*, while American pop-rock group One Republic performed the previous night at the MTV World Stage on Budapest's Heroes' Square.

Taking the best rock award was Italian band and first-time EMA performer Maneskin, who took the stage amid flying sparks and a giant neon sign bearing the name of their song *MAMMAMIA*.

South Korean pop group BTS took the most awards with four — Best Pop, Best K-pop, Best Group and Biggest Fans — while host and performer Saweetie won in the Best New category.

Taking the best alternative award was English multi-instrumentalist and singer YUNGBLUD, who closed the night with his newest single, *Fleabag*. Columns of fire erupted during the performance, and a smashed guitar and overturned amplifiers were all that were left once YUNGBLUD left the stage.

During the show, the EMAs recognised the winners of the Generation Change Award, a new category honouring five activists fighting against anti-LGBTQ policies worldwide.

Actress and talk-show host, Drew Barrymore, honoured the winners through a video message, saying they are doing "incredible things for the LGBTQ+ community."

"I am proud to help elevate these young voices. They are all gravely asking to love who they want and to love who they are," Barrymore expressed.

The winners were LGBTQ activists from Iraq, Nigeria, Brazil, the United States and Hungary. Accepting the Generation Change Award in person was Hungarian activist Viktoria Radvanyi, an organiser with Budapest Pride.

Radvanyi dedicated the award to Hungary's LGBTQ community and urged them to "get out and vote together" in Hungarian elections scheduled for April, where Hungary's right-wing governing party faces its most serious challenge since it took power in 2010.

"Never accept the notion that you should tolerate violence and discrimination," Radvanyi stated. "Every single human being is born equal, period... Let's not let them force us back to the closet." —AP

Against the backdrop of the pandemic, when everyone was shifting to the online medium, is when I first heard of HCL Concerts, through one of their programmes, *Baithak*. The *Baithak* sessions are a series of virtual performances by accomplished and forthcoming Indian classical music and dance artists. Even as the world adapts to Covid-19, it doesn't seem like the online medium will lose its relevance.

The *Baithak* series led me to probe into the phenomena that HCL Concerts is, and it appears that conservation and promotion of India's art and cultural heritage are very close to HCL's heart. To this end, HCL has been organising HCL Concerts for 23 years, dedicated to nurturing and promoting talent rooted in the glorious heritage of Indian classical performing arts. Over 1500 artists have graced this platform and have contributed towards reinvigorating the Indian classical performing arts.

Over the years, more platforms have been developed to contribute to the growth of the Indian performing arts ecosystem. Most notable of these are HCL Concerts' *Baithak* and *Soundscapes* series, which showcases the independent and inclusive music from across the Indian landscape including genres like Sufi, Folk and Indie-pop, allowing music lovers across the world a chance to enjoy the most comprehensive collection of classical music from the comforts of their home for free.

To know more about HCL Concerts, the head of the platform was kind enough to share his input. In charge of HCL Concerts since 2015, Rohit Kaul has a lot to do with some of the latest innovations by the platform. Read on for excerpts of the interview:

Q: The internet proclaims you are a behavioural science/ economics expert with over a decade of experience in diverse sectors. How has this experience helped HCL Concerts?

My interest and experience with behaviour science helped us in understanding the fundamental behavioural barriers and motivations of consuming Indian classical music.

This understanding allows us to create brand communication that addresses these barriers and appeal to the on-the-fence audience who are unsure if they will like Indian classical music. My earlier experience also enables me to understand customer journeys

Expanding horizons

ROHIT KAUL, the head of HCL Concerts, tells **CHRISTY VARGHESE** that the classical music scenario in India is adapting to the changing times and has something for everyone



better and identify ways to integrate listening to classical music into the daily lives of our audience. We have consistently increased the number of people who are interested in Indian classical music over the years.

Q: During your tenure at HCL concerts, would you say art and artists changed over the years? If yes, how?

One big change that I have observed is the willingness of artists to experiment with different genres, styles of presentation and collaborations. Earlier this was something that was seen more in younger artists but now maestros are also experimenting with different ways of presentation of classical music. This has expanded the appeal of Indian classical music to a much wider audience.

Also, the way these experiments/collaborations are done has evolved a lot. It is no longer about just adding a drummer or a guitarist to a classical music ensemble to make the music 'sound' like fusion. Artists are re-imagining their music and collaboration from scratch, resulting in more cohesive and integrated contemporary classical music.

Q: It is common knowledge that HCL Concerts seeks to promote Indian classical



performing arts, however, in the past couple of years we have seen a shift in perspective. With *Soundscapes*, even indie-pop artists are being promoted. What caused this shift in perspective?

At HCL Concerts one of our key objectives is to be a platform that connects the audience with their favourite artists and *Soundscapes* is a step that's aligned with this objective.

During the COVID lockdown, it was not possible for indie artists to perform in live concerts, which is the most crucial way for them to engage with their audience. Thus, we felt that as India's largest live music platform, it is our responsibility to provide a platform to such artists as well. We have received very encouraging responses from the artists and the audience, which makes us happy with the progress *Soundscapes* has made in a short span of time.

Q: How has HCL Concerts changed over the years?

Over the years HCL Concerts has expanded its role in the music ecosystem and has gone beyond concerts.

Q: Concerts: We have significantly expanded our geographic footprint and conduct concerts in nine cities in India and New York and

the Bay Area in the US (pre-Covid). We have also significantly expanded our digital footprint with over 80 million people viewing our digital concerts from 62 countries (post-Covid). We have also added more genres to our portfolio.

Q: Talent identification: We are investing significantly in identifying and nurturing young talent through the Quest programmes in partnership with the Rhapsody Foundation to fuel the next wave of Indian classical music maestros.

Q: HCL Music app: We have one of India's highest-rated music app, available free of cost and without any ads, to music listeners on the App store and Play store. Our collection has thousands of hours of classical music from legends as well as promising newcomers that can be enjoyed on-demand by anyone.

Q: What is your long-term vision with respect to HCL Concerts? Like *Soundscapes*, do you have any other interesting initiatives in the pipeline?

HCL Concerts will continue to play the role of a platform that connects the audience with their favourite artists. We want to continue to expand the audience universe of Indian classical music and the indie artist ecosystem. This means that we will launch new initiatives in the future that align with our objectives.

One such new initiative is the launch of a music album that features the winners of the first *Carnatic Quest* programme. We plan to do a worldwide launch of the album across all OTT platforms to provide maximum exposure to these young prodigies.

Q: Could you please tell us more about your new initiative, *The Carnatic Quest Junior*?

The Carnatic Quest Junior is a talent identification programme launched in partnership with the Rhapsody Foundation. It is open to all school children between 12 and 18 years.

The performances of these artistes will be evaluated through a series of stages by some of the most eminent Carnatic music artists. We are inviting entries in five categories: Carnatic vocal, veena, violin, flute and percussions (mridangam, ghatam and *kanjeera*). The winners will get a chance to perform in HCL Concerts, mentored by eminent teachers and record an album with our support.

THE QAWWALI PHOTO PROJECT

The *Qawwali Photo Project* is an exhibition of photographs, by Dinesh Khanna and Mustafa Quraishi, dedicated to Qawwali practitioners which was conceptualised by Manjari Chaturvedi. The exhibition will be inaugurated on November 17 at 6 pm by Amitabh Kant, the CEO of NITI



Aayog, and Hans Raj Hans, the singer-politician. As part of the inauguration there will be a Dastaane-Qawwali presented by Askari Naqvi. Solo recitations of Qawwals will be presented by new voices at 5 pm each evening during the course of the exhibition. **When:** November 18-28, from 11 am to 7 pm **Where:** Art Gallery, Kamaladevi Complex, Indian International Centre

SUBALTERN NAYIKA & LOTUS POND

Into the second half of his eighties, the renowned A Ramachandran acquired an unprecedented approach to his art. Ironically, the pandemic-induced lockdown was the trigger for it.

Effectively detained in his Delhi home from early 2020, the artist began to spend almost the entire daytime in his studio, working on the canvases for unusually long hours. The result was a flurry of typically large images, select 13 of which are coming up for public viewing at two venues of the national

east of the Yamuna in the last two years. **When:** Till December 12 **Where:** Shridharani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam and Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi

capital from next week.

Not only did the stifling and strenuous phase of COVID-19 alter the Padma awardee's painting style; the social aloofness gifted him an eerily novel theme. The solo show, titled *Subaltern Nayika & Lotus Pond*, will essay the octogenarian titan's latest bout of creativity. They would unveil what kept Ramachandran so meditatively engaged with the brush and colours on the first floor of his residence

east of the Yamuna in the last two years. **When:** Till December 12 **Where:** Shridharani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam and Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi



SPACE

SPACE is a solo-exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Pranav Shah, who has previously exhibited his wares at New York.

In the artist's words, "These works are a reflection of my heart, my thoughts, my emotion, my vision, my patience, my creativity, my life satisfaction, my nature, my boldness, my respect for nature and my strong understanding of abstract art."

When: November 18-22 **Where:** Visual Arts Gallery, Indian Habitat Centre

IIC DOUBLE BILL MUSIC & DANCE RECITALS

In this week's Double Bill Music and Dance Recital, the proceedings will be initiated by a Hindustani

Music Recital by Ghulam Hasan Khan from Delhi, disciple of Ustad Ghulam Sadiq Khan, who will be accompanied by Junaid Hasan (on the tanpura and vocal support), Zakir Dholpuri (harmonium) and Roman Khan (tabla), at 6 pm.

This will be followed by a Bharatanatyam recital by Shreyasi Gopinath from Delhi, disciple of Guru Saroja Vaidyanathan and the late Guru Jamuna Krishnan, at 7 pm. Gopinath will be accompanied by Satish Venkatesh (vocals), Sharanya Chandran (*nattuvangam*), Manohar Balachandran (mridangam) and Kiran (flute).

When: November 18 **Where:** CD Deshmukh Auditorium



ICC's 'Team of Tournament' No Indian included



PTI ■ DUBAI

No Indian cricketer figured in the ICC's T20 World Cup 'Team of the Tournament' which comprises players from six different countries, including Sri Lanka and South Africa, with Pakistan's Babar Azam being named 'captain' of the squad.

India were ousted at the group stage after being thrashed by Pakistan and New Zealand before winning three inconsequential games against Afghanistan, Scotland and Namibia.

The jury members did not think any of the Indian players deserving to be picked while South Africa's Aiden Markram and Anrich Nortje and Sri Lanka's Charith Asalanka and Wanindu Hasaranga were the players whose teams didn't qualify for the semi-finals but fore the ICC team.

Stars players from champions Australia, runners-up New Zealand, semi-finalists England and Pakistan also feature in the star-studded line up.

Opening batter and 'Player of the Tournament' David Warner, leg-spinner Adam Zampa and seamer Josh Hazlewood all made the cut for Australia after helping steer their

side to their first ever T20 World Cup title.

There were also spots for England's Jos Buttler as wicket-keeper and New Zealand left-arm Trent Boult, besides Pakistan's Babar as captain and Sri Lanka star Hasaranga -- the tournament's leading wicket-taker -- in the line-up.

One of the jury members, former West Indies pacer Ian Bishop, said: "As with any team selection there will be varying opinions, and robust discussion on the final composition of the squad."

"The panel respects that, and we encourage the strong debate that will ensue. This team was incredibly difficult to select over such a highly competitive tournament. Selections were based predominantly on the Super 12 onward to the final."

Team
David Warner (Australia), Jos Buttler (wk) (England), Babar Azam (captain, Pakistan), Charith Asalanka (Sri Lanka), Aiden Markram (South Africa), Moeen Ali (England), Wanindu Hasaranga (Sri Lanka), Adam Zampa (Australia), Josh Hazlewood (Australia), Trent Boult (New Zealand), Anrich Nortje (South Africa), 12th: Shaheen Afridi (Pakistan).

Hamilton's stunning win in Brazil

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton ended "the hardest weekend I've had" with a stunning victory at the Brazilian Grand Prix, and gained momentum in his Formula One title fight with Red Bull driver Max Verstappen.

Hamilton, a seven-time world champion, beat Verstappen despite starting from 10th position on the grid due to a penalty -- the second Hamilton faced this weekend in Sao Paulo.

Verstappen, the winner of the race's previous edition in 2019, finished second and saw his lead in the driver's championship shrink to 14 points, with three races left. The winner of a race gets 25 points.

"Let's keep pushing," Hamilton said on team radio after his sixth victory of the season. He took a Brazil flag to celebrate his win in the car and on the podium, just as his idol Ayrton Senna did.

Hamilton's teammate, Valtteri Bottas, finished third and Red Bull's

Sergio Perez was fourth with the Mexican clocking the fastest lap of the race. The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz were fifth and sixth, respectively.

Verstappen led most of the race after the first turn, when he overtook polesitter Bottas. But Hamilton, who rose from 10th to third position in just six laps, went ahead of Verstappen on lap 59, putting a raucous crowd on their feet at Interlagos.

Hamilton finished the race with a 10-second advantage over Verstappen and said he felt like he had won his first race before a joyous crowd at Interlagos.

"I was pushing as hard as I could," an emotional Hamilton said after his 101st victory. "From last on the grid (for Saturday's sprint race), and then another five-place penalty -- I think that's the hardest weekend I've had. Things kept going against us, but it just shows, never give up, keep fighting. Never, ever stop fighting."

Mercedes is now 11 points ahead of Red Bull in the constructor standings. Verstappen will leave Brazil



50,000 euros (\$57,200) poorer. He was fined after being seen touching the rear wing of Hamilton's Mercedes on Friday.

"We were just missing a bit of pace, but we gave it our all and had

fun," the Dutchman said. "We still have a good points lead, today was a bit of damage limitation. The coming races we will bounce back."

Organizers at Interlagos celebrated the return of the series to the tra-

ditional track, which will host the race for nine more years.

More than 181,000 tickets were sold for the three days of action, with thousands of fans gathering in front of the podium -- many of them unmasked despite health protocols.

Brazil was cut from the 2020 calendar because of restrictions in place for the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sao Paulo Grand Prix, renamed for this year, was allowed to open for full capacity only weeks ago when the state government eased restrictions for November.

Many fans saw the race as a return to a more normal life, and they liked the eventual winner.

Antonio Siqueira, 45, had tears in his eyes when Hamilton drove by Interlagos' straight with the Brazilian flag.

"Ayrton's last title was 30 years ago, and to see the greatest driver ever have this performance here and still reverer our hero was very emotional," Siqueira said. "Today makes it official; there is a Brazilian driver on the grid, and his name is Lewis."

Shastri joins upcoming Legends League as Commissioner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India chief coach Ravi Shastri has been roped in as the Commissioner of the Legends League Cricket (LLC), a professional event for retired players that is set to take off next year.

The first season of LLC is scheduled to be held in January next year in the Gulf.

"It feels great to remain connected with cricket in the thick of action, especially with the Legends of the game who have been champions in their own rights," Shastri, whose stint with India ended after the team's exit from the ICC T20 World Cup, said in a release issued by the event's organisers. "It is going to be a lot of fun with some serious cricket going."

These stalwarts have nothing new to prove but they have their reputation in line and I can assure you, it will be interesting to see how they do justice to it. "I am extremely thrilled to be a part of Legends League Cricket. This is a unique initiative and we see a very bright future ahead," added the 59-year-old.

Sindhu eyes podium finish; Saina pulls out due to injuries

PTI ■ BALI

Two-time Olympic medalist P V Sindhu will continue her quest for a podium finish when she spearheads India's challenge at the Indonesia Masters Super 750 tournament but compatriots Saina Nehwal and Sameer Verma will be missing in action after deciding to pull out of the tournament due to injuries.

Sindhu, who had claimed a bronze at the Tokyo Olympics to go with her Rio silver medal, reached the quarterfinals and semifinals at Denmark and France before skipping the Hylo Open in Germany.

The 2019 World Championship in Switzerland was Sindhu's last title. She reached the final at Swiss Open early this year but it ended with a loss.

The third seeded Indian, how-



ever, has good memories of Indonesia as she had reached the finals at Jakarta two years back and will look to make a good start when she faces Thailand's Supanida Katethong in the opener.

Sindhu is likely to cross swords with Spain's Clara Azurmendi and Canada's sixth seed Michelle Li in the next two rounds and a clash against top seeded Japanese Akane Yamaguchi could be on the cards in

the semifinals if she can cross the initial rounds.

Saina, the London Olympics bronze-medallist, and Sameer, who looked in good touch in the last two events, will miss the Indonesia leg to recover from their respective injuries.

While Saina had suffered a groin injury at Uber Cup, Sameer had injured his calf muscle in Denmark.

All eyes this week will also be on Kidambi Srikanth and Lakshya Sen, who had reached the semifinals of Hylo Open.

While Srikanth seemed close to regaining his form, Lakshya too has looked in good touch in his last few outings. The duo will look to continue the good run when they begin their men's singles campaign here.

Lakshya will meet Japan's Kanta Tsuneyama in his opening round,

while Srikanth faces a qualifier after Sameer pulled out.

Tokyo Olympian B Sai Praneeth will take on Indonesia's Shesar Hiren Rhustavito, while HS Prannoy is pitted against sixth-seeded Indonesian Jonatan Christie in his opener.

Parupalli Kashyap will square off against Denmark's Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus.

In men's doubles competition, sixth seeds Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will lock horns with Malaysia's Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi, while the fast-rising pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila will battle it out against the Japanese combination of Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi.

The women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy will take on Denmark's Alexandra Boje and Mette Poulsen.

Rohit as leader will bring a lot of calm into dressing room: Rahul

PTI ■ JAIPUR

As part of a new leadership group, India's T20 vice-captain K L Rahul could not be more excited about working with Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma as the head coach is big on setting a good team culture with the new skipper being a tactical genius.

The T20 home series against New Zealand marks the start of a new era for Indian cricket after the disappointment of a pre-mature exit from the T20 World Cup.

With the next edition only 12 months away, Rahul said the team management will soon take a call on what is the best

template to follow in the unforgiving shortest format.

"Look, obviously I've been very fortunate I have known Rahul Dravid for a long time. As a youngster I did pick his brain and try and understand the game better and understanding the art of batting better from his back. Has been very helpful to all of us back home in Karnataka.

"As a coach he has been with the boys around the country and to have him in the set up is a great opportunity to learn from, we all know what a big name he is and the kind of things he has done for our country," Rahul said referring to the new head coach ahead of the first T20 on Wednesday.



The vice-captain also spoke briefly about Dravid's vision for the team.

"When it comes to coaching, I have played a couple of games with the India A set up and we have had a small chat just

before coming out here for training. He is somebody who's big on setting a good team culture and creating an atmosphere where people are thriving and trying to get better as people and cricketers.

"He was always a team man when he was playing and that is the kind of culture he wants to bring in here where everyone is putting the team ahead instead of personal goals."

The new think thank has just got together and there will be plenty of discussions in the near future, said Rahul.

About Rohit, the stylish batter said his performances for the Indian team and his IPL franchise say it all.

"We have all seen him in the IPL and

his stats are for everybody to see. He has a great understanding of the game and tactically he is really good and that is why he has been able to achieve what he has as a leader.

"He will bring a lot of calm into the dressing room. The next few weeks will be exciting to know what kind of goals he has for the team and what kind of template we are looking to play.

"In a team sport it is always a collective effort and decision.

The job of the leadership group is to ensure that everybody is clear about their roles and feeling secure in the team and it will be an exciting challenge to create that kind of atmosphere," he said.

Argentina, Brazil meet in qualifying with eyes on Qatar

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Brazil is already the first South American team to secure a direct spot in next year's World Cup. Second-place Argentina is nearly there, too.

Anyone thinking Tuesday's qualifying match between the teams will not be decisive hasn't considered how much pride will be at stake in the region's superclásico.

Copa America champion Argentina is determined to upstage Brazil and show Lionel Messi he has a decent shot next year of winning the only trophy missing in his career. Victory in front of home crowd could also mean, pending other results, securing qualification for Qatar 2022.

Brazil is aiming to complete the best South American



qualifying campaign in history, although coach Tite is still expected to continue experimenting with his lineup with an eye on the World Cup.

Only 25,000 fans in San Juan, in Argentina's northwest, will be at the stadium to watch the teams play a full game for the first time in this edition of World Cup qualifying.

The first encounter was

stopped after seven minutes of play in September by Brazilian authorities enforcing protocols in place for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Brazil leads qualifiers with 34 points, six ahead of Argentina.

Both teams have completed 12 games, one fewer than the other eight teams in qualifying.

ICC must make sure there is level-playing field, says Gavaskar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The advantage teams have had batting second in the just-concluded T20 World Cup is something the ICC can look into to ensure a level-playing field, Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar said on Monday.

In the T20 showpiece that concluded in the UAE on Sunday with Australia's triumph over New Zealand in the title clash, teams batting second have won almost all their matches, including the semifinals and the final.

"The commentators were saying that the dew factor wasn't there today so I don't think it really came into play that much in this game but I think it has in the previous games and maybe that is something that needs to be looked at," Gavaskar told Sports Today.

"But you may also say that if the group matches are played at the same time then why change for the knockouts," said Gavaskar.

Early dew to minimise toss advantage in first T20I



PTI ■ JAIPUR

Heavy dew, which will minimise the toss advantage, has been predicted for India's opening T20I against New Zealand as Jaipur gears up to host its first international match in eight years on Wednesday.

The winter chill can be experienced the moment you arrive in the pink city. Officials and groundstaff at the Rajasthan Cricket Association told PTI that in the last two days, the dew has been

setting around 7pm, the start time of the first ever T20 International to be played at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium.

The dew factor proved to be a massive one at the recently concluded T20 World Cup in the UAE where teams preferred to chase in better batting conditions.

"Here in Jaipur, there could be dew in the first innings itself going by the last two days which minimises the toss advantage to a certain extent. Since it is a T20, one has to expect lots of runs from this surface," said an official.

"We will use the anti-dew spray on match day but we have all seen its effect is very limited."

In the last ODI held here in 2013, India chased down Australia's 359 in just 43.3 overs with Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli scoring a century each.

Mushtaq Ali Trophy knockouts to undergo in 'Hazardous' Delhi air

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sixty six premier domestic cricketers will battle it out in toxic Delhi air which has been the cause for health hazards as the Syed Mushtaq Ali National T20 Championship's pre-quarter-final starts in national Capital on Monday.

As on Monday, the highest Air Quality Index (AQI) level in Delhi was 349, which is 'Hazardous' and was recorded in Shahdara area.

The place where two of the pre-quarter-finals will be played is Feroz Shah Kotla, which is located in Central Delhi, where the condition is slightly better with peak AQI of 249, which is deemed 'Unhealthy'.

"The conditions are slightly better

compared to past week and there is no intimation that we won't go ahead with the game," a senior DDCA official told PTI when asked if there is a chance of cancellation.

Kotla will host one match in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

On the cricketing front, Maharashtra will miss their key and inform player Ruturaj Gaikwad, who has been called for national duty, when they take on arch-rivals Vidarbha in one of the three pre-quarter-finals.

Ruturaj was the chief architect of Maharashtra's wins in the league stage and he had continued his good run from the IPL, where he was the leading run-scorer for his side Chennai Super Kings. But having earned a national India



call-up for the T20 series against New Zealand, Maharashtra will miss his services.

In his absence, senior players Kedar

Jadhav and current vice-captain Naushad Shaikh, will have to shoulder responsibility if the side has to score or chase big.

Kedar has exactly not been among

heavy runs and come Tuesday, he would like to take on the Vidarbha attack with gusto and help his team advance to the last eight.

Naushad, who is an aggressive batter and can take any attack to cleansers on his day, would need to come good at the 'Kotla'. However, the duo would need support from other batters.

If a fit Rahul Tripathi, who missed the league stage due to an injury sustained in the IPL final, is available, then that will surely help Maharashtra, who had won the T20 domestic championship, 10 years back.

Maharashtra will also have a new captain for the marquee clash as the young opener from Pune led in the league stage.

SINGLES

YASIR SHAH MISSES TEST AGAINST BANGLA
Karachi: Pakistan's experienced leg-spinner Yasir Shah was on Monday not picked for the upcoming two-match Test series against Bangladesh after failing to recover from a thumb injury. The Pakistani selectors announced a 20-member squad for the series with opener Imam-ul-Haq and off-spinner Bilal Asif earning a recall to the national side.

ANIRUSH NEW CHENNAIYIN FC CAPTAIN
Chennai: India international Anirudh Thapa was on Monday named captain of Chennaiyin FC for the forthcoming season of Indian Super League (ISL) beginning on Friday. The 23-year old midfielder, who has been with CFC since 2016, takes over from Brazilian Rafael Crivellaro. Thapa, who is one of the key players for Chennaiyin FC over the years, said as a captain there's an added responsibility and he would always protect his team and players.

MOHIT STUNS KOREAN TOP SEED
Dhaka: Young and unheralded Mohit Deshwal of Haryana stunned Korean top seed Choi Yonghee en route to setting up a semi-final clash with Indian ace Avishek Verma in the men's compound section of the Asian Archery Championships here on Monday. On a day when the Indian recurve archers' familiar struggles against the Koreans once again came to the fore, the compound trio of Mohit, Verma and Jyothi Surekha kept India's hopes alive in the individual sections, advancing into their respective last-four rounds.

NORWICH HIRES DEAN SMITH
Norwich (England): Norwich appointed Dean Smith as manager of the Premier League's last-placed team on Monday, a week after he was fired by Aston Villa. The 50-year-old Smith replaces Daniel Farke, who was dismissed last weekend despite overseeing Norwich's first win of the league season. "It has been a whirlwind seven days, but I'm really pleased to be back and working for Norwich City in the Premier League," Smith said in a statement.

INDIA TO COMPETE IN 13TH EWC
New Delhi: A seven-member Indian team will compete in three gaming categories at the 13th Esports World Championship in Eilat, Israel starting on Tuesday. The Indian athletes, who will be supported by MPL Sports Foundation and sportswear brand from Bata, POWER, will be competing in CS:GO, Tekken7 and PES categories during the tournament, Esports Federation of India (ESFI) said in a release.

WAHAB PLANS TO RETIRE AFTER 2023 WC
Karachi: Left-arm Pakistan fast bowler Wahab Riaz is planning to retire from international cricket after the 2023 World Cup in India. The 36-year-old pacer, who has played 27 Tests, 91 ODIs and 36 T20Is, has not been a regular in the Pakistan team for a while now and was also ignored for the T20 World Cup. "Everyone has to say goodbye to cricket one day."

LALREMSIAMI TO LEAD INDIA IN JUNIOR WC
New Delhi: Forward Lalremsiami, who was a part of the Indian senior women's hockey team which finished fourth at the Tokyo Olympics, will lead the country's 18-member junior squad at the FIH World Cup starting in South Africa from December 5. The event will witness 16 top teams from across the globe battle for the title which was previously won by Argentina in 2016. Ishika Chaudhary will shoulder the responsibility of vice-captaincy.