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## Won't spare corrupt: Modi

‘No matter how powerful, persons betraying nation won't be let off’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asserted that no matter how powerful a person may be, stern action should be taken against those who work against the interest of the nation or its people by indulging in corruption.

Virtually addressing a joint conference of the CVC and the CBI at Kevadia in Gujarat, the PM asked the agencies to ensure that there are no safe havens anywhere in the world for those who betray the country.

Modi's assertions come against the backdrop of the Centre's engagement in legal proceedings to bring back alleged economic offenders like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Chowksi, who have taken refuge in foreign countries after allegedly duping the nation of thousands of crores of rupees.

"You have to remember that your partnership is with this 'mitti' (soil), with *Maa Bharti* (Mother India). There should not be any safe havens anywhere in the world for those who betray the country or its people," Modi said in his address.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits the Mahaparinirvana Temple, on the occasion of the Abhidhamma Day, at Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday PTI

"However powerful one may be, stern action should be taken against those who work contrary to the national interest or against the people of the country. Everyone should continue to work in the national interest," he said.

Modi said due to the hard work of his Government in the last six-seven years, a faith has been established among people that corruption can be stemmed.

"In the last six-seven years, we have been able to establish a faith among people that it is possible to stop corruption in the country. People of the

country have faith today that they will get benefits of Government schemes without any give and take or without any middlemen, he said.

"Corruption, big or small, takes away the rights of common people. It is a hindrance in the progress of the country and affects our collective energy," he added.

Taking a swipe at earlier dispensations, Modi said, "The way the earlier Government functioned, it lacked the political and administrative will to fight corruption. Today, there is a political will and administrative reforms are also being

carried out to achieve the goal."

Post-Independence, the mindset of the Governments was to keep everything under their control. Those Governments kept maximum control with themselves and due to it, the system witnessed many wrong practices, he said.

Maximum control, be it at home, in family or in the country, causes maximum damage, he said. Modi added, "We started as a mission to simplify the life of people by reducing controls, we believe in minimum Government and maximum Governance."

350 new routes,  
UDAN has taken  
big leap, says PM

PNS ■ KUSHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the Centre has approved around 900 new air routes under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme of which 350 have already become operational while more than 50 new airports, or those which were not in service earlier, have become operational.

"The Government is also working on preparing more than 200 airports, heliports, and water ports for seaplanes in the next four years," the Prime Minister said while addressing a big public meeting here after inaugurating and laying the foundation of 12 projects worth over ₹345 crores, including a ₹280 crore 500-bedded new medical college in Kushinagar.

Modi pointed out that the goal behind all these steps is to provide better connectivity to people living in the remotest corners, while air, rail, road, and waterways add to people's comfort. The Prime Minister said more middle-class people were able to avail flight services today than in the past due to the steps taken by the Government.

SC raps UP for slow  
Lakhimpur probeCourt asks Govt to  
shed image, orders  
witness protection

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday reprimanded the Uttar Pradesh Government for "dragging its feet" in the probe into Lakhimpur violence and ordered the protection of witness. The apex court cautioned the State police that probe should not be an "unending story" and UP Government is required to "dispel" that impression and should ensure recording of statements of witnesses before magistrates.

"We think you are dragging your feet, please dispel that impression," said the top court, and red-flagged the issue of non-recording of statements of nearly 40 prosecution witnesses, of the total 44, before judicial magistrates under section 164 of the CrPC.

"Please ask them to immediately take steps to record section 164 statements. That is the most important thing... Protection to the victims as well as the witnesses," said the bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli.

Statements under section 164 of the CrPC (Code of



Criminal Procedure) are recorded before a judicial magistrate and they have evidentiary value. The State Govt informed the court that statements of four out of the 44 witnesses have been recorded by the judicial magistrate.

Ten people, including Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra's son Ashish Mishra, have been arrested in connection with the violence that has triggered a political slugfest ahead of the crucial Assembly elections in the State.

The bench also raised the issue of filing of the status report on the day of hearing with the CJI observing, "We waited till 1 am last night for any filing. But we received nothing."

Senior advocate Harish Salve, who appeared along with

advocate Garima Prasad for the State Government, said the status report has been filed in a sealed cover on Wednesday because of the impression that it was for the perusal of the court only.

"No that was not required and we have just received it now...We never said anything about sealed covers," the bench said while declining the request to hear the matter on Friday. It listed the next hearing on October 26.

The Bench said, "Mr Salve, you said that you (police) have examined 44 witnesses and out of them, four witnesses' statements have been recorded under section 164 (before a judicial magistrate) of CrPC. Why have you not recorded the statements of other witnesses under 164?"

BJP open to alliance with  
‘nationalist’ AmarinderCaptain is a  
patriot: BJP

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

A day after former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh announced that he would launch his own political party and hoped for a "seat arrangement" with the BJP in poll-bound Punjab, the saffron party said it is open to alliances with those who put national interests first.

With Amarinder set to float his own political outfit with the BJP which has lost political ground in the State following Akali Dal's exit from the National Democratic Alliance in protest against three Central farm laws, Punjab may witness a triangular election battle with the ruling Congress and the AAP being the other two strong contenders for the seat of power in the State.

Given the fact that farmers from Punjab form the core of



the agitation against the three farm laws which they feel may hit the traditional 'mandi system' of sell and purchase of agricultural produce and may even end minimum support price, sooner or later, the BJP may think in terms of seeking some sort of reconciliation with the farmers to pave the way for an alliance with Amarinder.

BJP party general secretary and Punjab in-charge Dushyant Gautam on Wednesday said "Amarinder is a patriot" and the BJP is open to an alliance with him. "Amarinder was once a soldier

and his stand on the issues of national security should be praised," the BJP leader said.

On Amarinder's condition of resolving farmers' issues, BJP general secretary said Singh did not talk about ending the farmers' agitation. "He talked about farmers' issues. We are committed to it and are working for the welfare of farmers. If the time comes, both will sit together and discuss farmers' issues," Gautam was quoted as saying by news agency PTI.

As far as the agitation is concerned, it is politically motivated, he alleged.

"Our main agenda is nationalism and keeping the nation first. All those parties who want to form alliances with us on this agenda are welcome," he said.

Amarinder has openly announced that he would see that congress Punjab chief Navjot Singh Sindhu is defeated in the polls as he is a "threat to the national security".

4 LeT terrorists killed in Op All  
Out, migrants' murder avengedSoldier martyred,  
2 hurt; 17 ultras  
killed in 2 weeks

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The joint team of security forces on Wednesday avenged the death of migrant labourers by eliminating four Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) terrorists in the South Kashmir districts of Shopian and Kulgam. Three Army jawans also sustained bullet injuries during the operation in the Dragad area of Shopian.

One among them, Sepoy Karamveer Singh, succumbed to his injuries in hospital. He hailed from the Rampur area of Madhya Pradesh.

After the recent killing of migrant labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the security forces have launched an operation All Out to flush out the terrorists.

So far, 17 terrorists have



Security forces during an encounter with terrorists at Nar Khas forest area of Poonch district on Wednesday PTI

been eliminated in 11 encounters in the last two weeks. Eleven civilians, including five laborers, also lost their lives during targeted killings.

Kashmir range IGP Vijay Kumar said two LeT terrorists

killed in Devsar area of Kulgam were behind the killing of two labourers from Bihar.

In the first operation, security forces eliminated two terrorists, including Adil Ahmad Wani, a LeT terrorist, believed

to have targeted a carpenter Sageer Ahmad hailing from Saharanpur area of Uttar Pradesh.

In the second encounter, a joint team of security forces neutralised LeT district commander Gulzar Ahmad Reshi in the Devsar area of Kulgam. Reshi was behind the killing of two poor labourers from Bihar.

According to a police spokesman, a joint cordon and search operation was launched in the Dragad area of Shopian after receiving inputs about the presence of LeT terrorists in the area on Wednesday. After confirming their whereabouts in the areas the terrorists were given the opportunity to surrender.

Instead of paying heed to these appeals, the terrorists chose to open indiscriminate firing on the security forces, he said. The police spokesman said in the encounter, two terrorists were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of the encounter.

Delhi Govt to pay  
₹50,000/hectare  
to kisan for crop  
damage: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi will ensure that farmers in the city who suffered losses due to crop damage this year get compensation at the rate of ₹50,000 per hectare.

Addressing media online, Kejriwal said Delhi farmers need not get distressed over crop damage as their son stands with them. "I have directed District Magistrates and SDMs to complete the surveying of damaged crops in two weeks. Compensation should reach the farmers' accounts within one to one and a half months after that," he added.

A delegation of farmers had recently met the chief minister seeking help of the Government in view of crop damage due to rain.



Pandvani exponent Padma Vibhushan Teejan Bai visits the State Tribal Museum in Bhopal on Wednesday

Pioneer Photo

Can't promise no  
coercive action  
as Param Bir not  
traceable: Maha

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The whereabouts of former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh were not known, the Maharashtra Government on Wednesday told the Bombay High Court.

As Singh is not traceable, it did not wish to continue its assurance that no coercive action (such as arrest) would be taken against him in an Atrocities Act case, the Government said.

"He isn't traceable. In these circumstances, we do not wish to continue our earlier statement where the Government said it would not take any coercive action against him," State senior counsel Darius Khambata told a division bench of Justices Nitin Jamdar and Sarang Kotwal.

50-year-old woman  
mauled to death by  
leopard in Seoni

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In the second incident of animal attack within a week, a 50-year-old woman was mauled to death by a leopard in Seoni district on Tuesday.

The incident took place on Tuesday, when Gajra Pancheshwar was cutting paddy with other women in a field in Ugli area of the district, said BC Meshram, the manager of the Seoni Forest Development Corporation.

A leopard attacked the woman and mauled her to death, he said, adding that the other women fled from the spot to save themselves. The forest department has provided an immediate financial assistance of Rs 10,000 to the family of the deceased, and ex-gratia of Rs 3.9 lakh will be disbursed soon, it was stated.

Meanwhile, Divisional

Forest Officer (DFO) SKS Tiwari said four cages have been set up in the area to trap the animal.

Earlier on October 16, a 16-year-old girl was killed by a leopard in Kanhiwada forest area near Pandiwada village. The same leopard is involved in attacks on cattle in the villages of this area, the official said.

The authorities have written to the forest headquarters to declare this leopard a man-eater, he said. The DFO further said that villagers have been advised to stay away from the areas where such incidents have occurred and remain alert till the predator is captured.

In a similar incident, a 50-year-old woman was mauled to death by a leopard near Mohgaon village under the Keolari block in Seoni district on September 15.



# Infinity Learn ropes in Rohit Sharma as brand ambassador

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

As part of a robust market expansion plan, Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya brings on board the stylish opener and the batting mainstay of Team India, Rohit Sharma as its brand ambassador. The ace cricketer will be the face of Infinity Learn's multi-channel marketing campaign and brand activities.

The company says that it aims to further strengthen its brand identity and as the most aspiring EdTech brand in India through its association with Rohit Sharma.

"Infinity Learn is poised to become one of top EdTech brand in India. Rohit Sharma's personal brand resonates very well with Infinity Learn's brand values of trust and delivering success. Apart from being an inspiration for the next generation cricketers, Rohit is also an ideal role model, and above all, a mentor who guides his team to success and an expert at what he does. We look forward to building a strong brand by associating with Rohit," said Ujjwal Singh, CEO of Infinity



Learn by Sri Chaitanya.

Commenting on this association, Rohit Sharma (Indian Cricketer) stated, "I'm glad to be associated with reputed educational institution such as Sri Chaitanya with their digital learning venture Infinity Learn. Sri Chaitanya carries a rich legacy of three plus decades of shaping future of young India. I am impressed by the vision and the compelling story of commitment shown by Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya who is known to identify and nurture young talent by imbibing discipline and hard work."

# Sesame Workshop, Planet Water join hands to promote handwashing

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Sesame Workshop India, the Indian arm of global educational non-profit Sesame Workshop, and Planet Water Foundation joining hands to reinforce the life-saving habit of handwashing.

Sesame Workshop India has been working to meet the developmental needs of young children in India for over 15 years. As schools reopen and the number of COVID-19 cases drop, it is important for children and caregivers not to let their guard down and continue the safer practices like hand-washing, wearing masks and social distancing.

Spotlighting the awareness on hand-hygiene especially amongst young children and their families, Global Handwashing Day serves as a critical reminder to people in India and beyond as an effective means to prevent life threatening diseases.

A special song Chhapa Chhap is being released featuring children's favourite muppetsElmo, Cookie Monster and Abby with the message of handwashing using

soap.

Planet Water Foundation is supporting Sesame Workshop India to amplify handwashing videos, e-books, and posters which have been developed as part of a global initiative, Caring for each other.

To encourage children to adopt these healthy behaviours, Sesame Workshop India has also reached out to social media influencers popular amongst children and caregivers with the intention of making handwashing a safe and cool behaviour.

Kristen Steele, Vice President, Education and originator of Planet Water Foundation's water-health and hygiene education materials and school implementation platform said, "Handwashing is a cost-effective, healthy hygiene habit that can prevent many diseases amongst people and save lives.

While the pandemic has led to an increase in the levels of awareness about handwashing, we aim to continue to emphasize upon the sustenance of this hygiene behaviour."

# Sewa Sadan launches free eye, dental diagnosis facility at Raja Bhoj airport



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital launched a free eye and dental diagnosis facility at Raja Bhoj International Airport here today. This facility was made available jointly by SSEH and Kalyanmayi organization. Kalyanmayi is working in the field of women welfare. Chair person of this organization Richa Aggrawal and Airport Director K.L. Aggrawal actively participated in this programme.

Senior optometrist Eash

Chaubey diagnosed the eye ailments of 215 employees and their family members while Dentist Dr Hansa Dudani examined various dental disease of 74 employees and members of their families. Beneficiaries include employees of various departments of Airport and Laborers of contractors working there. On this occasion Hospital Administrator of SSEH Kushal Dharmani and Assistant Administrator Anusha Tiwari were also specially present.

# Modi Government concerned about farmers: Athawale

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi lead government at the Center is entirely committed to the concerns and welfare of farmers, said Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale at a press conference in Bhopal.

He said that the central government is fully dedicated to the welfare of the differently-abled. There are about 6.4 lakh specially -abled persons in MP and if we talk about the country, their number is about 2.67 crore.

Athawale said that in Madhya Pradesh, 5.1 lakh students get scholarship from the central government and in Madhya Pradesh government, 19lakh students from class 1 to class 10 have received scholarship. In the current year, the Madhya Pradesh government has demanded Rs 335 crore for the scholarship.

Athawale said that Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Virendra Kumar comes from Madhya Pradesh and will try to get this money released by talking to him.



So far over 43.5 crore accounts have been opened in the country under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana and about 3.63 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened in Madhya Pradesh.

Similarly, under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, over 31.47 crore people have benefited in the country and in MP, over 1.19 crore people have benefited under this scheme. Similarly, under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural), 24.55 lakh people of Madhya Pradesh have got housing facility.

The Central Government is also fully devoted to the interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These castes should get reservation in promotion and states should think on this issue.



Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale talking to mediapersons in Bhopal on Wednesday

Pioneer Photo



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan awarding cheques to the organisations for their excellent role in operating Gashalas at a programme in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday

Pioneer Photo

# Police book unidentified miscreant for duping victim of ₹1 lakh

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Bajaria police have booked unidentified miscreant who duped victim to the tune of Rs 1 lakh. The victim was duped in the name of change of product bought online, and using bank details accused transferred money to different bank accounts.

The victim Sunil Vajpayee was duped when he contacted online website from which he bought an iron which was fraud and after contacting and providing details of the iron and bank account details his

bank account was deducted of Rs 1 lakh.

After victim was cheated he lodged complaint with cyber cell and later case was transferred to Bajaria police.

In his complaint victim stated that he bought an iron of 1000 W but he was dispatched a 750 W iron which he refused to accept and returned it, later he searched for contact details of the online shopping website and contacted where he provided details of product purchased and bank details. After he shared details of bank account accused using the same

details transferred Rs 1 lakh in parts in different bank accounts.

The accused assured that he would take request of refund of excess amount which was paid for 1000 W iron and trapped victim and he provided bank details for refund of money. Meanwhile, Shahpura police have booked a miscreant who cheated victim to the tune of Rs 40000 by obtaining OTP from the victim. Kriti Sharma was duped to the tune of Rs 40000 after she was contacted by accused and fraudulently obtaining OTP.

# Youth receives bullet injury in gunfire by molester

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A youth sustained bullet injury in his leg while his habitual criminal friend was hit by locals at Jyotiba Phule Nagar after accused opened fire at locals opposing molesting girl of area in the evening on Tuesday.

According to the police, Duggu alias Durgesh came to the area after challenging that he would molest the girl and created ruckus which was opposed by Mamta and his son

Pramod. Accused took a gun and tried to shoot Pramod but it shot Akash Oswal who is friend of Duggu. After Akash was shot Duggu tried to escape but locals caught and hit him. Akash was taken to hospital along with Duggu where condition is reportedly stable.

Police said that Duggu pointed gun at Pramod and to save him Mamta came in front of Pramod but eventually Akash got shot. Accused used to visit area to tease and molest a girl and even after locals

opposed and objected he continued to harass girl.

After the preliminary investigation, the police registered a case under section 307 of the IPC and started further investigation. Duggu is a watch list criminal of TT Nagar police while other. The main accused had threatened to take girl forcefully with him and on the day of incident Mamta and her son opposed Duggu, he assaulted them and opened fire at them but Akash was injured in the firing.

# Archbishop Leo condemns Huzur Shri MLA's satement

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Archbishop Leo condemned an irresponsible statement of an MLA of Huzur Shri Rameshwar Sharma who said in a religious function "To stay away from Fathers and Chadar".

The Archbishop in a strongly worded statement said that "An MLA representing the people of a state should have a sense of what to speak and what not to speak in public forum. His statement has deeply hurt the sentiments of the peace loving community.

Through such a statement he tries to derive cheap political mileage for a short term goal which will harm the development of the society in the long run. The Archbishop asked the people to become aware of such evil intentions of planting the seeds of hatred and disharmony in the society. The recent report says the country is far behind the poverty line and not even above our neighbouring countries. Our MLA should focus on the development of the society based on the constitution than to spread division among the people."

# Weather conditions settle with drop in temp, Bhopal records 20 deg in night

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Weather conditions which were abrupt with heavy rainfall and thundery activities settled in the past 24 hours still systems are active and might impact weather conditions to some extent.

The current weather conditions affecting the weather of Madhya Pradesh is a fresh Western Disturbance is likely to hit the Western Himalayan during next two days and adjoining plains of Northwest India. A cyclonic circulation over Bihar and adjoining areas and persisting over Northwest Uttar Pradesh and adjoining areas. State capital witnessed hot and humid conditions with day temperature at 31 degree celsius while night temperature

at 20 degree celsius.

The temperatures were range bound and further changes would be gradual in the coming days after the systems would fade and wind direction would change.

Temperatures would dip in the next 5-6 days after rainfall was witnessed at several places and few are still witnessing spells in the past few days on regular basis. Lowest night temperature was recorded at 17 degree celsius in Mandla. The highest day temperatures were recorded in Khandwa, Khargone and Ujjain at 32 degree celsius.

Significant drop in day temperatures was recorded at Rewa and Shahdol in the past two days and same pattern was witnessed for night temperatures.

# MP Hockey Academy beats Vaidipatti Raja in league match

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

On the third day of the first Junior Boys Inter Academy National Hockey Championship-2021, Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy, SGPC defeated Vaidipatti Raja Hockey Academy 10-0 in their first league match.

In other matches of the day, Salute Hockey Academy, Republican Sports Club, SGPC Hockey Academy, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hockey Academy and Tamil Nadu Hockey Academy won their respective league matches.

Under the joint aegis of Hockey India and Sports and Youth Welfare Department, the championship is being

organized on the newly constructed turf of Major Dhyan Chand Hockey Stadium.

MP Hockey Academy did not give any chance to the players of Vaidipatti Raja Hockey Academy and scored 10 goals.

In the second quarter, MP Hockey Academy scored 5 goals. Kashif Khan scored in the 48th minute and Luv Kumar Kanojia scored in the 51st minute. With this, the Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy registered a 10-0 victory in its very first league match.

Earlier, in the first match, Salute Hockey Academy defeated Hubli Hockey Academy 1-0 in a thrilling

match.

In the third match, SGPC Hockey Academy defeated Jai Bharat Hockey Academy 7-0 in a one-sided match. SGPC Academy scored 2 goals in the second quarter, 3 in the third and 2 goals in the fourth.

In the fifth match, Tamil Nadu Hockey Academy defeated Lakshmi Ammal Sports Academy 12-1. Tamil Nadu scored 3-3 goals in the first and second quarters, 4 in the third and 2 in the fourth. At the same time, Lakshmi Ammal Sports Academy scored the only goal in the fourth quarter. Tamil Nadu's S Logesh scored the highest five goals.

# Webinar on financial goals held in Scope College

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A webinar on achieving financial goals in Scope College was held in Wednesday.

A webinar was successfully organized in Scope College, acting as a guide to the students to manage and achieve their financial goals in real life. A detailed discussion on this complex topic was organized live in SCOPE College, Monika Singh, Director of T&P Department of the institution. Eminent Financial and Corporate Trainer Daksha Gogia was invited online for

this programme.

At the beginning of the programmr, Monika Singh welcomed all the students present and explained in simple language how important it is to achieve and manage financial goals in everyone's life. With which we continued on the path of our progress without stress.

Daksha Gogia told how in today's time we can grow manifold by using our hard earned money in financial investments like shares, mutual funds etc. For this, we should also be careful and use small investments. He told that instead of short

term goals, we should make long term goals and invest only after getting information while staying safe.

All the money should not be invested at once. He shared the information in great detail.

The students present in the programme pacified their curiosity by asking questions and were also completely satisfied. At the end of the programme, Professor Prateek Khanna, Department of MBA thanked the chief guest and all the attendees. He also expressed his gratitude for the information provided by Daksha.



# Min: SOP for power lines now maintained all year

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Energy Minister Pradyuman Singh Tomar has informed that standard perating procedure has been implemented for the maintenance of power lines and equipment. Earlier maintenance of lines and equipment was done twice a year, which has now been made a continuous process. In this, different equipment and lines are being maintained throughout the year. Due to this technical disruptions have reduced. A special module has been created to review this process.

Apart from infrastructure development for quality power supply to the consumers, standard operating procedure has been prescribed for regular maintenance to reduce power disruption.

Grievances of electricity consumers are being resolved over telephone from junior engineer to principal secretary level and also by the Energy Minister himself and feedback

on the department's functioning is being taken. Prompt action is being taken while taking cognizance of complaints received from newspapers and social media.

Centralized call centers have been strengthened for speedy redressal of complaints related to electricity supply in urban and rural areas. All the 48.45 lakh complaints received during the period April, 2020 to September, 2021 have been resolved. The average time taken for redressal of complaints, which was one hour 31 minutes last year, has been reduced to one hour and 16 minutes.

After resolving the complaints, feedback was obtained by contacting 13.95 lakh consumers under the feedback system for consumer satisfaction. The average consumer satisfaction percentage was found to be 98.67 percent. Efforts are being made to solve the problems of the dissatisfied consumers by making person-

al contact with the field officials.

During the period between April, 2020 and September, 2021, 53 thousand 830 complaints have been resolved on the spot at distribution center/zone wise total 7556 camps organized for the redressal of complaints related to wrong bills of consumers.

Arrangement of meter reading of all non-agricultural consumers with connected load of more than 10 KW has been made through AMR or MRI without manual intervention. This will enable flawless readings and accurate billing of such consumers. Efforts are being made to eliminate the billing being done on the basis of estimated consumption in all district headquarters. Route map of meter readers is being prepared so as to redress the complaints of erroneous billing. This will ensure perfect meter reading and billing by swapping meter readers every 3 months.

# Three-day research seminar on nomadic community underway

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A three-day research seminar on the topic "Nomadic Community: Oral Traditions" is being organized by Tribal Lok Kala and Boli Vikas Akademi, MP Sanskriti Parishad in the auditorium of Madhya Pradesh Tribal Museum. On the second day of the seminar, on Wednesday, research papers were presented on the topic of deities, festivals and beliefs and social organizations.

Director Dharmendra Pare, Mukesh Mishra along with other scholars were present during the sessions. The first session of the seminar was presided over by Puran Sehgal, conducted by Shubham Chauhan and the keynote speaker Ujjwala Samadhan Dange from Maharashtra and the report was given by Vibha Thakur. The keynote speaker presented his research paper on Bharadia nomadic communi-

ty.

He said that the people of Bharadia community do not marry in the same gotra. Marriage takes place here according to the total tradition and at the time of marriage, instead of the girl's, the boy's dowry is given. This community earns its living by begging for alms and Bhairavnath is worshipped by the community.

Presiding over the seminar, Puran Sehgal said that all the speakers worked hard in their research papers. He further told that a common thing was seen among the Banjara community and other communities that when they move from one place to another, their language changes. They adapt themselves to that environment. During the second session of the seminar, it was conducted by Rahul Singh Parihar and the seminar was chaired by P.C.Lal Yadav and the keynote speaker Suryakant Bhagwan Bhise was present.

# Sahil Ahirwar KBC's season 13th 2nd crorepati

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Sony Entertainment Television's distinguished show Kaun Banega Crorepati, in its 13th season found its second Crorepati in Sahil weeks after Himani Bundela.

Sahil Ahirwar, during his first year of college used to bunk lectures, enjoy with friends, watch films and pass his time away in his college canteen. The next two years, Sahil dedicated his time to studies making him a rank holder.

His biggest inspiration has been his father who works as a Security guard in Noida and has studied until 10th Standard only. With carefully dissected answers, Sahil Aditya Ahirwar achieves the 1 crore mark on the show. Moving forward in the game, he will be seen attempting the jackpot question

for 7crore rupees. Will he make the cut? Watch his journey unfold on 21st and 22nd October at 9pm only on Sony entertainment Television

Speaking about the same, Sahil Aditya Ahirwar shares, "Making it till the hotseat has been a dream, really. Being in the same room as Mr. Bachchan is a privilege. The journey hasn't been easy but I've put in a lot of hard-work and dedication. I'd like to specially thank Navodaya Vidyalaya for helping me with all the challenges that came my way. My dad works as a security guard and winning the title of a 'Crorepati' means a lot to me and my family. With this money, I want to buy a house for my mother, a cricket set for my younger brother and help myself study and become an IAS officer someday soon."

# L-G transfers 7 IAS officers; Swati Sharma is new Health Secy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi, Anil Bajjal transferred seven bureaucrats, with senior IAS officer Swati Sharma being appointed as Health Secretary of the Delhi Government, an official order stated. The Delhi Government's Services department issued the transfer and posting order of these seven IAS officers of AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory) cadre where they have been given different responsibilities, according to the order dated October 18. "Senior IAS officer of 2003 batch Swati Sharma has been given additional charge of Health and Family Welfare secretary of the Delhi Government. She is currently posted as Secretary, tourism and has additional charges of art, culture and language along with MD Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC)," it said.



Women devotees present cultural programmes during Amrit Mahotsava celebrations of Digambar Jain Saint Acharya Vidya Sagar Maharaj at State Assembly in Bhopal on Wednesday

# 24-Yr-old woman stabbed to death in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a man and his two friends a day after he allegedly stabbed a 24-year-old woman to death for repeatedly spurning his proposals.

Police said the main accused, Ankit Gaba (24), fractured his legs as he jumped off the second floor of an under-construction building in Dwarka Sector 23 while trying to evade the arrest.

Police said that investigators have not interrogated Gaba as he was admitted to a hospital, adding that things will become clearer only after his questioning.

Gaba's two friends - Himanshu (20) and Manish Sharma - have also been arrested and they are all residents of southwest Delhi's Uttam Nagar area.

According to a senior police official, on Tuesday around 2.15 AM, while emergency response vehicle was patrolling, they received information by a delivery boy that a woman was lying in a pool of blood near Gurudwara Sewa Simran at Street number-1, Uttam Nagar.

"Police reached the spot. The victim, identified as Dolly Babber, was rushed to DDU hospital where she was declared brought dead. Inquiry revealed that around 11.30 PM, Babber had gone to attend her friend's birthday party along with her friends Ankit, Himanshu and Manish. Her brother Lakshay said that deceased told them that she was going to her friend's birthday party at 11.30 PM," said the senior police official.

Police formed six teams to arrest all the accused. All the CCTV cameras installed in the

area were analyzed and it was found that the incident happened around 1.38 am. In the video, the accused is seen stabbing her once. Later, he stabs the deceased six more times, the official said.

"Prima-facie it has been found that Babber was known to the three and in the evening, they were partying together on the terrace of an under-construction building at Matiala Road, near to the residence of Babber, where Gaba was also present," he said.

During the party, an argument broke out between Gaba and Babber over "some personal issues and alleged inter personal relations" which turned into a fight, he said.

They all came downstairs and Gaba, who had reached there on his scooter, took out a knife from the two-wheeler and stabbed Babber in the presence of his friends. After

stabbing her, he left the spot along with his two friends. The woman received seven stab wounds and was declared brought dead in the hospital, police said.

After the incident, police checked the CCTV footage. The accused went to Vikas Nagar and took an auto to Anand Vihar. They wanted to go to Chandigarh, but did not get a bus for the city. They then hired another auto-rickshaw and went to Kashmiri Gate ISBT. From the ISBT, the accused took a bus for Chandigarh and travelled to Patiala, police said.

Police conducted raids in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana at their possible hideouts. They were running out of money and returned to the national capital from Patiala, they said.

Later, police got a tip-off and nabbed Himanshu and Manish from Dwarka Mor. On their instance, police went to

an under-construction building in Dwarka Sector-23 area to nab Gaba. In order to escape, Gaba jumped from the second floor of the building and suffered injuries, police said.

The weapon of offence has also been recovered from the spot. Babber was working with an even management company before the lockdown. Himanshu and Manish also worked with Babber. Gaba has a medical shop. They all live in a same locality, police said.

Police said there were issues between Gaba and Babber. However, it is yet to be ascertained as the prime accused is in hospital and he is yet to be interrogated.

No earlier complaint from the victim against the accused was received by police. The accused have no previous criminal involvement, police added.

## PIC TALK



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the flag-off ceremony of Shobha Yatra on the occasion of Valmiki Jayanti, in New Delhi on Wednesday

# RED LIGHT ON, GAADI OFF CAMPAIGN Rai request Ministers to actively take part

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aiming to reduce vehicular Apollution, Environment Minister Gopal Rai urged Delhi people to contribute actively in 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign, moreover, the minister also said all the members of legislative Assembly will participate in the campaign to create awareness among people. "Public participation is the key to success behind any government initiative; it can protect Delhi from pollution only when the Government and the society come together," Rai said, "if two crore people of Delhi contribute responsibly and bolster the campaign, then vehicle pollution can be reduced by a staggering 15 to 20 percent. On October 21, all the MLAs of Delhi will raise awareness about the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign near the Chandgi Ram Akhara."



has started the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign in Delhi with an aim to reduce vehicular pollution. The campaign was started by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal under the 'Yuddh, Pradushan Ke Viruddh' initiative and drivers are being made aware about it by Green Marshals posted at 100 major intersections of Delhi.

Apart from this, to give further impetus to the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign, all the MLAs of Delhi will also take to the road from Thursday.

# Delhi reports 25 new Covid-19 cases; no death

SIANS ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital on Wednesday reported 25 new Covid-19 cases, taking the overall caseload to 14,39,466, the Delhi Health Department said.

No fatality, however, has been reported. The city's death toll stands at 25,090. The national Capital has recorded only three deaths due to the infection in this month, so far. The death rate stands at 1.74 per cent. The Covid infection rate in the national capital has dropped to 0.04 per cent. Meanwhile, the active cases tally has registered a decline and it stands at 310.

A total of 37 patients recovered in the last 24 hours to take the total number of recoveries to 14,14,066, the health bulletin said.

Currently, 96 patients are being treated in home isolation. With a 98.23 per cent of



Covid recovery rate, the active Covid cases rate in Delhi stands at 0.021 per cent.

Meanwhile, a total of 56,293 new tests - 47,577 RT-PCR and 8,716 Rapid Antigen -- were conducted in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of tests done so far to 2,88,12,339. The number of containment zones in the city currently stands at 97.

Out of 74,744 vaccines administered in the last 24 hours, 24,739 were first doses and 50,015 second doses.

The total number of cumulative beneficiaries vaccinated so far stands at 1,97,70,682, according to the health bulletin.

# Right to seek 'default' bail part of right to personal liberty: HC



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Right to seek 'default' bail is a fundamental right and an indefeasible part of right to personal liberty under the Constitution which cannot be suspended even during a pandemic situation, the Delhi High Court (HC) said. The HC said the right of the accused to be set at liberty takes precedence over the right of the State to carry on the investigation and file a chargesheet.

As per law, once the maximum period, that is, 60, 90 and 180 days from arrest, provided for an investigation in a case is over and no chargesheet is filed, the accused becomes entitled to be released on bail, which is called the 'default' bail.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri said the order of remanding an undertrial to custody or its extension is held to be a judicial function requiring due application of mind. "The right to seek default bail under Section 167(2) CrPC is a fundamental right and not merely a statutory right, which flows from Article 21 of the Constitution. It has been held to be an indefeasible part of the right to personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution, and such a right cannot be suspended even during a pandemic situation."

The court said the rights of an undertrial under the

Constitution cannot be allowed to be defeated on technicalities of procedure, and laid down a slew of directions to ensure that their right to seek default bail is not defeated and the custody of an accused is not extended mechanically. The judgement came on a petition by an accused challenging a trial court's order dismissing his revision plea seeking default bail on account of failure of prosecution to file chargesheet within the statutory period of 90 days from arrest in a case of dowry death and causing harassment to a married woman.

The HC released the man on default bail on furnishing of a personal bond of Rs 25,000 and a surety of the like amount and directed him not to try to tamper with the evidence or leave Delhi without prior permission. The man was arrested in the dowry death case on January 18, 2020 and was sent to judicial custody by a magisterial court and his custody was extended from time to time.

While the period of 90 days from arrest expired on April 18, 2020, the man applied for default bail through e-mail on April 20 last year as physical functioning of courts was restricted due to the nationwide Covid-19 lockdown, however, no response was received.

# Delhi Police solves child's kidnapping case in three hours



SIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested a man for allegedly kidnapping a seven-year-old child from the Gandhi Nagar area here in the national Capital, an official said here on Wednesday.

According to the official, they received a call at the Gandhi Nagar Police Station at around 5.39 p.m. about a kidnapping incident in which the kidnapper was demanding Rs 1.10 crore for the safe release of the child.

The family informed the police that their son had been kidnapped by their servant, identified as Monu, who had been employed by them just a month ago.

"He worked with them for eight-nine days and went away. About five-six days ago, he was again reemployed with a higher salary as the child had been crying and demanding his return due to his attachment to the servant. Thus Monu started working with them again," Deputy Commissioner of Police R. Sathiyasundaram said.

At about 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Monu took the victim for a walk after informing the child's mother. After about one hour, when they did not return, she tried to contact her servant but his phone was switched off. After a few minutes, Monu called back on her mobile phone and demanded Rs 1.10 crore for the safe release of the child.

The police began its investigation after deploying several teams and one family member was attached with every

team. The task became very challenging as the complainant had not done any police verification of the servant. Moreover, the accused was always on the move.

Accordingly, several teams, some in civil clothes, were dispatched to railway stations, nearby metro stations, ISBTs, check posts, etc as well as suspected hideouts of the accused. The team also covered various parks, isolated/abandoned buildings, and parking lots, the police said.

Meanwhile, the family continued negotiation efforts as the ransom amount was huge. The accused was told that the family could pay only Rs 10 lakh as they didn't have that much money. However, the accused instructed the parents to arrange Rs 1 crore within one hour and switched off the mobile after that. After a rigorous investigation for three hours, the kidnapper along with the child was spotted near the Gokulpuri Metro Station at about 8.30 p.m. where the accused was waiting to get a call back from the parents after arranging the money demanded. The police arrested the accused and safely recovered the abducted child.

During interrogation, the accused confessed that he was planning to buy a flat with the ransom money in Mumbai where he had worked as a decorator a few years back.

The mother of the abducted child said: "I thank Delhi Police from the core of my heart for rescuing my child."

# Events lined up to celebrate 100 cr jab feat



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With around 99.4 crore doses already administered on Wednesday, the Government hopes to complete 1 billion, or 100 crore, doses by Thursday. The Government has lined up a string of programmes for the 'great achievement which comes nine months after the vaccination drive started in the country.

Sources said party leaders have been asked to visit vaccination centres; party chief JP Nadda will be in Ghaziabad in UP, which votes early next year, for the occasion, while General Secretaries Arun Singh and Dushyant Gautam will be in Tamil Nadu's Coimbatore and Lucknow, respectively.

To mark the billionth shot the government had also planned to make announcements over loudspeakers on trains, planes, and ships, and hoist the national flag at the Red Fort in Delhi. In the meantime,

the Government said that it has set a target of vaccinating the entire adult population of the country by the end of 2021. Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare said that more than 99 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines have been administered in the country so far, the Minister added.

Only one other country has administered over a billion vaccine doses - China (crossed 1 billion doses in June), which is also the only other country to have a population of more than one billion.

Last month the centre - to celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 71st birthday - administered over 2.5 crore doses in a day; that was the fourth time over one crore doses were given in a day.

The administering of one billion vaccine doses - given the unknown and unpredictable nature of the coronavirus, the scale and intensity of the pandemic, and the challenges sur-

## CO2 emissions to keep rising for want of bids on safe constructions: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic caused CO2 emissions from buildings and construction to fall significantly in 2020, but a lack of efforts to decarbonise in real sense means that emissions will keep rising and contribute to dangerous climate change, according to the 2021 Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction.

The report, published by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)-hosted Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC), finds that in 2020, the sector accounted for 36 per cent of global final energy consumption and 37 per cent of energy related CO2 emissions, as compared to other end use sectors.

While the level of emissions within the sector are 10

per cent lower than in 2015, reaching lows not seen since 2007, this was largely due to lockdowns, slowing of economies, difficulties households and businesses faced in maintaining and affording energy access and a fall in construction activity. Efforts to decarbonize the sector played only a small role.

With large growth projected in the buildings sector, emissions are set to rise if there is no effort to decarbonize buildings and improve their energy efficiency. In Asia and Africa, building stock is expected to double by 2050. Global material use is expected to more than double by 2060, with one-third of this rise attributable to construction materials.

"This year showed that climate change is an immediate, direct threat to every community on this planet, and it is

only going to intensify," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP. "The buildings and construction sector, as a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, must urgently be decarbonized through a triple strategy of reducing energy demand, decarbonising the power supply and addressing building materials' carbon footprint, if we are to have any chance of meeting the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C."

The GlobalABC's Global Buildings Climate Tracker found that there have been some incremental improvements in action to decarbonize and improve the energy efficiency of the sector.

In 2015, 90 countries included actions for addressing building emissions or improving energy efficiency in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under



the Paris Agreement. This number has now hit 136, although ambition varies.

Since 2015, an additional 18 countries have put in place building energy codes - a move that is crucial to shift emissions downwards - bringing the total to 80. Local cities and governments have also developed codes. Investment in energy efficiency rose to over 180 billion USD in 2020, up from 129 billion in 2015. Green building certification has increased by 13.9 per cent compared to 2019.

Overall, however, the report finds that these efforts are insufficient, both in terms of speed and scale.

Other key findings of the report include: two-thirds of countries still lack mandatory buildings codes; most of the increase in energy efficiency spending came from a small number of European countries; too small a share of finance goes into deep energy retrofits, and there is a lack of ambitious decarbonization targets in NDCs.

Energy demand in the

buildings and construction sector is likely to rebound as economic recovery efforts take hold and as pent-up demands for new construction are realized. By 2030, to be on track to achieving a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050, the International Energy Agency says that direct building CO2 emissions would need to decrease by 50 per cent while indirect building sector emissions will have to drop through a reduction of 60 per cent in power generation emissions.

## 'Flower protein expression' could accurately predict hospitalisation or death: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Especially helpful in cases of the early phase of Covid-19 illness, the 'flower protein expression', a particular protein on the cell surface, could accurately predict hospitalisation or death as well as forecast who would have a less serious infection, scientists have said in a study published in EMBO Molecular Medicine.

The study shows that analysis of a particular protein on the cell surface is likely to predict who is in danger of a serious infection caused by the virus, explains Assistant Professor Rajan Gogna, lead author of the new study.

"Cells have a so-called fitness status, and by analysing it we could predict hospitalisation or death in Covid-19 patients, potentially making such a biomarker an earlier prediction tool, especially because it can be detected from the common nasal swap covid-19-tests," says Rajan Gogna from the Won Group at the Biotech Research & Innovation Centre.

If the cell fitness status is poor, it indicates that the cell

does not develop well, either because the cell is aged, lacks reliability, has an ill-functioning metabolism or is disease prone etc. Earlier in 2021, the research team discovered that fitness status is expressed in proteins called flower proteins. These flower proteins are on the surface of the cell, and they are expressed in two forms, explains Rajan Gogna.

"In one form, they tell the surrounding cells that this cell is doing well. In the other form, they indicate to the surrounding tissue that this particular cell is not doing well and thus has a bad fitness status. If the cell's fitness status is not great, the cell will get phased out and killed by the surrounding cells."

Especially helpful in cases of the early phase of COVID-19 illness, the flower protein expression could accurately predict hospitalisation or death as well predict who would have a less serious infection.

"The method could predict who needed hospitalisation with an accuracy of 78.7 per cent. With COVID-19 patients who would not have a serious

infection, the prediction was accurate at 93.9 percent," said Associate Professor and Group Leader Kyoung Jae Won, who analyzed the data using machine learning.

In order to analyse the data, the researchers performed a post-mortem examination of the infected lung tissue in deceased COVID-19 patients to determine the flower protein's biological role in acute lung injury, which is the main cause of death from the disease.

"The cell fitness, expressed by the flower protein, could help explain why some people respond poorly to COVID-19 and provide an opportunity for pre-identification of high-risk individuals. This discovery has the potential to help save their lives by severely alerting them to be extra protective of themselves, or until they are fortunate enough to get their hands on a vaccine.

In some other nations, the population in general has great hesitancy against vaccination. But people are not hesitant about a test, and we hope this will improve outcomes," said Rajan Gogna.

## Negative RT-PCR test must for int'l travellers visiting India



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All international travellers visiting India will need a negative RT-PCR test, according to the revised guidelines for international arrivals that will be implemented from October 25. An order issued by the Union Health Ministry said, "The global trajectory of Covid-19 pandemic continues to decline with certain regional variations. The need to monitor the continuously changing nature of the virus and the evolution of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern (VOCs) must still remain in focus."

"The existing guidelines (issued on 17th February 2021 with subsequent addendums) for international arrivals in India have been formulated taking a risk-based approach. In view of increasing vaccination coverage across the globe

and the changing nature of the pandemic, the existing guidelines for international arrivals in India have been reviewed," said the guidelines.

The order stated that the revised protocols need to be adhered to by international travellers as well as by airlines at points of entry (airports, seaports and land borders) for risk profiling of passengers.

As per the order, all travellers should submit a self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal before the scheduled travel, upload a negative Covid-19 RT-PCR report (this test should have been conducted within 72 hrs prior to undertaking the journey) and each passenger shall also submit a declaration with respect to the authenticity of the report and will be liable for criminal prosecution if found otherwise.

## NIA raids locations in J&K terror conspiracy case, 4 held

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday conducted searches at multiple locations in four districts of Jammu and Kashmir and arrested four accused persons in the J&K terrorism conspiracy case.

The agency conducted searches at 11 locations in Srinagar, Pulwama, Kulgam and Baramulla districts of Jammu and Kashmir and arrested four accused persons -- Suhail Ahmad Thokar (Kulgam), Kamran Ashraf Reshi (Hazratbal, Srinagar), Rayid Bashir (Srinagar) and Hanan Gulzar Dar (Srinagar), the NIA said in a statement.

## Multiple spots raided in Mudra drug haul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NIA on Wednesday conducted searches in Delhi in the case of seizure of 3,000 Kg drugs at Mundra Port, Gujarat. The agency conducted the searches at a godown in Nebsarai here, the agency said. The search was conducted at Nebsarai in connection with the seizure of

narcotics substance imported in the guise of semi processed talc stones by private firm Aashi Trading company. "During the search conducted today white powder material, suspected to be talc mixed with narcotics, has been seized with the help of FSL (Forensic Sciences Laboratory)," the NIA said in a statement.



among others.

The NIA had registered the case on October 10, 2021 and initiated the investigation. Till now, nine accused persons have been arrested in this case by the agency.

"Searches conducted today have led to recovery and seizure of electronic devices and incriminating jihadi documents/posters etc.," it said.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that the four arrested accused persons are terror associates/OGWs (over ground workers) of various proscribed terrorist organisations and have been providing logistical and material support to the terrorists, it added.

## BSF seizes bag full of foreign made pistols

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Border Security Force (BSF) on Wednesday said it has recovered a bag containing 22 pistols of Chinese, Pakistani and Italian make besides hundreds of rounds of ammunition from the border in Punjab in a joint operation with the Punjab police.

The seizures of the weapons, ammunition and the contraband items were made in the operational area of Khemkaran in Ferozepur district of Punjab.

"On 19th Oct' 2021, based on intelligence of Punjab Police regarding presence of consignment ahead of Border Security Fence

(in between B S Fence Gate No 159 to 160) in the AOR (area of responsibility) of BOP (Border Out Post) Uttar and T Bundh, a joint search operation was carried out by the BSF troops and a team of Punjab Police, Amritsar," the BSF said in a statement.

During the search operation, one shoulder bag (black in colour) was found lying inside the paddy fields (short of 10 metres from International Boundary), in the said alignment of BOP No 160/2 in the operational area of BOP T Bundh, it said.

From the recovered shoulder bag, the seized contraband included 22 pistols.

## Jacqueline appears before ED

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Having evaded four summons served to her by the agency, Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez on Wednesday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to record her statement under prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in connection with a money laundering case related to alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekar who has allegedly duped high profile personalities of Rs 200 crore.

Fernandez appeared before the agency here at around 3 PM. Along with the summons, the agency had also asked Fernandez to bring with her bank statements pertaining to her debit and credit cards trans-

actions, they added.

Fernandez's financial transactions and her alleged association with Sukesh Chandrashekar are under the ED scanner. While investigating the money trail of Chandrashekar, the investigators learnt about the alleged link between Fernandez and the conman, sources said.

The ED sleuths are seeking to ascertain any possible financial transactions between Chandrashekar and Fernandez.

The investigators are learnt to have posed to her questions like when was the first time she met either Chandrashekar or his wife Leena Maria Paul. Did she speak to Chandrashekar over the phone and if yes, how many times and whether she knew if

the person on the other side was Chandrashekar.

In August, the ED had one questioned Fernandez in connection with the case and then she had reportedly told the investigators that she was also a victim of Chandrashekar and denied any wrongdoing.

Chandrashekar, along with his wife and actor Leena Paul, is in ED custody along with five others in connection with the Rs 200 crore extortion case.

Earlier this month, actor and performer Nora Fatehi was also questioned by the agency over her reported links with Chandrashekar and Paul.

Fatehi's spokesperson had later issued a statement saying that the actor did not have any personal links with conman Sukesh Chandrashekar.

## Cong demands immediate restoration of J&K statehood

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday demanded immediate restoration of statehood and a democratically elected government in Jammu and Kashmir, while alleging that the Centre has "utterly failed" to tackle the situation there. The party also questioned the "silence" of Home Minister Amit Shah after the "selective killings" of 32 civilians and nine soldiers in the Union territory.

"Even after the selective murder of 32 civilians and nine soldiers, the home minister is still silent. This means that neither the Government

of India, under whose direct jurisdiction is Jammu and Kashmir, is able to understand the situation, nor can it tackle the situation," Congress spokesperson Gourav Vallabh said at the AICC Press conference.

"We demand that full statehood be given to Jammu and Kashmir immediately and there should be a government by democratic process and as per the Constitution of the country, and not by bypassing the Constitution. The people who have left Jammu and Kashmir should be immediately provided with financial assis-

tance and employment opportunities at the place of their return," Vallabh said in the wake of the exodus of migrant workers from Jammu and Kashmir.

Noting that Government of India made several promises about the development of the Union territory, he asked why employment rate there is the lowest in the country and why the tourist footfall and capital inflow has decreased since it came under the direct control of the Centre.

Selective murders are taking place because the Centre is unable to govern the State.

## Govts plan to double production of energy from fossil fuels by 2030: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Despite increased climate ambition and net-zero commitments, Governments still plan to produce more than double the amount of energy from fossil fuels in 2030, than the amount that would limit global warming to the Paris Agreement level of 1.5°C, according to the 2021 Production Gap Report, released Wednesday by research institutes and the UN Environment Programme

(UNEP).

Over the next two decades, governments are projecting an increase in global oil and gas production, and only a modest decrease in coal production, said the report, cautioning that taken together, these plans mean that fossil fuel production will increase overall, to at least 2040.

For Executive Director of UNEP, Inger Andersen, "there is still time to limit long-term warming to 1.5°C [above pre-industrial levels], but this win-

dow of opportunity is rapidly closing."

Andersen said that at the UN Climate Conference, COP26, taking place in early November in Glasgow, "governments must step up, taking rapid and immediate steps to close the fossil fuel production gap and ensure a just and equitable transition."

"This is what climate ambition looks like," she said.

This year's report provides profiles for 15 major producer countries, showing that most

**This year's report provides profiles for 15 major producer countries, showing that most will continue to support fossil fuel production growth**

will continue to support fossil fuel production growth.

Reacting to the report, the UN Secretary General highlighted recent announcements by the world's largest economies to end financing of coal, calling them "a much-needed step" in phasing out fossil fuels.

For António Guterres, though, the report shows that "there is still a long way to go to a clean energy future."

"It is urgent that all remaining public financiers as well as private finance, including com-

mercial banks and asset managers, switch their funding from coal to renewables to promote full decarbonization of the power sector and access to renewable energy for all," he said.

As per the report, countries surveyed plan to produce around 110 per cent more fossil fuels in 2030 than would be consistent with the 1.5°C limit, and 45 per cent more than what would allow a 2°C heating impact.

The report, first launched in 2019, measures the gap between

governments' production plans and the levels consistent with the Paris Agreement. Two years later, the size of the gap has remained largely unchanged.

Current plans would lead to about 240 per cent more coal, 57 per cent more oil, and 71 per cent more gas production in 2030 than would be consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

Global gas output is projected to increase the most between 2020 and 2040, continuing a trend of long-term

global expansion inconsistent with the Paris Agreement.

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, countries have directed over \$300 billion in new funds towards fossil fuel activities - more than they have towards clean energy.

For lead author of the report, Ploy Achakulwisut, the research is clear: "Global coal, oil, and gas production must start declining immediately and steeply to be consistent with limiting long-term warming to 1.5°C."



# OPS-EPS rift visible; hints of fracture in AIADMK

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The process of disintegration of the AIADMK began in right earnest on Wednesday as a prelude to the Golden Jubilee celebration of the party that falls in 2022. The AIADMK's chief coordinator O Panneerselvam was conspicuous by his absence in the official delegation that called on Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi on Wednesday. This comes amidst reports that the party is getting ready to revert back to the single power centre of general secretary against the present system of dual leadership. As on date the AIADMK is led by the Palaniswamy-Panneerselvam combination. But following the debacle of the party in two successive elections (2019 and 2021) there has been a strong demand by veteran leaders to go back to the system of general secretary heading the party.

No official reason has been given by the AIADMK for the absence of Panneerselvam though the delegation was led by Leader of the Opposition Edappadi K Palanisamy and included former ministers C V Shanmugham, K Jayakumar, K P Munusamy, Vaithyalingam, Thankamani and Velumani.

According to Palanisamy,



the leaders submitted a memorandum to the Governor listing the "widespread" irregularities in the recent Panchayat election held in the newly carved out nine districts. The opposition AIADMK was routed in the polls which was swept by the DMK.

Accusing the ruling party for irregularities in election is a ritual in Tamil Nadu and both the AIADMK and the DMK have figured as 'accused' depending on who is ruling the State. What is left unsaid this time by Palaniswamy is another issue which he raised with the Governor. The ruling DMK is selectively targeting leaders belonging to the Palaniswamy camp by subjecting their residences and offices to raids by the Directorate of Vigilance and Ant-Corruption (DVAC), a convenient tool in the hands of the ruling party.

While senior functionaries of the party like Rama Ramanathan are tight lipped about the absence of Panneerselvam in the delegation to Raj Bhavan, they said all was well within the party. Ramanathan said that the report about Panneerselvam not accompanying Palaniswamy was being blown out of proportion.

Sources close to Palaniswamy told *The Pioneer* that Panneerselvam has not been informed of the scheduled meeting between the AIADMK team and the Governor. "The recent statement on golden jubilee celebrations issued by the party had the signature of only Palaniswamy though all statements till date were issued with the signatures of both the leaders. This is the indication that plans are afoot to convene the general body meeting to elect the general secretary.

# BJP, TMC spar over Didi's silence on anti-Hindu riots

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bangladesh riots continued to have its political ramifications in this side of the border with the BJP firing more salvos at Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for giving no reactions to "the torture being perpetrated on the minority Hindus of that country."

Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar on Wednesday attacked the Chief Minister for her "mysterious silence on the Bangladesh riots where Hindus are being murdered, looted and tortured at will." He said "this is the same Chief Minister who had threatened to go to the United Nations if Citizenship Amendment Act was implemented in Bengal ... now why she has suddenly gone silent on the riots taking place in Bangladesh where houses and properties of Hindus are being looted and burnt down ... and they are being killed ... why is she not uttering a single word on this."

The Chief Minister's silence on the issue was a matter of concern he said adding the BJP would however do its duty by organizing protests until the Hindus of Bangladesh got justice.

Bengal opposition Leader



Suwendu Adhikari earlier linked the Chief Minister's silence to her alleged "vote bank politics" saying "the Chief Minister does not want to earn the displeasure of a particular section of the society who are incidentally her voters ... so she is keeping mysteriously silent about the whole issue... But the people of Bengal are observing this silence closely."

The Trinamool Congress however hit back saying unlike the BJP it was not trying to politicize the issue. "We have already protested against what happened in Bangladesh ... Mamata Banerjee is unwell and is not appearing in public for same reason ... our senior leader and Minister Partho Chatterjee has already spoken about this ... the BJP has pre-

ferred to ignore what the TMC leader said ... this is because they want to politicize the issue and encash it," senior TMC leader and Bengal Minister Subroto Mukherjee said.

Meanwhile, actor and director Aparna Sen too condemned the Bangla riots saying "in a modern democratic system right to practice one's own religion is guaranteed everywhere ... hence it is the duty of the majority community to ensure that the minorities can follow and practice their religion without hindrance ... I am not talking only about Bangladesh though my immediate context is the riots taking place in that country ... I am talking about all the countries including India."

# Dalit youth suspected of stealing ₹25L dies in Agra police custody

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Valmiki Jayanati turned out to be a dampener for Agra police as a Dalit youth suspected of stealing ₹25 lakh died in police custody shortly after being taken to his home for recovering the booty in Jagdishpura police station area on Wednesday.

As the news of his death spread, hundreds of members of Valmiki community laid siege to the police station and staged a strong protest, accusing the cops of killing the victim by using third degree torture during interrogation.

The protest ended only after a case was registered against the police team and Senior Superintendent of Police of Agra G Muniraj suspended five cops, including an inspector, a sub-inspector and three constables.

As per reports, victim Arun Kumar worked as a janitor and used to clean the premises of Jagdishpura police station. On October 17, a total of Rs 25 lakh and some confiscated pistols were found missing from the 'malkhana' of the police station. After the incident came to light, the SSP of Agra suspended six police officials, including the then station house officer (inspector).

However during the probe, the police zeroed in on Arun and dur-

ing quizzing he reportedly confessed to stealing the money from the police station and stashing it at his home.

On Wednesday, a police team took the suspect to his house and while the cash was being recovered, Arun's health deteriorated. The cops rushed him to a nearby hospital where he was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Soon after his death, members of Valmiki community gheraoed the police station, accusing the police of using extreme methods to exact a confession leading to Arun's death. The community also declared to cancel Valmiki Jayanti celebrations on Wednesday to protest the custodial killing.

The agitators also demanded a compensation of Rs 1 crore for Arun's family. The victim's family alleged that the circumstances leading to Arun's death needed to be investigated.

ADG, Agra Zone, Rajiv Krishna said, "Our officers are in contact with his family. They're cooperating. Action will be taken if there was any negligence. The family has filed a complaint; they suspect that he was beaten up by police following which he died. An FIR has been registered and the matter will be probed."

# Priyanka allowed to meet kin of deceased after brief detention

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary and UP incharge of the party, Priyanka Gandhi Vadrā's motorcade heading to the house of a Dalit youth who died in police custody in Agra on Valmiki Jayanti was stopped by the Lucknow police personnel on Agra- Lucknow Expressway on Wednesday.

Priyanka had targeted the Yogi Adityanath Government in Uttar Pradesh for the death of Dalit youth Arun Kumar in the custody of Jagdishpura police station personnel in Agra.

On Wednesday morning, the Congress general secretary accompanied by some party leaders left her Kaul House residence in Lucknow to meet and express condolences to the family members of deceased Arun Kumar at Agra. But as her motorcade reached the Agra- Lucknow Expressway, officers and personnel of Lucknow police accompanied by a magistrate stopped the vehicles from proceeding forward, citing imposition of prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Soon, scores of Congress leaders and workers resorted to sloganeering against the Yogi government and created a ruckus. After some heated exchange of words, Priyanka and some of her party men were taken to the reserve police lines and detained till evening.

Upon her release after a day-long high drama, Priyanka and her party leaders proceeded to Agra in the



evening.

In a video that went viral soon after, Priyanka is heard saying, "They say I can't go to Agra. They stop me wherever I go. Should I keep sitting in restaurants just because it is politically convenient for them? I want to meet them (victim's kin), what is the big deal? The moment I try to visit any place other than the party office, then they (administration) try to stop me. It also caused inconvenience to the public. What is the law and order issue? Someone has died...we are just two-three persons going to meet the family"

Later, Priyanka Gandhi Vadrā tweeted in Hindi: "Arun Valmiki died in police custody. His family is asking for justice. I want to go and meet his family. What is the UP government afraid of? Why am I being stopped? Today is Valmiki Jayanti. The PM made big statements about Mahatma Buddha, but is assaulting his (Buddha's) teachings."

In another tweet she said: "Beating someone to death in police custody... What kind of justice is this? Arun Valmiki's death in police custody is condemnable. On Valmiki Jayanti, the UP government has acted against the teachings of Maharishi Valmiki. The incident should be probed by a high-level committee, action should be taken against the involved police officials and the family should be given compensation."

Lucknow's Commissioner of Police DK Thakur said that neither Priyanka Gandhi Vadrā was arrested nor detained. "Ms Vadrā was taken to reserve police lines after her convoy disturbed traffic movement on Agra- Lucknow Expressway. She was later released in the evening."

In another video, UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu asked police officers whether Section 144 was imposed in Kushinagar where the prime minister addressed a huge crowd.

# Fake communal strife videos go viral, WB on alert

SIANS ■ KOLKATA

The West Bengal Home Department has put all the districts, particularly those bordering Bangladesh, on high alert after fake videos aiming to create communal tension following the attacks on Hindus during Durga Puja in Bangladesh, went viral.

One particular video from Bangladesh that has been making the rounds in Bengal is a clip having a tagline "how Jatan Saha, a Hindu Grand Alliance activist, was murdered in a temple at Noakhali".

Several BJP leaders, such as Debdas Mondal, general secretary of the party in Bongaon district, shared the video on Tuesday, seeking justice for the deceased. On the development, Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan on Tuesday said a group with "vested interests" was circulating fake videos on social media to create communal tension. Referring to the video, Khan explained that the 30-second clip he was referring to was of the May 16 incident in Dhaka's Pallabi area over a property dispute. "But a group with vested interests is circulating it, calling it the footage of the killing of Jatan Kumar Saha in

Noakhali, who died in the recent clashes. This is being done with the intention of creating communal tension. We condemn such actions," Khan said at a programme titled "Technological Modernisation of RAB (Rapid Action Battalion)".

A senior official of the state home department said that officials had been asked to keep track of all social media posts, as there are apprehensions that some forces might try to use the "assault on Hindus" in Bangladesh to create trouble in Bengal. "All units are being instructed to keep a sharp vigil on videos that are being forwarded. Even small matters of communal overtures are to be reported promptly at the highest level," he added.

"Any post which is spreading hatred, falsehood or rumours is to be dealt with sternly, as some groups and individuals have launched a concerted effort in the social media to spread communal hatred and create law and order issues," the official said.

The intelligence department has already sent a missive to all the SPs and senior police officers in the state to stay alert, considering the communal unrest in Bangladesh.

# Heavy rain, landslides bring life to standstill in North Bengal



PNS ■ KOLKATA

After Uttarkhand it is the turn of the eastern mountains of North Bengal with cloud bursts and heavy rains bringing lives in most townsof the northern part of the State to a standstill.

The road link between Bengal and Sikkim was snapped due to landslides at various places off Rangpo, sources in Darjeeling district administration said adding a part of the Balasan Bridge the one that connects Bengal to Assam and Bihar had subsided resulting in total blocking of the traffic which was currently being divert through another route.

Similarly National Highway 10 and 55 had been blocked due tolandslides and flash flood, sources said adding

heavy rains in Bhutan had caused rivers like Jaldhaka to overflow. Two children were drawnin Kalimpong flowing flash flood.

"There has been heavy rains for the past three days with Siliguriwitnessing 245 mm of rain... Darjeeling getting more than 200 mm, Kalimpong 199 mm, Jalpaiguri getting 151 and Malbazar witnessing 320 mm rain," Paresah Adhikari a minister said adding the tourists who were currently in the hills have been asked not to move out.

There has been heavy landslides at Lava, Bijanbari, Gorubathan, Sukhia Pokhri, Manebhanjan and elsewhere leading to virtual closer of most of the roads connecting hill towns to Siliguri. Large parts of Jalpaiguri too had been flooded, sources said.

# Mid-sea drug bust case: Special court rejects bail pleas of Aryan, two others

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI:

A Special Court set up under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act on Wednesday rejected the bail pleas of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's eldest son Aryan Khan and two others in the mid-sea drug bust case, prompting Aryan's lawyers of to challenge the sessions court's order in the Bombay High Court.

Apart from Aryan's bail application, the two other bail pleas that Additional Sessions Judge VV Patil rejected -- in his much-awaited order-- were that of his co-accused Arbaaz Merchantt and Munmun Dhamecha.

"Bail application nos 2571/ 21, 2576/ 21 and 2583/21 stand rejected. Accordingly, the bail applications are disposed of. The authenticated copy of roznama be supplied to Advocates and SPI," the Judge noted in his order that he passed at 2.45 pm.

Less than two hours after the Special Court rejected his plea, Aryan's lawyers moved the high court challenging the lower court's order denying him bail in the mid-sea drug bust case.

Aryan's lawyers will make a mention of his plea before Justice Nitin Sambre for urgent listing.

The Special court, it may be recalled, had on October 14



reserved its order on Aryan's bail plea, after the Prosecution opposed the plea alleging that he was a regular consumer of drugs for the past few years and that he was part of the conspiracy in the mid-sea drug bust case.

Twenty-three-year-old Aryan and seven others were initially detained on the night of October 2 and later arrested on October 3, after the NCB officials busted a rave party and seized 13 grams of cocaine, 5 grams of MD (Mephedrone), 21 grams of Charas, 22 pills of MDMA (Ecstasy) and Rs 1.33 lakh in cash from Goa-bound Cordelia

Cruises' Empress ship, off the Mumbai coast.

The total number of arrests in the sensational drug bust case has gone up to 20, with the arrest of a foreign national Okara Quazma and a local person Shivraj Harihan.

Aryan and other accused have been booked for offences under Section 8(c), 20(b), 27, 28, 29 and 35 under the NDPS Act.

After his arrest, Aryan was remanded to NCB custody till October 4, which was extended till October 7. On October 8, the Mumbai Esplanade Court rejected the bail pleas of Bollywood superstar Shah

Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan and two others on the grounds of maintainability. Thereafter Aryan and four accused moved a Special NDPS court.

After hearing the arguments by Aryan's senior Advocate Amit Desai and other lawyers for the accused in the case and Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Singh, the special NDPS court had on October 14 reserved its order on a bail applications made by Aryan and two other accused in the mid-sea drug bust case for October 20.

Though the grounds on which the special NDPS Court has rejected the bail pleas of Aryan and other accused, both the defence lawyers and Prosecution had argued for and against Aryan and other accused being granted bail.

In a plea made on behalf of Aryan before the Special Court, had made a strong case for their client's bail on the grounds: that no recovery of drugs has been made from his person and that since the offences arraigned against Khan are Sections 8(c), 20(b), 27, 28, 29, 35 of the NDPS Act and that since no Narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance has been recovered from him, the bar against grant of bail under Section 37 of the NDPS Act will not apply.

In another contentions, Aryan's lawyers had stated that recoveries of the other accused

cannot be held against Khan nor can the entire recovery be used against him in light of the precedents of the Supreme Court and High Court, that the NCB is relying solely upon the WhatsApp chats without verifying the accuracy of the chats "which have no connection with the case".

Aryan's lawyers had also stated that the NCB had invoked the provisions under the NDPS Act "mechanically" without any evidence or corroborating evidence to support ingredients for the offences. "There is nothing to suggest that Khan is in any way connected with the manufacture, possession, purchase or transport of the substances and hence the ingredients for the offences under NDPS Act are not made out," Aryan's lawyers had told the Special Court.

On its part, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) had told the court that Aryan had a role to play in the illicit procurement and distribution of drugs and that he was in touch with some persons linked to an international drug network, even as a Special Court adjourned the hearing on bail pleas of Aryan and others for Thursday after partly hearing the arguments.

"There is material on record to show that Khan was in touch with some persons abroad who appear to be a part of an international drug net-

work for illicit procurement of drugs. The investigation is still in progress," the NCB had told the court.

Rebutting the contention of Aryan's lawyers that since the offences arraigned against Khan are Sections 8(c), 20(b), 27, 28, 29, 35 of the NDPS Act and that since no Narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance has been recovered from him, the bar against grant of bail under Section 37 of the NDPS Act would not apply, the NCB told the court: "The role of one of the accused cannot be dissected from another. Even if there is no recovery of small substances, the accused are involved in conspiracy".

In his arguments made before the special court, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Singh had told the court: "The present applicant (Aryan) is not a consumer for the first time. The record and the evidence before your honour shows that he is a regular consumer of contraband since the last few years. The contraband in possession of Arbaz Merchant who accompanied Khan, was for consumption of both of them".

"The record in the panchnama signed by the applicant establishes that he was in a conscious position of contraband because he admits it was with his friend and it was for consumption of both of them...The contention that nothing was

found with Applicant may not be correct," the ASG said.

Alluding to the retraction made by Aryan on October 7 that he had consumed drugs, Aryan's lawyer Amit Desai had told the court: "The statement reverberates that there is a confession. But that will be tested in the course of the trial and in the larger scheme. But the retraction that has been filed and it is on record. Let us stick to the law and let us stick to the facts. Retractions are there".

Reading out from the panchnama, Desai had said: "If the phone is voluntarily taken then also there has to be something, but the panchnama says seized it was not handed over. There has to be a seizure memo for that. We have forgotten these things. Nobody stops their investigation, why should it stop my liberty! It stops at liberty, liberty and liberty!"

"If a gentleman is released on bail, how will there be a hindrance to the investigation. Then they say because of section 37(2) of the NDPS Act, the burden reverses so now I must satisfy, so when we look into the matter, if released on bail it is not going to affect the investigation. In context of the twin conditions of section 32 they hang their entire case on two things - conspiracy and second are seizure from Abdul of commercial quantity," Desai had told the court.

# Assam seeks ₹1k-cr from Centre for repair of damage caused by floods

**Guwahati:**The Assam Government has demanded ₹ 1,088.19 crore from the Centre for repair and restoration of various infrastructure damaged by the monsoon floods, officials said on Wednesday.

Officials of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said that a seven-member Central inter-ministerial team led by the Joint Secretary in the Home Ministry, Manish Tiwari, visited Assam on Tuesday and Wednesday and held meetings with the state government officials.

Assam government officials have urged the Central team to consider releasing the funds under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for repair and restoration works.

An ASDMA official said that the central team discussed the damages to properties and loss of livelihood caused by the floods.

The Assam government officials also requested the central team to consider erosion of rivers as an item admissible under SDRF and NDRF in their report to the Central government, as the state suffers heavily due to erosion every year.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Fetch up!

Though there are ample vaccines now, fully vaccinated people still being fewer is alarming

It was vaccine hesitancy then. It is vaccine complacency now. Some people seem disinterested in taking the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. Many are convincing themselves that the chances of a third wave of the pandemic look dim because of low infection rates. Adherence to safety protocol has already slackened; so has the urgency to take the second dose. It is also no longer the case that vaccine stocks are low. They are ample. In the second week of October, 11.12 crore doses were available with the States on a given day but only 38 lakh doses were administered. In Odisha, around 13 lakh people were overdue for the second dose in August-end. Such cases are being reported from all the States. The longer waiting period of 84 days between the two Covishield jabs could be one reason for the low job rate. It is also possible that overcrowding at vaccination centres puts off some people. Or, like in rural areas, they may not want to travel long distances to get their jabs. Whatever the reasons, the fact is lakhs of people are not taking their jabs when they become due. In August, the Union Government said in response to an RTI query that over 3.86 crore Indians had failed to take the second dose within the stipulated time. The poor response for the second dose is making the Government jittery. For, the process of vaccination is incomplete till the second dose is administered.



Some hospital studies reveal that a single dose of Covishield offers protection against symptomatic infections with the Delta variant in a range of 18-61 per cent. The fully immunised had 97 per cent protection against death and the partly vaccinated, 69 per cent. Secondly, an incomplete vaccination gives the coronavirus the chance to infect or mutate in a manner to resist the vaccine. Either way, it militates against the massive vaccination exercise the country has undertaken. Remember how on account of complacency, the strains of tuberculosis bacteria began to resist antibiotics and the country registered the highest number of drug-resistance tuberculosis cases in the world. The Union health ministry is running campaigns about the importance of the second jab but says it cannot force people who deliberately miss the second jab to take it. In contrast, in a judgment in May, the Karnataka High Court made it the Government's obligation to ensure that the second dose is provided. Even though the case was about the scarcity of vaccines, in principle, The court said vaccination affects the right to life. The truth is, the Government can be faulted for the scarcity of doses, and the lack of adequate vaccination centres but it cannot be responsible for people's complacency. That is something the people have to handle for themselves. It is their responsibility to get vaccinated to be safe and, importantly, keep others safe.

## PICTALK



Devotees take part in the International Dussehra festival, in Kullu

PTI

## Straying off

As the farmers' protest approaches its first anniversary, the very spirit of it is in question

Are the farmers and their leaders protesting against the Union Government's three farm laws losing touch with reality? Have they lost their way, probably misguided by the political inputs they might be receiving by the Opposition parties in what was initially their fight for justice? Are they doing what they had set out to do? Or, have their shepherds unwittingly crossed on to another path and are leading the flock influenced by interested political entities? These are the questions that need asking as the farmers' protest approaches its first anniversary. Already, the protests have run out of fizz; so much so that a deserted Rakesh Tikait had to shed tears to emotionally blackmail the disgruntled farmers to make them return to the protest site. Since then, he has travelled far and wide, from West Bengal to Punjab and Haryana, to amass support — and possibly funds — for the farmers' cause. But the truth of all this on ground really is that the public perception against the agitation has turned from sympathetic caring to irritatingly banal.

The locals have been inconvenienced for too long and they have started reacting adversely to the cause though, to be fair to them, nobody across the country is genuinely against the welfare of farmers and hence they have so long been supported in the pursuit of their goal; right or wrong is for the courts to judge. The farmers and their leaders themselves have done no less to hurt their own cause. Though the Lakhimpur Kheri incident may have divided people depending along the lines of which social media group members they are, the farmers haven't had a good advertisement for themselves beginning from the Red Fort on January 26, to the gherao of the Mini Secretariat, followed by the violence in Karnal, and now the brutal murder at the Singhu border. It's high time for the farmers to coax their leaders into thinking about the right strategy and execute it efficiently. Otherwise, the support and sympathy they have received thus far is likely to wane and they would have hardly anything to show for their struggle. In a democracy, that shouldn't happen. But, in a similar vein, in a democracy nobody has the right to take away the rights of anybody else. My right to swing my hand ends where your nose begins; they should remember this.

## The dilemma of displacement

The whole country is going through a weird moment. Not that violence is new to India, but it was never so blatant and cover-up so brazen

When the State acts with aggression against its people on spurious grounds, One can only expect danse Macabre. Only this time it was performed by Bijoy Shankar Bania, who stomped over the corpse of Moinul Huq who had succumbed to the police gunshots. When hate has paralysed the minds and poisoned the thinking, anything is possible.

It is diabolical and sends chills down the spine. The stomper was a Government photographer. He accompanied the police team that went to evacuate the Government land in Dholpur village in Assam on September 23, 2021. He has been arrested and would be out as soon as jumping over a dead body is no big crime legally. Amorality is not punishable under the law. It is a hate crime at its best or worse. A professional psychologist would be better placed to understand the mind of a person who stomps over a dead body, religion of dead body notwithstanding. He had hatred for a community that made him do a dastardly act. It gives a peep into the mindset of the people now on the daily diet of communal hatred that has poisoned the minds of the people.

The Government of Assam was ostensibly dealing with a spin off of love jihad, land jihad with all its so-called good intentions. It acted with brute force but legally. Thanks to a nineteenth-century archaic law called 'Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886'.

Dhalpur was "grazing ground" on Government land. The "chars" had erected their shanties and were around for quite some time. Around 800 people have been evicted in the drive, whereas the real numbers could be around 20,000, if not more. The people evicted were served with notices a few hours before the eviction. The violence was a logical corollary in Assam's Darrang district. However, the Government did not realise that it would come to such a pass. The police opened fire so much for the Government's will to solve the land issue with its "good intentions".



After winning the elections on a manifesto that promised illegal encroachments to be cleared, it was on the cards. Those addressed in the manifesto knew it would be Bengali Muslims, dubbed Bangladeshis in local parlance. The BJP harped upon its narrative of 'land jihad and consolidated its votes. The Bengali Muslims were portrayed as encroachers upon the land of the indigenous Assamese.

The Government wanted land for a farming project for locals called the "Garukhuti Project". The forceful eviction drive that led to resistance and firing. It killed Moinul Haque and the twelve-year-old child, Sheikh Farid, died on the altars of the Garukhuti project. The public good led to public misery. Though legally dressed it was naked oppression defying the basic premise of law.

In Assam, land is a far more emotional issue than elsewhere. Assam has been home to a multi-ethnic group which are often jostling for the land.

The marginalised communities are the worst sufferers in eviction drives. Be it eviction drives for beautification like 'Turkman Gate' in Delhi in the seventies or Kathputli colony rather recently or acquiring land for a pro-

IN ASSAM, LAND IS A FAR MORE EMOTIONAL ISSUE THAN ELSEWHERE. ASSAM HAS BEEN HOME TO A MULTI-ETHNIC GROUP WHICH ARE OFTEN JOSTLING FOR LAND

ject like in Bengal's Singur or Evicting forest land encroachers in Kerala or Niyamgiri in Odisha. The marginalised communities are touted as squatters standing in the way of development. It is conveniently forgotten that they too are citizens of India, who deserve to have the dignity of a small place to call their own

Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886 gives the right to the commissioner to forcibly remove acquisitions but after due notice. This was not done. The Government could also have the option of going to court, though time taking, would have given a fair chance to the person. It was not used. The Government wanted to act and wanted to be seen as acting harshly.

Even if the persons were illegal squatters on Government land, the eviction must be done following the procedure established by law. This would need a fact-finding exercise to gauge whether a person is illegally encroaching upon the said land, or has a bona fide claim upon that land.

The Government followed a "summary eviction" procedure, under Rule 18 of the Settlement Rules made under the archaic 'Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886'.



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

However, a person cannot be directed to vacate the land if they have a bona fide claim over the land. Rule 18 also mandates a publication of notice to provide the illegal encroacher with 15 days to vacate the land. This was again not done.

The stomping of the corpse was a 'George Floyd' moment for India but it passed rather calmly. That speaks volumes about sensitivities that we have as a nation. The whole country is going through a weird moment in history. Take, for instance, the incident at the Lakhimpur Kheri. Allegedly, the son of a Union Minister mauled the protesting farmers. Not that violence is new to India but it was never so blatant and cover-up so brazen.

The Opposition leaders were rounded up while the national media called people going there "political tourism"! Incredible as it may sound, the Opposition and voices of dissent are shrinking. The over-enthusiastic bird heads are getting out of control. The frankenstein planted in their heads is now manifesting in danse macabre.

(The writer is a columnist and documentary filmmaker. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## LITERATE VS EDUCATED

Sir — No kudos is enough for the humanitarians of West Bengal's Dharmadanga village for continuing with the 43-year old tradition of celebrating Lakshmi Puja jointly by transcending all norms of religious barriers amidst this utmost communally vitiated environment all around. Tarak Das — secretary of the Lakshmi Puja committee — humbly states that though he is not "very educated" (being a school dropout), he can't forget the lines of Kazi Nazrul Islam — *Mora ek brinte dui kusum Hindu Musalman* (we are two buds of one stalk — Hindus and Muslims) — and so we never differentiated among Hindus and Muslims!

Far from being "not very educated", Tarak Das and his Hindu-Muslim companions of farming community are infinite times more "educated" than innumerable so-called "educated" who are outright communal to the core despite being armed with academic degrees and holding medium to high Chairs in respective professions. Mere earning of a university degree hardly serves the moral fabric of the society. Hence if the concerned authorities really want to see a society where the future citizens of the society turn truly educated while pursuing degrees for career prospects; then inculcation of moral values, principles and humanity remain the urgent need of the hour in school curriculum.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

## PINK IS BEAUTIFUL, FOR ALL

Sir — Pink has not always been considered a colour for girls. There was no sudden, unanimous cultural shift but both men and women wear pink attire and that suits them well. It gets noticed, no matter who wears it. The amount of attraction that pink receives is much more than that of red. Pink is more English in nature and is combined with the right options and right apparels, it can give an elegant tone — a pink tie, for example.

Pink is a light tint of red and was named after a flower of the same name. It was first used as a color name in the

## Two-wheelers are two-seaters!



The Assam BJP chief has said that tripling on two wheelers will be allowed when the price of petrol goes up to Rs200 per litre in the State. It is foolish to link the number of persons to ride on a two wheeler with petrol price. The capacity of two wheelers has been limited to two. Extra seats beyond that are likely to increase the chances of accidents due to inability of the rider to balance in certain conditions. Is it

possible to allow four members on two-wheelers when the fuel price rises to ₹300?

The price of goods and services will never be the same with changing conditions in the coming days. At the same time, the income level of any community is also not the same. The business community has its own strategy to increase the price of their goods and services. The Government employees meet the increased cost of goods and services due to increased income as 'dearness allowance' and pay revision. Even a beggar's income level changes for the better. Level of corruption keeps pace with the increased cost of goods and services. There is no reason to cry hoarse over the spiraling cost of fuel when the income level is also rising corresponding to the increased cost of goods and services. Rise in income level is the only panacea to meet the increased cost of living.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

late 17th century. According to surveys in Europe and the United States, pink is the color most often associated with charm, politeness, sensitivity, tenderness, sweetness, childhood, femininity and the romantic. As long as you are aware of how different work environments have a different way of dressing and in the daily routine pink occupies the top spot and women love to wear their favorite colour and pink is the best suited for them. A pleasing colour like pink pays well for your appearance and brings about a sea change in your dress sense as well.

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

## THE EARTH IS SUFFERING

Sir — International prices of petroleum, coal, natural gas and LPG are too high and unbearable for the poor and the middle class. Better if India imports clean renewable energy (solar, wind, green hydrogen) batteries rather than the conventional fuel. Also India should make big plans to produce clean renewable energy on both small scale and large

scale — solar roads, solar and wind energy plants in Thar desert, Ladakh and J&K). This can generate employment, help reduce air pollution and provide low cost fuel.

Also climate change related weather catastrophes such as floods, cyclones in various parts of India can be reduced to an extent. Other measures should include — increasing the use of e-paper, e-books, e-bills, mechanical pencils and chopsticks, and cashless transactions. This can save millions of trees and limit deforestation. It is pertinent that we keep the oceans clean and plastic free so that they can absorb more carbon dioxide and mitigate various kinds of pollution. That is why many countries are growing sea plants, seagrass and sea phytoplankton too. It is high time that we imbibe such measures from individual to national level so that the ecosystem yields less damage.

Nivriti Sreelekha | Secunderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

Unfortunately, the Opposition and a section of yellow media is unable to digest the love and affection we receive from people.

Andhra Pradesh CM — YS Jagan Mohan Reddy

We had said that when the Government is established, work (on nuclear talks) will be maintained, and now it is being pursued.

Iranian President — Ebrahim Raisi

Rajkumar Rao is one of those actors you get to learn so much from and enjoy working with.

Actor — Paresh Rawal

You always need that sixth option to free your bowlers, in case someone has a bad day.

India vice-captain — Rohit Sharma

Only 30 per cent Indians are fully vaccinated. How does the BJP plan to fulfill its promise to vaccinate all by December 2021?

Congress spokesperson — Jaiveer Shergill





## FIRST COLUMN REVAMPING THE EDUCATION SECTOR

The new education policy aims at providing premium yet affordable education to all



DEVENDER SINGH **ASWAL**

Eyebrows were raised when a member of the Kasturirangan-led committee, set up recently to revise the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and lay down the broad guidelines for school syllabus and textbooks, said that the existing curriculum in schools dwells "too much on defeats", and that "in the light of new facts, history should be rewritten". The member, an ideologue, also remarked that textbooks should talk about the "fighting spirit" of rulers such as Maharana Pratap in battles against foreign invaders. When Dr Murl Manohar Joshi, HRD Minister in the Vajpayee government, caused some revision in the school text books, it was considered by the left-wing as saffronisation of the syllabus. The revision of the extant NCF has been necessitated by the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. It is not new or novel. It was last revised in 2005, and earlier in 1975, 1988 and 2000. The NEP, the first education policy of the 21st century, aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of India. The NEP envisages revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance and to create a new system aligned with the aspirational goals of the 21st century and the SDG4, while building upon India's great traditions and value systems. The NEP unambiguously says that 'the pursuit of knowl-



edge (Jnan), wisdom (Pragya), and truth (Satya) was always considered in Indian thought and philosophy as the highest human goal. A member of the National Steering Committee entrusted the task of drafting the NCF, and a right-wing ideologue, has hinted at re-writing history and the text books 'in the light of new facts' of history. The precise mandate of the steering committee is to develop the NCF within the mandated remit. The NEP speaks, among other things, of incorporating local content and flavour as the students must know about their past, immediate surroundings and topography, India's civilisational heritage, constitutional values, so as to develop the spirit of critical thinking and enquiry. The Policy advocates multilingualism, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long opportunities for all by 2030 by incorporating rapid changes in the knowledge landscape in the globalised world. The aim is to promote India as a global study destination by providing premium education at affordable costs so as to help 'restore its role as a Viswa Guru'. Evidently, the founding fathers of our republic laid the foundation of a civic nation, and not an ethnic nation by crafting a republican democratic Constitution, solemnly affirming to secure to all its citizens: justice, liberty, equality and fraternity—assuring the dignity of the individual. When one speaks of India's civilisational heritage and the need for inculcating the spirit of enquiry and scientific temper, the following Vedic hymn flashes across the mind — 'Whether God's will created it (the universe), or...Only He who is its overseer in highest heaven knows, Only He knows, or perhaps He does not know.' In a steering committee of 12 eminences in diverse fields of knowledge, there may be initial difference of opinion but when they talk together, deliberate, build consensus, they will surmount parochial considerations and develop the national curricular framework in perfect accord with the hallowed provisions of the NEP 2020, staying clear of the potential carping criticism of the extreme left or the radical right, by not harking too much on the past. Of course, we must analyse the past — without being its prisoner — in the context of the present for the purpose of building a resurgent India by laying the foundation of a sound, secure and holistic school education system to meet the aspirational needs of the 21st century.

(The writer is former Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha, and member of the Delhi Bar Council. The views expressed are personal.)

# Making sense of the power crisis debate

For import-dependent India, it is costlier to import longer haul Australian coal than shorter haul Indonesian coal which is getting diverted to China



SUBHASH C **PANDEY**

A barrage of news about rising electricity consumption, rising international price of coal and shortage of coal with power plants have raised fears of an impending power crisis. There are 135 coal-fired power plants with total installed capacity of about 202 GW meeting about 70 per cent of electricity supply. On October 7, more than half of these plants had coal stocks of less than three days. 16 small plants with total capacity of 17GW had no coal stock. Low coal stocks with thermal power plants does not mean shortage of coal in the country.

Here is the big picture; facts that speak for themselves. There is absolutely no shortage of power if people are willing to pay its price, both in terms of cash and health.

International Energy Agency has highlighted that energy demand has shot up worldwide as economic activity picks up post-pandemic. During April-September 2019, India's electricity consumption was 68100 crore units (kwh). It fell down 62500 crore in April-Sept 2020, mainly during the lockdown months of April-May 2020. However, electricity consumption during April-Sept 2021 jumped to 71500 crore units, more than the pre-covid level even though there was a distressing second wave in April-May 2021 and the tour/travel/hospitality industry is not yet back to pre-covid level. Air/rail travel is not fully restored.

Increase in electricity demand is a positive sign indicating economic recovery. Increased coverage of households with access to electricity connection have brought new electricity consumers in the market. Growing digital economy also contributes to rising demand. A welcome surge in electricity demand has raised supply concerns, especially, as all indications are further increase in electricity demand in coming months.

Since 2013, total primary energy consumption in India has been the third highest in the world after China and the US. Total power generation capacity in India has increased from 243 GW in March 2014 to 320 GW in March 2017 to 388 GW in August 2021. Out of this, 202 GW is coal/lignite fired thermal power, 46 GW is from large hydroelectric projects, 45 GW from Solar and 40 GW from Wind power. Renewable energy capacity is about 37 per cent of total and India will reach 40 per cent renewable energy capacity well before 2030 as per target accepted under 2015 Paris Climate Change agreement.

Although coal-based power plants contribute only to 52 per cent of installed electricity generation capacity, these plants meet almost 75 per cent of total electricity demand. So even though we have made impressive gains in expanding solar power, we are still largely dependent on coal for electricity. Our domestic production of coal is about 730 MMT and we annually import over 300 MMT. Electricity sector accounts for about 2/3rd of total coal consumption.



SINCE 2013, TOTAL PRIMARY ENERGY CONSUMPTION IN INDIA HAS BEEN THE THIRD HIGHEST IN THE WORLD AFTER CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES. TOTAL POWER GENERATION CAPACITY IN INDIA HAS INCREASED FROM 243 GW IN MARCH 2014 TO 388 GW IN AUGUST 2021

(The writer is former Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The views expressed are personal.)



India is the second largest coal consumer after China. International prices of coal have risen recently for two reasons. Sharper increase in gas prices mean that countries are increasing dependence on cheaper coal-based thermal plants.

China is facing increased electricity demand in post-pandemic economic recovery and in a trade war with Australia, China stopped coal imports from Australia, one of the major exporters of coal.

Coal makes up nearly 60 per cent of China's energy consumption. Increased coal/power demand from China has set coal prices soaring high and many coastal power plants depending on (previously cheaper) coal imports are now switching to domestic coal in India.

For import dependent Indian power producers, it is costlier to import longer haul Australian coal than shorter haul Indonesian coal that is increasingly getting diverted to China. The net result of all this is higher demand for coal, higher price for coal and resultant financial stress on power generating companies.

There have been temporary supply disruptions (monsoon-related) in coal mining and transportation. The coal supply position is steadily improving but there are basic issues to be addressed to ensure long term health of the power sector which is victim to populism. Coal supply is a temporary problem. There is enough coal and production/transport will increase once monsoon woes are over. But the real issue of financial distress on power generating companies remains. Power generating companies owe about ₹20,000 crore to Coal India Limited alone.

Thermal plants are expected to have stock of 20 days requirement

but many power producers don't have money to stock coal because they have themselves not been paid by discoms for power supplied. Discoms are cash starved because tariffs don't cover all costs, many consumers don't pay their bills or delay payment. Power theft and leakage through unmetered supply continues to be rather high. This is all reflected in discoms inability to pay to power producers.

Power producers give 45 days' credit to Electricity Distribution companies (discoms). If the dues are not cleared in 45 days, outstanding dues are called 'overdues' liable to charge of penal interest.

On 17 October, 2021, discoms owed an overdue amount of ₹98,067 crore to power generation/transmission companies. Nearly ₹23,310 crore is payable to public sector thermal power generating companies (NTPC, etc.) Around ₹51,899 crore is payable to public sector thermal power generating companies (maximum amount payable to a single company is ₹25,611 crore, to Adani Power). Around ₹17,980 crore is payable to renewable power producers and ₹4,877 crore is payable to PowerGrid.

If coal companies have to recover ₹20,000 crore from power utilities, will it make sense for them to produce more coal and supply on credit? If power producers are not getting paid for power supplied, will they not reduce production? Does it make sense for them to improve plant load factor and produce more electricity to supply on credit? That is the real problem.

The discom reform scheme UDAY ended in 2019-20 with most of the states failing to meet their stipulated targets. On July 1, the Centre has launched a new scheme of 'Reforms-based and Results-linked,

Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme' to provide conditional financial assistance to discoms for strengthening of supply infrastructure. The scheme with total outlay of ₹3,03,758 crore will involve Central government budget support of ₹97,631 crore by 2024-25. All existing power sector reform schemes namely DDUGJY, IPDS, PM-KUSUM scheme would be subsumed into this new umbrella program.

Among the many contemplated reforms is a measure to create separate feeder for agricultural electricity supply, expansion of network of solar run irrigation systems. Other pending electricity reforms are removal of cross subsidies and open access, introducing competition by allowing consumers choice of electricity supplier.

States are presently administering two types of cross subsidy arrangements. One is between high-end and low-end household consumers and the other is between household consumers on one hand and industrial/commercial consumers on the other.

There are just too many consumer categories and tariff lines - slabs and fixed charges, making electricity pricing quite complex and non-transparent. On top of tariffs fixed by 'independent regulators', States levy electricity duty (as it is not subsumed in GST) which ranges from 0-70 per cent for certain categories of consumers.

Cross-subsidy burden on industry is problematic because it adversely affects cost competitiveness — manufacturing and exports and resultant job creation. It is frustrating that these reforms are getting delayed and deferred. Any myopic politics will sap the nation of energy in the long run.

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

**RAHUL GANDHI IS A DRUG ADDICT AND A DRUG PEDDLER. I DO NOT SAY THIS, IT HAS APPEARED IN NEWS REPORTS.**  
—KARNATAKA BJP PRESIDENT  
**NALIN KUMAR KATEEL**



**KATEEL MIGHT HAVE CONSUMED SOME DRUGS SEIZED FROM THE ADANI PORT, WHICH IS WHY HE IS MAKING SUCH REMARKS.**  
—AICC GENERAL SECRETARY  
**RANDEEP SURJEWALA**

# Women officers in the armed forces

There is no doubt that officers and other ranks have to undergo a sea change in their thinking process and attitude to accept gender equality



RAVI CHANDER **KOCHHAR**

The recent Supreme Court judgement directing the Government to open the portals of the National Defence Academy for women has finally paved way for across-the-board gender equality in the armed Forces. Eligible women will now be permitted to appear for the NDA Entrance Examination for the first time and the sky will be the limit for their career aspirations. This will now enable women to join all available combat or non-combat branches of the three services.

Notwithstanding the above judgement, women have always had their presence in the armed forces, though in a limited role like that of doctors in all the three wings of the armed forces. It

has, however, been almost three decades when women entered many other branches where only men dominated once.

The women officers in Indian armed forces have come a long way and have adapted well with the changing times. However, it is incumbent on the services to be accommodative in assimilating women in all domains — be it combat, administration, engineering or medical. Therefore, the onus is still upon the male-dominated armed forces to recognize the power of women officers and facilitate them to achieve their full potential.

I still fondly remember, whilst I was in command of INS Vikrant in 1992, when the first batch of women officers



reported onboard for initial sea training for Short Service Commission in the Indian Navy. The lady officers were very enthusiastic and took keen interest in the training. Normally when officers join for sea training, they all live on the ship throughout their training. In this case as there were no separate arrangements onboard for their stay, the ship was in harbour and they would come in the morning and leave in the

evening. Throughout their training they exhibited their skill levels, adaptability, physical fitness and mental alertness to match with standards laid down for men.

These young lady officers were quick on the uptake and always enthusiastic to learn the service ways. They were happy with the training but had one observation — why they could not stay onboard. It was explained to them that as of now the arrangements onboard ships are for men, especially living spaces and washrooms. Whilst they all understood the existing constraints, they were keen to know when ships will have women's quarters as well. I recollect my reaction to that was 'when a child is born, he/she first learns to

crawl, then stand and only thereafter runs'. I can only say that the time has come for all of them to run.

On the lighter side, many of those young lady officers found their soul mates amongst the naval officers during their initial service career and thereafter, lived happily ever after. Being from the same service the understanding between the partners also proved to be of higher quality, essential for marital harmony. In short it is a win in situation, as both the partners know each other's service conditions and do not take long to settle.

I can only say that the day has come when the idea of women joining armed forces had taken shape and has now evolved to women getting

permanent commission and entering areas dominated by men like fighter pilots, combat units and serving onboard ships and sailing on operational missions.

There's is no doubt that officers and other ranks have also to undergo a sea change in their thinking process and attitude so as to accept gender equality and when required, take orders from women officers in command. Having said that, women must also remember that they are getting into new fields and must tread with caution and never hesitate to take guidance from men who have been holding the fort for a much longer period.

By the way in the US Navy, for the first time, a woman officer has recently

been appointed to command a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. I have no doubt it is only a matter of time when we will have lady officers in command of combat units and move shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts.

Indian history is replete with examples of women in command of combat troops, like "Rani of Jhansi" and many others who have led troops in battle and given a befitting reply to the enemy. It was only somewhere along the time when we lost the plot and armed forces became the forte of men alone.

At the end, I can only say, 'Welcome to Indian armed forces, brave Ladies, you are indeed the pride of India.'





# Decision on Air India will give new energy: Modi

## AVIATION SECTOR

PTI ■ KUSHINAGAR

With Air India set to be acquired by Tata group, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said the decision on the national carrier will give new energy to the country's aviation sector.

His comments come weeks after Tata group emerged as the winning bidder for Air India paying the way for dis-investment of the loss-making carrier.

In an address after inaugurating the Kushinagar International airport, Modi said the decision on Air India will give new energy to the aviation sector of India.



Tata group has emerged as the winning bidder for Air India, and on October 11, a letter of intent (LoI) was issued to the group.

Earlier this month, the government accepted an offer by Talace Pvt Ltd, a unit of Tata group, to pay ₹ 2,700 crore cash and takeover ₹15,300 crore of

Air India's debt.

After Tatas accept the LoI, the share purchase agreement (SPA) for the sale will be signed.

Along with Air India, Tatas will acquire low-cost carrier Air India Express and Air India's 50 per cent stake in equal joint venture AISATS.

# Power crisis: Govt looks to revise coal stocking norms for thermal plants

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to avert power crisis being triggered in the country due to fuel shortages in the months following monsoon rains, the government proposes revise the coal stocking norms for thermal power plants, based on regular shift stock limits, depending on the actual fuel requirement during a particular period.

Sources said that the Central Electricity Authority will come up with revised coal stocking guidelines that will have higher stocking requirement for non-pit head power plants while lower for those located near the coal-bearing regions of the country.

As per a draft that is being discussed, against the uniform requirement of 20-22 day coal

stocks to be maintained by power plants, lower coal stock of 10 days may be mandated for pit-head power plants while 20 days stock may be needed for power plants farther from coal-producing areas. But in the peak summer months (April-June), non-pit head plants would still require to stock 22 days of coal while pit head plants around 12 days. The norms of stocking may change slightly in winter months. The thinking within the government is that the revised coal stocking norms will prevent a situation like the one that faced the country recently when post monsoons, several of the 135 coal-based power plants in the country were found to be sitting with critical coal stock levels sufficient to meet just three to four days of supply.

# IMF revises down Asia economy growth forecast to 6.5%

ANS ■ WASHINGTON

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised down its 2021 economic growth forecast for Asia to 6.5 per cent, down by 1.1 percentage points from its April projection, according to a newly released regional economic outlook.

"The resurgence of the pandemic, amid initially low vaccination rates, slowed the recovery in the Asia-Pacific region, especially in emerging market and developing economies," Chang Yong Rhee, director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department was quoted as saying by Xinhua news agency.Noting that the Asia-Pacific remains the fastest growing region in the world, Rhee said as vaccination rates accelerate, the region is expected to grow by 4.9 per cent in

2022, 0.4 percentage points faster than projected in April.

For advanced economies, the latest IMF forecast is broadly unchanged for 2021 with upgrades in South Korea and New Zealand and downgrades in Japan and Australia, according to the report.

Most of the downgrades in the region come from emerging market and low-income countries, led by India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.China is projected to grow by 8.0 per cent in 2021, down by 0.4 percentage point from the April projection, according to the report.India is projected to grow by 9.5 per cent after a sharp decline in 2020. While the pandemic

surge earlier this year had a large adverse impact on growth, the subsequent rebound in activity has gained strength, it said.The ASEAN-5 countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand), are still facing "severe challenges" from a resurgent virus and weakness in contact-intensive sectors.

"The divergence between Asian advanced economies and developing economies is deepening, with output levels in the emerging market economies and low-income countries expected to remain below pre-pandemic trends in the coming years, reflecting differences in policy support and vaccination rollout," Rhee said.

# IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath to leave job and return to Harvard University

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

IMF's Chief Economist Gita Gopinath will leave her job in January next year and return to the prestigious Harvard University's Economics Department, according to the global financial institution.The 49-year-old prominent Indian-American economist had joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as the Chief Economist in January 2019.She was the John

Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and Economics at Harvard University when she joined the Washington-based global lender.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on Tuesday announced that the search for Gopinath's successor would begin shortly."Gita's contribution to the Fund and our membership has been truly remarkable - quite simply, her impact on the IMF's work has been tremendous," Georgieva said.

# India to see salary hike at 9.3% in 2022: Report

ANS ■ NEW DELHI

After a pandemic-induced lull, pay rises are making a comeback. With India projected a salary increase of 9.3 per cent next year, the country is set to be the highest payer in Asia Pacific, according to a report.

This is an increase of 8 per cent compared to 2021, revealed the latest report by advisory, broking and solutions company Willis Towers Watson.

India is followed by Sri Lanka (5.5 per cent),

China (6 per cent), Indonesia (6.9 per cent), and Singapore (3.9 per cent) for the highest salary increase for 2021 in the Asia Pacific region.

Pointing towards a much-anticipated economic recovery, a majority (52.2 per cent) of companies in India have projected a positive business revenue outlook for the next 12 months, up from 37 per cent in Q4 2020.

This translates in increased hiring across businesses with 30 per cent of companies planning to hire in the next 12 months. This is almost three times more than last year.

# India needs to become a global power to defend itself:Gadkari

New Delhi:Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said India needs to become a global power, not to attack anyone but to defend itself. Addressing an event organised by industry body FICCI, he said India is not an expansionist power and does not intend to attack its smaller neighbours. "We need to make India a global power...We need to become powerful but not to attack anyone," the road transport and highways minister said.Gadkari noted that India is becoming self-reliant in the defence sector. "We are a rich nation with a poor population. We need to work to make India a rich nation with a rich population," he emphasised.

PTI

# Markets skid for 2nd day as profit-booking takes hold

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex slumped 456 points while the Nifty closed below the 18,300-level on Wednesday as market participants pared exposure to overbought counters for the second straight session.

Midcap and smallcap stocks too saw heavy selling amid concerns over frothy valuations, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 456.09 points or 0.74 per cent lower at 61,259.96. Similarly, the NSE Nifty dropped 152.15 points or 0.83 per cent to 18,266.60.

Titan was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, shedding

2.97 per cent, followed by HUL, NTPC, L&T, PowerGrid, Bajaj Finserv and M&M.

In contrast, Bharti Airtel led the gainers' chart with a jump of 4.03 per cent.

SBI, IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, ITC and HCL Tech were the other winners. "Indices corrected quite meaningfully led by the expensive side of the market where valuations had got stretched," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.


Almost all sectoral indices ended in the red, although PSU banks were seen bucking the trend with investors cherry-picking for value in that pocket, he noted.

Further, he said the street is taking note of the cost presuemanating from higher input costs in companies that do not possess the pricing power.


**Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**  
 (Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)  
 Corporate Identity Number: U410PB2010SGC33813  
 Website: www.pspcl.in, (Contact Number 96461-18774)

Tender Inquiry No. 04/2122/CD Dated: 19-10-2021  
 Dy. Chief Engineer/CIVIL DESIGN, PSPCL, E-2, Shakti Vihar, Patiala, invites E-tender for  
 DNIT FOR PURCHASE OF 43 GRADE ORDINARY PORTLAND CEMENT CONFORMING  
 TO IS:269/2015 (WITH LATEST AMENDMENTS)/PACKED IN NEW SYNTHETIC/JUTE  
 BAGS CONTAINING 20 BAGS IN A MT AT PSPCL PILOT WORKSHOPS MOHALI,  
 MUKTSAR & SARNA--- QUANTITY= 20000 MT. For detailed NIT & tender specification,  
 please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> (Contact No.- 0172-2970263, 0172-2970284)  
 from 21.10.2021 from 05:00 PM onwards.  
 Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at  
<https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

RO NO. 76155/12/499/2021/9067 C378/21


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**TENDER FOR A DOCUMENTARY FILM ON PROMOTION OF ANGANWADIS**  
 National Book Trust, India, an autonomous organization established by the Government of India in the year 1957 to develop reading habits and creation of book culture in the country intends to produce a Short documentary/ promotional film on the age- appropriate books available at Anganwadi Centres for children, which is the largest outreach programme of NBT.  
 NBT India invites tender/bids from all interested Agencies for the production of a 30-40 minute documentary film, a 5-minute short film and 1-minute on promotional video including on-site interviews with teachers, learners, Anganwadi-sevikas, villagers and key stakeholders in Amethi, Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Jhansi and Muzaffarnagar.  
 For Tender Form and detailed terms and conditions, please refer to our website i.e. [www.nbtindia.gov.in](http://www.nbtindia.gov.in). Last date for submitting tender/bids is **10 November 2021 upto 10:00 AM**. The decision of the Director, NBT, India will be final and binding.


davp 21103/11/0018/2122

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**E-Tender Notice**  
 Dy. CSTE/TW, DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, ROOM No. 203, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055 for & on behalf of "President of India" invites online OPEN E-tender in two packet system from the experienced & established contractors having sufficient experience in similar work and satisfying minimum eligibility criteria on the prescribed form for the under noted work:

Name of work	Provision of Indian Railway KAVACH (Formerly known as Train Collision Avoidance System) (IR Kavach) over NDLS-PWL, Ex TKJ, CPYZ, LKO-Ex CNB Sections of Northern Railway including Provision for Double Distant along with Interlocking of required Block section LCs in LKO-Ex CNB section and Provision of STIM/Telecom towers at stations wherever not available in NDLS-PWL & Ex TKJ-CPYZ sections along with loco TCAS filament works in 106 nos of 160kmph Electric locos in connection with achieving speeds upto 160kmph over New Delhi-Mumbai and New Delhi-Howrah (including Lucknow-Kanpur) routes of Indian Railways.
Tender No.	172-Sig-TW-Tender-EPC-T13
Approximate cost of the work	Rs. 123.027 Crs
Cost of tender form	Nil
Address from where tender document can be downloaded	Indian Railways website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> from 21.10.2021
Earnest Money	Nil (Bid Security declaration required)
Completion Period	700 days.
Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Tender to be submitted online on Indian Railways website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> from 21.10.2021 upto 11:00 hrs of 23.02.2022. Date of tender Opening: 02.03.2022 after 16:00 hrs.
Detailed Tender Notice	Available at Indian Railways website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>
No: 172-Sig-TW-Tender-EPC-T13 Date: 20.10.2021 2383/2021	
Serving Customers With A Smile	

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 The Shabad Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd., Plot No.5, Sector-13, Dwarka, New Delhi -75 has proposed for clearance of the member as under:  
 1) Smt. Archana Bhatia, (2) Sh. Dheeraj Chhabra (3) Sh. Mahesh Kumar Jethani (4) Sh. Ashwani Sharma (5) Mrs. Jaya Asrani for allotment of flats by way of draw by DDA/RCS objections are invited from general public, members of the society and all concerned, if any within 15 days of publication of this Public Notice.


**NOTICE**  
 Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Thursday, 28th October, 2021, inter-alia, to consider and approve the Un-audited Financial Results Prov. of the Company for the quarter ended on 30th Sept., 2021.  
 The information contained in this notice is also available on the Company's website [www.cubical90.com](http://www.cubical90.com) as also on the website of the Stock Exchange viz. BSE Limited- [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)  
 For Cubical Financial Services Limited Sd/-  
 Place: New Delhi (Ashwani Kumar Gupta)  
 Date: 20-10-2021 Managing Director


**MAHATRANSCO**  
 Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd.  
**MAHARASHTRA STATE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION COMPANY LTD.**  
 Praskashgad, 1st Floor, Plot No.9, Station Road, Bandra (E), Mumbai- 400 051.  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER CPD/16- 2021-22**  
 Tenders are invited through e-Tendering in SRM system from the registered vendors for Supply of following:

Tender No. & Description of Material	Estimated Amount (in Rs. Lakhs) Tender Fee (in Rs.)	Due Date & Time (Hrs.) for Submission & Opening of Tender
SP/T-0609/1021 [RFX No. 500000942] (Two Bid System)	773.88	02.11.2021 02.11.2021 Up to 17:00 Hrs. at 17:05Hrs
Procurement and Retrofit of Existing Old Quadruple Break SF6 Circuit Breakers (Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning) by New one alongwith Dismantling of Existing 400KV Quad Circuit Breakers for HVDC-I & II Line Bays at owners yard of 400KV Chandrapur & Padghe S/s.	5,000.00	

Contact Person: Office of the Executive Engineer (P&C)  
 Tel. No.022-2647421 1/022-26472131 Extn.2491/2493.  
 Email:eegrp6@mahatransco.in, dyeegrp5@mahatransco.in  
 For further details visit our website <http://www.srm.tender.mahatransco.in>  
 Any further amendments will be published on the MSETCL website [www.mahatransco.in](http://www.mahatransco.in). So bidders are requested to check the website.  
**DGIPR/C 2405/21-22**

Executive Engineer (P&C)


**CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED**  
 Corporate Office: 1st Floor, 'Dare House', No.2, N.S.C. Bose Road, Chennai-600 001.  
 Branch Office:1st & 2nd Floor, Plot No.6, Main Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110 005

**DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION & RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002**  
 You, the under mentioned Borrower / Mortgagor is hereby informed that the company has initiated proceedings against you under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and that the Notice under 13 (2) of the Act sent to you by Registered Post Ack. Due for Borrower/s has been returned undelivered. Hence, you are hereby called upon to take notice and pay the outstanding loan amount mentioned against the said account with interest accruing there from within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the company will proceed against you by exercising its right under Sub-Sec (4) of Section 13 of the Act by enforcing the below mentioned security to realize its dues with interests and costs. It is needles to mention that this notice is addressed to you without prejudice to any other remedy available to the company.

Name and Address of the Borrower/s	Loan Amount	Date of Demand Notice & Amount Outstanding	Description of the property/ Secured Asset
LOAN ACCOUNT NO.X0HEDHE00000875978 <b>MANMOHAN SINGH</b> (BORROWER) At:- C 82 GALI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110051 <b>Also At:-</b> PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-82, AREA MEASURING90 SQ. YDS., OUT OF KHASRA NO. 165 MIN. SITUATEDIN BLOCK-C, WEST AZAD NAGAR, KNOWN AS AREA OF VILLAGE GHOUNDLI, DELHI <b>MANMEET SINGH</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- C 82 GALI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA, NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110051 <b>BHAGAT SINGH</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- C 82 GALI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110051 <b>PARAMJEET KAUR</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- C 82 GALI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA, NAGAR, NEWDELHI-110051 <b>CHARANJEET KAUR</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- C 82 GALI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEWDELHI-110051 <b>M/S ASER ELECTRONIC PVT LTD</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- 42 A /27 1ST FLOOR LAXMI NARAYN COMPOUND, DILSHAD GARDEN INDUSTRIAL AREA, NEW DELHI-110095	Rs. 1,03,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Three Lakh Only)	27-09-2021 Rs.70,11,562/- (Rupees Seventy Lakh Eleven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Two Only)	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-82, AREA MEASURING 90 SQ. YDS., OUT OF KHASRA NO. 165 MIN. SITUATED IN BLOCK-C, WEST AZAD NAGAR, KNOWN AS AREA OF VILLAGE GHOUNDLI, DELHI-110051 NORTH: PROPERTY NO. C-83 SOUTH: ROAD EAST: PORTION OF PROPERTY NO. C-82 WEST: PROPERTY NO. C-80
LOAN ACCOUNT NO. X0HEDL00001926828 <b>SATISH KUMAR SAINI</b> (BORROWER) At:- H.NO.61, SAINI MOHALLA, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI-110041 <b>Also At:-</b> KHATU NARESH TENT HOUSE 668, KHASRA NO-126, SAINI MOHALLA NANGLOI, DELHI-110041 <b>Also At:-</b> PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-225, KHASRA NO. 62/25/2, VILLAGE NANGLOI, KNOWN AS SAINI VIHAR, LAXMI PARK, NEW DELHI. <b>MANJU SAINI</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- H.NO.61, SAINI MOHALLA, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI-110041 <b>KHATU NARESH TENT HOUSE</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- THROUGH ITS PROPRIETOR MR SATISH KUMAR SAINI 668 KHASRA NO.126,SAINI MOHALLA, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI-110041	Rs. 20,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Lakh Only)	27-09-2021 Rs.18,13,079/- (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Thirteen Thousand Seventy Only)	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-225, AREA MEASURING 100 SQ.YDS., SITUATED IN THE AREA VILLAGE NANGLOI JAT, COLONY KNOWN AS LAXMI PARK, NAGLOI, NEW DELHI, BOUNDED ON: NORTH: OTHER'S PROPERTY SOUTH: ROAD 25 FT WIDE EAST: ROAD 12 FT WIDE WEST: OTHER'S PROPERTY
LOAN ACCOUNT NO. X0HEDL00001683751 <b>VIKAS GOEL</b> (BORROWER) B-45, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094 <b>MANGE RAM GOEL</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- B-45, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094 <b>KUSUM GOEL</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- B-45, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR SABAPUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094 <b>HARYANA TRADING COMPANY</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- A-18, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR ROAD, NEAR BHAINPURA, NEWDELHI, NEWDELHI-110094 <b>NIYATI GOEL</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- B-45, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094 <b>HARSH GOEL</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- B-45, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094 <b>GOEL TRADERS</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- A-18, GALI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR ROAD, NEAR BHAINPURA, NEWDELHI, NEWDELHI-110094	Rs. 1,00,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Only)	27-09-2021 Rs. 1,01,02,098.85/- (Rupees One Crore One Lakh(s) Two Thousand Ninety Eight And Paise Eighty Five Only)	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING PROPERTY BEARING OLD NO. B-40, NEW NO. B-45, MESURING AREA 160 SQ. YDS., I.E 133.77 SQ.MTRS OUT OF KHASRA NO. 40, FITTED WITH ELECTRICITY AND WATER CONNECTION IN RUNNING CONDITIONS, CONSISTING OF ACCORDING TO SITE WITH CONSTRUCT UPTO THE LAST STOREY SITUATED AT VILLAGE MEERAPUR TURK, IN THE ABADI OF GALI NO.2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR, ILLAQ SHAHDARA SHAHDARA, DELHI 110094
LOAN ACCOUNT NO. X0HEDHE00001142898 & X0HEDHE00001356212 <b>RENU SHARMA</b> (BORROWER) At:- HOUSE NO-7 SECOND FLOOR BLK-B, SHAKTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110052 <b>Also At:-</b> PROPERTY NO. 7, BLOCK-B, SITUATED IN THE DELHI CORPORATION ENGINEERING CHBS LTD. SHAKTI NAGAR EXTN, DELHI <b>RAJ KUMAR SHARMA</b> (Co-BORROWER) HOUSE NO-7 SECOND FLOOR BLK-B, SHAKTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110052 <b>Also At</b> 1094, KASHMERE GATE PO PS KASHMERE GATE DELHI 110006 <b>PRATEEK SHARMA</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- HOUSENO-7 SECOND FLOOR BLK-B, SHAKTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110052	Rs. 2,65,00,000/- (Rupees Two Crore Sixty Five Lakh(s) Only)	27-09-2021 Rs. 1,80,06,787.65/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Lakh(s) Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Seven And Paise Sixty Five Only)	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING PROPERTY NO. B-7, CONSISTING OF GROUND FLOOR, FIRST FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR WITH TERRACE/ROOF RIGHTS BUILT ON F R E E H O L D L A N D ADMEASURING 275.55 SQ. YDS., SITUATED IN THE LAYOUT PLAN OF THE DELHI CORPORATION CO - O P E R A T I V E H O U S E BUILDING SOCIETY LTD, SHAKTI NAGAR EXTENSION, DELHI-110052, BOUNDED BY: NORTH: ROAD 45' WIDE SOUTH: SERVICE ROAD 15' WIDE EAST: PLOT NO.B-8 WEST: PLOT NO. B-6 ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING PROPERTY NO. 17, BLOCK NO. 10, CONSTRUCTED ON PIECE OF LAND MEASURING 275 SQ YADS APPROX. OR WHATSOEVER IS MORE OR LESS IN THE BOUNDARIES SITUATED AT SHAKTI NAGAR ELHI-110007, BOUNDED BY: NORTH: ROAD 15 FT. SOUTH: OTHERS PROPERTY NO. 10/16 EAST: MAIN ROAD WEST: ROAD 15 FT WIDE.
LOAN ACCOUNT NO. X0HEDL00001892604 & X0HEDL00001892629 <b>ANIL KUMAR</b> (BORROWER) At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040 <b>Also At:-</b> PROPERTY BEARING NO. 482, KHASRA NO. 37/6/2, NEAR SABOLIROAD, OLD ABADI OF VILLAGE NARELA, DELHI-110040 (AREA MEASURING 144.4 SQ. YDS.) <b>SANGEETA</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040 <b>BHARDWAJ TRADERS</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- 1961/6A SABZI MANDI, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040 <b>ASHISH KUMAR</b> (Co-BORROWER) At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040	Rs. 4500000/- (Rupees Fourty Five Lakh(s) Only)	27-09-2021 Rs. 4700007.26/- (Rupees Fourty Seven Lakh(s) Seven And Paise Twenty Six Only)	ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROERTY BEARING NO. 482, GROUND FLOOR (WITH ROOF RIGHTS UPTO SKY) FORMING PART OF KHASRA NO. 37/6/2, SITUATED AT NEAR SABOLI ROAD, OLD ABADI OF VILLAGE NARELA, DELHI-110040 (AREA MEASURING 144.4 SQ. YDS.)

Date : 21.10.2021  
 Place : Delhi

AUTHORISED OFFICER  
 Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited.



# EXPLORING THE CONFLICT WITHIN

Writer-director, HARDIK GAJJAR, and lead actor, PRATIK GANDHI, tell CHRISTY VARGHESE that there is much more to *Bhavai* than the controversy surrounding its previous name, *Raavan Leela*

Pratik Gandhi became a household name after the raging success of *Scam 1992*. However, how many of us can claim to know that he was quite a prominent name in the Gujarati theatre circuit, much before *Scam 1992*?

Hardik Gajjar, the writer-director of Gandhi's forthcoming film, *Bhavai*, is someone who knew him from his theatre days. They have collaborated on and off over the years, their camaraderie only grew with time. And believe it or not, Gandhi was shooting for the film when he got the opportunity to star in *Scam*. *Bhavai* was all set to release in theatres on October 1. However, the release date was pushed forward to October 22, following the announcement by the Maharashtra government that cinema halls in the state will reopen on October 22.

You may have heard of *Bhavai*, although under a different name; it had been named *Raavan Leela*, however, after a certain section of audience flagged the concern that the film may hurt religious sentiments, the name of the film was duly changed.

When we quiz Gajjar on the prompt renaming of the film, he shares unabashedly, "I did not expect the audience to misinterpret the name of the film. When I coined the name, *Raavan Leela*, I was talking about the Raavan that is all around us. When I conceptualised the film, what I had in mind was the essence of the story — internal conflict. Am I right, or am I wrong? And I believe the best way to depict the same was through *Ramayana*. I feel that both Ram ji and Raavan are within us. It is all about perception, and intention. When we got to know that some people were not pleased about the name of the film, we changed it without any hesitation, since it has no bearing on the film itself. There is nothing in the film related to the *Ramayana* or Ramlila, for that matter."

What does *Bhavai* mean, though? "It all depends on your perception. (chuckles before continuing) For me, the word mean two things. When something



goes wrong in life, it is termed 'bhavai' in our lingo. As in, 'Ye kya bhavai ho gaya?'" Bhavai is also a form of folk-theatre in Gujarat," expresses Gajjar animatedly.

He went on to reveal that he has a long line up of projects with Gandhi in the pipeline, with the next one being the horror rom-com, *Atithi Bhooto Bhava*.

When we ask Gajjar whether he has a message for the audience, pat comes the reply, "I welcome everyone's opinion, but I would urge you to go watch the film with an open mind before passing your verdict on the same."

Keep reading for excerpts of our conversation with the protagonist of *Bhavai* and *Scam 1992*, Gandhi...

**QWe heard that after *Scam 1992*, you opted to star in a Gujarati web-series, *Vithal Teedi*, because of your character. Other interviews have you stating that when it comes to choosing new projects, you go by your intuition. What was it about *Bhavai* that reeled you in?**

The same formula. The first time the film was narrated, I felt that I could relate to the character's emotions. And without any second thoughts, I said yes, let's do it. This was before *Scam* and I was searching for something I could perform in. I wanted to get into the shoes of a character in a story that touched me. And the process you mentioned, I have been following it since a long time now.

**QWhat is the premise of *Bhavai*?**

The most simple way I can explain the story without giving away the plot is that we are talking about moral dilemma here. If you see Ram and Raavan as a metaphor, the good and evil is present within us all.

We all are constantly involved in the fight between Ram and Raavan. It is up to us, we have to decide who wins — Ram or Raavan?

But literally speaking, *Bhavai* is a love-story. It has nothing to do with Ram or Raavan per se.

**QWhen you say that it is up to us,**

**whether we choose to be Ram or Raavan in any given moment, can you say that it is as simple as that? In a world where external factors influence everything we do, can we really claim to be in complete control of our lives?** Let me try and explain. If we take social media for instance, there are times when one has this strong urge to say something, without even thinking of the repercussions. But if we can control our urge in that moment, having that sense of mastery over yourself changes the game altogether. And I believe this is the situation throughout our life, everywhere.

However, I would agree with you that there are many variables, which we need to constantly factor in, since they are not in our control. But what we can control is how we react to it. Otherwise the world would be a chaotic place. Because, I am sure, everyone has this urge to lash out at people. Road-rage is one example that will get my point across. And such things are happening everywhere.

What is of vital importance is that crit-



ical moment, when you hit that point of saturation, do you lose control over yourself? Or are you able to take a step back, and take stock of the situation? That is why they say, don't react, just respond.

**QGoing by the first example you stated, about controlling one's urge to be impulsive on social media, do you regret achieving stardom after *Scam 1992*?**

(laughs)Not really, no. I am well aware of the fact that once you are well known, each and every word that you utter needs to be measured. It is bound to reach a large number of people. Even if I was not a prominent actor and was instead employed elsewhere, it's a personal choice. How you speak, what you speak, it is on you. And it should be well thought.

However, I will agree that once you have made it in the entertainment industry, you have to be more careful of your actions and words than people engaging in other professions.

**QHow have your dreams changed post *Scam 1992*?**

My dreams have not really changed, but I am more hungry now. I want to enact more characters, and be part of good scripts. In fact, I would like to broaden my horizon and perform without having language as a barrier. You might think that I have my eyes set on the international platform, however, I would love to perform in regional cinema also; I am raring to go.

## On a roll

Actor ADARSH GOURAV is all set to star alongside Meryl Streep, Sienna Miller and Kit Harington for Scott Z Burns' anthology, *Extrapolations*. By TEAM VIVA

Adarsh Gourav had a breakthrough role in *The White Tiger* playing the role of Balram Halwai which found him incredible fame, both locally and internationally. The talented young actor earned himself three major award nominations including a BAFTA, AACTA and Independent Spirit Awards a few months back for his first international project. Now, the actor has bagged his second major project, Scott Z Burns' anthology series for Apple TV+, titled *Extrapolations*. The show stars big wigs of the acting fraternity from the west alongside Gourav, including Meryl Streep, Sienna Miller, Kit Harington, Tahir Rahim, Matthew Rhys, Daveed Diggs, Gemma Chan and David Schwimmer.

The series explores the stories of how the changes to the planet will impact love, family, work both on a personal level and at a large human level. It will feature eight interconnected episodes which will display the need for survival in the current era, across the globe. The show has Scott as the writer, director and executive producer, with the show being helmed by Michael

Ellenberg's Media Res. The show also has Ellenberg, Greg Jacobs, Dorothy Fortenberry and Lindsey Springer as executive producers.

Adarsh recently flew off to the US, to New York where the show is currently expected to go into production. Adarsh will wrap this project before heading back to India to start his next, *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan* with Ananya Panday and Siddhant Chaturvedi.

Adarsh expresses his joy, saying, "This is beyond anything I can express, to be honest. But to be working with such an incredible team at such an early juncture of my career is truly rewarding. I'm elated to be part of this project and grateful that I will be working alongside some of the very best in the business. I have grown up and looked up to each of my co-stars and to now be sharing screen space with them is incredible. This story is such an important one for our current generation and is interconnected with the realities of today."



India is the world's second-most populated country, with a majority of its people between the age group of 10 to 24. This means that the country is at a relative advantage as young adults constitute a greater percentage of job seekers. thereby having the potential to boost its economy.

However, for the past decade, India's youth unemployment rate has been hovering around the 22 per cent mark. Almost 2 million graduates and half a million postgraduates are unemployed in India. Various reasons can be attributed to the number of educated yet unemployed youth in the country such as recession, demand-supply mismatch, but the skill gap is perhaps the greatest contributor to this pressing national problem.

**Accessibility and quality of education**

Despite having thousands of educational institutions in the country, there are at least 35 million children aged between six and 14 years in India who have no access to formal education. India being an agrarian economy has more than 70 per cent of its people living in villages. Most children living in rural areas are expected to support their families for meeting their livelihoods. Girls, especially, are dissuaded from going to school and are compelled to master household chores. Furthermore, the condition of schools in some rural areas is challenged with serious concerns such as ill-equipped staff, insufficient funds and lack of hygienic facilities, etc.

There is a desperate need to bridge the divide between urban and rural schools and their ability to impart technical and industrial skilling. While a few technical and engineering institutions aim to provide practical training to their students to make them job-ready, they are not necessarily accessible to all.

**Bridging the skill gap**

The current job market requires

## The need of the moment

PARIDHI KHAITAN talks about the importance of vocational training, citing India's vast reserve of untapped potential



students to acquire practical skills on top of their theoretical knowledge. However, almost 80 per cent of the new job seekers get little to no opportunities for skills-based education. The talent acquisition process, wherein practical knowledge-based skills and experience are valued above academic degrees, is becoming more selective than ever before. In rural areas, attaining higher education is highly challenging, hence the presence of vocational training programmes proves to be advantageous as it provides industry-relevant education and hands-on skilling where students can acquire various soft and hard skills. Proficiency in basic office software tools such as PowerPoint, Excel, and Word, competency in communication skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving are some of the fundamental requisites for job seekers.

**Broaden your horizons**

Vocational training programmes are extremely crucial to partake as they offer a sneak peek into the real-world work scenario and help students make informed career decisions using a practical approach. These programmes are designed

for most industry sectors. Such vocational training programs facilitate students to make better career decisions.

**A viable alternative**

Vocational training addresses the affordability and accessibility challenges faced by rural children. It also empowers women belonging to low-income groups by improving their job prospects. Besides carpentry, welding, automotive repair, heating, and air conditioning, tailoring, and beauty care, vocational training programs also cater to various 21st century ready sectors such as healthcare, education, IT, financial services, retail, tourism, etc. Students passionate about such new-age sectors need not enrol themselves in highly expensive degree courses but can just attain the necessary skills through diploma courses at very affordable fees.

**Foreign exchange**

There was a time when students had no other choice but to move out of India to acquire specialised job skills. The lack of relevant facilities and exposure triggered high migra-

tion rates. The advent of global online vocational training programmes has bridged this limitation in the country. Today, Indian students can pursue these courses at affordable rates from the comfort of their homes. This has improved the retention rate of talent in the country.

**Initiatives by the government**

Under the Skill India Mission launched in 2015, the Government of India has upskilled about 1.7 crore youth by January 2021, intending to train Indian youth to become self-reliant and financially stable. Various development courses like training workshops sponsored by ISRO and AIIMS (New Delhi), among others, were made available to youth under this program.

It is with schemes like these that India can bridge the skill gap and make educated youth industry-ready. But selecting the right vocational course for a student can be tricky. Making career choices influenced by family or peer pressure could sabotage the benefits these vocational courses are meant to offer. Choosing the right course, based on individual skills and interests, is the only way to succeed.

To ensure one doesn't falter in making the right choice, more and more students today are opting for digital career counselling. Such services bring together technology-based digital platforms and industry professionals with in-depth domain knowledge and know-how of various careers to help individuals make well-informed choices.

(The author is the MD of ProTeen, an online career guidance platform.)

It all started with an Instagram post where he announced how he quit drinking a year back. Not that actor Sidhartha Mallya was an alcoholic, just that he experienced anxiety, the morning after.

"Getting thousands of responses on an honest post was overwhelming and made me think how many more lives could I touch, and maybe help if I shared more experiences," he shares in an interview.

Mallya's memoir, *If I'm Honest*, published by Westland Publications, which recently hit the stands takes the reader back to 2016 when he went through depression. Something that came as a bit of a surprise to him, given that he seemingly had the world at his feet -- he was young, had just graduated from a prestigious drama school and had upcoming film projects.

However, despite all the awaiting opportunities, he was unhappy. That was when he realised that something was not right and sought professional help. Thus began the journey to understanding his current mental state as well as an exploration of the other mental issues he has suffered throughout his life and where they might have stemmed from.

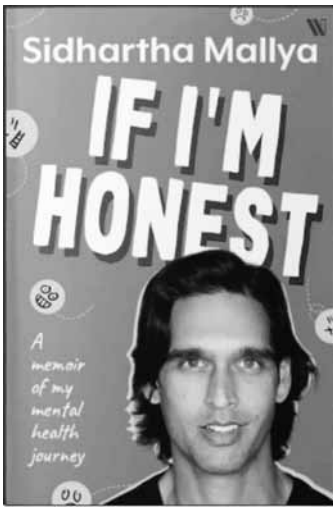
In this memoir, he opens up about struggling with depression, living with OCD, the effects of his parents' divorce, why he quit drinking and also what helped him overcome his challenges.

"There are a few messages that I want to get across. One is that everyone can suffer from issues of mental health. And also, I think, by being honest, as the title suggests, I want to convey that it is okay to talk about these things. To embrace your own truth. It makes no sense to be ashamed talking about it," he says.

Ask him if there was the much-hyped 'catharsis' post finishing the book, and he asserts, "Frankly, the whole process was quite difficult. You have to do a lot of self-work to be able to talk about these things. Writing it and reliving those things do take a toll

## It is ok to not feel ok

Actor SIDDHARTHA MALLYA shares that he wants to help as many people as possible through his memoir, *If I'm Honest*, where he opens up about lesser-known details of his life



was the fact that the director is known to do his own thing without getting distracted by box office consideration. "He is not a conformist, and that is what makes him special. We shot the film in 2014, a time when the Indian cinematic landscape was very different. All these OTT platforms did not exist then."

Stressing that digital platforms have opened doors to multiple genres without the pressure of a box office success and also actors who might not be A-listers, he adds, "Everything is subscriber-based, and the success of a show is not based on box office revenue. Therefore, you don't need your star names in these projects anymore. I think what it has done is it has given a lot of actors the opportunities to be in really good projects that they would not have been really able to be in the traditional model."

Currently working on a few film projects, the lockdowns for this actor were not really drastic. "Believe it or not, despite what the people might think, I am not the most social person. I like being in bed by 9 pm and getting up by 6:30 in the morning. So, the lockdowns did not really change my life very much. I know a lot of people who love social interactions. I actually spent a lot of the time working on myself."

And how is it being Vijay Mallya's son? "Well, I do not want people to think 'Vijay Mallya's son wrote a book'. I hope that I get respected. And if you don't like me, if you don't like my book, that is fine. But do not dislike the book because you associate me with someone else that you don't like."

—IANS

on you. However, I kept telling myself that if I can just help one other person, then it is all good.

Mallya, who studied business and joined the corporate world before giving it up to enrol in the prestigious Royal Central School of Speech and Drama says that he always wanted to do something performative in India.

"From a very young age, my imagination loved running in every direction, and always wanted to do my thing. I am very pleased that I made this transition. Because if I didn't, I don't know if this book would have existed today. I think the switch helped me grow as a person. It helped me get in touch with myself," he says.

Pleased that he made his debut with the rebel filmmaker Q in *Brahman Naman* (the first Indian original to release on Netflix), the actor says that what fascinated him

## TRENDBLAZER



### SONU HOSTS NEW NATGEO SERIES

Bollywood actor **SONU SOOD** is all set for a new series titled *It Happens Only in India*. Hosted by him, this 10-part series by National Geographic Channel will take viewers into the lesser-known and well-researched narratives from across the length and breadth of India.

As per Sonu, "No matter how much you learn about India, you can't know enough. The country's diversity has tons of incredible stories that are yet to be revealed and this show will take viewers on a fascinating journey."

### fairtalk

SANYA MALHOTRA



"I'm hoping with the forthcoming show, *Sasural Wonder Phool*, we are able to change a few things. It would be comforting to know that we could inspire people to be more comfortable when they're talking about sex or sex-related issues. I honestly feel that my character in the show, Ashima, reflects our society wonderfully. She's not so comfortable talking about sex."

### dailytalk

GAUHAAR KHAN



"As an artiste, one always looks to expand their horizons and I am glad that I am on the path to growth. I think the best part about being an actor is that you get to experiment with different kinds of roles. In *14 Phere*, I got to play the diverse role of Zubina, the aspiring artiste who plays the fake mother to both Vikrant and Kriti during different weddings."

### KEEP DOING YOUR THING: MEGAN FOX

Actor **MEGAN FOX** says it is hard to be a woman and has encouraged other women to wear whatever makes them 'feel good' and not to worry about someone else's opinion.

She acknowledges that it's easier said than done. However, style is a reflection of your mood. She reveals, "I change multiple times a day sometimes, don't you? That's my best advice for anyone — wear what makes you feel good and do not worry about what other people say."





# ABHIDHAMMA DAY CELEBRATIONS

PM Modi believes that Buddha is universal because he encouraged people to start from within as *Buddhatva* is a sense of ultimate responsibility



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, participated in an event marking the celebrations of Abhidhamma day at the Mahaparinirvana temple in Kushinagar.

The Governor and Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, union ministers, G Kishan Reddy, Kiren Rijiju, and Jyotiraditya Scindia, the cabinet minister of Sri Lankan government, Namal Rajapaksa, Buddhist delegation from Sri Lanka, diplomats from Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Lao PDR, Bhutan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Japan,

Singapore, Nepal, and others, were present during the occasion.

Addressing the event, PM Modi noted the auspicious occasion of Ashwin Poornima and the presence of holy relics of Lord Buddha. Welcoming the delegation of Sri Lanka, he traced back the connections between India and Sri Lanka to emperor Ashoka's son, Mahendra, and daughter, Sanghamitra, taking the message of Buddhism to Sri Lanka. He also remarked that it was believed that on this day, Arahant Mahinda, a Buddhist monk, returned and told his

father that Sri Lanka had accepted Buddha's message with enthusiasm. The belief spread and Buddha's message was accepted by and for the whole world. Buddha's dhamma was for humanity.

Lauding the role of the International Buddhist Confederation in spreading the message of Lord Buddha, the Prime Minister remembered Shri Shakti Sinha, who passed away recently, for his contribution as DG of the International Buddhist Confederation. He also remarked that Buddha came back to Earth from Tushita

heaven and on Ashwin Purnima, the monks also completed their three-month *varshavas*.

He also said that Buddha was universal and *buddhatva* was a sense of ultimate responsibility. He underlined that many questions arise along with environmental concerns and climate change. But, if we adopt the message of Buddha, then instead of 'who will do,' 'what is to be done' path would start to show itself. PM Modi mentioned that Buddha was in the soul of humanity that connected different cultures and countries.

"India never believed in restricting the knowledge, great messages or the thoughts of great souls. Whatever was ours was shared with the entire humanity and that is why, human values, like non-violence and compassion, are settled in the heart of India so naturally", he commented.

He stated that Buddha was the source of inspiration for the Constitution of India as Buddha's Dhamma Chakra is sitting on the tricolour of India and giving us momentum. Even today, if someone goes to the Parliament of India, then the mantra, 'dharma chakra pravartanaya', is observed.

Talking about the influence of Lord Buddha in Gujarat and, specifically, the Prime Minister's birthplace, Vadnagar, he said Buddha's influence could be observed in western and southern parts of the country in equal measures as the eastern parts.

"The history of Gujarat shows that Buddha is beyond boundaries and directions. Mahatma Gandhi, born in the land of Gujarat was the modern flag-bearer of Buddha's message of truth and non-violence", he added.

Quoting Lord Buddha, "appa deepo bhava", meaning, "be your own lamp", the Prime Minister said that a self-illuminated person would show the path to the world. He concluded, saying that the day would mark the motivation for India to become self-reliant, providing strength to participate in the progress of every country in the world. PM Modi also remarked that Lord Buddha's teachings were being taken forward by India in the mantra of '*sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka*



## Strengthening fuel security

### NTPC ties up with Talabira mines of NLC in Odisha

In its effort to strengthen fuel security, NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) Limited, the country's largest power generator, commenced coal offtake from Talabira mines of NLC in Odisha. As per the agreement, NTPC shall offtake coal from Talabira mines to Lara and Darlipalli. Besides this, NTPC is also ramping up coal production from its captive mines.

The present installed capacity of

NTPC Group is 66,900 MW (including 13,425 MW through subsidiaries), comprising 47 NTPC stations (23 coal-based stations, seven gas-based stations, one hydro station, one small hydro, 14 solar photovoltaic system (PV), and one wind-based station), and 26 joint venture stations (nine coal-based, four gas-based, eight hydro, one small hydro, two wind, and two solar PV).

## Top innovators

BHEL wins the Clarivate South and South East Asia Innovation awards



director of Intellectual and South East Asia of Property group, South Asia Clarivate Analytics.

## Addressing public concerns

Dr Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad visits the LIC central office and expresses his desire of seeing it as a top company

Dr Bhagwat Kishanrao Karad, the Minister of State, department of Financial Services, Government of India, visited the central office of LIC of India in Mumbai on October 18.

The chairperson, MR Kumar, and managing directors, Siddhartha Mohanty, Mini Ipe and BC Patnaik, welcomed the minister.

Karad addressed his focus on people and how they can be benefited. While expressing satisfaction over the brand image of LIC, he stated the desire of seeing LIC occupying a numero uno position in global insurance brands.

Subsequently, he visited various departments of the central office and interacted with departmental officials, wherein he emphasised on the prompt disposal of work.



## New investment strategy

LIC Mutual Fund announced the launch of LICMF BAF, an open-ended dynamic asset allocation fund which would invest across equity, debt and money market

The investment strategy for LIC MF Balanced Advantage Fund (LICMF BAF), essentially a hybrid scheme, would be uniquely driven by the Fundamental Driven Mathematical model.

Explaining the dynamics of the model-based unique investment approach for the new fund offer in LIC MF BAF, Dinesh Pangtey, the CEO of LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management Ltd said, "Bond yields, in a way, represent the opportunity cost of investing in equities and perception of risk appetite. We at LIC MF would be using this inverse relationship between equity and debt in



LICMF BAF for switching from equity to debt and vice versa, based on the Fundamental Driven Mathematical model."

LICMF BAF model would precisely use this relationship to determine optimal asset allocation level for the scheme. The model would use interest rates, one-year forward price-earnings ratio and earnings yield, to arrive

at the optimum asset allocation level.

Pangtey added that the model automatically would arrive at asset allocation between equity and debt, as the underlying fundamentals change. However, the equity and debt portfolio should be managed actively by seasoned fund managers.

The model would be designed

in such a way that it automatically factors in, any change in any of the parameters, on a real-time basis and keep changing the price to earning band using linear progression.

LICMF BAF would not only help investors participate in the market rally but, more importantly, it would also aim to minimise the downward risk, and this would be a crucial part of any investment strategy. LICMF BAF would be benchmarked against a customised index, LIC MF hybrid composite 50:50 index. The index composition would be 50 per cent nifty, 50 TRI and 50 per cent nifty 10 year benchmark G-Sec. The fund endeavours to keep gross equity allocation 65 per cent or above to enable investors to avail equity taxation benefits.

The New Fund Offer (NFO), which has opened on October 20, would close on November 3, 2021. The fund managers for LIC MF BAF would be Yogesh Patil for the equity portion, and Rahul Singh for the debt portion.

International Chef's day 2021 was celebrated at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur, which had live food demonstrations. The theme for this year's event was 'Healthy food for the future'.

Organised by SRM Institute of Hotel Management (SRMIHM) and South India Chef's association, chief guest Chef Dr K Damodaran, president of SICA, held an interactive session with students. The celebrity chef, who also holds a Guinness world record, shared his work experience and love for cooking healthy meals while demonstrating on how to do the traditional *meen kolumbu*.

"Chefs are the backbone of the food industry," he stated, while urging senior chefs to pass down their skills and knowledge to the youngsters so that the latter may have the opportunity to get creative and innovate newer meals.

"Traditional food has a lot of healthy optional medicinal values. This will help in beating Covid," Damodaran added.

Chef Damodaran was honoured with the Life Time Excellence award by

## Healthy food for the future

SRM honours chef Dr K Damodaran with Life Time Excellence award on International Chef's day



SRMIHM. Guest of honour, chef N Sheetharam Prasad, and general secretary of IFCA, and culinary director of GRT Hotels & Resorts, was honoured with the Service Excellence award. The Vocational Excellence award was presented to Chef Dr M Thirulogachander.

In his speech, Prasad said, "Students need to do a lot of research to develop good healthy eating habits." He urged all the upcoming chefs to practise cooking and eating local food.

SRMIHM also honoured 19 chefs, from all over the country, who had participated in the mega event. Chef Zubin Writer, executive sous chef at ITC grand Chola also held a live demonstration for students.

The fruit mixing ceremony was held during the event in which all the guests and chefs took part. The event concluded with cultural performance and prize distribution ceremony.

Also present at the event were SRMIST registrar Dr S Ponnusamy, the director of hotel management, Dr D Antony Ashok Kumar, and vice-principal of SRM IHM Lalitha, among others.

## Welfare schemes for people

Chhattisgarh CM, Bhupesh Baghel, receives the highest popularity rating amongst all heads of Indian states, according to the Governance Index

As per the CVoter Governance Index, the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Baghel, is the best performing Chief Minister in the country.

He has received the highest popularity rating among all chief ministers of states. The index report attributed his popularity to several welfare schemes introduced by the state government.

Recent schemes, such as Mahatari Dular Yojana, that will provide free education to children who lost their guardians/parents to Covid, is appreciated by all. The government will bear the entire expenses of their education.

The report says that the Chief Minister is popular among the masses because of his strong decision-making ability and his CEO style of working. Around 94 per cent people of Chhattisgarh are happy with the Baghel's performance.



## Milestones in environmental management

Union Mines secretary, Alok Tandon, IAS, inaugurates the lean slurry project of NALCO at Angul

The secretary of Ministry of Mines, Government of India, Alok Tandon, inaugurated the lean slurry project of National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) at Angul yesterday, marking a significant milestone in the Navratna company's journey of business excellence and

adopting outstanding practices in environmental management.

Completion of the lean slurry project by the company will ensure 100 per cent utilisation of ash generated at the company's Captive Power Plant (CPP) and marks a big step forward in its commitment towards environ-



ment-friendly and sustainable operations.

Tandon, accompanied by Sridhar Patra, CMD of NALCO, visited the smelter and captive power-plants of NALCO at Angul and appreciated the efforts of NALCO in achieving the targets and scaling new heights of success amidst a challenging business environment. The IAS also interacted with officials and employees and motivated them to maintain the tempo of production and productivity.



# Rohit finds his groove as India outplay Australia

PTI ■ DUBAI

India fine-tuned their T20 World Cup preparations with a convincing nine-wicket win over Australia in their final warm-up game here on Wednesday but the sixth bowler's slot remained a worry as even Virat Kohli rolled his arm over going into the tournament proper.

Captaining the side with Kohli only taking the field to bowl, Rohit Sharma (60 retired off 41) showed sublime touch alongside opening partner K L Rahul (39 off 31) as India chased down Australia's 152 for five in 17.5 overs.

Suryakumar Yadav (38 not out off 27) came at number three in Kohli's absence and got valuable time in the middle which should boost his confidence going ahead.

Hardik Pandya (14 not out off 8) came at four to finish the game and he did it with a clean hit over the bowler's head.

Another plus for India was seasoned pacer Bhuvneshwar



Australia's Marcus Stoinis looks on as India's Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul run between the wickets during the Cricket Twenty20 World Cup warm-up match between India and Australia in Dubai, on Wednesday

AP

Kumar finding rhythm after a poor outing against England. India had also beaten England in their earlier practice game.

The batting department looks more or less settled and the five specialist bowlers also inspire confidence but the same can't be said about the extra bowling option with Hardik not bringing his all-round skills to the table at the moment.

"Hardik is coming along pretty well, but it'll be a while before he will start to bowl. He hasn't started bowling, but he should be ready by the start of the tournament," said Rohit at the toss for the warm-up match against Australia.

The team management is hoping he will be ready to bowl during India's World Cup campaign which begins with the marquee clash against Pakistan on Sunday.

Skipper Kohli kept things tight with two overs of medium

pace but to expect him to do the job in high-pressure scenarios would be asking for too much from him.

India conceded 58 runs off the last five overs and that is something they would like to improve on.

After losing the toss, India put up a decent bowling effort. Rohit mentioned at the toss that Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami were rested from the game but the skipper took the field to bowl a couple of overs in which he conceded 12 runs.

India had Australia on the mat at 11 for three after Aaron Finch opted to bat first.

David Warner's barren run continued after a failed attempt at a reverse sweep had him trapped in front off Ravichandran Ashwin.

With his very next ball, Ashwin got rid of birthday boy Mitchell Marsh who played for the turn which wasn't there only to edge it to the first slip.

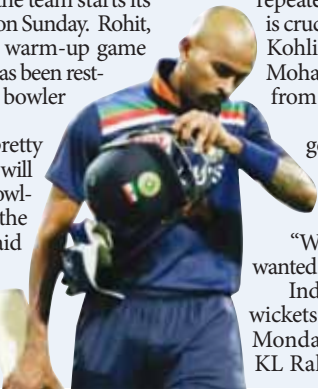
## Hardik expected to bowl when Indian T20 WC campaign begins: Rohit

PTI ■ DUBAI

India vice-captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday said that all-rounder Hardik Pandya is expected to be "ready" to bowl when the team starts its T20 World Cup campaign here on Sunday. Rohit, who is leading the side in the warm-up game against Australia as Virat Kohli has been rested, said the team needs a sixth bowler during the showpiece.

"Hardik is coming along pretty well, but it'll be a while before he will start to bowl. He hasn't started bowling, but he should be ready by the start of the tournament," said Rohit at the toss for the warm-up match against Australia.

"We have quality in the main bowlers, but you need an option for a 6th bowler," he



added. India play Pakistan in their opening match here on Sunday. Pandya's fitness is a concern heading into the tournament as he did not bowl at all in the IPL. The team management has repeatedly stated that Pandya's bowling is crucial for the team's balance. Besides Kohli, pacers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami were also rested from Wednesday's warm-up game.

"We want to make sure that we get the 6th bowling option, some options in the batting order as well, we'll try all those things today," Rohit said.

"We wanted to bat first as well, just wanted to try and get runs on the board." India had beaten England by seven wickets in their first warm-up game on Monday, riding on a 24-ball 51 from KL Rahul.

do. Steve Smith (57 off 48) and in-form Glenn Maxwell (37 off 28) tried to break the shackles with a 61-run partnership.

While Maxwell used his reverse sweep to good effect, Smith kept himself busy by rotating the strike.

## T20WorldCupwindow

### 12 YR OLD DEIGNED SCOTLAND T20 WC JERSEY

**Dubai:** Scotland beating teams such as Bangladesh in the ICC T20 World Cup was never unthinkable. But what is difficult to believe is that the team's striking dark blue and purple-coloured jersey has been designed by a 12-year-old girl. Rebecca Downie is the young designer and she has been cheering her team, which proved to be the most impressive in the first week of the tournament. The team chose the design from over 200 entries from school children across the country. The jersey is based on the colours of Scotland's national emblem — the thistle.

### 'IF WE DON'T GET RESULTS, WE SEARCH FOR SCAPEGOATS'

**Karachi:** Former captain Misbah-ul-Haq said that there will be no improvement in Pakistan cricket unless it changes its culture and stops hunting for scapegoats. Speaking for the first time after his sudden resignation as head coach last month, Misbah said "cosmetic surgery" will not change anything in Pakistan cricket as the problems are deep rooted in the system."The problem is that in our cricket we only look at results and we don't give time or have patience for planning ahead and improving the system," he said on A-Sports' channel.

## Namibia beat Netherlands, keeps them in hunt for Super 12

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

In a sensational display of power-hitting, David Wiese conjured up a 66-run knock to fashion Namibia's six-wicket win over the Netherlands in a crucial first round Group A game of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

Wiese's maiden international half-century changed the pace of the game in matter of minutes as runs flew thick and fast after he took charge at the crease and in the process added 93 runs with skipper Gerhard Erasmus (32) for the fourth wicket. Chasing 165 to stay alive in the competition,

debutants Namibia were stuttering at 52 for three after nine overs but Wiese single-handedly sank the Dutch side.

His onslaught on the spinners, especially the monstrous straight sixes, was a treat to watch as the Dutch bowlers were guilty of putting the balls in the slot for Wiese to clobber.

And even if the pacers drew the length a bit back, the 36-year-old Wiese had enough power to muscle the ball around for big shots.

He raised his fifty in just 29 balls, with a six off rival skipper Pietar Seelaar. His 40-ball unbeaten knock was adorned with five



sixes and four shots to the fence. Erasmus too timed the ball beautifully and got boundaries with ease in his 22-ball knock

that had four fours and a six. The victory has kept Namibia in hunt for the Super-12 stage and now need to beat

Ireland in their final game in the first round.

They had lost to Sri Lanka in their opening match.

The Netherlands now have lost both their games and their chances to make it to the next stage are quite low.

Earlier, opener Max O'Dowd (70) struck his second consecutive half-century and shared a 82-run stand with Colin Ackermann (35) to help the Netherlands post a competitive 164 for four.

O'Dowd, who had hit 51 against Ireland in the previous match, expressed himself freely, going after the bowlers. At times he played uppish shots, not exactly in control but still kept finding the gaps to keep the scoreboard going.

## Pattinson retires from international cricket

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian fast bowler James Pattinson on Wednesday retired from international cricket after realising that he won't be in the reckoning for the Ashes series due to fitness issues.

The 31-year-old, who has played 21 Tests and 15 ODIs, though will continue to play domestic cricket.

Pattinson had recently suffered a knee injury during an intra-squad Victorian trial game.

"Leading into pre-season I really wanted to give the Ashes a crack but in the end I haven't had the preparation I would have liked heading into the coming season," Pattinson was quoted as saying by cricket.Com.Au in a statement.

"If I was to be part of the Ashes I would need to do myself and my teammates justice. I didn't want to be in a position of battling with my body when you need to be 100 per cent fit and ready to go at any time. That would not be fair to myself or the team.

"It was then I felt that instead of trying to play at the very highest level, knowing I have only got three or four years of cricket left, I would focus more on Victoria, helping the young guys develop, perhaps some cricket in England and spending more time with my family."

## It should be spinners' World Cup, says Rashid Khan

PTI ■ DUBAI

The ICC T20 World Cup will belong to the spinners. Afghanistan's star leg-break bowler Rashid Khan has asserted, and said they can beat any team if they bat well in the showpiece. Since being picked up by IPL team Sunrisers Hyderabad as an 18-year-old in 2017, ace leg-spinner Rashid has emerged as T20 cricket's leading wicket-taker in this period with 333 scalps and is wanted by franchises across the world.

Appearing in his second T20 World Cup, Rashid feels spinners are always "effective" on pitches at three venues in the UAE, where the Super 12s, the



semi-finals and final will be played.

"Conditions here are always good for spinners and it should be spinners' World Cup," Rashid was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"Doesn't matter how wickets are prepared here, it is always helpful for the

spinners. Spinners will play a huge role in this World Cup.

"As we have seen in the IPL, spinners have brought back their team in the game. I feel that will be same in the World Cup as well. The best spinners will bring their team back in the game and win it."

Rashid feels Afghanistan, who are in Group 2 along with India, Pakistan and New Zealand, would need to do "lots of hard work" considering all their opponents in the Super 12s are "good players of spin".

Afghanistan have played 14 T20Is at the three venues in the UAE and have won all of them.

PTI ■ ODENSE

Young Lakshya Sen thumped compatriot Sourabh Verma in straight games to enter the second round but it was curtains for Saina Nehwal at the Denmark Open Super 1000 tournament here on Wednesday. Lakshya, who had finished runners-up at Dutch Open last Sunday, dished out a superb performance to outclass national champion Sourabh 21-9 21-7 in 26 minutes.

The 20-year-old from Almora, who had failed to make the cut for the Sudirman Cup and Thomas Cup Final after losing his only match in the trials, is likely to clash with second seed



and Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen of Denmark next.

London Games bronze medalist Saina, who had retired midway through her first match at Uber Cup Final due to a groin injury, couldn't match Japan's world no 20 Aya Ohori and lost

21-16 21-14 in the opening round.

The Indian doubles players had a dismal outing as apart from Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa, none of the others could put up a fight in their respective matches.

While Satwik and Ashwini's gallant battle ended with a 17-21 21-14 11-21 loss to China's Feng Yan Zhe and Du Yue in mixed doubles, Meghana Jakkampudi and Poorvisha S Ram lost 8-21 7-21 to Indonesian combination of Nita Violina Marwah and Putri Syaikhah in women's doubles. Commonwealth Games bronze medalists Ashwini and N Sikki Reddy also went down 17-21 13-

21 to second seeded Korean pair of Lee Sohee and Shin Seungchan.

Lakshya had claimed five titles in 2019 before COVID-19 forced the suspension of the BWF calendar.

On Wednesday, the world no 25 Indian was up against Sourabh, an opponent against whom he had lost twice in the past but it made no difference as Lakshya dished out a dominating show to blow him away.

He led 7-2 early on and never looked in trouble as he reeled off seven straight points from 13-7 to grab seven game points. Sourabh saved two before Lakshya pocketed the opening game.

## Messi scores 2 goals to rescue PSG



AP ■ PARIS

Lionel Messi scored twice in a quick succession, including an exquisite Panenka-style penalty, to rescue Paris Saint-Germain as it rallied to beat Leipzig 3-2 in the Champions League after being dominated for long spells.

Messi equalised in the 67th minute on Tuesday, poking home from close range after goalkeeper

Peter Gulacsi tipped his first shot onto the post. He then sent Gulacsi diving to the left before dinking the ball softly down the middle for his third goal since joining PSG from Barcelona.

They have all come in the Champions League, with Kylian Mbappe setting up the first two and winning the penalty for Messi's winner against Leipzig in the 74th minute.

Mbappe pointed straight at Messi to tell him he could take the spot kick.

"It's normal, it's about respect," Mbappe said.

"He's the best player in the world. I've always said it's a privilege to play with him."

It was the 34th time that Messi scored at least two goals in a Champions League game, bringing the Argentina captain's total to 123

goals in the tournament. He remains second to longtime rival Cristiano Ronaldo on 137.

Mbappe then took a penalty in the fourth minute of stoppage time, awarded following a video review for a foul on right back Achraf Hakimi, but he blazed it well over.

PSG is atop Group A with seven points, one more than Manchester City. Leipzig is last with no points.

Mbappe opened the scoring with a ninth-minute goal. But after that, the visitors took control by pressing high up the field and forcing panicky PSG into numerous errors.

"(Were we) lucky, no? You make your own luck," Mbappe said.

"But of course, it was difficult, Leipzig played well. We had some low spells which were perhaps a little bit too low."

Striker Andre Silva equalised in the 28th and midfielder Nordi Mukiele volleyed in powerfully in the 57th, with left back Angelino setting up both with his deft left foot.

"Leipzig have a good team, full of confidence," PSG winger Julian Draxler said.

"They caused us some problems, but we ruthlessly exploited the room we were allowed."

PSG was missing forwards Neymar and Mauro Icardi, which gave Draxler a rare start alongside Mbappe and Messi in attack. Neymar has a sore adductor while Icardi was excused for family reasons.



## Olympic flame arrives in Beijing amid boycott calls

PT ■ BEIJING

The Olympic flame arrived in Beijing on Wednesday amid calls from overseas critics for a boycott of the Feb. 4-20 Winter Games.

Beijing's Communist Party Secretary Cai Qi, the top official in the Chinese capital, received the flame at a closely-guarded airport ceremony.

Beijing successfully hosted the Summer Olympics in 2008, although the event failed to produce the more open political and social environment in China that many had hoped for.

Activist groups disrupted the flame lighting ceremony in southern Greece on Monday, accusing the International Olympic Committee of granting legitimacy to rights abuses in China.

IOC officials have said they are committed to seeing the competition go ahead and that rights issues are not part of their remit.

Speaking in the ancient stadium of Olympia, IOC President Thomas Bach said the Games must be "respected as politically neutral ground."

## SINGLES

### BENZEMA ABSENT FOR BLACKMAIL TRIAL

**Versailles :** Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema wasn't present Wednesday for the opening of his three-day trial for involvement in an alleged attempt to blackmail former France teammate Mathieu Valbuena over a sex tape. The 33-year-old Benzema's legal team told the court in Versailles that professional obligations made it "impossible" for him to attend. Valbuena's lawyer said he deplored the absence. Benzema played for Madrid in Kyiv on Tuesday against Shakhtar Donetsk in the Champions League. Madrid plays again Sunday against Barcelona in the Spanish league. Four other people accused of attempted blackmail in the case were present in court.

### AKEAL HOSEIN REPLACES FABIAN ALLEN

**Dubai:** Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein was on Wednesday approved as replacement for an injured Fabian Allen in the West Indies squad for the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup. The Event Technical Committee of the tournament has approved Hosein as a replacement for Allen, the ICC said in a statement. Hosein, who has played nine ODIs and six T20Is, was picked after Allen was ruled out due to an ankle injury. Hosein was a reserve as per the allowance for teams to travel with extra players in view of COVID-19 quarantine requirements.

### OLYMPIANS HEADLINE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

**Hisar:** Olympians Simranjit Kaur (60kg) and Pooja Rani (81kg) headline a strong field for the National Women's Boxing Championship, which will double up as a selection trial for the world championships, starting here on Thursday. The tournament, which is being conducted in association with Haryana Boxing Sangh, will see participation of more than 320 boxers from 36 States/UTs/Boards from across the country. Apart from Simranjit (60kg) and Pooja (81kg), who is the reigning Asian champion, 2019 World Championships bronze-medallist Jamuna Boro (54kg), defending champion Pwila Basumatary (60kg) and Asian Championships bronze medalist Jaismine (60kg) will be seen presenting strong challenges.