

**OPINION 6**  
THE DILEMMA OF DISPLACEMENT

**WORLD 8**  
RUSSIA HOSTS AFGHAN TALKS, CALLS FOR INCLUSIVE GOVT

**SPORT 12**  
ROHIT FINDS HIS GROOVE AS INDIA OUTPLAY AUSTRALIA

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DON'T REACT, JUST RESPOND: PRATIK GANDHI  
10 VIVACITY

## 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

"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 probe

Court 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 CJ 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' Amarinder

Captain 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 Sidhu is defeated in the polls as he is a "threat to the national security".

## 4 LeT terrorists killed in Op All Out, migrants' murder avenged

Soldier 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-Tayyiba (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

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

to have targeted a carpenter Saeer 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.

### CAPSULE

#### WEAPONS, 1 KG DRUGS RECOVERED AT BORDER

**Chandigarh:** The Punjab Police and the BSF have recovered a huge cache of weapons near the India-Pakistan border in the Khemkaran area of Tarn Taran district. In a joint operation, the Counter Intelligence wing of the Punjab Police and the BSF recovered 22 pistols, 44 magazines and 100 rounds of ammunition, the police official said. One kg of heroin was also recovered, he added

#### 43 NAXALS SURRENDER IN SUKMA DISTRICT

**Sukma:** A total of 43 Naxals, including nine women cadres, surrendered before the police in Chhattisgarh's worst Maoist-hit Sukma district on Wednesday.

#### COVID-INDUCED NIGHT CURFEW LIFTED IN UP

**Lucknow:** In view of the improved Covid-19 situation in Uttar Pradesh, the State Government lifted night curfew between 11 pm to 6 am.

#### CBI FILES CHARGESHEET IN DHANBAD JUDGE CASE

**New Delhi:** The CBI has filed a chargesheet against two accused in the alleged murder of Dhanbad Judge Uttam Anand, who was mowed down by an auto-rickshaw on July 28.

## 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.

## Char dham yatra resumes as rain fury subsides after killing over 50

PNS ■ DEHRADUN/NEW DELHI

As rain subsided in Uttarakhand after taking lives of over 50 people and damaging properties worth hundreds of crores, the "char dham" yatra resumed on Wednesday. The "char dham" pilgrimage was suspended for three days, from October 17 to 19, amid warning of heavy rainfall in the hill State during this period.

At least 14 people, including eight trekkers from West Bengal and Delhi, have gone missing at separate places in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district amid snowfall.

After its late withdrawal from northwest India, the southwest monsoon remains active over some parts of the country.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the southwest monsoon



Stranded tourists being evacuated by the NDRF from the landslide affected area following heavy rain in Nainital

will withdraw completely from the entire country around October 26, paving the way for

the commencement of the northeast monsoon. There will be rainfall activity over Kerala,

Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, coastal and south Karnataka during October 20-24.

## 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 want 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.

## Denied bail, Aryan moves Bombay HC

TN 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 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 Merchant 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 roz-



nama be supplied to advocates and SPP," 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.

# Ellenabad bypoll, a major challenge for ruling BJP in Haryana

**NISHU MAHAJAN**  
■ CHANDIGARH

The bypoll to Ellenabad assembly constituency in Haryana's Sirsa district is not just another election in the Jatland but is bound to have a long-term impact on state's politics amidst the ongoing farmers' agitation against the three central farm laws.

The Ellenabad bypoll, which is scheduled to be held on October 30, is witnessing a high-stakes triangular fight with ruling BJP-JJP joint candidate Govind Kanda, Congress candidate Pawan Beniwal and Indian National Lok Dal nominee Abhay Singh Chautala in the fray. A total of 19 candidates are contesting the bypoll on the assembly seat. The seat became vacant in

January after INLD's lone MLA Abhay Chautala had resigned in protest against the three farm laws. The outcome of the bypoll on November 2 will be particularly crucial for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, which will complete its seven years tenure including two years of coalition government in Haryana this month.

A favorable outcome for the BJP would cement Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's place as a stalwart politician in Haryana at a time when the ruling saffron party is on a Chief Minister changing spree in the country.

A victory would not only come as a shot in the arm for Khattar but will also project the political mood in the state in the wake of farmers' agitation for more than ten months. The

protesting farmers have been camping at three border points of Delhi -- Singhu, Tikri (along Haryana), and Ghazipur -- since November last year demanding a repeal of the three farm laws enacted by the BJP led Central Government in September last year.

While the opposition parties-Congress and INLD- are pinning their hopes on the anti-BJP sentiment due to the farmers' protest, the saffron party has played a non-Jat card in Ellenabad, which is known as Chautala family's stronghold.

The Jat- dominated Ellenabad is a rural assembly segment having more than 1.8 lakh voters. BJP has fielded a non-Jat Govind Kanda in an attempt to polarize the non-Jat voters against the two promi-

nent Jat candidates in the fray. BJP nominee's strong rivals are two Jat candidates namely Congress Pawan Beniwal, who had unsuccessfully contested on Ellenabad assembly seat on a BJP's ticket in 2014 and 2019 assembly polls while INLD's Ajay Chautala is eyeing his fourth straight win from the Ellenabad assembly constituency.

In 2019 assembly polls, Abhay Chautala had won the Ellenabad seat and got 57,000 votes, the then BJP's nominee Pawan Beniwal polled 45,000 votes, Congress candidate Bharat Singh secured over 35,000 and JJP's OP Sihag barely got 6,569 votes.

BJP's Govind Kanda had unsuccessfully contested the assembly elections in 2014 and 2019 from Rania segment

in Sirsa district. His brother, founder of Haryana Lokhit Party (HLP) and Sirsa MLA Gopal Kanda has been supporting the BJP in the 90-member Haryana Vidhan Sabha.

This time, the saffron party hopes to get support of non-Jat voters and JJP's Jat base in Ellenabad to ensure its victory. However, the caste equations will not be enough for the ruling party to make it sail through the bypoll. The ongoing farmers' protest, which is a key election issue, is a major challenge for the BJP.

The farmers' unions have made an appeal to the voters to boycott the ruling party's candidate in the bypoll. Not only this, the BJP leaders and workers are finding it tough to campaign in the rural belt due to

farmers' call to boycott their entry in several villages. For the high-pitched electoral battle, the Chief Minister, his Cabinet Colleagues and BJP senior leaders will begin intensive election campaigning from October 20 onwards.

As per the campaigning strategy chalked out by the saffron party, the Chief Minister, Cabinet Ministers, party MLAs, chairmen of Boards and Corporations and senior leaders will take part in various programmes to be held at village level in next one week to reach out to the voters in Ellenabad. Terming the farmers' agitation as "totally political", the campaign of BJP leaders is focused on achievements of the government in the last seven years. Political observers say the Ellenabad

bypoll won't be a cakewalk for any political party. But for the BJP, the outcome will not only reflect its standing among various castes and communities amid the farmers' protest but would be seen as a sign of Chief Minister's popularity in the state.

Winning the Ellenabad bypoll would not mean much numerically to the ruling BJP, which has 40 MLAs and its alliance partner-JJP has 10 MLAs, placing the coalition government in a comfortable position in the 90-member assembly.

But being in power in Haryana for almost seven years now including two years of coalition government, the BJP won't want to lose the bypoll as it would be a major setback to the party's image after its defeat

in Baroda bypoll last year, the political observers say. The last bypoll in Haryana held in Sonapat's Baroda assembly segment did not go well for the saffron party.

The BJP-JJP's development and corruption-free slogan had failed to woo the voters as the opposition Congress had managed to retain its Baroda assembly constituency seat despite a tough fight put up by ruling's heavyweight candidate Yogeshwar Dutt who had lost the election the second time.

The Congress had linked its victory in Baroda assembly seat to the prevailing unrest in the farming community in the state over three agriculture laws. The main opposition in Haryana-Congress-has 31 MLAs in State Assembly.

## Punjab Congress MLA, his security guard trash youth for questioning on his work

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Punjab Congress MLA, his security personnel, and supporters in the poll-bound Punjab were caught on camera thrashing a youth, for questioning the legislator what work he had done for his village.

Reacting sharply, the Shiromani Akali Dal demanded registration of a criminal case against the Congress MLA Joginder Pal, besides seeking his immediate arrest. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) dubbed the incident as the "intolerant face of the Congress".

In the video widely shared on the social media platforms, Bhoja MLA Joginder Pal, his two security personnel, and some of the supporters, were seen thrashing a youth when he questioned the legislator.

Pal, in the video, was seen addressing a group of people in his constituency, that falls in Pathankot district.

A youth, later identified as Harsh Kumar, could be heard questioning the MLA as to what work he had done during his tenure. On this, one of MLAs security personnels tried to lead the youth away from the event.

Later, Pal could be heard asking the youth to come and speak to him. As the youth came near, the MLA gave him the microphone to speak, and the youth asked, "Tu ki kita (what have you done?)".

Losing his cool, enraged Pal could be seen slapping the youth several times in the video. Two of his security personnel and some supporters too then join the lawmaker in thrashing the youth.

Harsh Kumar later said that he had just asked a question but was badly beaten up by Pal and a few others. His mother said that Harsh had only asked the MLA as to what works he had done for the village and demanded justice for him. There was no reaction from the MLA.

From the ruling Congress, Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa said that a legislator has to serve the people and that the MLA should not have behaved in such a way. BJP IT cell's national head Amit Malviya, sharing the video, hit out at AICC leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka

## IMMEDIATELY BOOK, ARREST MLA FOR ASSAULTING SC YOUTH: SAD

Strongly condemning the conduct of Congress MLA Joginder Pal, SAD on Wednesday demanded registration of a criminal case against the Congress legislator and his arrest for "attacking and thrashing a SC youth who was demanding his right of job as per Congress party's promise of ghar ghar naukri".

SAD spokesman and MLA Pawan Kumar Tinnu said that such a "dastardly attack" on a youth, who was simply asking for his right, was not tolerable in a democratic society.

"Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi should prove that he is ready to secure the interests of the Scheduled Caste community by ordering the arrest of Joginder Pal immediately. If he does not do this, SAD cadre will gherao Joginder Pal and take him to task for insulting the SC youth," said Tinnu. SAD leader said that this was necessary to send out a clear signal that atrocities against youth would not be tolerated at any cost.

"Congress party should fulfil the promises made to the youth instead of attacking them for asking for their rights. The Chief Minister should come out with a time frame to implement all the promises made to the youth before the imposition of the code of conduct in the State," he added.

Gandhi Vadra. "After Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Vadra turned out journalists from their PCs for asking factual questions, it is turn of Joginder Singh, Congress MLA from Boha in Pathankot, to thrash a young man black and blue for just questioning him. This is the intolerant face of Congress (sic)," said Malviya in a tweet.

Pathankot police has not registered any case. A police spokesperson said that so far no complaint has been received with regard to the incident.

## Punjab Govt constitutes SIT to probe Singhu border lynching

**Chandigarh:** On the directions of Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, the state Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Iqbal Preet Singh Sahota on Wednesday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the allegations of sister of Lakhbir Singh, who was murdered by Nihang Sikhs at Singhu border.

The SIT has been constituted under the chairmanship of ADGP-cum-Director, Bureau of Investigation Punjab Varinder Kumar. DIG Ferozpur Range Inderbir Singh and Tarn Taran SSP Harvinder Singh Virk are the other two members.

As per the information, Raj Kaur, a resident of Kassel (presently residing in Cheema Kalan) in Tam Taran district, had alleged that her brother Lakhbir Singh, was allured by some unknown persons and taken to Singhu (New Delhi-Haryana border), where he was murdered by some Nihang Sikhs on October 15, 2021, on sacrilege charges.

As per the order, the ADGP-cum-Director Bureau of Investigation Varinder Kumar may co-opt any other police officers posted in the State for enquiry as per needs and requirements. ADGP Kumar would also be at liberty to obtain support and assistance of any other Wing or Unit of Punjab Police in this regard.

## Punjab CM greets people on Pargat Diwas of Bhagwan Valmiki

### Announces grant of ₹5 cr annually for Bhagwan Valmiki's chair in GNDU

**PNS ■ RAM TIRATH (AMRITSAR)**

To perpetuate the rich legacy of Bhagwan Valmiki in every nook and corner of the world, Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Wednesday announced a budgetary grant of Rs five crore annually for already existing Bhagwan Valmiki's Chair in Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU).

In recognition to the immense contribution of Valmiki community in the overall development of the State, the Chief Minister also announced to establish a chair in the name of legendary Sikh Warrior Shaheed Baba Jiwan Singh (Bhai Jaita ji) and a devout companion of Dasmesh Pita Guru Gobind Singh, who carried the severed head (sheesh) of Guru Tegh Bahadur from Chandni Chowk, Delhi, to Anandpur Sahib braving all odds amid tyranny unleashed by the then Mughal regime.

The Chief Minister, addressing the gathering during the state-level function, greeted the people on the auspicious occasion of pragat divas of 'Karuna Sagar' Bhagwan Valmiki. The Chief Minister said that the upcoming Baba Jiwan Singh Ji's chair would also

be given an annual grant of Rs five crore every year to undertake extensive research on the teachings and philosophy of the iconic Sikh warrior. Exhorting the people to follow the path and high ideals shown by Bhagwan Valmiki so as to carve out an egalitarian society, the Chief Minister urged the people to further strengthen the ethos of peace, harmony, brotherhood and amity, which was the need of the hour.

Making a firm resolve to fill over one lakh vacant posts in different departments shortly, Channi said that all these vacancies would be filled purely on the basis of merit in a fair, impartial and transparent manner. He also warned the aspirants and their parents not to fall prey to the nefarious designs of unscrupulous elements by giving them money.

The Chief Minister said that the Cabinet had recently taken a landmark decision to abolish the prevalent system to recruit Group-D employees through outsourcing and in future such employees would be recruited only on a regular basis like other categories of employees.

Taking a dig at those who blame his Government for giving freebies at cost of State's exchequer, the Chief Minister said that he was crystal clear in his approach to spend people's money on people's welfare. Slamming SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal and former Minister Bikram Singh Majithia for their open loot of state exchequer, Channi said:

## CHANNI ANNOUNCES MEMORIAL GATE, STADIUM IN MEMORY OF MARTYR MANDEEP SINGH

**Chatha (Batala):** Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi announced construction of a memorial gate and a stadium in memory of martyr Naik Mandeep Singh who attained martyrdom at Jammu and Kashmir during an anti-insurgency operation.



The Chief Minister, accompanied by Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Rana KP Singh and Rural Development Minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, paid visit to the ancestral house of the martyr and expressed his condolences with the family.

Channi, while paying tributes to the martyr, recalled the heroism with which he laid down his life during the operation. He said that the supreme sacrifice made by the braveheart will always inspire the coming generations to protect the unity, integrity, and sover-

eignty of the country. "The unparalleled sacrifice of martyr Naik Mandeep Singh has made all the countrymen feel proud for which the entire country is indebted to him and his family," said the Chief Minister, adding that to perpetuate his great sacrifice, the Punjab Government will construct a memorial gate and a stadium in his memory. "This memorial gate and stadium will always remain a source of inspiration to infuse the spir-

it of nationalism and patriotism amongst the coming generations," he added. Pointing out further, Channi said that the memorial and stadium will be a humble but befitting tribute to the martyr by the State Government.

He also assured the family that his Government is fully with the family in this hour of grief. The Chief Minister also handed over the cheque of ex-gratia grant to the bereaved family.

"At least, I am spending Government funds for the betterment of poor and needy, as compared to Akalis who plundered state through illegal means in pursuance of their personal narrow interests."

Ridiculing Aam Aadmi Party for misleading the people by making false promises in the guise of aam aadmi, Channi said that Congress high command had actually demonstrated its will to install a com-

mon man with humble background as Chief Minister in the letter and spirit. Conceding the long pending demand of the Safai Sewaks, the Chief Minister announced that these employees would be given a weekly off besides making them entitled for all gazetted holidays at par with other government employees. Realising plight of poor and economically weaker sections of society, the Chief Minister also said that

detailed instructions had already been given to all Panchayats to allot five-Marla plots to houseless people and complete entire process shortly. The Chief Minister also announced that he and his Cabinet colleagues and MLAs would personally light earthen pots (diyas) on day of Deepawali to handover symbolic possessions to eligible beneficiaries under Basera Scheme.

## Punjab Assembly Speaker seeks welfare policy for EWS

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Rana KP Singh on Wednesday sought a special welfare scheme and policy for the economically weaker sections (EWS) of the society, irrespective of the caste, creed, colour, or religion they belong to. "There is an urgent need for such a scheme in view of the fallout of the COVID pandemic that has economically ruined and devastated the people across the communities, particularly the urban areas," said Rana KP. Rana KP also congratulated the Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi for the number of welfare schemes he had

announced for the people across Punjab within a short period of time. However, he observed that a large section of the society continued to remain ignored and marginalized since it does not come under any welfare scheme of the government.

"It is for this reason that I have a suggestion for the Government that economically weaker sections of the society need to be identified and provided with relief on the pattern of other weaker sections of the society so that nobody is left out," he added. Moreover, the Speaker said, he has been receiving scores of representations and delegations from the people badly affected by the

COVID pandemic. "People have lost highly paid jobs. Factories have shut down rendering so many unemployed," he pointed out, while adding that well-to-do families have been reduced to poverty overnight and they do not see any ray of hope.

Suggesting some relief measures, Rana KP said that the Government can institute a special time-bound survey to identify the EWS of the society, who are spread mostly across the urban areas and start providing relief and compensation to them. "The pursuit of progress must be inclusive and include everyone, while keeping economic welfare of people also in mind," he observed.

## Uttarakhand tragedy: Haryana Government to give ₹5 crore to Uttarakhand

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Wednesday announced to provide financial assistance of Rs 5 crore to the Uttarakhand Government amid natural calamity in the region.

Khattar said that there has been a huge loss of life and property due to the disaster in Uttarakhand. Expressing deep condolences and grief on the loss of many lives in this calamity, the Chief Minister showed solidarity towards the families of the deceased.

The Chief Minister said that all possible help would be provided by the Haryana Government to the Uttarakhand government in this hour of crisis. Apart from financial assistance, tents, essential clothes and medicines will also be sent by the State Government, he added.

## Keeping Punjabi out of main subjects by CBSE very unfortunate: Pargat Singh

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Terming as unfortunate the decision to keep Punjabi language out of the main subjects in the datesheet of Classes 10th and 12th, released by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Punjab Education and Higher Education and Languages Minister Pargat Singh on Wednesday appealed to the central board to reconsider its decision.

The Minister termed the CBSE's decision to include all the regional languages in the minor subjects as a

"conspiracy to wean students away from their mother tongue". He said that the step is a gross injustice to the students of the State and is in total contravention to the spirit of the Indian Constitution.

Divulging more, the Minister said that at least in the concerned states, the mother tongue must be included in the main subjects such as in Punjab, it is Punjabi. "If need be, I would call upon the Union Education Minister to impress upon him to roll back the decision," he added.

## Punjab Police foils a major weapon and drugs smuggling bid via Indo-Pak border

**22 pistols, ammunition, 934 gms heroin recovered**

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/TARN TARAN**

In an intelligence-led operation, Punjab Police on Wednesday recovered huge arms and ammunition besides 934 grams of heroin during a search operation near the Indo-Pak border fencing in Tarn Taran district.

The operation was jointly conducted by Border Security Force (BSF) and the Counter Intelligence, Amritsar, in area of BOP Mianwali Hithaar, Khemkarn sector. "The Police had received a secret information that some Pak border operatives have concealed a huge consignment of arms and heroin, following which Counter Intelligence, Amritsar, was sent

to the spot and a search operation was planned with BSF authorities," said the officiating Director General of Police (DGP) Iqbal Preet Singh Sahota. Sahota said that during the combing operation, the teams have recovered 22 pistols (most of them .30 bore Star mark) along with 44 magazines and 100 live rounds besides a packet of heroin (weighing 934 grams) packed in a black coloured kit bag concealed in a paddy field.

During the preliminary investigations, it has come to light that as 'conceal and clear' has been the most practised modus operandi of Pak smugglers, this consignment was placed by them in Indian territory across the fence and it was supposed to be retrieved by their Indian associates. The DGP said that a case, dated

October 19, 2021, under sections 511 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), sections 21, 28, 29 of the NDPS Act, section 25 of the Arms Act and section 14-Finance Act, has been registered at Police Station SSOC Amritsar. Efforts are being made to ascertain the identity of the Pak end as well as their Indian links who were to pick this consignment, he added. Pertinently, this is not for the first time that the anti-national elements have tried to push such consignments through various channels across the border. In the past also, huge caches of illegal weapons have been recovered by the Counter Intelligence wing from different accused, which were meant to disturb peace and harmony of the state. On June 10, 2021, a consignment of foreign-made 48 pistols was recovered from Jagjit Singh alias Jaggu.

## Cong downplays Capt's announcement

**Rawat says no harm to Cong; Randhawa calls him opportunist**

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

A day after former Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh's declaration of floating his own political party while expressing hope for a seat arrangement with the BJP if farmers' issue is resolved in their interest, the Congress party on Wednesday downplayed development by claiming that move would not affect party in state.

At same time, the state Congress leaders lashed out at Capt Amarinder for betraying state and its people, by being hand-in-glove with the BJP and Akalis since all these years. Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, who has once been Capt Amarinder's staunch loyalist, hit out at Congress veteran call-

ing him an "opportunist" and backstabber. Punjab Congress party affairs in-charge Harish Rawat on Wednesday claimed that Capt Amarinder's announcement will not hurt Congress in state, but would actually divide votes of rivals in state. "Our votes will depend on the performance of Channi government."

The way Channi has started, it has created a good impression before Punjab and entire nation," he said. Talking on Capt Amarinder, Rawat said his statement was really shocking, and it seems that he has killed 'secular Amarinder' within him. On other hand, Deputy Chief Minister and senior Congress leader Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa accused Capt Amarinder of being "hand in glove" with BJP and backstabbing Congress. Calling two-time former Chief Minister an "opportunist",

Randhawa said that Capt Amarinder had always worked with only his and his family's interests in mind. "Captain Saab has betrayed (Gandhi) family that gave various positions and always honoured him."

Had Congress not given its support, he would not have remained the Chief Minister of Punjab for nine-and-a-half years. Now he calls it worst party," said Randhawa. Randhawa, who hurled personal accusations at former Chief Minister, also blamed him for Centre's unilateral move to extend jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF) from 15 km to 50 km, from border.

Accusing former Chief Minister of betraying Punjab and siding with those who never thought about welfare of state, Randhawa said: "Punjab does not fear Pakistan or

China. If Punjab today faces any threat, then it is from Amarinder Singh." Cabinet Minister Pargat Singh said that Capt Amarinder was in league with the BJP for the past two-and-a-half years. "I have been saying this since then, but many in the party did not believe me at that time. The truth is now coming out," said the Minister, who is a confidant of Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu.

### MODI TRYING TO PREVENT FORMATION OF AAP GOVT BY FIELDING CAPT THROUGH FOURTH PARTY: AAP

AAP's national spokesperson and Punjab affairs co-in-charge Raghav Chadha said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was making every effort to prevent AAP from forming a government in Punjab. "While

three parties BJP, Akali Dal Badal, and Congress party are failing to stop AAP from forming a government in Punjab, Prime Minister has fielded his beloved Capt Amarinder Singh through a fourth party to prevent formation of AAP government," he said. Appealing to people of Punjab, Chadha said that even in 2017, the BJP and Akali Dal Badal had given all votes of their workers to Congress party to stop formation of AAP government.

"This has been said many times by senior Akali Dal leader Naresh Gujral and Congress leaders. Even today, an attempt is being made to do so. When three parties together could not stop the formation of AAP government in Punjab, efforts are being made to stop it by forming a fourth party; but people of Punjab want to make Punjab prosperous," he said.

# Value addition will benefit tribals: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Processing units will add value to forest produce collected by tribes in forest areas of Bastar and Surguja because these benefits are denied by the traders when they sell them to other states, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said on Wednesday.

He was addressing the Chhattisgarh Herbal's Central Processing Centre foundation laying and Ayurvedic Medicine Unit bhoomi pujan event at Jamgaon in Durg.

The Chief Minister announced establishing a hospital, opening a paddy procurement centre and con-



Constructing a rest house. He handed over laptops to two blind girls, Mainsavri Raghuvanshi and Mandakani Raghuvanshi. He

also released a book on the qualities of millet, an official statement said.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister said that 54 minor forest produce are being collected and these are procured by the state government.

The plan is to establish both processing units at 83 hectares of land. Another 17.57 hectares of land will be allocated to private entrepreneurs to establish the forest minor produce-based industries as part of Food Park. It will provide employment to around 5,000 people.

He urged the people to protect the forest and plant more fruit bearing trees like mahuwa, mango and others.



Naxalite hotbed Dantewada is transforming rapidly. 636 surrendered Maoists have been rehabilitated by the Chhattisgarh government; 120 have got government jobs. A residential premise named after Mahendra Karma has been built for them. It includes a school for their children. Pioneer Photo

# Govt to provide expensive health services to poor



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

available in these stores. He said the cost of

healthcare services has been a cause of concern the world over. People are pushed to debt due to medical expenses.

## Medical Stores open

The Chhattisgarh government is making consistent efforts to make expensive health services available and accessible to the poorest of the poor, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said on Wednesday.

The Shri Dhanwantri Medical Store Scheme launched earlier in the day is one of the many schemes launched for this purpose, Baghel said.

He was addressing the inauguration of 84 shops under the Dhanwantri scheme virtually, an official communication said.

He also dedicated a home medicine kit priced at Rs 290 (Original MRP Rs 691) and a travel medicine kit for Rs 130. These will be

Under the Dhanwantri Generic Medical Store scheme, 15 medical stores have been opened in Durg district and Janjgir-Champa district each, 6 each in Dhamtari, Korba and Raigarh, 5 in Rajnandgaon, 3 each in Bilaspur, Kondagaon, Sukma and Bijapur, 2 each in Raipur, Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, Surajpur and Jashpur and one each store in Mahasamund, Balodabazar-Bhatapara, Gariaband, Bemetara, Kabirdham, Sarguja, Balrampur-Ramanujan, Bastar, Narayanpur, Kanker and Dantewada districts.

The Urban Administration and Development department plans to open 188 medical stores in 169 cities in the next phase.

These stores will sell 251 types of generic medicines of 20 reputed brands and 27 surgical products. Sanjeevani products of the Forest Department, cosmetics products and baby food will also be sold.

# 'BJP, RSS behind riots in Congress-ruled states'



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

non-BJP ruled states.

Baghel was responding to Union Minister Fagga Singh Kulaste's statement that riots are common in Congress-ruled states.

The BJP and the RSS disrupt

communal harmony and fan hatred among different communities by evoking emotions leading to conflict, he said. They have "mastery" in this area and are spreading poison in the society, he added.

Baghel said the BJP doesn't know how to rule and disarray in the government is seen at the Centre. They are unable to handle the situation in the country, he said.

Commenting on Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi's announcement that 40 percent of Assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh will be reserved for women, Baghel said a decision in Chhattisgarh will be taken when the time comes.

# Chhattisgarh thwarts Central scheme for generic medicine: BJP



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Kendra in the state and now launching the scheme in another name.

The BJP's Convenor of the Medical Cell, Dr. Vimal Chopra, said the Jan Jan Aushadhi Kendra scheme was launched by the Central government in 2016.

Chhattisgarh had 254 Jan Aushadhi Kendras, out of which 100 have been closed, he said in a statement. He said the state government did not provide physical resources for the Kendras.

The BJP on Wednesday accused the Chhattisgarh government of not providing the Centre resources and infrastructure to run the Jan Aushadhi

# Preparations on for national tribal dance



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Raipur will host a three-day dance festival from October 28 to 30. Tribal folk dancers from across the country and from abroad will participate in the event.

Invitations are being sent to Chief Ministers and Governors, a press communiqué said.

This will be the second time Chhattisgarh is hosting the event after 2019. Last year the festival could not be held due to Covid-19.

# Prices of medicines at Dhanwantri stores announced

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The prices of some generic medicines available at the Shri Dhanwantri Generic Medical Stores, launched by Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday:

Paracetamol tablet worth Rs.10.20 will be available at Rs.3.88, Ciprofloxacin Eye/Ear Drop (Rs.39.75) at Rs.15.11, Cetirizine Tablet (Rs.18.48) at Rs.7.02, Azithromycin Tablet (Rs.70.69) at Rs.26.86, Amoxicillin Capsule (Rs.72.46) at Rs.27.53, The

stores will sell ORS (Rs.17.96) at Rs.6.82. Multivitamin Syrup (Rs.169) at Rs. 64.22, Ofloxacin-Ornidazole Tablet (Rs.145) at Rs. 55.10, Diclofenac Gel (Rs.105) at Rs.39.90, Clotrimazole Dusting Powder (Rs.116) at Rs.44.08. Miconazole Cream (Rs.90.50) at Rs.34.39, Surgical items including cotton, bandage, spirit, blood sugar testing kit, oximeter, BP machine, thermometer and vaccine, will also be sold at these stores at discounted rates.

Similarly, 69 Chhattisgarh

herbal products including powder, soap, coffee, green tea, candy, cashew, mahua laddu, honey, broom will be sold.

Shri Dhanwantri Generic Medical Store will open in the middle of a city close to a hospital.

The shops are provided to businessmen at a rate of Rs. 2 per sq. ft. in municipal areas and Re. 1 per sq. ft. per month in municipalities and nagar panchayats.

These stores have the freedom to buy medicines in the open markets. Home delivery of medicines will start in the near future.

# Flagship schemes to be reviewed today

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will chair a Collectors Conference here on Thursday to review flagship schemes of the government, it was announced on Wednesday.

An official communiqué said Baghel will review the construction of Gauthans and Rural Industrial Park, cow dung procurement, developing Gauthans as multi-activity centres, the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana and the Narva, Garva, Ghurva, Badi (NGGB) scheme.



The Chief Minister will also discuss the preparations for paddy procurement on

Baghel will review the construction of Gauthans and Rural Industrial Park, cow dung procurement, developing Gauthans as multi-activity centres, the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana and the Narva, Garva, Ghurva, Badi (NGGB)

support price, progress of Jal Jeevan Mission and prepara-

tions against a possible third wave of Covid-19.

Other issues which will be reviewed include cases under Public Service Guarantee Act, cases of conversion, Girdawari work, Nazul land, labourers registered in Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Bhumihen Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana and Swami Atmanand Schools.

The Haat Bazar Clinic Scheme, Urban Slum Health Scheme, Affordable Medicine Scheme, EWS in urban and rural areas, Sushpan Abhiyan, status of ashram-hostels and refund of money to victims of chit fund scam will also be discussed.

## GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER KHARUNG WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, BILASPUR DISTT. BILASPUR (C.G.) CORRIGENDUM No. 1

The following corrigendum has been issued to Notice Inviting Tender No. 07/SAC/ 2021-22, Dated 06.10.2021 System Tender No 84769 RAHTATOR ANICUT SCHEME.

| S.No. | Item                                                                                                                                                                              | Previous issue                  | Amendment                       |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.    | <b>Bid Start date &amp; time</b><br>(The date and time from which bidders start preparation / submission of their bid response, before this bidder's action will not be allowed.) | Date 13-10-2021<br>(Time 17:31) | Date 22-10-2021<br>(Time 17:31) |
| 2.    | <b>Bid Due date &amp; time</b><br>(The last date & time for submission of bid response, after which no bids can be submitted.)                                                    | Date 15-11-2021<br>(Time 17:30) | Date 22-11-2021<br>(Time 17:30) |
| 3.    | <b>Bid Open, Start date &amp; time</b><br>(The date of opening of Envelope- A & B online)                                                                                         | Date 16-11-2021<br>(Time 11:30) | Date 23-11-2021<br>(Time 11:30) |
| 4.    | <b>Pre-bid-meeting</b>                                                                                                                                                            | Date 25-10-2021<br>(Time 05:30) | Date 01-11-2021<br>(Time 05:30) |

All other terms and conditions of NIT are remain unchanged. Executive Engineer Advert. No.64312 dt.07.10.2021 Kharung Water Resources Division Bilaspur (C.G.) G- 6456/6 Ryp/Dtd 20.10.21

## GOVERNMENT OF CHHATTISGARH, WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER MAHANADI GODAWARI BASIN RAIPUR (C.G.) e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

eProcurement Portal: <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> (1st CALL)

System Tender No. 85044/ NIT No. : 03/SAC/2021-22, Balod, Dated: 18.10.2021 Online Tenders are invited for the following works up to 09.11.2021 at 17:30 Hour Name of work : Remodelling lining of Main Canal R.D. 0 M. to 5720 M., Construction of 02 Nos. Super passage, 04 Nos.VRB , 03 Nos Outlets Fixing of Kuwagondi Diversion Scheme of Block Dondi and District Balod.

Probable Amount of Contract:- Rs. 222.09 Lakhs The details can be viewed and downloaded online directly from the Government of Chhattisgarh Integrated e-Procurement Portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) from Date 26.10.2021, at 17:31 Hours (IST) onwards.

NOTE :- All eligible/intrested contractors/bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the Integrated e-procurement portal (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) and get approval on specific vendor class from PWD under Centralized Contractor/Supplier Registration in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process.

Executive Engineer Water Resources Division, Balod (C.G.) For, Chief Engineer, Mahanadi Godavari Basin, Raipur (C.G.) G- 6456/6 Ryp/Dtd 20.10.21

# Events lined up to celebrate 100 cr job 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,

## 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.

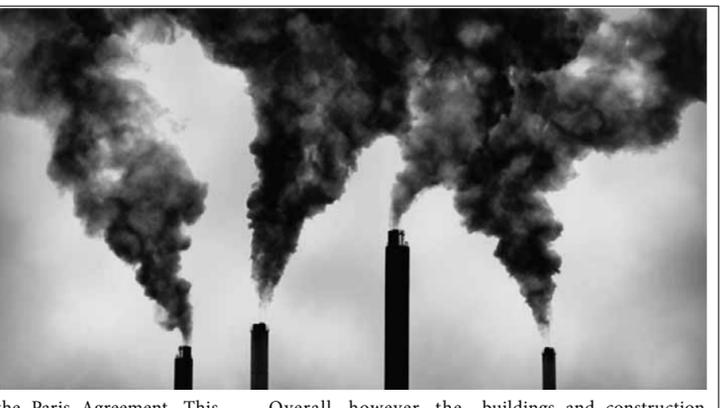
While the level of emissions within the sector are 10 per cent lower than in 2015, reaching lows not seen since 2007, this was largely due to lockdowns, slowing of economies, difficulties households and businesses faced in maintaining and affording energy access and a fall in construction activity. Efforts 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.

An estimated 20 per cent of the country's 1.4 billion people have received both shots. By contrast with the busiest festive season of the year upon us, an estimated 51 per cent have been given just one dose so far, which gives an estimated 30 to

50 per cent protection against the virus.

The Government has said a "sizeable number of eligible beneficiaries" have not taken their second dose. Meanwhile, the Ministry said that the country has reported 14,623 fresh Covid cases on Wednesday, 12 per cent higher than Tuesday and registered 197 deaths in the last 24 hours.

## '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 swab 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 as forecast 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

## 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.

The case relates to conspiracy for undertaking violent terrorist acts in Jammu and Kashmir and other major cities by cadres of proscribed terrorist organisations Laskkar-e-Tayabba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Al Badr and similar other outfits and their affiliates including The Resistance Front (TRF) and People Against Fascist Forces (PAFF)

## 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.

"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 Force (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 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 transactions, 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 assistance 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**

(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 window 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 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 commercial 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 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.



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.

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.

# 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 she is not uttering a single word on this."

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."

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."

# 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 message to all the SPs and senior police officers in the state to stay alert, considering the communal unrest in Bangladesh.

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

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Valmiki Jayanti 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 Jagdishpur 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 Jagdishpur 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 in-charge of the party, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's motorcade heading to the house of a Dalit youth who died in police custody in Agra on Wednesday 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 Jagdishpur 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 Vadra 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 Vadra was arrested nor detained. "Ms Vadra was taken to reserve police lines after her convoy disrupted traffic movement on Agra-Lucknow Expressway. She was later released in the evening." In another video, UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lalu asked police officers whether Section 144 was imposed in Kushinagar where the prime minister addressed a huge crowd.

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



PNS ■ KOLKATA

After Uttarakhand it is the turn of the eastern mountains of North Bengal with cloud bursts and heavy rains bringing lives in most towns of 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 to landslides and flash flood, sources said adding heavy rains in Bhutan had caused rivers like Jaldhaka to overflow. Two children were drawn in Kalimpong flowing flash flood. "There has been heavy rains for the past three days with Siliguri witnessing 245 mm of rain... Darjeeling getting more than 200 mm, Kalimpong 199 mm, Jalpaiguri getting 151 and Malabar witnessing 320 mm rain," Pares 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 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 Arbaz Merchant 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 SPP," 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. 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 contention, 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. IANS



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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 irritating 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



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

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 Haq 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-

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'.

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.)

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

## 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.

Jayanthy 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

## SOUNDBITE

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

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## 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 Murlu 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

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



RAVI CHANDER KOCHHAR

(The writer, a retired Rear Admiral, is Group Pro Vice Chancellor & OSD (HR), Amity University, Uttar Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

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 among 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.'

# Russia hosts Af talks, calls for inclusive Govt

MOSCOW: Russia hosted talks on Afghanistan on Wednesday involving senior representatives of the Taliban and other factions, a round of diplomacy that underlines Moscow's clout.

Opening the talks, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov emphasized that "forming a really inclusive government fully reflecting the interests of not only all ethnic groups but all political forces of the country" is necessary to achieve a stable peace in Afghanistan.

Russia had worked for years to establish contacts with the Taliban, even though it has designated the group a terrorist organization in 2003 and never took it of the list. Any contact with such groups is punishable under Russian law, but the Foreign Ministry has responded to questions about the apparent contradiction by saying that its exchanges with the Taliban are essential for helping stabilize Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union fought a 10-year war in Afghanistan that ended with its troops withdrawing in 1989. In recent years, Moscow has made a strong comeback as an influential power broker in international talks on Afghanistan, hosting the Taliban representatives and members of other

factions for bilateral and multilateral meetings.

Unlike many other countries, Russia hasn't evacuated its embassy in Kabul and its ambassador has maintained regular contacts with the Taliban after they took over the Afghan capital in August.

Lavrov in his opening speech at the conference commended the Taliban for their efforts to stabilize the situation in the country and ensure the operation of state structures.

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin noted that there must be no rush in officially recognizing the Taliban as the new rulers of Afghanistan, but emphasized the need to engage in talks with them.

At the same time, he emphasized the security challenges posed by the Islamic State group and other militants based in northern Afghanistan, and noted that drug trafficking from Afghanistan will continue to present a challenge.

Russia has vowed to provide military assistance to its ex-Soviet allies in Central Asia to help counter the threats, and held a series of joint drills in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan that neighbor Afghanistan.

Another sweeping military exercise in Tajikistan

involving 5,000 troops, more than 700 military vehicles and combat jets has started this week. **AP**

## Pak Army chief urges world to avert humanitarian crisis in Afghan

**Islamabad:** Pakistan Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa on Wednesday urged the international community to get together to stop a brewing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, which is now ruled by the Taliban.

Gen Bajwa made the appeal during his meeting with Stefano Pontecorvo, Senior Civil Representative NATO, who called on him at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, the army said in a statement.

During their meeting, matters related to mutual interest, peace and stability in the region and the Afghanistan situation were discussed, it said.

"There is a need for global convergence on Afghanistan to avoid a humanitarian crisis," Gen Bajwa said.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in the Afghan situation including successful evacuation operations and efforts for regional stability. He also assured to enhance cooperation with Pakistan on Afghanistan and regular engagement by the NATO countries for all bilateral issues. Pakistan has been trying to convince the world to engage with the Taliban in Afghanistan as it fears a humanitarian crisis in the neighbouring country due to looming shortages of food and other essential commodities. The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan on August 15, two weeks before the US was set to complete its troop withdrawal after a costly two-decade war. **PTI**

# Protesters in Bangladesh demand law to protect minorities

## They condemn violence against Hindus

**DHAKA:** Demanding that the Bangladesh government should enact a new law to ensure religious freedom for everyone, protesters and academicians across the country condemned the mob attacks on the Hindu community and vandalism of temples and idols during Durga Puja festivities.

Attacks on Hindus and their temples have intensified in Bangladesh since last Wednesday after an alleged blasphemous post surfaced on social media during the Durga Puja celebrations.

On late Sunday night, a mob damaged 66 houses and set on fire at least 20 homes of Hindus in Bangladesh.

Condemning the attacks on the Hindu community, protests were held across the country for the sixth day on Tuesday, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported on Wednesday.

Speakers at various programmes demanded that the perpetrators of the violence be brought to justice, as well as other measures to protect minorities in Bangladesh, it said.

The Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) demanded exemplary punishment for those involved in the attacks on Hindu temples and Durga Puja venues across the country.

They also urged the government to enact a new law to ensure religious freedom for everyone.

Over a hundred teachers from various departments of the university participated in the programme and made a human chain, voicing the demands, at the Dhaka University campus.

Condemning the violence, DU Vice-Chancellor M Akhtaruzzaman said: "The Durga Puja celebration of this country was a model of secularism for the entire world. This festival is supposed to be open

to people of all religions. The rise of communal evil in various parts of the country is disgraceful and cannot be tolerated. We urge the government to identify the perpetrators immediately and bring them to book." According to M Wahiduzzaman, former VC of Noakhali Science and Technology University, the government should immediately enact a law that effectively discourages communal violence.

"Compensation must be ensured for all the victims of the recent attacks," he added.

Former Vice-Chancellor of Jagannath University Mijanur Rahman said perpetrators of communal violence often get away without punishment, and this needs to be stopped.

Leaders and activists of the Progressive Student Alliance and the Khulna University Teachers' Association also condemned the violence against the Hindu community.

Students and teachers of Dhaka University also staged a street drama titled 'Dekhte Ki Pao, Purche Bangla? (Can you see that Bangla is burning?) to protest the attacks.

Rights activists under the banner 'Poets, litterateur, artists and journalists against communal terrorism' organised a rally in front of the National Museum at Shahbagh on Tuesday. **PTI**

to people of all religions. The rise of communal evil in various parts of the country is disgraceful and cannot be tolerated. We urge the government to identify the perpetrators immediately and bring them to book." According to M Wahiduzzaman, former VC of Noakhali Science and Technology University, the government should immediately enact a law that effectively discourages communal violence.

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# Vladimir Putin orders week-long paid holiday as Covid cases soar in Russia

**Moscow:** Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday ordered a nationwide week-long paid holiday to curb Covid infections in Europe's worst affected country and urged Russians to show "responsibility" and get vaccinated.

Putin approved a government plan to declare a non-working week across the country from October 30 as Russia registered a record 1,028 coronavirus deaths in a single day.

"The main aim is to protect the lives and health of our citizens," the 69-year-old Kremlin chief said during a televised meeting.

He said the severity of the outbreak in Russia was linked to the country's vaccination rates that are "unfortunately" low.

Infection rates have soared in recent weeks amid a stalled vaccination campaign, with only 35 per cent of the country fully inoculated despite several widely available vaccines including Sputnik V.

Putin said he was surprised by how many Russians were refusing the vaccine, even among his "close friends."

"It's strange. People with a good education, scientific degrees... I just don't understand what is happening."

Putin has made numerous pleas for Russians to get Covid jabs, and on Wednesday once again called on people to get immunised.

"Please, show responsibility," he said.

On Wednesday, the country recorded over 34,000 new virus cases and a total of 226,353 fatalities -- the highest death toll on the European continent. Russian authorities have been accused of vastly downplaying the scale of the pandemic, and Putin told regional authorities not to under-report the number of virus cases, calling it "dangerous."

Putin has introduced paid holidays during coronavirus peaks before, most recently in May. The new non-working week will coincide with national school holidays.

Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said the new restrictions were tough but necessary. **AFP**

# Iran urges UN action against Israeli threats to n-programme

**Tehran:** Iranian Ambassador to the UN Majid Takht Ravanchi has called for an action by the UN Security Council (UNSC) to tackle rising Israeli threats to Tehran's nuclear programme.

In a letter to the UNSC on Tuesday, Takht Ravanchi said over the past months, the intensity of Israel's "provocative and adventurist threats" to Iran's nuclear programme have consistently grown and reached an alarming level, Xinhua reported on Wednesday citing Tasnim news agency.

The Iranian envoy referred to the latest remarks by Israeli senior military officials of "operational plans against Iran's nuclear programme", saying that "such systematic explicit and public threats by the Israeli regime against a founding member of the United Nations constitute flagrant violations of international law". Takht Ravanchi warned against any possible military act of Israel against Iran and its nuclear programme, stressing that Iran reserves the right to self-defence to decisively respond to any threat. **IANS**

# Bus bombs kill 14 in Syria capital shells elsewhere kill 10

**Damascus:** Two bombs attached to a bus carrying Syrian troops exploded in Damascus during the morning rush hour Wednesday, a military official said. Fourteen people were killed in the attack, one of the deadliest in the capital in years.

While the Syrian government's decade-long conflict with insurgents continues in parts of the country including the rebel-held northwest, the bombings in Damascus have become exceedingly rare since President Bashar Assad's troops pushed opposition fighters from the capital's suburbs in 2018.

The explosions, which also left several wounded, happened at a busy intersection, near a main bus transfer point where commuters and schoolchildren typically converge. After the blasts, Syrian state TV showed footage of smoke rising from a charred bus as soldiers hosed down the vehicle and onlookers flocked to a nearby bridge to watch.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but several insurgent and jihadist groups that seek to overthrow Assad are active in Syria.

Separately, rescue workers reported 10 people were killed, including four children and a woman, in government shelling of a town in the last rebel enclave in the country's northwest. The UN Deputy Regional Humanitarian Coordinator Mark Cutts described as "shocking" the reports of the shelling that hit a market and roads near schools as students were heading to classes.

In addition to the four children killed, their teacher also died, according to UNICEF, the UN children's agency.

"Today's violence is yet another reminder that the war in Syria has not come to an end. Civilians, among them many children, keep bearing the brunt of a brutal decade-long conflict," the agency said. "Attacks on civilians including children are a violation of international humanitarian law." **AP**

**OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER-II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI**  
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

**PROCLAMATION OF SALE**

Notice Under Rule 38 of The Second Schedule to The Income Tax Act, 1961 Read With Section 25(a) The Recovery of Debts Due to Banks & Financial Institutions Act, 1993.

**RC No. 312/2014 Dated: 09.09.2021**

**In the matter of: ICICI BANK V/S BHARAT SOMASTAMB**

To, **CD#**  
Bharat Somastamb S/o Sh. Krishan Gopal Somastamb  
R/o House No. 523, Sector-21C Faridabad, Haryana- 121001.  
Also at: Bharat Enterprises G1/203A, Indera Enclave, Sector-21-D, Faridabad- 121002.

Whereas in execution of bid **RC No.312/2014** dated **28.08.2014** in **OA No.308/2013** drawn up by the Hon'ble Presiding Officer, Debts Recovery Tribunal-II, Delhi, the CD is to pay to the applicant **Rs.12,16,823/- (Rs. Twelve Lacs Sixteen Thousand Eight Hundred And Twenty Three Only)** has become due from you as per the bid Recovery Certificate drawn in **OA No. 308/2013** by the Presiding Officer, Debts Recovery Tribunal- II, Delhi. The applicant is entitled to recover a sum of **Rs. Rs.12,01,823/- (Rs. Twelve Lacs One Thousand Eight Hundred And Twenty Three Only)** alongwith pentadente and future interest @15.01% per annum w.e.f. **18.10.2013** till realization with cost of **Rs.15,000/-** and costs from the Certificate Debtor (CD), failing which the amount shall be recovered by sale of the hypothecated vehicles. In case of any shortfall, the same shall be recovered from the personal movable and immovable assets of the CD.

2. And whereas the undersigned has ordered the sale of the hypothecated vehicle mentioned in scheduled property for satisfaction of the said Recovery Certificate.

3. Notice is hereby given that in the absence of any order of postponement, the said hypothecated vehicle (mentioned under the schedule of property below) shall be sold through e-auction through **https://auctions.cardekho.com/ auctions@cardekho.com**, by e-auction at **11:00 AM on 27.10.2021**.

4. The CH bank shall ensure that prospective bidders are allowed inspection of the said hypothecated vehicle (mentioned under the schedule of property below) before day of auction for which interested individuals may contact the concerned officer of **CH Ms. Kalayani Preeti (MOB: 9599281817)**.

5. The sale shall be of the movable property of the above named Certificate Defaulters (CD), subject to the liabilities and claims attaching to the said hypothecated vehicle, if any.

6. The sale shall be stopped if, before lot is knocked down, the arrears mentioned in the said certificate, interest costs (including cost of sale) are tendered to the officer conducting the sale or proof is given to his satisfaction that the amount of such certificate alongwith the interest and costs has been paid to the undersigned.

7. At the sale the public generally are invited to bid either personally or by duly authorized agent. No officer or other person, having any duty to perform in connection with this sale shall, however, either directly or indirectly bid for, acquire or attempt to acquire any interest in the property sold.

8. The property is being sold on **"AS IS WHERE IS" BASIS** and **"AS IS WHAT IS" BASIS**. The sale shall be subject to the conditions prescribed in the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961 and the rules made thereunder and to the following further conditions.

9. The particulars specified in the Schedule have been stated to the best of the information of the undersigned, but the undersigned shall not be answerable for any error, mis-statement or omission in this proclamation.

10. The Reserve Price and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) be fixed as follows-

| S. No. | Details of property                                            | Reserve Price (In Rs.) | Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (In Rs.) |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Mercedes Benz/ E280CDI, bearing Registration No. HR- 51Y-0945. | 1,60,000/-             | 16,000/-                             |

11. The amount by which the biddings are to be increased shall be determined by the Officer conducting the sale. In the event of any dispute arising as to the amount of bid, or as to the bidder, the lot shall at once be again put to auction.

12. Intending bidders shall be required to pay Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by way of pay order/demand draft payable at New Delhi and in favour of Recovery Officer-II, DRT-II, Delhi before the start of bidding and identity proofs, address proofs etc. The said deposit shall be adjusted in the case of successful bidders; and in the case of unsuccessful bidders the same shall be refunded without interest, on the date of sale.

13. Successful highest bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale proceeds by way of pay order/demand draft favoring the Recovery Officer-II, DRT-II, Delhi, within 24 hours (next working day) by way of bank draft, after adjusting the EMD stated above, failing which the EMD shall be forfeited.

14. The purchaser shall deposit the balance 75% of the sale proceeds alongwith poundage fee @ 2% upto Rupees 1,000/- @ 1% of the sale price exceeding Rupees 1,000/ within 15 days from the date of auction. The Poundage fees shall be deposited through a demand draft payable in favor of the Registrar, DRT-II, Delhi.

15. In case of default, the amount earlier deposited by the bidder, if the undersigned considers fit, after defraying the expenses of the sale shall be forfeited and the property shall be resold, and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part thereof or of any part of the sum for which it may subsequently be sold.

16. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids if found unreasonable or postpone the auction at any time without assigning any reason.

| S. No. | Description of property to be sold with names co-owners where the property belongs to the defaulter and any other persons is co-owners | Revenue assessed upon the property or any part thereof | Details of any encumbrances to which the property is liable | Claims, if any which have been put forward to the property and other known particulars bearing on its nature and value. |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.     | Mercedes Benz/ E280CDI, bearing Registration No. HR- 51Y-0945.                                                                         | No Information                                         | No Information                                              | No Information                                                                                                          |

Given under my hand and seal of this Tribunal at New Delhi on this **09.09.2021**.

**(Dattatrey Bajpayee)**  
Recovery Officer-II,  
DRT-II, Delhi

# 48 died, 31 missing in Nepal's flood and landslides

**Kathmandu:** At least 48 people have died and 31 others went missing in Nepal's flood and landslides triggered by incessant rains from Sunday, Nepal's Ministry of Home Affairs said.

Similarly, thousands of farmers across the country have lost their crops to rains this year. Destruction of the paddy crop is a major setback for Nepal's overall economy. Paddy alone contributes around 7 per cent to the national gross domestic product and is the major income source for more than half of the population.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has called an emergency Cabinet meeting on Wednesday afternoon to discuss the situation created by the rain, floods, and landslides. As many as 11 districts of the country reported deaths and missing people, according

to the Home Ministry.

Some bridges collapsed and highways were obstructed. Some cities and airports are inundated and in some districts, some human settlements were submerged under the floods. Local authorities have shifted some settlements to safe places in some districts to save people from the flood and landslides.

Several districts of the country have been hit hard by the unexpected autumn rain. According to Nepali Airlines officials, at least 100 domestic flights scheduled for an operation to and from the capital, Kathmandu were suspended on Wednesday owing to bad weather conditions. This is the highest number of flight suspensions recorded in a single day in recent times as air carriers could not operate services to various hilly as well as plain areas due to incessant rains and

bad weather conditions.

The Home Ministry said that 31 people are still missing in landslides and floods in several parts of the country and search and rescue operation is underway. The sudden and extreme rainfall in the third week of October, has left experts wondering-and worried-how climate change is impacting the economy and livelihoods of the people.

Nepal's economic well-being is intimately linked with the rainy season. Water from the skies is the lifeblood of Nepal's Rs 4.26 trillion economy which is farm-dependent, as nearly two-thirds of the farmlands are rain-fed. A large part of the country gets nearly 80 per cent of its annual rainfall during the four months-June to September. Given the above-normal rainfall this year, Nepal was expecting a bumper harvest. **IANS**

# Jailed Russian Opp leader Navalny wins top EU prize

**Brussels:** Imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was awarded the European Union's top human rights prize Wednesday in a clear slap at President Vladimir Putin.

In awarding the Sakharov Prize to Navalny, the European Parliament praised his "immense personal bravery". The 45-year-old activist was poisoned with a nerve agent last year and promptly arrested upon his return to Moscow from treatment in Germany and later imprisoned.

"He has campaigned consistently against the corruption of Vladimir Putin's regime, and through his social media accounts and political campaigns, Navalny has helped expose abuses and mobilize the support of millions of people

across Russia. For this, he was poisoned and thrown in jail," parliament President David Sassoli in a statement.

Sassoli called for Navalny's immediate release.

The recognition of Navalny will further sour relations between the 27-nation bloc and Russia. These ties have been on the decline for years, especially following Moscow's 2014 annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula and its support for a separatist insurgency in eastern Ukraine.

The impact reverberated beyond the EU as well.

Days after Russia suspended its mission at NATO and ordered the closure of the alliance's office in Moscow in retaliation for NATO's expulsion of Russian diplomats, the organisation's chief said he embraced the news. **AP**

**Pak PM accused of selling gifts received from other countries' heads**

**Lahore:** Pakistan's Opposition parties on Wednesday accused Prime Minister Imran Khan of selling gifts he received from other countries' heads, including an expensive watch worth USD 1 million.

Gifts are routinely exchanged between heads of states or officers holding constitutional positions during a state visit. According to the gift depository (Toshakhana) rules, these gifts remain the property of the state unless sold at an open auction. Rules allow officials to retain gifts with a market value of less than Rs 10,000 without paying anything. The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

"Imran Khan has sold the gifts he received from other countries," PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz tweeted in Urdu. **PTI**

# Career diplomat Donald Blome named US envoy to Pakistan

**Washington:** U.S. President Joe Biden plans to nominate Donald Blome, currently ambassador to Tunisia, as his top diplomat in Pakistan as Washington works to manage the situation in neighboring Afghanistan following the withdrawal of American troops.

Joe Biden will announce plans to nominate Blome to the job in Pakistan, the White House said. Blome is a career Foreign Service diplomat with long experience in the region who once worked in the Kabul embassy, shuttered earlier this year during the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Pakistan is playing a major role in diplomacy with its Taliban-ruled neighbor.

International agencies have warned that Afghanistan is on the verge of humanitarian collapse without access to aid or foreign reserves, which remain frozen in the United States.

Pakistan's relationship with neighboring China has also been of interest to the Biden administration, which regards Beijing as its chief international rival. Tunisia, where Blome has worked as ambassador since 2019, is an important diplomatic outpost for the United States in North Africa, representing interests beyond the country's borders, including in neighboring Libya. **PTI**

# Volcano in southwest Japan erupts, warning issued

**Tokyo:** An eruption was observed on Wednesday at Mt Aso in Kyushu area, southwestern Japan, the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) said.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters in Tokyo that no injuries have been reported so far and that local authorities are working to determine whether there are any climbers still on the mountain, Xinhua news agency reported.

According to the JMA, the eruption occurred at 11.43 a.m. local time at the No 1 Nakadake crater, with smoke billowing out of the peak in Kumamoto Prefecture.

Volcanic ash has blown more than 1 km from the crater and reached a height of about 3,500 meters, and pyroclastic flows could occur in areas within about 2 km, the JMA said.

The agency raised the volcanic alert level of Mt Aso to 3 on a scale of 5. **IANS**

# Former German troops arrested over alleged terror plot

**Berlin:** Two former German soldiers have been arrested on suspicion of trying to form a terrorist mercenary force to fight in Yemen's civil war, officials said. The former soldiers -- Arend-Adolf G and Achim A, face terrorism charges after police raids in southern Germany on Wednesday, the BBC reported.

They allegedly planned to recruit up to 150 men for a private army made up of former police officers and soldiers.

According to prosecutors, they wanted to offer their services to Saudi Arabia's government for illegal missions in Yemen. Yemen has been racked by a civil war between the Saudi Arabia-backed internationally recognised government and the armed Houthi movement since 2014. Saudi Arabia entered the civil war in 2015 shortly after the capture of the capital, Sanaa, by the Houthis, who are supported by Iran. **IANS**

# Queen cancels travel plans within UK after medical advice to rest

**London:** Britain's Queen Elizabeth II has cancelled a planned visit to Northern Ireland following medical advice to rest for a few days, Buckingham Palace said on Wednesday.

The 95-year-old monarch was to begin a two-day trip to Hillsborough in County Down and attend a church service marking the centenary of the formation of Northern Ireland in Armagh on Thursday, but will now remain at Windsor Castle instead.

"The Queen has reluctantly accepted medical advice to rest for the next few days," a Buckingham Palace spokesperson said. "Her Majesty is in good spirits and is disappointed that she will no longer be able to visit Northern Ireland, where she had been due to undertake a series of engagements today and tomorrow. The Queen sends her warmest good wishes to the people of Northern Ireland and looks forward to visiting in the future," the spokesperson said.

The decision is not believed to be related to coronavirus and the monarch is now said to be resting at her Windsor Castle residence in Berkshire, south-east England.

The Queen, the UK's longest-serving monarch, has been attending a series of public events in recent days, including hosting a Global Investment Summit at Windsor Castle on Tuesday evening. It was revealed on Tuesday that the Queen had declined a so-called "Oldie of the Year" award, from a magazine of the same name, saying: "You are only as old as you feel".

She is still expected to attend the UN COP26 climate conference in Glasgow.

The Queen was seen using a walking stick for the first time at a major public event earlier this week, when attending a Westminster Abbey service marking the centenary of UK armed forces charity Royal British Legion. **AP**

# 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 disinvestment 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

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

IAN S ■ 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 to 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%

IAN S ■ 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.

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

IAN S ■ 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.

# India's 450GW renewable energy goal by 2030 doable: John Kerry

New Delhi: US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry on Wednesday said India's goal of reaching 450 GW of renewable energy (RE) by 2030 is doable as it has already crossed the 100 GW RE mark.

"It is really terrific to see India leading the ISA (International Solar Alliance). India is a close partner and the United States strongly supports India's goal of reaching 450 GW of renewable energy by 2030. "We believe that it's absolutely doable and

will be done. India has already set an example for emerging economies by reaching 100GW of renewables," Kerry said while addressing a session of ISA general assembly.

He further said, "What India has demonstrated with its low-cost solar auctions and build-out of the transmission grids and massive solar parts program and other innovative policy tools can be replicated all over the world."

# 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.

# 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 pressurising from higher input costs in companies that do not possess the pricing power.

**PSPCL 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 DMIT 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

**NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA**  
Ministry of Education, Government of India Nehru Bhawan,  
5 Institutional Area, Phase-II, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110 070,  
Tel: 011-2670783  
Email: office.nbt@nic.in Website : www.nbtindia.gov.in

**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**  
By: 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 L&S in LKO-Ex CNB section and Provision of STIM/Telecom towers at locations 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 up to 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.

**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 (RFN No. 5000000942) (Two Bid System)                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 773.88                                              |                                                           |
| 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-1 & II Line Bays at owners yard of 400kV Chandrapur & Padghe S/S. | 5,000.00                                            | 02.11.2021 02.11.2021<br>Up to 17:00 Hrs. at 17:05Hrs     |

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.  
DGIPRC 2405/21-22 Executive Engineer (P&C)

**Chola** Enter a better life  
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 needless 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.X0HEDHE0000875978<br>MANMOHAN SINGH (BORROWER)<br>At:- C 82 GALLI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110051<br>Also At:- 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<br>MANMEET SINGH (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- C 82 GALLI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA, NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110051<br>BHAGAT SINGH (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- C 82 GALLI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110051<br>PARAMJEET KAUR (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- C 82 GALLI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA, NAGAR, NEWDELHI-110051<br>CHARANJEET KAUR (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- C 82 GALLI 1A WEST AZAD NAGAR KRISHNA NAGAR, NEWDELHI-110051<br>M/S ASER ELECTRONIC PVT LTD (Co-BORROWER)<br>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<br>Rs.70,11,562/- (Rupees Seventy Lakh Eleven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Two Only)                                         | ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF PROPERTY 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<br>NORTH: PROPERTY NO. C-83 SOUTH: ROAD EAST: PORTION OF PROPERTY NO. C-82 WEST: PROPERTY NO. C-80                                                                                                                     |
| LOAN ACCOUNT NO.X0HEEDL00001926828<br>SATISH KUMAR SAINI (BORROWER)<br>At:- H.NO.61, SAINI MOHALLA, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI-110041<br>Also At:- KHATU NARESH TENT HOUSE 668, KHASRA NO-126, SAINI MOHALLA NANGLOI, DELHI-110041<br>Also At:- PROPERTY BEARING NO. C-225, KHASRA NO. 62/25/2, VILLAGE NANGLOI, KNOWN AS SAINI VIHAR, LAXMI PARK, NEW DELHI.<br>MANJU SAINI (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- H.NO.61, SAINI MOHALLA, NANGLOI, NEW DELHI-110041<br>KHATU NARESH TENT HOUSE (Co-BORROWER)<br>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<br>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.X0HEEDL00001683751<br>VIKAS GOEL (BORROWER)<br>B-45, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094<br>MANGE RAM GOEL (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- B-45, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094<br>KUSUM GOEL (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- B-45, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR SABAPUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094<br>HARYANA TRADING COMPANY (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- A-18, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR ROAD, NEAR BHAINPURA, NEWDELHI, NEWDELHI-110094<br>NIYATI GOEL (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- B-45, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094<br>HARSH GOEL (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- B-45, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, BIHARI PUR NORTH EAST DELHI NEWDELHI-110094<br>GOEL TRADERS (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- A-18, GALLI NO-2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR ROAD, NEAR BHAINPURA, NEWDELHI, NEWDELHI-110094 | Rs. 1,00,00,000/- (Rupees One Crore Only)                    | 27-09-2021<br>Rs. 1,01,02,098.85/- (Rupees One Crore 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 UP TO THE LAST STOREY SITUATED AT VILLAGE MEERAPUR TURK, IN THE ABADI OF GALT NO.2, CHANDU NAGAR, KARAWAL NAGAR, ILLAQ SHAHDARA SHAHDARA, DELHI 110094     |
| LOAN ACCOUNT NO.X0HEDHE00001142898 & X0HEDHE00001356212<br>RENU SHARMA (BORROWER)<br>At:- HOUSE NO-7 SECOND FLOOR BLK-B, SHAKTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110052<br>Also At:- PROPERTY BEARING NO. 7, BLOCK-B, SITUATED IN THE DELHI CORPORATION ENGINEERING CHBS LTD. SHAKTI NAGAR EXTN, DELHI<br>RAJ KUMAR SHARMA (Co-BORROWER)<br>HOUSE NO-7 SECOND FLOOR BLK-B, SHAKTI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110052<br>Also At: 1094, KASHMERE GATE PO PS KASHMERE GATE DELHI 110006<br>PRATEEK SHARMA (Co-BORROWER)<br>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<br>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 FREE HOLD LAND ADMEASURING 275.55 SQ. YDS., SITUATED IN THE LAYOUT PLAN OF THE DELHI CORPORATION CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE 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 |
| LOAN ACCOUNT NO.X0HEEDL00001892604 & X0HEEDL00001892629<br>ANIL KUMAR (BORROWER)<br>At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040<br>Also At:- PROPERTY BEARING NO. 482, KHASRA NO. 37/6/2, NEAR SABOLIRoad, OLD ABADI OF VILLAGE NARELA, DELHI-110040 (AREA MEASURING 144.4 SQ. YDS.)<br>SANGEETA (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040<br>BHARDWAJ TRADERS (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- 1961/6A SABZI MANDI, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040<br>ASHISH KUMAR (Co-BORROWER)<br>At:- CN-482 MAIN SABOLI ROAD SANJAY COLONY, NARELA, NEW DELHI-110040                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Rs. 4500000/- (Rupees Fourty Five Lakh(s) Only)              | 27-09-2021<br>Rs. 1,80,06,787.65/- (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...

**Q We heard that after *Scam 1992*, you opted to star in a Gujarati web-series, *Vitthal 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.

**Q What 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.

**Q When 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.

**Q Going 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.

**Q How 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, Tahar 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 training. 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.

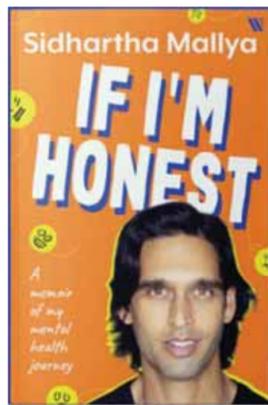
In this memoir, he opens up about struggling with depression, living with OCD, the effects of his parents' divorce, why he quit drinking and also what helped him overcome his challenges.

"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



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

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

## 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

GAUHAH 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 Lanka 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, Arahata 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 also 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

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been adjudged as the winner of the Clarivate South and South East Asia Innovation award, 2021, under the corporations in India. BHEL's efforts, as a leader in innovation, were recognised and placed among the top innovators in India. The award has been won by BHEL earlier in the years 2018 and 2020 also.

The Clarivate awards were announced, at the Clarivate South and South East Asia Innovation forum, that were held virtually earlier. The award was received by Renuka Gera, the director (IS&P, additional charge E, R&D) on behalf of BHEL, from Rajat Sikka, the



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 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 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

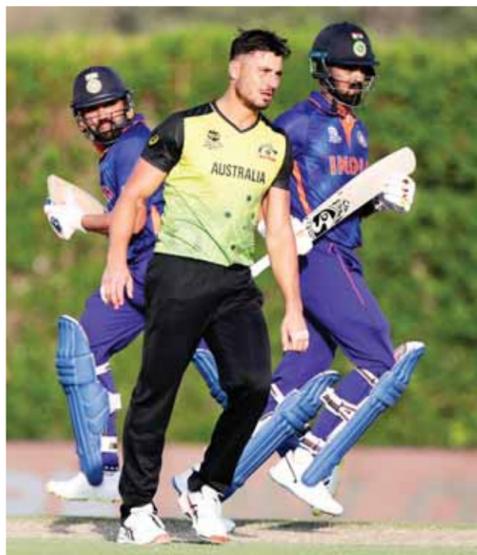
India fine-tuned their T20 World Cup preparations with a convincing nine-wicket win over Australia in their final warm-up game here on Wednesday but the sixth bowler's slot remained a worry as even Virat Kohli rolled his arm over going into the tournament proper.

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

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.

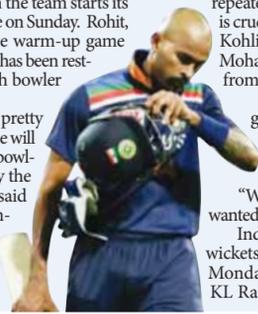
"Hardik is coming along pretty well, but it'll be a while before he will start to bowl. He hasn't started bowling, but he should be ready by the start of the tournament," said Rohit at the toss for the warm-up match against Australia.

"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.



Ravindra Jadeja had Finch trapped LBW with a slider off his very first ball, leaving Australia with a lot of work to

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 DONT 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 deride 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 Seelar. His 40-ball unbeaten knock was adorned with five



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.

## Lakshya sails into second round, Saina sinks at Denmark Open

## Messi scores 2 goals to rescue PSG



AP ■ PARIS

Lionel Messi scored twice in 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.